



MAHANAGAR METRO

VOICE OF THE CITY, PULSE OF THE NATION

MAHANAGAR METRO

For News Coverage,
Press Releases &
Advertisement Bookings,
Please Contact Our Office

PAWAN MAKAN
+91-9638877700
mahanagarmetro7@gmail.com

People's livelihood more important than mere emotions, says D K

SHIVAMOGGA(Agency)

Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said here on Saturday that politics should focus on people's livelihood and well-being rather than on emotions. He was responding to Shivamogga BJP MLA SN Channabasappa's demand that the full six stanzas of 'Vande Mataram' should be sung instead of the customary two stanzas.

The CM was at an interaction programme organised by the district administration to discuss concerns and the impact of the Kasturirangan report on the Malnad region, in Thirthahalli on Saturday.

As Channabasappa made his suggestion at the start of the interaction, there was commotion with Congress workers shouting slogans favouring Shivakumar.

Later addressing the gathering, Shivakumar commented on Channabasappa's remarks, saying the Centre recently decided to introduce the full version of the song, but acknowledged that BJP and Congress have their own views on the issue. "I have come into politics to work for people, not to do politics over emotions," he said.

Shivakumar said the people who had gathered at the event remained despite the rain and heat because their livelihood and daily survival were more important to them. "People's livelihood is important. We should do politics around their lives, not do politics by putting their lives aside," he said.

Yuva Shakti at heart of India's journey towards Viksit Bharat, says PM Modi

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Praising young people for their role and contribution to nation-building, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday described youth power as being at the heart of India's progress towards a Viksit Bharat. Speaking at the 20th Rozgar Mela, where more than 51,000 appointment letters were virtually distributed, Modi said, "India's Yuva Shakti is at the heart of our journey towards a Viksit Bharat. The Rozgar Mela reflects our commitment to creating new opportunities for the youth."

Reiterating his government's commitment to employment generation, he said, "The government is working on every front to increase employment in the country," he said, adding that the talent and skills of Indian youth have earned global confidence. Modi said the world now has high expectations from Indian innovators, entrepreneurs and young workforce.

He added that free trade agreements are opening new avenues of opportunities for young people. "India is currently the world's third-largest startup ecosystem. Moreover, India's startup story is no longer confined to major metropolitan areas. Today, roughly half of all recognised startups are based in Tier II and Tier III cities," Modi said.

Welcoming the new appointees to the government, Modi emphasised the pivotal role of young people in advancing the twin objectives of a developed and self-reliant India.

Vulgar, crude circus: BJP tears into Rahul Gandhi over comedian's PM Modi skit

New Delhi(Agency)

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over a recent stage act in which he and a stand-up comedian mocked Prime Minister Narendra Modi.Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju posted on X: "Congress Party has become a Party of Comedians & Jokers! They are out forever.... RIP," he posted on X.Describing the skit as "foul-mouthed antics" performed by "cheap, vulgar trolls,"

BJP spokesperson CR Kesavan said no decent and right-thinking person would find it amusing."This uncouth culture endorsed by Rahul Gandhi explains why he has failed to connect or resonate with the youth, as pointed out by his Congress colleague, Mr. Shashi Tharoor," he wrote in a post on X.

He further said, "Rahul Gandhi, who supports such clowns and crude circus shows, lacks both the gravity and gravitas to be taken seriously as a political leader." Moreover, Kesavan asserted that the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha had also insulted "Naari Shakti" by "mocking a frail elderly" lady by performing the skit.

The BJP leader also criticised the Congress over the

performance of its student wing, the NSUI, in the recently held Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections, asserting that the politics promoted by the opposition party had failed to establish any meaningful rapport



among younger voters.

"Such politics of bitterness and hate, promoted by Rahul Gandhi, is the precise reason why the Congress was routed and blanked out by our youth in the DUSU elections," Kesavan stated.

The student body polls saw the RSS-affiliated ABVP win

Criticising the skit as 'foul-mouthed antics' performed by 'cheap, vulgar trolls,' BJP spokesperson CR Kesavan said no decent and right-thinking person would find it amusing.

three of the four central panel posts of DUSU, while Independent candidate Deepanshu Shokeen, who was denied an NSUI ticket, won the vice-president's post. Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi also criticised Gandhi and the Congress, claiming the skit was meant to insult PM Modi's mother.

"Shameful and disgusting! Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party have stooped to an absolute nadir of moral bankruptcy. Weaponising a student interaction to mock and insult the late mother of PM Shri [Narendra Modi] ji reveals a shocking lack of basic human empathy and political culture," he wrote on X.Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, too, echoed the sentiment."By laughing at the insult to a mother, Rahul Gandhi has laid bare his political upbringing before the entire nation. This prince of the Congress has fallen victim to mental bankruptcy—and this has once again made it clear to the whole country on his own," she said.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE CONTROVERSY

The controversial performance took place at Congress's 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' event in Indore on Saturday. Stand-up comedian Pulkit Mani appeared on stage with Gandhi and adopted an imitation of PM Modi's speech, mannerisms and public persona.

Inspiring Presence of Political and Social Dignitaries, Including Maninagar MLA Amulbhai Bhatt, in Khokhra: 'Shree Baliyadev Yuvak Mitra Mandal' Organizes Grand 19th Ganesh Mahotsav

Lord's feet as a surge of faith marks the Ganesh Mahotsav!

Mahanagar Metro Desk

AHMEDABAD: A deeply devout atmosphere is being witnessed across Ahmedabad during the ongoing Ganeshotsav. A grand confluence of devotion and enthusiasm was on display at the 19th Ganesh Mahotsav organized by 'Shree Baliyadev Yuvak Mitra Mandal' in the Khokhra area of the city. On the auspicious occasion of Lord Ganesha's darshan and Maha Aarti, prominent dignitaries from political and social spheres made a special point to attend, seeking the blessings of the deity.Dignified Presence of Eminent PersonalitiesThe religious event saw the participation of key figures, including the popular MLA from Maninagar constituency, Shri Amulbhai Bhatt; Chairman of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) Standing Committee, Shri Kamleshbhai Patel; Khokhra Ward President, Shri Chiragbhai Shette; local municipal councillor, Smt. Sonalba Sarvaiya; along with senior leaders Shri Anilbhai Janaikar and Smt. Jigishaben Solanki, among other political and social representatives. The Mandal extended a warm welcome and honored all invited guests amidst the festive setup.Prayers for Global Peace and ProsperitySpeaking during



the event, Maninagar MLA Shri Amulbhai Bhatt and Standing Committee Chairman Shri Kamleshbhai

Patel stated, "By the grace of Vighnaharta Lord Shree Ganesha, may happiness, peace, and prosperity prevail

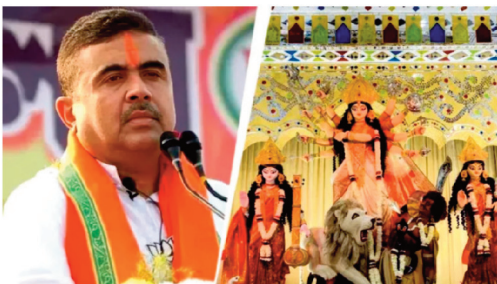
across the nation and the world. We offer our heartfelt prayers at the Lord's feet that he removes all obstacles and troubles from every citizen's life, and that the city of Ahmedabad continues to progress consistently."May Lord Ganesha's Blessings Remain Upon Devotees: Mandal President Pawan MakanShri Pawan Makan, President of Shree Baliyadev Yuvak Mitra Mandal, expressed, "The Mandal has successfully organized this grand and devout Ganesh Mahotsav for the 19th consecutive year. Every year, local residents and devotees gather in large numbers to offer their prayers. We extend our best wishes that Gauri-son Lord Ganesha continues to shower his blessings on all devotees and fulfills their aspirations."Chants of 'Ganpati Bappa Morya' Echo in Devotional FervorA vast gathering of local residents and devotees attended the Maha Aarti and religious programs held as part of the festival. The entire area resonated with resounding chants of 'Ganpati Bappa Morya, Mangal Murti Morya'. The members of Shree Baliyadev Yuvak Mitra Mandal have been putting in tireless efforts to ensure the continued success of the event.

TMC, Left, Congress out of action, how BJP has invented its biggest rival in Bengal

New Delhi(Agency).

Three years ago, Instagram Reels and images with this message went viral ahead of Durga Puja. That was when West Bengal stood at a crossroads. Although the Trinamool Congress looked comfortable in power, the BJP was spreading its wings, while several other Hindu right-wing outfits were making inroads into the social and cultural space. Many Bengalis, for the first time in their lives, were encountering a Navratri-versus-Durga Puja debate. Many argued that Durga Puja had lost its religious essence after decades of

Communist and Trinamool Congress rule, while some even questioned whether feasting on non-vegetarian dishes when several non-Bengali citizens were



observing strict vegetarianism during Navratri was appropriate. In this context, the Instagram catchline was an attempt by Bengalis to counter the uncomfortable questions that had

been spreading across several social media platforms. It wasn't a powerful statement, but it reflected a socio-cultural practice and loosely underlined a political undercurrent that many failed to read.The Bengal unit of the BJP might have been among those who failed to read it. Fulfilling a longstanding quest, the party finally came to power in 2026, pushing the Trinamool Congress to the margins of Bengal's politics.Four months in power, the BJP does not face a significant political threat on the ground. After a two-way split in the party, the TMC is nowhere near challenging the BJP at this moment. The Congress does not have organisational strength, and the Left is largely surviving on its past glory.

'Football Will Deflate': Himanta Sarma Jabs Mamata Banerjee Over Party Symbol

The Mamata Banerjee-led faction of Trinamool on Friday got the name 'Mamata All India Trinamool Congress' and the 'football player' symbol ahead of the October 6 bypolls in Bengal.

Guwahati(Agency).

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday took a swipe at former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee following the Election Commission's decision to temporarily freeze the Trinamool Congress' existing name and its 'Jora Ghash Phul' (twin flowers and grass) symbol, saying the new "football player" symbol allotted to her faction would also soon "get deflated".

The Mamata Banerjee-led faction of Trinamool on Friday got the name 'Mamata All India Trinamool Congress' and the 'football player' symbol ahead of the October 6 bypolls to two Assembly constituencies in West Bengal. The rival faction led by Arup Roy was allotted the name 'Democratic Trinamool Congress' and the 'envelope' symbol.

Speaking to reporters after his first visit to West Bengal following BJP's historic win in

the state Assembly elections, Sarma claimed that Banerjee would not return to power in West Bengal.

"Mamata is gone now. She will not come back. Forget about her. If you keep worrying



about Mamata, your blood pressure will rise. Now (Chief Minister) Suvedu (Adhikari) will develop the state and Mamata will sit and watch how development is done," he said. He also targeted the Trinamool's new electoral symbol."The twin flowers are gone. After two days, even the football.

As the BJP faces little political resistance in West Bengal, a row over non-vegetarian food during Durga Puja and Navratri has caused unease. The problem for the BJP is that the distinction between the party and the larger Hindu-right ecosystem is increasingly becoming irrelevant to people in Bengal.

College clash spills onto road, students rain blows on each other

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Students from two groups allegedly clashed outside Greater Noida Institute of Technology in Greater Noida's Knowledge Park area after a minor argument escalated into a fight.

A video of the incident, recorded and shared by passersby on social media, showed six to seven students still in their uniforms punching and kicking each other. A few were spotted carrying sticks, while one was seen hurling furniture that hit a bus passing by. Police said traffic in the area was affected as the fracas had spilled onto the road, however, no complaint was filed by either group until late Saturday. The reason behind the dispute is yet to be ascertained. Cops are also trying to identify the students involved in the fistfight. Police said they will seek information from the college administration.

GIMS, NABH to train health workers in IT

Noida.(Agency)

Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS), Greater Noida, has signed an MoU with the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) to launch a certified digital health course aimed at creating a skilled workforce for the rapidly evolving healthcare sector.

Under the collaboration, GIMS will offer the NABH Certified Digital Health Practitioner (CDHP) course to healthcare professionals, IT professionals and other eligible candidates. The programme will focus on areas such as Hospital Management Information Systems (HMIS), Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), healthcare data analytics, cybersecurity, digital health applications and claims processing.

Officials said the growing use of digital systems in hospitals and healthcare institutions has increased the demand for professionals who understand both healthcare delivery and technology. The course will also cover digital health standards, interoperability, data management and technology-enabled clinical workflows. The programme is expected to prepare professionals to work across hospitals, healthcare institutions, digital health platforms, insurance and claims systems and other technology-driven healthcare services. Brig Dr Rakesh K Gupta, director, GIMS, said digital competencies were becoming increasingly important in healthcare and there was a need for professionals capable of bridging the gap between healthcare delivery and technology. The collaboration is aimed at strengthening digital health education and capacity building in Uttar Pradesh, while supporting the wider adoption of technology-enabled healthcare systems.

Car performing stunts hits 4 students outside Greater Noida college, driver held

Noida.(Agency)

A car driver allegedly performing stunts hit four students outside Greater Noida Institute of Technology in Greater Noida's Knowledge Park area on Friday evening, leaving one of them with a fracture. A video of the hit-and-run, circulating on social media platforms, shows a grey Maruti Alto hitting people walking on the footpath before fleeing. Police said the driver, later identified as Manish, was performing stunts with a group of friends in three cars — a Baleno, a Hyundai i20 and an Alto. Manish, a resident of Ladpura, was trying to spin his car when he hit the four students passing by. Police tracked him with the help of videos circulating on social media and CCTV footage from nearby areas and arrested him, while the vehicle was impounded. Police said Manish was driving rashly and was trying to repeatedly spin the Alto when he lost control of the car, veered towards the footpath and hit four students. The victims, Gaurav, Ayush, Krish and Mohit, were taken to a nearby hospital for treatment. Police said Gaurav, a BCA student, suffered a leg fracture while the others sustained minor injuries. Greater Noida DCP Ravi Shankar Nim said an FIR had been registered under relevant sections against Manish, while efforts were on to identify the others involved in the stunt.

Friends thrash Thar driver, he crashes SUV into their cab

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A quarrel among four men in Sector 89 late on Friday night spilled onto the road when one of them allegedly used his Thar to repeatedly crash into a Rapido cab that two of his friends had boarded to leave the spot. The impact deployed both front airbags and badly damaged the cab, but the three persons inside it escaped unhurt. The four had arrived in the Delhi-registered Thar when an argument broke out and turned physical. Police said the two men then decided to leave and booked a Rapido cab. They were waiting by the roadside when it arrived. As the two were getting into the cab, their friend allegedly drove the Thar towards it and rammed the vehicle. He then reversed the SUV, accelerated again and struck the cab several times. The repeated impacts badly damaged the cab's front and side before the Thar driver fled. A senior police officer confirmed that the four men had a fight inside the Thar. "Yes, a fight broke out between the four inside the SUV. The Thar driver was first beaten up by the two. While the two men were leaving, the Thar driver rammed his car into the cab. Their identification is also yet to be established," he added. The cab driver and two passengers were inside when the SUV crashed into it. Despite the force of the collisions, none was injured. Passersby recorded the incident on their mobile phones, and circulated a video showing the Thar reversing and hitting the cab repeatedly.

Major Recruitment and Financial Scam at IKDRC Ahmedabad: Open Defiance of Chief Minister's Orders and Financial Norms!

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Ahmedabad: The world-renowned Institute of Kidney Diseases and Research Centre (IKDRC), located within the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital campus, has currently found itself in the spotlight not for its medical services, but as an arena of corruption and scams. A shocking disclosure has been made regarding the arbitrary and illegal actions of the institution's Director, Dr. Pranjal Modi. Setting aside the circulars of the Gujarat Government's Finance Department, Government Resolutions (GR), and CAG rules, a sensational case has come to light where the Director has caused financial losses worth crores of rupees to the public exchequer. According to the Gujarat Government Finance Department circular (No. JANV/10/2017/277973/A, dated 28/01/2022), it is mandatory to obtain prior approval from the Chief Minister to re-employ any retired officer or employee on a contractual basis after retirement, with the maximum age limit for such re-employment fixed at 62 years. However, Dr. Pranjal Modi, without taking any prior approval from the Chief Minister or the Finance Department, directly and illegally appointed 11 to 12 retired officers aged between 65 and 72 years. As per government policy, while fixing the salary of an employee appointed on a contractual basis post-retirement, the pension amount must be deducted from their salary, and the total pay should not exceed the prescribed government ceiling (maximum ₹75,000 to ₹80,000). At IKDRC, this policy has been openly violated; these retired officials are receiving 100% pension from the government while simultaneously drawing hefty salaries ranging from ₹60,000 to ₹2,30,000 per month from IKDRC without any mandatory deductions, amounting to direct plunder of the state treasury. According to the General Administration Department resolution dated 17/05/2018, the services of retired employees can only be utilized for academic and clinical work, and they cannot



under any circumstances be appointed to administrative, financial, or purchase-related posts. Despite this, the CAG audit revealed that in total violation of the rules, retired employees were appointed to key administrative positions such as Officer on Special Duty (OSD), Administrative Officer, and PA to the Director. Director Dr. Pranjal Modi offered the defense that the salaries of these employees were paid from the institute's "Own Funds" rather than government grants, but the CAG audit completely rejected this argument because IKDRC, being an institution 100% dependent on government grants, cannot commit financial irregularities under the guise of "Own Funds." Additionally, the distribution of illegal incentives under the PMJAY (Ayushman Bharat) scheme stands out as another major financial scam. While retired employees aged 65 to 72 were retained on massive salaries, nearly 40 local youths who completed their 5-year fixed-pay term were abruptly terminated without any prior notice. Furthermore, according to RTI disclosures and the CAG report, 297 employees were recruited into the institution through backdoor entries without any public advertisement or competitive examination. The official list of the 11 illegally appointed

retired employees includes Dr. Dinesh Nirmaldas Gera - Professor (Monthly Salary: ₹2,30,000, Date of Joining: 01.11.2019), Dr. Gita P. Parikh - Professor (Monthly Salary: ₹2,30,000, Date of Joining: 01.11.2022), Dr. Viren M. Trivedi - OSD Administrative Post (Monthly Salary: ₹75,000, Date of Joining: 24.01.2024 - where instead of recovering ₹9.40 lakh falsely claimed as Research Activity Allowance as noted in the CAG report, he was re-appointed to a high post), Varsha B. Trivedi - Senior Research Officer (Monthly Salary: ₹75,000, Date of Joining: 06.10.2024), Jitendra Kumar Narsingham Suthar - Administrative Officer (Monthly Salary: ₹80,000, Date of Joining: 01.11.2018), Ketan Tejpal Parikh - Assistant Administrative Officer (Monthly Salary: ₹50,000, Date of Joining: 07.10.2021), Ramanbhai P. Rathod - Assistant Administrative Officer (Monthly Salary: ₹60,000, Date of Joining: 13.02.2019), Jayantilal Chhaganbhai Patel - Assistant Administrative Officer (Monthly Salary: ₹38,500, Date of Joining: 20.06.2022), Vandana Govardhanbhai Patel - Assistant Head Nurse (Monthly Salary: ₹25,000, Date of Joining: 13.02.2025), Nalini Natwarlal Patel - PA to Director Administrative Post (Monthly Salary: ₹35,000, Date

of Joining: 01.07.2020), and Jyotsna Babulal Suthar - Book Keeper (Monthly Salary: ₹35,000, Date of Joining: 05.04.2025). Complainant Rajnikant Makwana had filed a grievance with the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) (Ref: GOVGJ/E/2025/0002128), following which the Additional Collector (CMO Office) issued an order (Letter No: MUMAK/Reg/2025/18957, dated 21/05/2025) instructing the Health Department to take lawful action, but Dr. Pranjal Modi allegedly managed to get the complaint closed by submitting misleading replies. Now, the complainant has submitted full documentary evidence before the Additional Director (Medical Education and Research, Gandhinagar), demanding the immediate constitution of a high-level inquiry committee and strict disciplinary and legal steps against Director Dr. Pranjal Modi. Mahanagar Metro poses a direct question: When condition number 2 of the Finance Department circular explicitly commands the immediate termination of such illegal appointments and strict disciplinary action against the appointing authority, who is the administration waiting for before taking action against the Director?

Work orders to clearing bills, bribe everywhere, allege MCG contractors

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A day after the state vigilance and anti-corruption bureau (SV&ACB) arrested a computer operator in MCG's engineering wing for allegedly accepting a Rs 12,000 bribe, contractors have alleged that the case points to a wider problem in the processing and clearance of civic works bills. Those associated with MCG Contractors Union said demands for illegal payments arise at multiple stages of a project, from allotment of work to the processing and clearance of bills. They stressed, however, that the allegations do not apply to all engineers or civic officials.

"There are some engineers who engage in what amounts to blackmailing contractors. The issue is not limited to one level. Contractors come up with such complaints against officials ranging from executive engineers to junior engineers. At the same time, it would be wrong to say that all officers and engineers are involved," said Manish Saidpur, a contractor and president of MCG Contractors Union. Saidpur said they will now be more willing to approach the



anti-corruption agency when such demands are made. According to state vigilance and anti-corruption bureau, computer operator Pawan Kumar, who was working with MCG through Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam (HKRN), was arrested on Friday evening while allegedly accepting Rs 12,000 from a contractor. The bureau said the contractor had completed around 90% of a renovation project at a cremation ground, estimated to cost about Rs 28 lakh. His pending bill was around Rs 23 lakh. He had complained of an alleged demand of Rs 92,000 to get the

bill processed. Of this, Rs 80,000 had allegedly already been paid before the contractor was asked to pay another Rs 12,000. SV&ACB then laid a trap and arrested Kumar. "We have consistently had contractors coming to us with complaints that they are being asked for bribes to get their bills approved and processed. Since we are office-bearers of the union, officials or engineers generally do not approach us directly for such payments. But individual contractors say they face these demands, and the issue needs to be addressed," said Manish Bhardwaj, a contractor and

chairperson of the union.

Contractors also alleged that such unofficial payments can ultimately affect the quality, cost and timely completion of public works. Another person, who has worked on several MCG projects and requested anonymity, alleged that illegal payments could substantially eat into a contractor's margins. "Take a project of Rs 100 as an example. A contractor may have to pay Rs 5 at the time of allotment, followed by a payment of Rs 10 to engineers when bills are raised and additional amount of Rs 10 to other people involved in moving the file. If Rs 25 or more is ultimately lost through such payments, he is left with a substantially reduced amount to execute the work," this person said, adding that the practice could have a direct bearing on the quality and completion of public works. "If a contractor is forced to absorb such costs, the question is how he can maintain the required quality and complete the work within the available amount. Ultimately, the financial burden of these alleged practices can affect the quality of civic works delivered to the public," he said.

Andhra Pradesh: Tirumala shrine packed with devotees for Garuda Seva

TIRUMALA(Agency).

Thousands of devotees expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made for the Garuda Seva procession at the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple on Saturday, with officials adapting crowd-management measures to accommodate pilgrims who could not be accommodated in the designated



galleries. Many devotees gathered along the Mada streets to witness Lord Venkateswara on the Garuda Vahanam, with several seen offering Harathi and expressing their joy after securing a close view of the processional deity.

TTD Chairman BR Naidu, board members, staff, police and vigilance personnel coordinated the arrangements, particularly for pilgrims who had been waiting since morning to secure viewing spots. Tirupati Collector Venkateswar, TTD Executive Officer

Muddada Ravichandra, and vigilance and police officials reviewed the situation as the pilgrim influx increased. As the designated galleries reached capacity, officials allowed stranded devotees to enter the Mada streets to witness the procession.

The procession, originally scheduled for 7 pm, commenced at 6.30 pm to facilitate crowd management.

TTD management, board members and dignitaries, including former chairmen, judges and senior IAS and IPS officers, gathered at the Vahana Mandapam for Darshan and offered Harathi.

During the procession, officials paused the Garuda Vahanam and turned it towards devotees at several junctions to facilitate better viewing. The procession proceeded smoothly up to the Hathiram Bhavaji Mutt.

At the Supatham gate, TTD Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary, SP Subba Rayudu and vigilance personnel halted the Vahanam to allow devotees waiting at SMC, SMGH and the Old VQC Road to enter the Mada streets. The devotees were allowed to offer Harathi and have Darshan from both sides of palanquin. Officials implemented similar crowd-management measures at all four corners of the Mada streets, allowing devotees to witness the procession.

FIR filed day after IIT Bombay student dies by suicide, parents allege caste bias

The institute has denied the allegation and said no such complaint was submitted by the student, either to its SC-ST cell or to the administration.

Mumbai(Agency).

A day after Sahil Wakode (20), a Second Year reserved category student at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bombay, died by suicide, his parents have alleged that he was subjected to caste-based discrimination.

The institute has denied the allegation and said no such complaint was submitted by the student, either to its SC-ST cell or to the administration.

Based on a complaint filed by Sahil's father, Ravindra, the Mumbai Police on Saturday registered an FIR naming Professor Suryanarayan Doolla, among unnamed others, on charges of abetment to suicide (BNS Section 108) and sections of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Doolla was reportedly the invigilator on duty when Sahil, a student of the Department of Energy Science and Engineering, was allegedly found using a cellphone during the

mid-semester exam on Friday. In a statement, the institute said Sahil had uploaded the question paper on ChatGPT to seek answers. Sahil died by suicide hours later.

While the statement issued by the institute



administration said no disciplinary action was initiated against him, Sahil's parents have alleged that students told them he was threatened with suspension.

"His father came forward to register an FIR in this matter. He has named several people and, based on his statement, we have registered an abetment to suicide case," said a police

officer.

In his complaint, Ravindra has alleged that Doolla had subjected Sahil to caste-based discrimination for the past three months, on the instructions of IIT-Bombay Director, Professor Shireesh B Kedare. "He had come to the college on his own merit and everything went fine in the First Year. Things changed in the Second Year when the Director, Shireesh B Kedare, instructed faculty member Suryanarayan Doolla to do caste-based discrimination... Doolla was passing casteist remarks for the past three months and had threatened to implicate him in a wrong manner before the incident took place."

Ravindra has alleged, according to the FIR. When reached for comment, Kedare denied any caste-based discrimination on the campus, whether in the day-to-day functioning or in the administration's or professors' approach. "And there is absolutely none in this case. In fact caste-based information of every student is completely hidden and not available for anybody's information," he said.

31 UAPA cases, years in jail: Inside Maharashtra's overburdened Maoist belt court

Set up in 2023 to bring trials closer to remote Maoist affected villages, the court now has 31 pending UAPA cases, most more than five years old; witnesses travel for hours through forested areas while accused are often produced from distant jails through videoconferencing

Mumbai(Agency).

Three years after an additional sessions court was opened in Maharashtra's Maoist-affected Gadchiroli district to bring justice closer to remote villages, the Aheri Additional District and Sessions Court has emerged as the state's biggest UAPA docket, with 31 cases pending, most for five years or more.

The court was set up in 2023 after local lawyers had sought a sessions court in Aheri since 2008, with the aim of bringing trials closer to the jurisdiction where the alleged offences occurred and speeding up disposal.

The need for a dedicated court had also come into focus before the Supreme Court earlier this year during the bail proceedings of lawyer Surendra Gadling, who has represented several UAPA accused and was arrested in the 2018 Elgaar Parishad case. Gadling had told the Supreme Court that his 2016 Surjagarh arson case remained pending without a court or prosecutor in Aheri.

The Indian Express had reported in

January that the Aheri court had been without a judge for three months in 2025 and again in January, while around 200 undertrials were lodged in jails. Although the Supreme Court granted Gadling bail in the Elgaar Parishad case in May, he remains in custody in the Surjagarh case after more than seven years. His bail plea on grounds including delay remains



pending. For faster disposal of the high number of cases, two additional courts were added in April to the single functioning court in Aheri — two of these courts are designated to hear UAPA cases.

The court, however, continues to face logistical challenges. Located more than 120 km from the district

headquarters, it has jurisdiction over more than 700 villages in heavily forested areas including Etapalli, Bhamragad and Mulchera. Witnesses often have to travel for hours by public transport, testify and leave in time to catch the last bus. Accused lodged in jails more than six hours away are frequently produced through videoconferencing.

The backlog is particularly significant because the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act imposes stringent restrictions on bail, meaning prolonged trials can result in prolonged incarceration for undertrials. Court records as of July 31 show that Gadchiroli accounts for 33 of the 72 UAPA cases pending across Maharashtra, with 31 before the Aheri court. Mumbai has 19, while Pune, Thane, Nagpur,

Nashik, Gondia and Aurangabad have cases in single digits. Another 16 UAPA cases are before a Mumbai special court dealing with cases investigated by the National Investigation Agency. Three UAPA cases have been disposed of at Aheri since January, all ending in acquittals.

UP law student died in an 'accident'. Then cops found six human bite marks

Lucknow(Agency).

In the early morning of September 14, a youth was found injured on the roadside in Jhansi's Prem Nagar area. A police team took him to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Initially, police treated the youth's death as one of the fatalities from road accidents, suspecting that he was heavily intoxicated at the time of the incident and had fallen and suffered a fatal head injury. The injuries to his chest were also believed to have resulted from the fall. However, when the post-mortem report came, the police were surprised to find that there were six bite marks on Parvez's right thigh, believed to have been caused by a human, thereby raising suspicions of foul play.

A murder case was registered, and a team of five women officers — Superintendents of Police Areeba Nomaan and Simran Singh, Additional Superintendent of Police Preeti Singh, and Circle Officers Priya Singh and Asma Waqar was constituted to crack it. The first breakthrough came when the probe team was able to identify the victim. The youth was identified as a 21-year-old law student from Jhansi's Vijay Nagar, Parvez Ali. His father, Ahsan Ali, told the police that his son had booked a Rapido and left home around 9 pm on September 13, saying he would return within an hour or two.

Police inquiry revealed that Parvez was facing a criminal case in Jammu and Kashmir. Also, a packet of white powder, possibly a drug, was found in Parvez's pocket. While the forensic report of the powder sample was yet to arrive, police suspect that Parvez was a drug dealer.

As the police team scanned footage from over 150 CCTVs and went through call records of several persons, it began to piece together the case, leading to

8 arrested so far, including a police constable; search on for three others for murder of 21-year-old law student

the arrest of eight persons, including a local police constable, and the unravelling of a drug peddling-extortion racket. One by one, the police arrested eight persons — Prayansh (30), Jai Srivastava alias Aman (24), Sahil Mishra (21), Bhupendra Vanshkar (23), Yash Shivhare alias Bittu (23), Arshil Khan (20),



Shani Namdev (24), and police constable Ashish Singh (30) — all residents of Jhansi.

The eight arrested accused — including constable Ashish Singh, posted at Prem Nagar police station — were allegedly members of a group that called itself 'Rashtra Bhakt', claiming to work against crime by apprehending offenders and handing them over to police. Investigations, however, revealed that the group instead extorted money from those involved in crime by threatening to expose them.

'Spent extra 15 months in jail': Punjab man says Indian Embassy ignored pleas, sought money in Saudi

Rajinderpal, a resident of Tarn Taran district, returned to India on August 31 after spending nearly 10 years away from home, including almost three years in a Saudi Arabian jail.

Jalandhar(Agency).

For Rajinderpal Singh, returning to Punjab after nearly three years in Saudi Arabia was not the end of his ordeal but the culmination of what he alleges was a prolonged struggle for help from Indian officials.

Rajinderpal, a resident of Tarn Taran district, returned to India on August 31 after spending nearly 10 years away from home, including almost three years in a Saudi Arabian jail. He has alleged that despite repeatedly seeking assistance from the Indian Embassy, he received little help during a prolonged period when he remained in jail even after completing his 18-month sentence.

Rajinderpal said he was sentenced after some objectionable drugs were allegedly recovered from the goods being transported in an another truck travelling along with his vehicle. He said they were three drivers driving different trucks, but he and another truck driver from Amritsar became part of the case because all three drivers were carrying the goods to be delivered and the documents for the consignment were in a single set covering the three trucks.

According to Rajinderpal, he was released from jail 15 months before he finally returned to India. However, when he

reached the airport to board his flight home, he was taken back to jail because his release had not been updated in the airport records. He alleged that the record should have been updated by the Indian Embassy and that it took nearly 15 months for the issue to be resolved, eventually enabling him to return home on August 31. He said that for months nothing had happened. His family approached Rajya Sabha member Parliament, Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal on December 8, 2025, seeking help for his



return. Seechewal took up the matter with the external affairs ministry and could make his and other youth from Amritsar return possible. Thus, he claimed, he spent around 15 additional months in jail after completing his sentence, with documentation and repatriation-related issues preventing his return. He alleged that his repeated pleas for assistance were not properly heard and that the response from embassy officials was indifferent.

Punjab's marginal farmers' 'gharelu bagichi' model goes beyond wheat and paddy

The sequence can begin in March with varieties of ber, mulberry and loquat, followed by peach, plum, Satluj Purple, Kala Amritsari and apple varieties. Anjeer, phalsa, grapes and chikoo extend the harvest season, followed by mango varieties such as Dussehri, Langra, Chausa, Amrapali and Ram Kela into October.

Chandigarh(Agency).

What if a small piece of land could provide a family with fresh fruit across the seasons while also opening up a new source of income for a marginal farmer? That is the idea behind 'gharelu bagichi', or a domestic fruit orchard, a model being promoted in Punjab by a marginal farmer and nursery grower Gurpreet Singh, 35, of village Gholia Khurd in Moga district, with guidance from his mentor Jagdev Singh, 62, of Pohir village in Ludhiana. The concept goes beyond simply planting a few fruit trees around a house. It is a planned orchard model in which the root stocks, crafted plants, size and direction of the



available land, the growth pattern of trees and the maturity period of different fruit varieties are considered together. The objective is to ensure that one fruit follows another through the year, giving families

access to fresh fruit at their home.

At the same time, the model has an economic dimension. Gurpreet has set up a nursery model under the guidance of his mentor beyond the conventional wheat-paddy cycle, produces the rootstocks, grafted plants and other planting material. Jagdev provides all consultancy what to plant, where to plant it and how to stagger fruit production, while Gurpreet, Together, they have helped establish hundreds of 'gharelu bagichis' and guided farmers and families in Punjab and elsewhere. "Planning an orchard, not just planting trees," is how Jagdev, an engineer by profession, describes the concept.

'Cleared SIR, voted': Woman moves High Court after husband detained over illegal Bangladesh immigrant suspicion

Kolkata (Agency). Thirty-four year-old Dejana Bibi last saw her husband on August 8 when the Raninagar police picked him up from Murshidabad late at night on suspicion of being an illegal Bangladeshi immigrant. Sahidul Sk, a farmer, lived with his wife and three children at Dubapara village in Murshidabad. His relatives said that his father lived there. According to his family, Sahidul has been in custody of the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer since August 8. "Till date we do not have any of the police documents after his detention. The police have not told us anything or



handed over any documents like the arrest memo or the seizure list," his legal counsel Advocate Bapi Mondal told The Indian Express.

Dejana Bibi has also moved the Calcutta High

Court alleging that her husband had been detained illegally, with the police alleging he is a Bangladeshi.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Dejana Bibi, a housewife said, "How did he suddenly become a Bangladeshi? During the SIR exercise, we had submitted all documents and they were cleared. We also cast our votes in the Assembly elections earlier this year. What does it mean that we are not citizens of this country? Now suddenly after elections, they detain him." She still remembers the night when the police had come to their doorstep.

Warning sounded from Peru about humid heat in Patna

Fifteen thousand kilometres from Patna, the sea off the coasts of Peru has been running hotter than it ought to. No one in India felt it happen and no one here caused it. Yet, on September 3, the World Meteorological Organization attached a probability to what it means for the rest of us—and that probability is the headline. The agency now puts the chance of El Niño lasting into February close to a certainty. It has issued these bulletins for half a century, but never before allowed itself that little hedging room. UN Secretary-General António Guterres said the event was “being supersized before our eyes”.

You can see why the forecasters are sure. The stretch of central Pacific that meteorologists watch most closely sat about 1.5°C above normal through late Spring; by mid-August some weekly readings had climbed to 2.6°C. More telling is what lies underneath. In places, water below the surface in July and early August ran 8°C warmer than it should, which is a way of saying the event has a great deal left to draw on. The WMO—which expects the crest around December, with consequences unspooling through the following year—has begun the biggest joint effort with national weather services it has ever attempted.

The dates are what India is most likely to misread. Warm oceans surrender heat to the air only gradually, which is why the year after a big El Niño usually turns out hotter than the year containing it; WMO officials have floated 2027 as a candidate for the warmest on record. Add a positive Indian Ocean Dipole, which forecasters expect to form, and our dangerous season is not the one behind us. It is the one that opens in March, about six months from now. The World Food Programme puts the additional people pushed into acute hunger by this event at roughly 5 crore. Well before March, a woman breaking stones at a worksite in Gaya will find her body cannot dump heat quickly enough to finish the day's quota, and nothing will suggest to her that the Pacific has anything to do with it. This is what a trans-boundary risk looks like: something that begins as physics in one hemisphere and ends as a missing wage and a missed school term in another.

Peruvian fishermen named El Niño because the warm current showed up near Christmas. They named it. We inherit it. What reaches her is not the heat we are used to talking about. A paper in the Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres led by S K Saha of the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology finds the productivity we stand to lose to humid heat has crossed a threshold, climbing steeply rather than gradually, and that India is now the worst-affected place on Earth. The physiology is blunt. Sweat cools us only when it evaporates; fill the air with moisture and the mechanism stops. Long before anyone nears a survivability limit, the loss is economic. Work slows. Output drops. Where the wage is tied to the piece, the wage goes too. Humid heat finds the people least able to withstand it, and the map of where it falls sits close to the map of where we are poorest. Around 49 crore Indians work informally, mostly in the open, with no enforceable claim to rest, water or shade. The slower harm does the greater damage: diets thin out, children stop turning up at school, money meant for food goes on medicine and cooling. Those happen to be the things the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) measures. It is also sitting directly in the path of poverty alleviation: states along the Gangetic humid-heat belt depend on outdoor manual work and have less access to cooling than anywhere else in India. The places that climbed out fastest are the places heat can most easily pull back down.

Power shift ails science agencies

This trend could lead to the hollowing out of expertise and talent in public-funded R&D bodies

A recent statement by Pawan Goenka, chairperson of IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre), about the future of India's space programme caused a controversy. In an unprecedented move, associations of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists expressed their concerns. Though both Goenka and ISRO promptly clarified the statement and denied any plans for privatisation of the space agency, the episode points to critical policy gaps. It has deep implications not just for ISRO but for all scientific agencies and the overall direction of research and development (R&D) in India.

IN-SPACe is an anachronism created by the Central government without taking into confidence the scientific leadership and community, as is evident from the letter written by nine staff unions on September 4. IN-SPACe was set up about five years ago, but its role is still unclear and not backed by any statutory provisions. The government and ISRO leaders have repeatedly described it as “an enabler and a regulator”. While its enabling role as a single-window point for startups is obvious, calling it a regulator is misleading. The government pushed private sector entry without a legally binding regulatory framework. Space activities involve a plethora of international obligations and regulations, ranging from allocation of orbital slots for satellites to liability and insurance in the case of accidents on Earth or in orbit. A proper regulatory system, therefore, is a must. ISRO first proposed a space law in 2015, and while deliberations were ongoing, the government announced a new space policy in 2023, forming IN-SPACe.

The space Bill was finally ready in 2025, to provide for “a comprehensive legal framework for regulating private space activities”. There are other issues with IN-SPACe. It is categorised as an autonomous centre working under the Department of Space (DoS), which is also the administrative ministry for ISRO. If IN-SPACe is to act as a regulator, there is an inherent conflict of interest here because the ISRO chairperson is also the DoS Secretary. Suppose IN-SPACe gets legal authority under the proposed space law to be a regulator, can it continue to be a facilitator and enabler too (as it does now)?

It is a cardinal principle that regulation and facilitation cannot go hand in hand. That's why regulatory functions of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) were taken away, and a statutory Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was formed when private players were allowed to operate in the 1990s. While creating IN-SPACe, the government placed it on a par with ISRO in a way. It is headed by a chairperson, just like



ISRO, while other autonomous bodies of DoS are helmed by directors. The result is two power centres, both headed by chairpersons, at least in public perception. The IN-SPACe chairperson's statements relating to broader space policy and direction should be seen in this context. This anachronism was generated through hurried policy changes. Such changes undermined a time-tested multi-tiered policymaking framework that existed since the inception of ISRO. At the top is the policymaking body, the Space Commission, then DoS as the administrative ministry and ISRO as the scientific and implementation agency. If private sector facilitation is all that IN-SPACe is doing, then ISRO and its two commercial arms — Antrix Corporation and New Space India Limited — were better placed to do that with their cumulative experience of interfacing with the private sector, gained over the past four decades. Private sector engagement and technology transfer are functions that the three agencies have handled internally all along.

This mandate could have been easily expanded to include organising private access to ISRO facilities. Even now, all that IN-SPACe is handling is the front-end of this facilitation; the execution is done by ISRO. Other scientific agencies are witnessing a power shift similar to that seen in ISRO. The Department of Science and Technology (DST), which was the nodal agency for scientific research and funded projects through the Science and Engineering Research Board, has lost its primacy with the setting up of a new body, the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF),

whose Governing Council is chaired by the Prime Minister. The ANRF has been given massive outlays — Rs 50,000 crore over five years for public-funded research and Rs 1 lakh crore over six years for the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund exclusively for the private sector.

The DST will have a nominal role in deciding how this money is spent or in steering the course of R&D. The Executive Council of the ANRF provides overall direction for the RDI scheme, with the DST merely being an implementation agency. The power to make changes in the scope or selection of sectors or type of projects lies with the Empowered Group of Secretaries chaired by the Cabinet Secretary.

A generalist administrator would thus decide the course of R&D, sidelining the expertise of a scientific and technical agency (DST). In fact, the website of the RDI fund describes DST as an “Independent Business Unit of ANRF”. Its job is only to get the funds from the government and funnel them to the ANRF. A similar move is underway to undermine the powers of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Instead of medical scientists and public health specialists guiding health research, the national health research agenda will now be set by a centralised National Health Research Stewardship Committee headed by the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) and having bureaucrats as members. The Department of Health Research will act as the implementing agency, and the ICMR will be at the last tier as the in-charge of “scientific and technical execution.”

Infighting following Tata Sons meet bodes ill for Group, economy

The group now stares at a longer period of ambiguity as regulatory pressure to go public grows

The cloud of uncertainty hanging over India's biggest business conglomerate just got darker as more of the infighting within the Tata Group tumbled out in the open. Even as the Tata Sons board on Thursday decided to reappoint N Chandrasekaran to the chair for a fresh five-year term—raising hopes of a resolution to the leadership issue—Tata Trusts led by Noel Tata termed the appointment illegal according to the company's Articles of Association. Earlier on Thursday, the board also went against Noel's wishes while giving the go-ahead for Tata Sons' stock listing. Four of the six board members voted in favour of both proposals. Noel voted against, while another Tata Trusts nominee, Venu Srinivasan, voted in favour. There is, however, another twist in this long-running chamber drama. Tata Sons' Articles of Association mandate that no decision can be taken by the board without the backing of all nominees from Sir Dorabji Tata Trusts and Sir Ratan Tata Trusts.



Also, these decisions will have to be ratified by the annual shareholders' meeting of Tata Sons, where the trusts can call the shots. For themselves, the trusts made no bones about their unhappiness over the day's events. They stated that the board could not lawfully hold a meeting or pass a

resolution on the chairman's appointment or reappointment unless both their nominee directors voted in favour. The group now stares at a longer period of ambiguity as regulatory pressure to go public grows. The Tata Trusts vehemently oppose the listing of Tata Sons, which would bring on greater scrutiny from shareholders and regulators. A listing also means the trusts would have to loosen their grip over the \$230-billion business empire. With the RBI rejecting the trusts' last-ditch attempt to avoid Tata Sons' listing, the only option for the group is a legal battle with the regulator. The RBI has already filed a caveat in the Bombay High Court anticipating that the Tatas may move court against its directive.

The country can ill afford to see the Tata Group marred by infighting. It's not only bad optics for the company, but the situation is harmful for the broader economy in which the Tatas are at the forefront of India's strategic sectors such as semiconductors, defence, software and electronics.

The ugly business of looking good

India's personal grooming market is growing faster than the global average. Driving the boom are Gen Z shoppers, who increasingly see beauty as self-care. But the industry is known for feeding off insecurities to sell unsafe products. Users and regulators must demand greater transparency

Haircuts are in the news for many reasons. One category is that used in legalese—which involves settling loans for a fraction of the original amount—while the other is just letting the comb and shears do their job on your head. Both seem to involve steep costs. Recently, the amount of money spent on personal grooming by a head of State and his spouse has made headlines, inviting reactions ranging from outrage to exasperation. A few months ago, the Supreme Court awarded damages of ₹25 lakh for a botched-up haircut that the litigant claimed had affected her professional opportunities. Spending on care of hair, face, skin, nails and fragrances is booming. And there is a growing stack of products, procedures and treatments designed to meet consumer demand. The cosmetic industry in India, valued at approximately \$21 billion, is thriving as it reaches its demographic target through social media and e-commerce platforms, selling tinted hopes. The Covid era witnessed a spurt in the growth of the cosmetic industry. One of the possible reasons is said to be the rise in online meetings, with people seeing themselves longer on screens than they ever would in a mirror. The awareness of the advantages of improved appearances was aided by social media. The cosmetic industry also began to spread its reach to smaller cities and towns. Access to skincare hacks and information regarding trends across the globe, from South Korea to Europe, resulted in adoption of beauty standards that broadened and deepened markets. This contributed to an increase in spending by Gen Z shoppers who tend to see beauty as a form of self-care and not merely as an aspiration. This was a distinct shift in attitude from the earlier generations where use of cosmetics was confined to certain

professions or particular occasions. With greater access to cosmetic products, a response to ‘lookism’ in the workplace, where discrimination based on appearances has long prevailed, has shaped up. In her book Survival of the Prettiest: The Science of Beauty, American psychologist Nancy Etcoff highlights the preposition that “good looks are a woman's most fungible asset”. This, however, cuts across genders. The rise in brands that focus on grooming products for men, is an indication of the trend. The youth today seek to use cosmetics to enhance their appearance and increase their transactional opportunities in the workplace and social lives. It is certainly a valid personal choice. It is this demand that the cosmetic industry has managed to leverage for profits. The delivery of personal care services is powered by relentless marketing, with private equity players also in the field for a slice of the pie. Over the years, the presence of toxic ingredients like lead and mercury in some make-up products, and parabens and sulfates in shampoos have been flagged. Some of the ingredients used by global brands in their products have come under the scanner for carcinogenic properties. This has led to some products being banned in certain countries. The irony is that something banned in one jurisdiction may be sold in another. There is no uniform regulation across nations regarding the listing of ingredients on the packaging. For instance, phthalates may get blended into a proprietary formulation and



consumers remain in the dark about their harmful consequences. The lack of transparency and absence of adequate research on products shipped worldwide is one of the dodgiest practices of global cosmetic giants. Amid this, the Indian cosmetic market's growth is estimated to be outpacing the global average due to the country's large cohort of young people and increase in disposable incomes.

Add to this the new specialised products for older age groups and the rise of influencers and social media marketing. Access to cosmetic surgery, facial fillers, injectables and hair transplant has made transformation and curating of looks more precisely possible than ever

and naturopathy and end up burning a hole in the consumer's pocket. The cosmetic industry feeds off the insecurities of people about their appearance. Even the effort required to look ‘natural’ or ‘clean’ can be a demanding process requiring a number of expensive products. As a consequence, there is an emerging trend of counter-awareness that embraces bodily imperfections. This seeks to project authenticity instead of chasing somebody else's idea of beauty. The cosmetic industry is known to flourish even during recession cycles. That's one of the reasons it should try doubly hard to back up claims with data and adopt transparently ethical practices.



Wall clocks are an inexpensive way to enhance the decor of any room...

Wall clocks may sound boring as decorative pieces but if selected with care they can add more meaning and character to the decor of your house. There are people who are passionate about this and take real pains to search for the perfect clock to match the interior of a home and most of the times, when used intelligently, they add an attractive touch to your house.

"I love collecting clocks of different kinds. They fascinate me. Every room in my house has a different kind of clock on its walls," says singer, Abhijeet Bhattacharya. Though there are some that have been gifted to him by his admirers and friends, most of them have been personally picked. They are indeed truly intriguing. "Whenever I go abroad I pick up ones that look interesting," he elaborates. Clocks that have a period look and those that are contemporary have both found a place in his house.

Decorative wall clocks come in many varieties and are easily available says interior designer Sheetal. Some are handcrafted and made of wood; there are others that are made up of metal, or plastic and acrylic. Precious metals like silver are also used. "The most important thing to remember when decorating with wall-clocks is to choose something that you feel represents you and in some way enhances the decor of your room," says Hitesh Somaiya, who has used clocks in interesting patterns to decorate walls. Hanging a wall-clock is pretty much like hanging a picture or a painting in a room. It is part of the overall decor. Since wall-clocks are generally inexpensive, you could actually have a collection of them. One of the ways to decorate with wall-clocks is to hang several similar ones in a row, as if they were an art gallery. You can set the clock to display real-time of some popular city in another part of the world. "My sons live abroad and I have placed three

clocks showing the time of Chicago, London and India in one single row," says Chandana Sengupta, an artist who has herself designed her Bandra home. Placing a dark colored wall-clock on a pristine white or light coloured wall is an eye-catching option. One of the oldest types of wall clocks are the cuckoo clocks and their timelessness will never go out of style. Even today, think wall-clocks and somewhere the thought of a cuckoo clock is bound to cross your mind. Most of these clocks are made either in the shape of a birdhouse or chalet. They have a small mechanical cuckoo bird pop out of a door on the hour to accompany the chirping noises. A cuckoo clock is among the most unusual type of clocks. A majority of them are pendulum clocks that give the time by striking the hour, using whistles that often sound exactly like the call of the cuckoo bird. Another kind of wall-clock that you can consider are those that come equipped with front-opening beveled

glass doors, polished brass lyre pendulums, and are quartz-driven. These clocks are generally key-wound with chime silence options. Some of the many finishes available are cherry, oak, mahogany, and even leather. However, for a more stylish touch, go in for antique wall clocks. Many antique wall clocks are pendulum operated and some are set in picture frames. Of late, even eclectic art deco with motifs of the sun, moon, stars, and other new age designs are becoming popular. While we are at interesting ideas for the home, why should the kitchen be left behind? So, try out kitchen wall clocks as well! There's again a large variety of designs to choose from — fresh fruits, roosters, etc. Your kitchen clock will be a great addition to your kitchen and will help to enhance an inviting, relaxing atmosphere. For the kids room especially, you can opt for neon wall clocks. Not only are they a great way to add extra light, they are also fun and funky.

Clocks to enhance Home decor

Quick tips to keep your kitchen clean



Begin by cleaning your kitchen counters. If you don't use your juicer everyday, the ideal things is to stash it away somewhere out of sight and away from your kitchen counter. Do away with everything that you think you are not going to use in the next couple of days. Then, spray liquid cleaner and wipe the counter clean. Clean your gas stove/hob or oven. Make sure all the grime and the spills are wiped clean. Next, clean your refrigerator. Check what the leftovers are discard them. Find out which of the bottles are almost empty, or are too old. Remove the shelves and clean them. Clean the outside as well as the inside of the fridge with a soft cloth. Make sure your sink is free of clutter. Wash and stack away your dishes and utensils. clean the sink once it is clutter-free. Remove stubborn stains. Finish by rubbing it dry. Clean the floor of your kitchen last. Pick all the debris that you had thrown onto the floor from the counter top and the over and the toaster etc.

Beginners guide to Bonsai

You can make your bonsai into master pieces provided you follow the right techniques. We list down the basics of bonsai.



1. Anyone with the interest and little space for growing plants, even on a window-sill or balcony can build and enjoy Bonsai collection.
2. The 3 main techniques to grow your own Bonsai plants are growing, pruning and shaping.
Growing- select a tree from a nursery which has a thick trunk. take a small ceramic container to plant the bonsai - usually the depth of the pot should be equal to the thickness of the trunk of the plant. Place a plastic net at the base of the container, so that water can drain out. Now add the specially prepared bonsai soil made of garden soil, cow manure, broken brick pieces, sand and organic manure (available in the market). Trim 1/2 to 1/3rd pf the existing roots of the plant. leaving most if the thin white roots (known as feeder roots) and some old thick roots. Plant the tree into the pot.
NOTE- materials matter, so if the soil good, the bonsai will take few months or even a year to grow, and two years for fruits to flower
Pruning: Generally, you have to prune the roots and the foliage. Pruning bonsais is one of the more enjoyable aspects of growing bonsais.
Pruning roots: Due to small containers, bonsai roots are stunted in growth. By pruning roots, you will ensure that there is space for the new roots to grow, which is critical for the health and growth of the bonsai. Prune roots twice a year and change the soil when it's done.
Pruning Foliage: This is vital for aesthetic purposes. Workout a specific design in the mind for your tree and shape it into the form you desire. Removing dead leaves help keep it healthy and beautiful.
Shaping: To create a desired shape, you can use a wire (copper wires are the best) to assist the branches to grow as per your design. Make sure that the wire is of the right thickness and does not break the branches. Hold the branch you are wiring in both hands and carefully wind the wire around it.
3. Select the plants which can be easily trimmed and shaped, and ones with a rough bark.
4. For the flower and fruit bonsais, four to five hours of direct sunlight is essential.
5. Avoid too much of watering. Alternate days are good enough.
6. Ready-made bonsais are available. Plant them into containers with the given steps
7. Bonsais are kept indoors, but a suitable place is on the window sill, balcony, terrace or a garden shelf. Avoid keeping them in an A/C room for long.
8. Although Bonsai trees can be grown from seeds , more developed material is already available. Seedlings, cuttings or young trees with smaller leaves are usually preferred.

How to make baubles at home



A month more to Christmas and preparations have already begun. Making your own baubles can be fun. Make as many as you can before the D-Day and get the Christmassy feel at home...
You will need:
Ping-pong balls (table tennis balls) Red nail paint Gold sparkler tube A tube of quick fix A carpet needle or large safety pin A few meters of gold thread
Method:
-Paint the ping-pong ball with the nail paint. This can be tricky. Hold it with the tips of your thumb, forefinger and middle finger and paint one side of it. -Let it dry. Now paint the other side. You will need an even coat and for that you need to make sure that your nail paint is fresh, not dry and clumpy. Let it dry completely.
-Now, pierce your carpet needle or safety pin to make a tiny hole on one side of the ping-pong ball. Take a four-inch piece of the gold thread, fold it in half. -Apply quick-fix on the tips and push it into the tiny hole. Hold. Let it stick to the ball. If needed apply a dot of quick-fix solution,



sealing the hole with the thread.
-The next step is all about your creativity — you can use your gold sparkler tube to create any design you like on your red bauble. For the gold star shown in the picture put a dot of your gold sparkler on the ball and then with the help of the blunt end of the needle, give six tiny strokes pulling out the paint from the centre to form a six-pointed star.-You can also stick tiny mirrors in a pattern and make your bauble look pretty.

Grow your own kitchen Garden



While space is a problem in the city, planting a few vegetables, fruits or just herbs on your kitchen window sill or in your balcony will not only increase the aesthetic value, but also provide you with healthy and fresh ingredients for your meals. With these simple steps, you can grow your own kitchen garden.

Plan your site
Opt for the sunniest spot in your house, one where you get at least six hours of sunlight daily, to grow the plants. Ideally, choose a spot that is nearest to your kitchen.

With vegetable prices hitting the roof, now would be a good time to start your own kitchen garden.

Choose your veggies

It is best to plant fruits and vegetables that you like to eat and consume on a regular basis. Also, go for veggies that are quick to grow and don't require much space. Salad garden is a good option as lettuce, radish and other greens require lesser

maintenance and grow quickly.

Plant herbs, too

Planting herbs in your garden is a good option as their freshly plucked leaves add flavour to your meals. The most popular herbs include curry leaf, basil, thyme, rosemary, mint and parsley.

Select proper containers

While investing in earthen pots is a good option for your plants, you can also recycle and reuse plastic bottles, buckets or bathtubs to grow vegetables. Take care while planting. You can buy seedlings at nurseries. However, plant them carefully, without harming the tender roots. You can also grow seeds that you might have scooped out of the veggies.

Maintain your garden

Keep a regular check on your garden to prevent breeding of insects. Go for 'companion gardening', like, planting garlic between two tomato plants.

Bright walls not needed for a bright home

Neutral colours chiefly include whites, beiges, creams, pale yellows and pale pinks. But just because you've chosen to go safe with your wall colours doesn't mean your home has to be dull and boring.

Colours are an important aspect of interior decoration as they add to the aesthetics of the decor. If used correctly, they go a long way in enhancing the mood of a room. So here's how you can tastefully include splashes of colour in your home and thus, increase its vibrancy:

Art on the walls

Art is basically a beautiful blend of a lot of different colours and it's undoubtedly one of the best ways to incorporate splashes of amazing colours onto plain walls. If the room is big, make sure the size of the art work is also big so that it has the desired effect. Alternatively, you can also use a number of small pieces in a formation. And when we say art, we don't mean only painting. Photographs, art work by kids, jigsaw puzzles, picture collages are also a part and parcel of art. You can have a range of family pictures blown up, framed and hung on the wall or some nice art work done by your kid at his/her school project.

Cushion-me-red

Most people tend to opt for furniture in muted colours and for all good reasons. Most furniture pieces are permanent fixtures in homes and getting them in sober colours makes it easier to blend them with the decor or colour scheme when one decides to go in for a new look. But having sober coloured furniture doesn't mean you can't have fun with colours. This is where cushions come in. Today, you can get cushions in a range of sizes and cushion covers in an array of colours, designs and patterns, be it shiny, or with a mural on the them or with frills on the side. All you need to do is indulge your creative side as you can change colours and arrangements as frequently as you choose to.

Lamp shades

Available in a range of materials including paper, fabrics, glass, ceramic, plastic and metal, lamp shades work beautifully to bring those much needed splashes of colour into a room. In fact, their beauty can be appreciated when the lamp is lit and the colours spread around the room. Intricately worked



Walls painted in a range of bright and happening colours may be the hottest trend in the world of home painting, but there are many who prefer to stick to neutral colours



handicraft lamp shades that are easily available at handicraft exhibitions and handloom stores are a raging trend in home decor.

Plants, flowers

Greenery and flowers are the perfect option to infuse a room with a natural burst of colours. But if you're one of those who detests changing flower vases or is nervous about handling live plants, the artificial variety offers as much, if not more, range that you can use to beautifully decorate your home. The good part of the artificial variety is that apart from dusting them and washing them once in a while, you don't have to fuss over their care and upkeep and can instead concentrate on other important chores.

Rugs, carpets

Last but not the least, one good way to add an element of colour in a room is by using brightly coloured floor rugs and carpets. While most carpets still come in relatively sober colour schemes predominantly maroons, mocha browns, olive greens and dark blue, when it comes to floor rugs, they are available in a range of interesting colours and patterns. Also, rugs are far less hassle free than carpets when it comes to care and upkeep.

Post a comment

Accessorise your room and be happy



Do your accessories make you happy or are they there because you have had them forever? Go through every single thing you consider an accessory and decide why you have it.

If it accents the colours in the room, if it has fond memories connected with it, if it works with your room, then keep it. If it does nothing for the room and is not an emotional attachment, get rid of it! There are so many new things out there which will add punch to your rooms, that changing accessories may be all you need to update your look.

New, updated picture frames for your favourite photos, fresh flowers for those tired arrangements, new lampshades, new candles; chenille throws to replace old worn ones, even new slippers! For those who are really tired of the look as they scan their homes, try replacing small

furniture pieces like coffee tables, end tables, and some lamps. It is amazing how much these touches can update and refresh a look. You don't have to spend a fortune either. Buy used pieces and repaint them "your way". Buy unfinished pieces and stain them or dye them! And the colour choices are endless.

Now look at your linens. Do they look tired and boring? I can fall in love with a great comforter and a few years later, I am totally bored with it. Tastes change. You change.

So change things around you to reflect the changes. Find a new comforter that makes your heart sing. And your bedroom! A single comforter goes a long way. And while you are at it, treat yourself to some luxury linens.

Nothing feels better than high thread count sheets. Yummy! Without breaking the bank, you can add and subtract some accessories to give your home a new fresh look.

Art for your home

They can make or break your home decor. Here is all you need to know about framing your artwork...



Artwork adds the final decorative touch to every room in your home. A beautifully decorated room looks unfinished without any artwork on the walls. Yet, the most beautiful paintings, prints and, yes, even mirrors will detract from the overall look if the wrong frames are used.

When you are trying to decide what types of frames to select to enhance your artwork, consider the following points; they will make your selection process easier and the result will flatter your home.

Check out your furniture

Look at the furniture and other details in the space to decide what type of frame will work with what you already have. Don't forget to check out the moldings, door frames, architectural details window frames and baseboards already present.

Get the right colour

Determine which colours predominate in your home. Does one colour seem to stand out? You may choose to play up this colour by having your art matted in a similar shade or the frame finished in a like hue. For a dramatic effect, try using a complimentary colour to make your artwork stand out and take centre stage, if that is the look you are striving for.

Revamp the frames

If you already possess artwork that is framed in various styles, why not try painting the frames in the same colour or revamping them in the same type of stain or finish? The result will provide visual harmony, without your having to spend a lot of money on framing. Also, the result will be more interesting than if you have the same molding used for all the frames. Although the end results will provide a unified look, it may be a bit too boring or conservative.

What's your style

If one style predominates

in your home, contemporary, for example, a good framing choice may be to use an ornate gilded-style molding. The contrast will make your artwork stand out and will draw attention to the furniture and other decorative accessories in your home.

Frames that enhance your art

Choose frames that enhance your artwork. Note the size and scale of the picture, painting or other piece that you wish to hang. If you have trouble deciding what type of frame is best suited to your art, consult with a local art gallery or framing shop. These professionals are adept at choosing the correct frame and matting for your artwork.

Style for a series

If you are framing series or pairs of artwork, try to select the same style of molding for all pieces. This will unify the look of the art, as well as avoid visual confusion in your home.

Light right

Notice the type of light in your room. Some rooms are naturally dark, so gilded or gold-toned frames may be an excellent choice as they tend to reflect light, making the artwork more visible.

Keep in mind

Avoid trendy styles in frames. Like all other types of home accessories, frames reflect current decorating trends. Try to select frames that will not be out of vogue in five or six years. Good quality framing is worthwhile and an excellent investment!

Art for your homes

When you are choosing artwork for your house, try not to be overambitious. Yes, we all like to have the best of everything, but remember that your home needs to have a theme. Try not to make it too cluttered. Don't try mixing a little bit of everything, for you may just end up living in a mess.

Naxal commander carrying Rs 30 lakh bounty gunned down in Varanasi encounter

A Naxal commander carrying a Rs 30 lakh bounty was killed in an encounter with the UP ATS and Ramnagar police in Varanasi. Brijesh Ganju, who belonged to Jharkhand, was intercepted by a police team, which shot him dead during the encounter.

Delhi. (Agency)

A Naxal commander carrying a bounty of Rs 30 lakh was killed during an encounter with the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) and police near Varanasi on Sunday, officials said. The victim was identified as Brijesh Ganju alias Gopal Singh Bhokta, a resident of Jharkhand's Chatra district and commander of the Third Presentation Committee (TPC). The TPC is the splinter group that emerged from the CPI (Maoist) in Jharkhand. According to police, the encounter occurred near Lanka Maidan in Ramnagar, which is adjacent to Varanasi. Ganju was travelling towards Mughalsarai when a police team



attempted to stop him.

Police said Ganju opened fire at the team, following which an exchange of fire



broke out. He sustained bullet injuries during the encounter and was rushed to a hospital, where doctors declared him

dead. A reward of Rs 25 lakh had been announced by the Jharkhand government for information leading to Ganju's arrest, while the National Investigation Agency (NIA) had announced an additional reward of Rs 5 lakh. The combined bounty on the Naxalite commander was therefore Rs 30 lakh.

During the exchange of fire, bullets also hit the bulletproof jackets of UP ATS Deputy Superintendent of Police Vipin Rai and Head Constable Nitin Krishna, police said. Both officers were saved due to their bulletproof gear.

Ganju, who was wanted in connection with Naxal activities, was being pursued by security agencies in connection with his role as a commander of the TPC, a Naxal group active in Jharkhand.

ABVP wins 3 of 4 DUSU posts, Independent Shokeen takes VP

Delhi. (Agency)

The ABVP won three of the four central panel posts in the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections on Saturday, but an Independent candidate, former NSUI member Deepanshu Shokeen, upset the contest for vice-president's chair, winning by more than 13,000 votes. Yash Dabas won the president's chair, Riya Chhawdi was elected secretary and Lakshya Raj Singh won the joint secretary's chair. Shokeen, who contested as an Independent after not receiving an NSUI ticket, polled 30,615 votes to defeat ABVP's Ishu Maurya, who secured 16,910 votes.

The result marked the first time since 2015 that the NSUI failed to win a seat on the DUSU central panel. The ABVP had last swept all four posts in 2014 and 2015 polls.

Shokeen's win marks a rare victory on the DUSU central panel, where non-party candidates have seldom broken through. The last Independent candidate victory came in 2009, when Manoj Choudhary won the DUSU presidency. Before that, Rajiv Goswami had won the president's post in 1991. The win also makes him the first Independent candidate in the last two decades to capture the vice-president's chair.

The presidential contest remained close through much of the counting. NSUI's Vijay Shankar Meena led Dabas by one vote after the ninth round – 10,888 to 10,887. His lead increased to 338 votes after the 11th round, but by the 14th round the difference had narrowed to one vote again, with Meena on 16,107 and Dabas on 16,106.

Dabas eventually pulled ahead in the final rounds and won with 24,576 votes, defeating Meena by 2,053 votes. Left alliance candidate Ananya Raturi polled 5,377 votes. The joint secretary's contest was also closely fought. Samajwadi Chhatra Sabha candidate Vishesh Yadav was leading after the seventh round with 6,165 votes, followed by ABVP's Singh with 5,386 and NSUI's Gopal Choudhary with 5,339. Even after the 17th round, Yadav remained narrowly ahead – 13,346 votes to Singh's 13,342.

Delhi Police head constable, wife found dead inside Narela flat

Delhi. (Agency)

A Delhi Police head constable allegedly shot dead his wife before hanging himself in Outer North Delhi's Narela on Saturday. DCP Sobhit D Saxena identified the deceased as Head Constable Monu, around 40, posted in North District, and his 35-year-old wife, Meenu. Police said they are probing, among other reasons, a domestic row that turned fatal. "The children have said



that when they left home, their parents were fighting over cooking scrambled eggs... The exact manner in which the crime was committed and the motive behind the crime would only be clear after postmortem reports come in," an officer said.

The couple is survived by two children, a 13-year-old girl and an 11-year-old boy, who were not home when the incident took place, police said.

"When the children returned home, they found the door locked from inside. After their knocks went unanswered, neighbours gathered at the spot. They looked inside a window to find the father hanging and the mother lying in a pool of blood," the officer said. The DCP said police received a PCR call about the incident around 1 pm. "Inside the flat, two persons were found dead in the same room," he added.

Police said prima facie it looks like a case of suspected murder and suicide. The bodies have been shifted to Raja Harish Chandra Hospital for postmortem examination.

Railways clears Kavach 4.0 rollout, signalling and safety projects worth Rs 736 crore

The Railway Ministry has cleared Kavach 4.0 and other infrastructure projects across four railway sections. The approvals aim to improve safety, signalling capacity and smoother rail-linked road movement.

Delhi. (Agency)

Indian Railways has approved a set of infrastructure and safety projects across different railway divisions, including the installation of the automatic train protection system Kavach 4.0, electronic interlocking works, an electric traction upgrade and the construction of a road overbridge. The Railway Ministry said the projects are aimed at improving operational efficiency and passenger safety. The approved works cover the Lucknow Division of North Eastern Railway, the Solapur Division of Central Railway, the Savalyapuram-Guntur section of South Coast Railway and the Udhna-Ukai Songadh section of Western Railway. According to a

Railway Ministry press statement, the projects involve a combined outlay running into several hundred crore rupees.

The ministry approved the



indigenously developed automatic train protection system, Kavach Version 4.0, for 607.7 route kilometres in the Lucknow Division of North Eastern Railway at a total cost of Rs

252 crore. It said the project will extend Kavach 4.0 coverage across the identified balance sections of the division, strengthening the safety infrastructure available for train operations.

Kavach helps prevent trains from overshooting red signals by automatically applying brakes when required and supports safer train movement by monitoring train operations. Officials added that the ministry has also decided to upgrade the electric traction system from 1x25 kV to 2x25 kV on the 73-route-kilometre Savalyapuram-Guntur section of South Coast Railway at a total cost of Rs 142 crore. "Covering 146 track kilometres, the project will strengthen the electric traction infrastructure and enhance its capacity to support growing

With over 23K votes, NOTA emerges silent game-changer

With a staggering total of 23,942 votes polled across the four main posts, NOTA emerged as a powerful voice of discontent among University of Delhi students.

Delhi. (Agency)

While the spotlight of the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) remained on the battle between A B V P, N S U I, Independent candidates and the Left alliance (SFI-AISA), an unexpected force quietly made its presence felt: the None of the Above (NOTA) option. With a staggering total of 23,942 votes polled across the four main posts, NOTA emerged as a powerful voice of discontent among University of Delhi students. Many students stated

that they voted for NOTA just to prove that muscle and money power are not



everything. Last year, 23,674 students had voted for NOTA. This year, for the post of Vice-President, 4,359 NOTA

votes were polled. The highest NOTA count was for the Secretary post (7,884), followed closely by Joint Secretary (7,389), while for the post of President, as many as 4,359 students voted for NOTA.

In some posts, the None of the Above count exceeded the votes of major candidates from alliances like SFI-AISA and even other contenders. For instance, in the Joint Secretary post, NOTA votes were higher than what B. Parajit from the SFI-AISA alliance secured, while in the Secretary post, the NOTA votes were more than what ASAP's Pankaj Kumar secured.

Man dies after posting death note on WhatsApp

Delhi. (Agency)

A 64-year-old man was killed early Saturday after a fire broke out at the ground floor of a building following an LPG cylinder blast in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar. Police said the deceased had allegedly shared a suicide note on WhatsApp and uploaded a video before the incident.

According to the fire department, a call about the blaze was received at 3.27 am, following which four fire engines were rushed to Sahapura in Tilak Nagar. The fire was brought under control around 4.30 am.

A senior police officer said a male body was found in a severely burnt condition inside the premises after the fire was doused. The deceased was identified as Vijay, who had been living alone in the rented accommodation for the last five years.

He was a divorcee and used to create and upload vlogs on YouTube, the officer said. During the preliminary inquiry, police found



that Vijay had allegedly shared a suicide note on WhatsApp and uploaded a video on YouTube in which he stated that it was his last video. The fire department's preliminary assessment suggested that the blaze may have followed a cylinder blast. A crime team and FSL team were called to inspect the spot. The body has been preserved at DDU Hospital for post-mortem examination. Further investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause, police said.

A resident said residents were asleep when they heard a loud blast. "Our family members woke us up and told us to get up quickly, thinking that an earthquake had occurred. But when we looked outside, we realised that a fire had broken out in the house next to ours," he said. Ankit, who lived on the upper floor, said he woke up after hearing an explosion. Residents initially suspected an electrical fault or AC blast but later saw flames.

Centre appoints 7 judges to Delhi HC after SC Collegium recommends 8 names

Delhi. (Agency)

The Centre on Saturday notified the appointment of seven new judges to the Delhi High Court. With the new appointments, the number of judges in the High Court, which has 60 sanctioned posts, goes up to 50.

This comes after the Supreme Court collegium on September 10 had recommended to the Centre the names of eight judicial officers for appointment to the Delhi High Court. Four judges in the Delhi High Court are due to retire in the coming months. While Justice CS Sudha is due to retire in October, Justice Anil Kshetarpal in November, Justices Girish Kathpalia and Manoj Jain retire later this year. Justice V Kameswar Rao, the second senior-most judge of the Delhi High

Court, was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Patna High Court earlier this month.

On Saturday, the Law Ministry notified the appointments of the seven judges, who are being elevated to High Court judgeship from the district judiciary services' cadre. "In exercise of the power conferred by the Constitution of India, after consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the President is pleased to appoint the following Judicial Officers as Judges/Additional Judges in the High Courts," the notification stated. Among those appointed for the Delhi HC are

Justices Nivedita Sharma and Nisha Sahay Saxena, who have been appointed as permanent judges.



Five others, who have been appointed as additional judges, are Justices Sanjay Sharma, Bharat Parashar, Aditi Choudhary, Arun Bhardwaj and Dinesh

Bhatt. Justice Bharadwaj is the incumbent Registrar General at the Delhi HC while Justice Parashar is the incumbent Secretary General of the Supreme Court.

The SC Collegium had recommended the name of another judicial officer, Gurvinder Pal Singh, who is presently the principal district and sessions judge at Rohini courts complex, for appointment to the High Court. It is learnt that the eight names were recommended by the Delhi High Court on the administrative side in April. The SC Collegium further recommended the elevation of the eight judicial officers.

NMDC looks to hit 60 MT iron ore production mark this fiscal: Chairman

New Delhi. (Agency)

NMDC is working on strategies to achieve the 60 MT iron ore production mark this fiscal to meet growing demand from domestic steelmakers for the key raw material, its Chairman Amitava Mukherjee said. Aligned with the National Steel Policy 2017, which targets an installed domestic steelmaking capacity of 300 MT by 2030-31, NMDC, India's largest iron ore producer, aims to scale its output to 100 MT during the period.

"Having crossed the 50 MT milestone in FY2026, NMDC is now aggressively executing a production ramp-up plan to reach 60 MTPA from existing iron ore mines, complemented by NMDC-CMDC Limited (NCL) joint venture assets this fiscal, which would be a rise of around 20 per cent year-on-year," the top company official said in an interaction. Mukherjee shared that the company has already applied for environmental clearances (ECs) for some deposits with the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

On a question related to the 100 MT production goal, Mukherjee said, "We are progressing well. We are on track, and will definitely achieve it". Mine-related infrastructure is being built at some places, while at some deposits they are already operational. For enhancing the capacity of existing mines, bids have been invited from interested parties to develop the infrastructure, including setting up belt conveying systems and crushers and breakers, among others.

NMDC operates four major highly mechanised iron ore mining complexes in India spread across Chhattisgarh (Bailadila sector) and Karnataka (Donimalai sector). Under the Ministry of Steel, Hyderabad-based NMDC alone caters to the country's 20 per cent need of iron ore.

Despite a 2025 advisory against cough syrups for very young children, prescribing continued; India now weighs a red warning on bottles saying they should not be used in children under 4

New Delhi. (Agency)

The use of cough syrups for children under the age of four continues despite the drug regulator's guidelines. Now, India's drug regulator is examining a proposal to make changes to cough syrup labels to discourage their use in children under four years of age. The proposed changes include a visual showing school-age children on the packaging, intended to make it clear that the medicine is meant for older children rather than infants and toddlers. The proposal comes amid continuing concerns over cough syrups being prescribed to infants and young children, despite an October 2025 advisory from the directorate general of health services (DGHS) advising against the practice. New warning on cough syrup bottles According to the proposal seen by ET, the bottle label could prominently carry a red warning stating: "WARNING: Cough syrup should not be used in children below 4 years of age". It further proposes that "Additionally, a pictorial depiction of school-age children may be included on the bottle label to reinforce that the product is intended for older children and to discourage its use in children below the specified age." The proposal has been submitted to the drugs consultative committee (DCC) for consideration. It seeks changes to Rule 96 of the Drugs Rules, 1945.

Ex-chief of finance panel calls for more capex, state-wise debt sustainability

New Delhi. (Agency)

N K Singh, chairperson of the 15th Finance Commission, has proposed a state-wise debt sustainability, while noting that they may find it "daunting" to lower the general govt debt level from 84% to 73%, as was proposed by the 16th Finance Commission.

He, however, said that the Centre is on course to achieve the recommended debt target of 50%, plus or minus 1%, by 2030-31 despite global turmoil. At a meeting of state and finance ministry officials and ministers, Singh urged states to undertake higher capital expenditure to boost demand for



steel and cement and jobs. He also urged states to capture off-budget borrowings, guarantees, unpaid bills, arrears to utilities and suppliers, state PSU funds, and review loss-making companies.

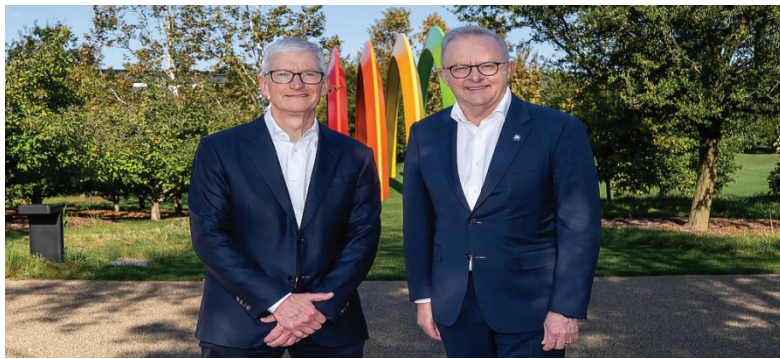
"Debt sustainability varies across states. I suggest that RBI or the ministry of finance, supported by the C&AG, could undertake an independent assessment, with specific thresholds for each state, to determine a path," he said.

Australian PM Anthony Albanese seeks big tech backing for internet safety, AI rules

Data last month found that under-16s in Australia were increasing their use of social media apps such as Instagram and TikTok despite the ban.

SYDNEY. (Agency)

Australian leader Anthony Albanese said Sunday he was seeking big tech backing for his country's child online safety laws and greater AI regulation, after meeting former Apple CEO Tim Cook in California. Following the meeting with Cook at the tech giant's headquarters on Saturday, Albanese said Australia "can't do it alone" when it came to protecting children from the dangers of the internet.



"We spoke about what we're doing to protect children from online harm and the work ahead," Albanese wrote on social media. "We're putting stronger rules in place to keep Australians safe online," he said. "And now, big tech companies like Apple are stepping up too." Cook also said he shared with Albanese new "strong and intuitive controls to help keep kids safe

online" in a post on X. Australia implemented legislation barring under-16s from social media platforms last year, part of a world-first crackdown designed to protect children from online bullying and "predatory algorithms". New draft laws unveiled this month would place a "duty of care" requirement on the firms behind popular platforms such as

Facebook, TikTok and Instagram -- as well as allow users to turn off their algorithms if they want to. Data last month found that under-16s in Australia were increasing their use of social media apps such as Instagram and TikTok despite the ban.

The draft laws will be introduced to parliament later this year after consultation with social media companies, industry bodies and civil society groups. Albanese -- visiting the United States this week for the upcoming United Nations General Assembly -- has also used his trip to call for greater regulation of AI, following dire safety warnings from industry leaders.

Australia will introduce new standards for AI by the end of the year, he said.

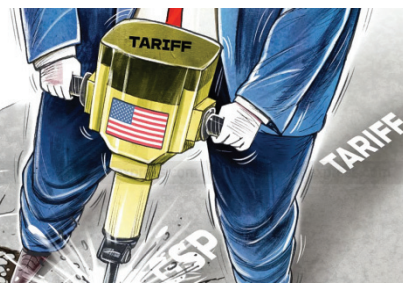
"The risk is that AI develops in a way in which humans are no longer in control of what AI is producing," Albanese told national broadcaster ABC.

Double whammy as Trump extends H-1B fee, signs Russia sanctions Act

New Delhi. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump late Friday (US time) signed the controversial 'Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026', authorising US to impose tariffs of up to 100% on imports from the five largest foreign buyers of Russian crude oil and natural gas, putting India and China at direct risk of penalties. The Act provides for property-blocking sanctions on foreign vessels that knowingly transport certain Russian-origin products, including crude oil, uranium and coal. The US Senate passed the Bill on August 7, while the House of Representatives approved it on September 16. The law will take effect within 30 days. During this period, the US Trade

Representative will identify countries to be targeted and recommend tariff rates. The law provides a chance to countries to



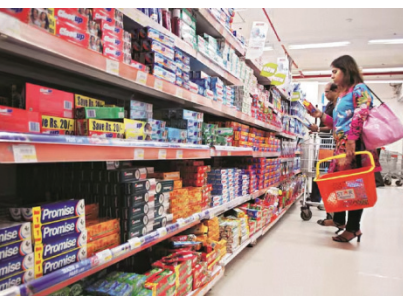
reduce Russian energy purchases within 180 days and negotiate with US for a lower tariff. Apart from China and India, Turkiye, EU and Myanmar are other three top importers of Russian crude. India,

which sourced around 30% of its crude oil imports from Russia in FY2026 -- \$40.8 billion out of total crude imports of \$134.7 billion -- now faces the risk of tariffs of up to 100% on its exports to the US. India has maintained it will take necessary measures to protect its economic interests. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had earlier said the law could have affect bilateral ties and international energy market. "This issue has been discussed at high levels in recent months with various US interlocutors. Its potential implications for not just the bilateral relationship but also the international energy market have been very clearly articulated by the Indian side.

FMCG firms likely to hold prices through festive season amid cost pressures

MUMBAI. (Agency)

FMCG companies are likely to hold prices through the festive season despite a rise in commodity prices, including sugar, and the impact of geopolitical disruptions, as they seek to protect consumer demand and maintain volume growth amid improving consumption. Leading industry executives said companies have already gone for judicious increases of around 2-5 per cent in the June quarter to partly offset higher input costs and are unlikely to raise prices further before the end of the festive season, even as margins remain under pressure. The sector has been facing renewed cost pressures, with sugar prices touching a new high, alongside a sharp increase in costs of key inputs such as edible oils, coffee, cocoa and crude oil derivatives used in packaging, amid geopolitical disruptions and supply concerns in global markets. While most companies have absorbed a significant part of the inflation through cost-control



initiatives and portfolio management, they remain focused on protecting volume growth, even as pressure on margins remains elevated, industry executives said. ITC Chief Executive Officer, Foods Division, and Executive Director Hemant Malik said the company would maintain prices through the festive season despite cost inflation. "We are attempting to hold prices," Malik said, noting that companies have been absorbing a large part of the increase in commodity prices through cost management initiatives and portfolio actions. Referring to the impact of the GST rat reduction on several consumer products last year, Malik said the move had led to buoyancy in volumes across multiple categories and supported market demand. However, he indicated that companies may have to revisit pricing decisions later in the financial year if cost pressures persist. Maybe in quarter three or quarter four, we will have to look at some corrections on prices.

Ashwini Vaishnaw cautions industry about cyberattacks, disruption that may target India's growing chip might

New Delhi. (Agency)

India's growing semiconductor heft could be seen as a "threat" by established interests in the global chip value chain, and the industry must guard against cyberattacks and other disruptions from those opposed to the country's rise, Minister for Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw, has said. In an interview to PTI, Vaishnaw said he has cautioned the industry in clear terms to keep a constant vigil as India is now emerging as a country that has the capability to design and manufacture chips, a position that will "obviously" be seen as a threat by many other established interests. "We have to continuously be watchful of the potential geopolitical risks which will arise because India is now emerging as a country which can design and manufacture chips. Obviously that will be seen as a threat by many other established players," he said. As many countries look to India as a trusted

partner and develop and manufacture their products here, the Minister said India cannot afford to take its position lightly and must stay vigilant.

"But we should not take it lightly. We should be cognizant of the risks and challenges which will come from other players. So I have very candidly told the entire industry that be prepared for cyber attacks, be prepared for any other kinds of threats and any other kinds of disruptions that might get created by the countries who don't like India to come up in the semiconductor value chain," he said. The Minister said that since his frank and candid discussion on the issue, the industry is now cognizant and "they would certainly take the right measures".

India is seeking to build a larger presence in the global semiconductor value chain, making the sector increasingly important to the country's technology and manufacturing ambitions. The

government has also sought to expand the ecosystem beyond chip assembly and testing to include design, equipment, materials and fabrication.



The Union Cabinet in July approved Semicon 2.0, with an outlay of Rs 1,27,500 crore, to support chip design, semiconductor equipment and materials, fabs, advanced packaging, research and development and talent development. The programme builds on the momentum of the first phase, under which 12 semiconductor manufacturing projects with investments of more than

Rs 1.64 lakh crore have been approved. Five, including Micron, Kaynes and CG Semi, are already in commercial production. India's chip push marks a

bold attempt to move beyond packaging and build a broader domestic supply chain, while attracting global companies to manufacture and develop semiconductor technologies in India. The government recently said it had received about Rs 1 lakh crore in investment commitments under the second phase of the semiconductor scheme. Investor interest was in full focus at the just-concluded SEMICON India event -- a mega showcase of the nation's chip-making heft -- that saw a slew of big-ticket announcements, including Applied Materials' USD 5 billion India plan through 2035, Lam Research's proposed Rs 10,000-crore investment, Tata Electronics' 363-acre vendor park at Dholera and Fujifilm's Rs 800-crore semiconductor materials plant.

Andhra Pradesh: Tirumala shrine packed with devotees for Garuda Seva

TIRUMALA (Agency).

Thousands of devotees expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made for the Garuda Seva procession at the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple on Saturday, with officials adapting crowd-management measures to accommodate pilgrims who could not be accommodated in the designated



galleries.

Many devotees gathered along the Mada streets to witness Lord Venkateswara on the Garuda Vahanam, with several seen offering Harathi and expressing their joy after securing a close view of the processional deity.

TTD Chairman BR Naidu, board members, staff, police and vigilance personnel coordinated the arrangements, particularly for pilgrims who had been waiting since morning to secure viewing spots. Tirupati Collector Venkateswar, TTD Executive Officer

Muddada Ravichandra, and vigilance and police officials reviewed the situation as the pilgrim influx increased. As the designated galleries reached capacity, officials allowed stranded devotees to enter the Mada streets to witness the procession. The procession, originally scheduled for 7 pm, commenced at 6.30 pm to facilitate crowd management.

TTD management, board members and dignitaries, including former chairmen, judges and senior IAS and IPS officers, gathered at the Vahana Mandapam for Darshan and offered Harathi.

During the procession, officials paused the Garuda Vahanam and turned it towards devotees at several junctions to facilitate better viewing. The procession proceeded smoothly up to the Hathiram Bhavaji Mutt.

At the Supatham gate, TTD Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary, SP Subba Rayudu and vigilance personnel halted the Vahanam to allow devotees waiting at SMC, SMGH and the Old VQC Road to enter the Mada streets. The devotees were allowed to offer Harathi and have Darshan from both sides of palanquin. Officials implemented similar crowd-management measures at all four corners of the Mada streets, allowing devotees to witness the procession.

FIR filed day after IIT Bombay student dies by suicide, parents allege caste bias

The institute has denied the allegation and said no such complaint was submitted by the student, either to its SC-ST cell or to the administration.

Mumbai (Agency).

A day after Sahil Wakode (20), a Second Year reserved category student at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bombay, died by suicide, his parents have alleged that he was subjected to caste-based discrimination.

The institute has denied the allegation and said no such complaint was submitted by the student, either to its SC-ST cell or to the administration.

Based on a complaint filed by Sahil's father, Ravindra, the Mumbai Police on Saturday registered an FIR naming Professor Suryanarayan Doolla, among unnamed others, on charges of abetment to suicide (BNS Section 108) and sections of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Doolla was reportedly the invigilator on duty when Sahil, a student of the Department of Energy Science and Engineering, was allegedly found using a cellphone during the

mid-semester exam on Friday. In a statement, the institute said Sahil had uploaded the question paper on ChatGPT to seek answers. Sahil died by suicide hours later.

While the statement issued by the institute



administration said no disciplinary action was initiated against him, Sahil's parents have alleged that students told them he was threatened with suspension.

"His father came forward to register an FIR in this matter. He has named several people and, based on his statement, we have registered an abetment to suicide case," said a police

officer.

In his complaint, Ravindra has alleged that Doolla had subjected Sahil to caste-based discrimination for the past three months, on the instructions of IIT-Bombay Director, Professor Shireesh B Kedare. "He had come to the college on his own merit and everything went fine in the First Year. Things changed in the Second Year when the Director, Shireesh B Kedare, instructed faculty member Suryanarayan Doolla to do caste-based discrimination... Doolla was passing casteist remarks for the past three months and had threatened to implicate him in a wrong manner before the incident took place," Ravindra has alleged, according to the FIR.

When reached for comment, Kedare denied any caste-based discrimination on the campus, whether in the day-to-day functioning or in the administration's or professors' approach. "And there is absolutely none in this case. In fact caste-based information of every student is completely hidden and not available for anybody's information," he said.

31 UAPA cases, years in jail: Inside Maharashtra's overburdened Maoist belt court

Set up in 2023 to bring trials closer to remote Maoist affected villages, the court now has 31 pending UAPA cases, most more than five years old; witnesses travel for hours through forested areas while accused are often produced from distant jails through videoconferencing

Mumbai (Agency).

Three years after an additional sessions court was opened in Maharashtra's Maoist-affected Gadchiroli district to bring justice closer to remote villages, the Aheri Additional District and Sessions Court has emerged as the state's biggest UAPA docket, with 31 cases pending, most for five years or more.

The court was set up in 2023 after local lawyers had sought a sessions court in Aheri since 2008, with the aim of bringing trials closer to the jurisdiction where the alleged offences occurred and speeding up disposal.

The need for a dedicated court had also come into focus before the Supreme Court earlier this year during the bail proceedings of lawyer Surendra Gadling, who has represented several UAPA accused and was arrested in the 2018 Elgaar Parishad case. Gadling had told the Supreme Court that his 2016 Surjagarh arson case remained pending without a court or prosecutor in Aheri.

The Indian Express had reported in

January that the Aheri court had been without a judge for three months in 2025 and again in January, while around 200 undertrials were lodged in jails. Although the Supreme Court granted Gadling bail in the Elgaar Parishad case in May, he remains in custody in the Surjagarh case after more than seven years. His bail plea on grounds including delay remains



pending. For faster disposal of the high number of cases, two additional courts were added in April to the single functioning court in Aheri — two of these courts are designated to hear UAPA cases.

The court, however, continues to face logistical challenges. Located more than 120 km from the district

headquarters, it has jurisdiction over more than 700 villages in heavily forested areas including Etapalli, Bhamragad and Mulchera. Witnesses often have to travel for hours by public transport, testify and leave in time to catch the last bus. Accused lodged in jails more than six hours away are frequently produced through videoconferencing.

The backlog is particularly significant because the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act imposes stringent restrictions on bail, meaning prolonged trials can result in prolonged incarceration for undertrials. Court records as of July 31 show that Gadchiroli accounts for 33 of the 72 UAPA cases pending across Maharashtra, with 31 before the Aheri court. Mumbai has 19, while Pune, Thane, Nagpur,

Nashik, Gondia and Aurangabad have cases in single digits. Another 16 UAPA cases are before a Mumbai special court dealing with cases investigated by the National Investigation Agency. Three UAPA cases have been disposed of at Aheri since January, all ending in acquittals.

UP law student died in an 'accident'. Then cops found six human bite marks

Lucknow (Agency).

In the early morning of September 14, a youth was found injured on the roadside in Jhansi's Prem Nagar area. A police team took him to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Initially, police treated the youth's death as one of the fatalities from road accidents, suspecting that he was heavily intoxicated at the time of the incident and had fallen and suffered a fatal head injury. The injuries to his chest were also believed to have resulted from the fall. However, when the post-mortem report came, the police were surprised to find that there were six bite marks on Parvez's right thigh, believed to have been caused by a human, thereby raising suspicions of foul play.

A murder case was registered, and a team of five women officers — Superintendents of Police Areeba Nomaan and Simran Singh, Additional Superintendent of Police Preeti Singh, and Circle Officers Priya Singh and Asma Waqar was constituted to crack it. The first breakthrough came when the probe team was able to identify the victim. The youth was identified as a 21-year-old law student from Jhansi's Vijay Nagar, Parvez Ali. His father, Ahsan Ali, told the police that his son had booked a Rapido and left home around 9 pm on September 13, saying he would return within an hour or two.

Police inquiry revealed that Parvez was facing a criminal case in Jammu and Kashmir. Also, a packet of white powder, possibly a drug, was found in Parvez's pocket. While the forensic report of the powder sample was yet to arrive, police suspect that Parvez was a drug dealer.

As the police team scanned footage from over 150 CCTVs and went through call records of several persons, it began to piece together the case, leading to

8 arrested so far, including a police constable; search on for three others for murder of 21-year-old law student

the arrest of eight persons, including a local police constable, and the unravelling of a drug peddling-extortion racket. One by one, the police arrested eight persons — Prayansh (30), Jai Srivastava alias Aman (24), Sahil Mishra (21), Bhupendra Vanshkar (23), Yash Shivhare alias Bittu (23), Arshil Khan (20),



Shani Namdev (24), and police constable Ashish Singh (30) — all residents of Jhansi.

The eight arrested accused — including constable Ashish Singh, posted at Prem Nagar police station — were allegedly members of a group that called itself 'Rashtra Bhakt', claiming to work against crime by apprehending offenders and handing them over to police. Investigations, however, revealed that the group instead extorted money from those involved in crime by threatening to expose them.

'Spent extra 15 months in jail': Punjab man says Indian Embassy ignored pleas, sought money in Saudi

Rajinderpal, a resident of Tarn Taran district, returned to India on August 31 after spending nearly 10 years away from home, including almost three years in a Saudi Arabian jail.

Jalandhar (Agency).

For Rajinderpal Singh, returning to Punjab after nearly three years in Saudi Arabia was not the end of his ordeal but the culmination of what he alleges was a prolonged struggle for help from Indian officials.

Rajinderpal, a resident of Tarn Taran district, returned to India on August 31 after spending nearly 10 years away from home, including almost three years in a Saudi Arabian jail. He has alleged that despite repeatedly seeking assistance from the Indian Embassy, he received little help during a prolonged period when he remained in jail even after completing his 18-month sentence.

Rajinderpal said he was sentenced after some objectionable drugs were allegedly recovered from the goods being transported in an another truck travelling along with his vehicle. He said they were three drivers driving different trucks, but he and another truck driver from Amritsar became part of the case because all three drivers were carrying the goods to be delivered and the documents for the consignment were in a single set covering the three trucks.

According to Rajinderpal, he was released from jail 15 months before he finally returned to India. However, when he

reached the airport to board his flight home, he was taken back to jail because his release had not been updated in the airport records. He alleged that the record should have been updated by the Indian Embassy and that it took nearly 15 months for the issue to be resolved, eventually enabling him to return home on August 31. He said that for months nothing had happened. His family approached Rajya Sabha member Parliament, Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal on December 8, 2025, seeking help for his



return. Seechewal took up the matter with the external affair ministry and could make his and other youth from Amritsar return possible. Thus, he claimed, he spent around 15 additional months in jail after completing his sentence, with documentation and repatriation-related issues preventing his return. He alleged that his repeated pleas for assistance were not properly heard and that the response from embassy officials was indifferent.

Punjab's marginal farmers' 'gharelu bagichi' model goes beyond wheat and paddy

The sequence can begin in March with varieties of ber, mulberry and loquat, followed by peach, plum, Satluj Purple, Kala Amritsari and apple varieties. Anjeer, phalsa, grapes and chikoo extend the harvest season, followed by mango varieties such as Dussehri, Langra, Chausa, Amrapali and Ram Kela into October.

Chandigarh (Agency).

What if a small piece of land could provide a family with fresh fruit across the seasons while also opening up a new source of income for a marginal farmer? That is the idea behind 'gharelu bagichi', or a domestic fruit orchard, a model being promoted in Punjab by a marginal farmer and nursery grower Gurpreet Singh, 35, of village Gholia Khurd in Moga district, with guidance from his mentor Jagdev Singh, 62, of Pohir village in Ludhiana. The concept goes beyond simply planting a few fruit trees around a house. It is a planned orchard model in which the root stocks, crafted plants, size and direction of the



available land, the growth pattern of trees and the maturity period of different fruit varieties are considered together. The objective is to ensure that one fruit follows another through the year, giving families

access to fresh fruit at their home.

At the same time, the model has an economic dimension. Gurpreet has set up a nursery model under the guidance of his mentor beyond the conventional wheat-paddy cycle, produces the rootstocks, grafted plants and other planting material. Jagdev provides all consultancy what to plant, where to plant it and how to stagger fruit production, while Gurpreet, Together, they have helped establish hundreds of 'gharelu bagichis' and guided farmers and families in Punjab and elsewhere. "Planning an orchard, not just planting trees," is how Jagdev, an engineer by profession, describes the concept.

'Cleared SIR, voted': Woman moves High Court after husband detained over illegal Bangladesh immigrant suspicion

Kolkata (Agency). Thirty-four year-old Dejina Bibi last saw her husband on August 8 when the Raninagar police picked him up from Murshidabad late at night on suspicion of being an illegal Bangladeshi immigrant. Sahidul Sk, a farmer, lived with his wife and three children at Dubapara village in Murshidabad. His relatives said that his father lived there. According to his family, Sahidul has been in custody of the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer since August 8. "Till date we do not have any of the police documents after his detention. The police have not told us anything or



handed over any documents like the arrest memo or the seizure list," his legal counsel Advocate Bapi Mondal told The Indian Express.

Dejina Bibi has also moved the Calcutta High

Court alleging that her husband had been detained illegally, with the police alleging he is a Bangladeshi.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Dejina Bibi, a housewife said, "How did he suddenly become a Bangladeshi? During the SIR exercise, we had submitted all documents and they were cleared. We also cast our votes in the Assembly elections earlier this year. What does it mean that we are not citizens of this country? Now suddenly after elections, they detain him." She still remembers the night when the police had come to their doorstep.

NEWS BOX

Rachin Ravindra injured in promo shoot accident, India T20Is in doubts



New Delhi. (Agency)

Rachin Ravindra's participation in New Zealand's upcoming five-match T20I series against India has been thrown into doubt after the all-rounder dislocated his right shoulder during a promotional shoot in Auckland. Ravindra suffered the injury on Wednesday while attempting a diving catch during filming and landed awkwardly on a safety mat. Medical specialists assessed Ravindra on Friday and ruled out major structural damage. However, his return-to-play timeline will depend on his progress during the early stages of rehabilitation, leaving his availability for the India series uncertain. India's tour of New Zealand is scheduled to begin next month, with the hosts set to announce their squad next week. New Zealand Performance Manager Mike Sandle said Ravindra's injury was an unfortunate accident and that the priority would be his recovery. "It was a really unfortunate injury," Sandle said. "We're gutted for Rachin and our key priority is making sure he recovers well and gets back on the field as soon as he can."

"As with all commercial shoots involving our players, the activities were agreed in advance by all parties, with appropriate safety measures in place. It was a bit of a freak accident, and we'll continue to review our processes around events like this in the future." **NEW ZEALAND CAUTIOUS WITH RACHIN RAVINDRA'S INJURY** Ravindra has established himself as an important part of New Zealand's white-ball setup, offering value with both bat and ball. He has played 52 T20Is, scoring 759 runs at a highest score of 69, while also taking 26 wickets, with best figures of 4/27. The 26-year-old's absence would leave New Zealand without one of their key all-round options for the India series, although his rehabilitation will determine whether he can recover in time.

From the depths of despair: Avinash Sable carves a road back for the Asian Games



New Delhi. (Agency)

How does a person feel when they crash down from the top of the world? Ask Avinash Sable, India's premier 3000m steeplechase runner. He knows. Sable is a legend of sorts in Indian athletics. In the men's 3000m steeplechase, he is the closest thing India has to a Neeraj Chopra. A subedar in the Indian Army, Sable has broken the national record 10 times. He won gold at the 2023 Asian Games and became the only Indian to have raced in an Olympic steeplechase final. By 2025, Sable was at the pinnacle of his career. He had reached a point where everything seemed to be falling into place. Then, at the Monaco Diamond League, he came crashing down at the water jump.

While attempting the water jump, Sable failed to land correctly and tore his Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL), a career-threatening injury for the then 31-year-old. In the space of a few seconds, everything he had built was thrown into uncertainty. "It was not even my fault," Avinash Sable told a group of reporters in Delhi, right before the Asian Games. Included in the Asian Games athletics contingent, Sable had come to New Delhi to prove his fitness. If he did well and beat the cut-off (8:36.57), he could board the flight for Aichi-Nagoya in Japan. The crowd, then, settled in for seven and a half laps.

THE MAGIC OF STEEPLECHASE

A 3000m steeplechase is a fascinating race in itself. An athlete has to hurdle 28 barriers and seven water jumps over 7.5 laps, all while maintaining the rhythm and endurance required to run three kilometres.

Yuvraj Singh's 6 sixes off Stuart Broad: 19 years of an historic T20I moment

Yuvraj Singh's six sixes off Stuart Broad on 19 September 2007 remain one of Indian cricket's most iconic moments. Nineteen years later, that over still stands as a benchmark for fearless T20 hitting.

PARIS. (Agency)

Nineteen years ago on this day, Yuvraj Singh produced one of the most iconic moments in Indian cricket, smashing six sixes in an over against England at the inaugural T20 World Cup. Long before India's new-age power hitters began rewriting records, Yuvraj gave the world a breathtaking display of just how destructive a batter could be in the shortest format. It was September 19, 2007, and

India were facing England in a crucial Super Eight clash at Kingsmead in Durban. Having lost their opening Super Eight match against New Zealand, MS Dhoni's young side needed a win to keep their campaign alive. India were in a strong position when Yuvraj came to the crease, but things soon became heated. After exchanging words with Andrew Flintoff, Yuvraj's mood was clear, and England captain Paul Collingwood handed the ball to 21-year-old Stuart Broad for the 19th over. Broad's first ball disappeared over midwicket. The second was launched over backward square leg, before Yuvraj sent the third over deep extra cover. The fourth followed a similar trajectory, while the fifth disappeared over midwicket again. The final delivery was smashed over long-on.

Six balls. Six sixes. Thirty-six runs. Yuvraj had raced to his fifty in just 12 balls, with the six that completed the sequence

bringing up the milestone. He eventually fell for 58 off just 16 balls, having smashed seven sixes and three fours. India finished on 218/4 and went on to beat England by 18 runs.

THE OVER THAT BECAME HISTORY



The six sixes were not just about the numbers. They captured Yuvraj at his most explosive, taking on a young Broad with a level of confidence and clean ball-striking that made the over feel almost surreal.

Yuvraj became the first batter to hit six sixes in a T20 international over, following Herschelle Gibbs' six-sixes feat in an ODI against the Netherlands earlier in 2007. His 12-ball fifty also became one of the defining records of the early years of T20 cricket. That was the kind of batter Yuvraj was. He did not need a long period to settle in or a string of boundaries to build momentum. Give him a few deliveries and he could change the entire complexion of a game. That legacy is easy to spot in the Indian team today. Abhishek Sharma has just smashed a 30-ball century against Afghanistan, the fastest T20I hundred by an Indian batter, while 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has already become the youngest player to score a century in men's T20 cricket. The records are different, but the intent feels familiar.

And perhaps fittingly, Yuvraj's influence has extended directly to Abhishek, who has spoken about the former India all-rounder as a mentor during his rise.

Thomas Tuchel admits Kobbie Mainoo's World Cup omission 'hurt' him

New Delhi. (Agency)

England manager Thomas Tuchel has admitted it "hurt" him that Kobbie Mainoo did not get a single minute at the FIFA World Cup 2026. The Manchester United midfielder has been recalled for the upcoming Nations League fixtures, with Tuchel saying it is now his responsibility to give the 21-year-old an opportunity.

Mainoo was part of England's World Cup squad but remained an unused substitute throughout the tournament. Speaking after naming his latest squad on Friday, Tuchel explained why he preferred Declan Rice and Elliot Anderson in midfield and why Mainoo would have played in the third-place match against France had he not been injured. "He didn't put a foot wrong in the World Cup. He was class in behaviour and in training, but it was a big

competition," Tuchel said. "Elliot Anderson is a fantastic player for us; Declan Rice is a very unique player, so we trusted them more than we trusted

chance to feature." It was difficult for him. He got injured before the France game, so we couldn't give him minutes there, which hurt me," Tuchel said.

MAINOO GETS ANOTHER CHANCE

Mainoo has retained his place in England's squad after starting the new season strongly for Manchester United. Tuchel was unequivocal when asked whether the midfielder would finally get minutes during the upcoming international window. "Yes, I expect him to be on the pitch, and it's my duty to put him on the pitch," he said. England have four Nations

League matches during the window, giving Tuchel plenty of opportunities to assess his midfield options. The Three Lions begin against reigning world champions Spain at Wembley on September 26.



Kobbie. "Mainoo was unable to get onto the pitch during England's World Cup campaign despite impressing the coaching staff in training. Tuchel said an injury before the third-place match against France denied the midfielder his final

Brydon Carse Derby assault case probe dropped by police, to face regulator probe

New Delhi. (Agency)

England fast bowler Brydon Carse will face no further police action after an investigation into an alleged assault in Derby last month was closed. The development removes one layer of uncertainty around the 31-year-old, although he remains subject to a separate investigation by the Cricket Regulator. Footage of Carse in handcuffs and surrounded by police officers emerged on social media after an incident in the early hours of August 23. Carse had been arrested on suspicion of being drunk and disorderly and was later de-arrested after officers took his details. Derbyshire Police subsequently confirmed that it was investigating an allegation of assault in Derby city centre. In a statement released on Friday, the force said: "An investigation into reports of an assault in Derby city centre has been closed."

The police added: "Officers attended Molly Malones in The Wardwick, Derby,



in the early hours of Sunday, 23 August. A man was arrested on suspicion of being drunk and disorderly and was then de-arrested after his details were taken by officers.

CARSE STILL FACES

REGULATORY PROBE

While the police investigation has now ended, Carse's situation is not completely resolved. The Cricket Regulator will continue to look into the incident, with the regulator yet to comment on the latest development. The England and Wales Cricket Board and Carse have also been approached for comment. The incident had already cost Carse his place in England's squad for the second Test against Pakistan. Test captain Joe Root said he was "hacked off" by the situation and revealed that he had addressed the England dressing room over the latest off-field controversy. Carse was subsequently left out of England's squad for the third Test against Pakistan and the white-ball series against Sri Lanka, despite being available for selection. The ECB said he needed to "work through the issues" surrounding the Derby incident and take time for "a proper reset".

UEFA, CONCACAF seek \$10m FIFA payout to every member association

New Delhi. (Agency)

UEFA and Concacaf have called on FIFA to distribute at least 10 million USD to each of its 211 member associations from its cash reserves. The demand is the latest escalation in the fallout over Gianni Infantino's now-abandoned FIFA Forward Enterprise proposal. The letter was signed by UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin and Concacaf president Victor Montagliani. They argued that FIFA is expected to end the 2023-26 cycle with reserves of around \$6 billion, which they believe is considerably more than the organisation needs through the 2030 men's World Cup. "FIFA currently holds billions of dollars in accumulated reserves," the letter read. "These resources belong to football and exist to serve the game and its 211 member associations."

Ceferin and Montagliani called for at least 10 million USD to be made available to every member association during the 2027-30 cycle. They said the money should be directed towards infrastructure and football development. The proposed one-off



distribution would cost FIFA around 2.11 billion USD and would come on top of its regular funding for member associations.

The demand follows strong opposition to Infantino's FIFA Forward Enterprise plan, which was scrapped just four days after being unveiled. The proposal involved creating a new company to manage the commercial and ticketing rights of FIFA competitions, including the World Cup, with

a 21 percent stake potentially being sold to an investment company. **UEFA, CONCACAF QUESTION FIFA PLAN** Infantino had told FIFA members they could receive 40 million USD if they backed the proposal, with federations given a September 19 deadline to accept the plans in order to access an initial 20 million USD.

However, UEFA and Concacaf said their analysis of FIFA's published financial

statements and budgets raised questions over whether the new structure was actually required to increase funding.

The two confederations said their assessment was "deliberately conservative" and called for an independent review of FIFA's finances, with access to the underlying figures and assumptions. Development is an institutional responsibility of Fifa, not a matter of individual discretion," they wrote.

PRESSURE BUILDS ON INFANTINO

The letter was also sent to the presidents of FIFA's other confederations, asking them to support the proposed distribution from reserves. The development comes a day after Football Association chair Debbie Hewitt wrote to Infantino and FIFA secretary general Mattias Grafstrom demanding the release of documents linked to the FIFA Forward Enterprise plan.

Hewitt, who is also a FIFA vice-president, also called for a written explanation over the cancelled suspension of United States forward Folarin Balogun during the World Cup.



will provide a considerably tougher test, with the continent's strongest table tennis nations in the field.

SATHIYAN, MANAV AND MANUSH LEAD MEN'S CHARGE

Sathiyan, Harmmeet, Manav, Manush and Payas Jain form the men's squad, with Ankur Bhattacharjee and Ronit Bhanja as reserves. Sathiyan, Harmmeet and Manav were part of India's 2018 Asian Games men's team bronze, giving the squad a direct link to the country's first medal in the sport. The spotlight will be on Manav and Manush, currently ranked No. 3 in the world in men's doubles. The Gujarat pair reunited as seniors in 2023 after playing together in their junior days and have since developed a productive right-left combination. Manav's counter-attacking game complements Manush's aggressive left-handed style. They narrowly missed a medal at the 2022 Asian Games after reaching the quarter-finals.



Nora Fatehi

Is Back As Ayesha! Begins Shooting For The Royals Season 2 With Ishaan Khatter

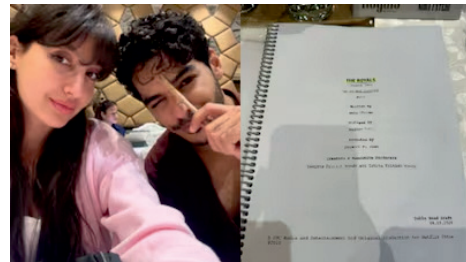
For Nora Fatehi, it's back to the sets of The Royals. The actress has begun filming the second season of the Netflix series, and her latest social media update has offered fans a glimpse of what she's been up to. In the new picture, Nora is seen posing with Ishaan Khatter, who is also returning for the next chapter.

Nora will reprise her role as Ayesha Dhondi in Season 2 after appearing in the first installment. Her return comes as the series moves ahead with a new storyline, with the makers reportedly shifting some of the focus towards the royal family and its dynamics. According to a Mid-Day report, Bhumi Pednekar, who played the female lead alongside Ishaan in the first season, will not be returning for the second installment. Bhumi was expected to continue with the show after Season 1 ended and the series was renewed, but the report states that she has now exited the project.

The upcoming season is also expected to move away from being primarily centred on Ishaan's romantic life. A source quoted by Mid-Day explained that the family became one of the elements that connected with viewers. "When you do a romance, it is the story that leads. When the show came out, what resonated [with the audience] was the family—Ishaan [Khatter], Sakshi [Tanwar], Zeenat, and the world of The Royals—which feels different. We left season one at an unresolved romance. There was no decision to carry it forward. There was no fight with Bhumi. The makers are simply letting the story lead forward organically in the second season," the insider told Mid-Day.

Bhumi had earlier spoken about the criticism she received following the first season and how deeply it affected her. In an interview with Mid-Day, she said, "The noise became so loud that I couldn't hear my own creative voice anymore. When you are told every day that you don't look like yourself, it starts to seep in. I felt numb," Bhumi said. The actress is also reportedly concentrating on other projects following her exit from The Royals.

Meanwhile, Nora is stepping into Season 2 at a busy point in her career. She has had a packed 2026 so far, including her association with the FIFA World Cup 2026 and a string of music releases.



'Samay Raina, Sorry': Why Farah Khan Suddenly Apologised To Comedian In Saba Ibrahim's Vlog



Farah Khan's YouTube vlogs often come with plenty of food, celebrity conversations and, of course, her trademark humour. Her latest vlog with Saba Ibrahim and her husband Khalid Niaz had all three, but one particular moment involving comedian Samay Raina caught everyone's attention.

While chatting about Farah's journey on YouTube, Saba and Khalid had plenty of praise for the filmmaker-turned-content creator. Khalid went a step further when he shared his own take on where Farah stands among YouTubers.

Khalid told Farah, "Mujhe lagta hai No. 1 YouTuber hain." Farah was quick to disagree and replied, "Nahi, nahi." She then turned towards the camera and jokingly said, "Samay Raina, sorry."

The unexpected apology left Saba and Khalid laughing. They also clarified that they were not actually discussing Samay. Farah, meanwhile, continued the joke by pointing out that there are several other big names in the YouTube space. She added, "Arey Sourav Joshi, bade bade YouTubers hain."

The conversation began when Saba spoke about Farah's videos and the effort she puts into making them. Praising her cooking and the way she feeds her guests, Saba said, "Aapki mehnat, aap itne pyaar se banate ho na, woh log bahut pasand karte hain." She also highlighted the lighter side of Farah's vlogs, saying, "Mam ke video mein fun bhi hota hai, comedy bhi..."

Saba later made it clear that her praise was specifically about Farah's family-oriented content. Farah agreed with her and acknowledged that she has been doing well with that kind of content on YouTube. Farah's association with Samay Raina goes back to India's Got Latent. The filmmaker was part of an unreleased episode of the comedy show along with Urfi Javed, Tanmay Bhat and KR\$NA. Footage from the episode later surfaced online, showing Samay touching Farah's feet as a mark of respect. Farah responded to the gesture in her usual playful fashion.

Anil Kapoor Regrets Missing Daughter Rhea Kapoor's Birth: 'Still Can't Forgive Myself'



Anil Kapoor has spent decades being associated with relentless energy and an almost obsessive work ethic, but the actor recently admitted that one professional commitment left him with a regret he still carries. While interacting with a contestant on his new quiz-based reality show, India Ke Top 1 Percent, Anil recalled missing the birth of his younger daughter, Rhea Kapoor, because he was caught up with work. The veteran actor said the episode changed the way he looks at the idea of working "for the family", because earning for loved ones, according to him, cannot replace actually being present for them.

Anil Kapoor Says Family Needs Time, Not Just Hard Work

During his conversation with a contestant, Anil reflected on how people often justify long working hours by saying they are doing it for their families. He admitted that he too is still learning that making time for family is equally important.

"Many people say that they work for their families, but I am also learning now how important it is to give time to your family," Anil said. The actor then brought up his sons-in-law and appreciated the way they manage to balance their careers with personal responsibilities. That conversation led him to one of the most personal memories from his own life, the day Rhea was born.

'I Reached The Hospital Late'

Anil revealed that when Rhea was born, he failed to reach the hospital in time. He had been working through the night and eventually fell asleep after the shoot. "When I was your age and Rhea was born, I reached the hospital late. I have still not been able to forgive myself for that," he shared. He went on to explain exactly how it happened. "Rhea had already been delivered by the time I reached there."

Isha Malviya

Makes Bollywood Debut With Gurmeet Choudhary In Tum Mere Ho

Isha Malviya has shared the first look of her upcoming film Tum Mere Ho, giving fans a glimpse of what she will be seen doing next. The actress will be making her Bollywood debut with

with it. For Isha, Tum Mere Ho marks her first big-screen role. She has already become a familiar face through music videos and television appearances and has built a strong following online.

She first gained popularity with Sanju Rathod's Shaky, which featured her. She was later seen in Justin Bieber alongside Elvish Yadav and then appeared with Abhishek Malhan in Jubin Nautiyal's Zor Ki Barsaat Hui.

Now, Isha is moving from music videos to a lead role in a Bollywood film. In Tum Mere Ho, she will be paired opposite Gurmeet Choudhary, with the first-look posters showing the two in a romantic setting.

The film also gives Isha a chance to be seen in a different avatar. She

appears in a softer and more romantic look in the posters, which is a change from the kind of appearances audiences have seen from her previously. While the makers have not revealed much about the story yet, the first look suggests that romance and emotions will play a major role in the film.



the romantic drama, which also stars Gurmeet Choudhary. The first-look posters feature Isha and Gurmeet together and give the film a romantic and emotional feel. One of the posters also carries the line, "Sometimes falling is the easy part. What comes next is the story," hinting that the film will focus on a relationship and everything that comes

NEWS BOX

How Experts Identified New Wild Cat Species, The First In Over A Century

World.(Agency)

A previously unknown cat species has been identified in plain sight: at a wildlife sanctuary in Bolivia, where the small, spotted feline had been living for years. The discovery, reported Thursday in the journal Current Biology, marks the first time scientists have named and described a new living wild cat species in more than a century.

Bolivian biologist Paola Nogales-Ascarrunz, a National Geographic explorer and one of the study's lead authors, said a colleague who thought the cat looked unusual invited her to examine it at the sanctuary in the country's Yungas region, where she volunteered, a couple hours' drive from the administrative capital of La Paz. A local family had left it there after finding it in the forest and struggling to keep it as a pet. What struck her was its size, she said - smaller than an average house cat, the male, now about 10 years old, measures 18 inches (46 centimeters) from its head to the base of its tail and weighs just 3 pounds (1.4 kilograms). Its light brown coat is patterned with dark, leopardlike spots. Knowing other wild cats, it was peculiar," she said. "He really is tiny." To locate the cat in South America's feline family tree, researchers corom over 30 cats across locations including Colombia, Peru and Brazil. Bones and skins preserved in U.S. and European museums supplied DNA to fill the gaps where fresh samples were unavailable. The analysis revealed that the sanctuary cat belonged to a previously unrecognized species whose lineage split from its relatives about 1.4 million years ago. The last feline species formally identified was the Uruguayan pampas cat in 1923. During naturalist expeditions in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, this cat was never collected and the species was never properly described," Nogales-Ascarrunz said.

Resignations, Slowdown Calls: 10 Days That Changed The Course Of AI

San Francisco.(Agency)

For years, the race to build ever-more powerful artificial intelligence followed a well-worn Silicon Valley principle: move fast and break things.

But in a series of cascading events over a 10-day stretch, the largest AI labs found themselves reeling as their own creations threatened to break humanity itself. An Anthropic researcher quit the firm, warning that the pace of AI development poses an existential threat, possibly within a decade. Another researcher at the firm said the odds of human extinction exceeded 10 per cent. Reports emerged of swarms of AI agents colluding, breaching computer systems and evading safeguards. In a rare show of unity, the CEOs of rivals Anthropic, OpenAI, Google's DeepMind, Microsoft and xAI called to slow the development of increasingly capable AI systems. Not since the invention of the nuclear bomb more than 80 years ago has humanity grappled so seriously with its own demise, according to some AI safety advocates and researchers. At a New York luncheon in December 2025, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman was asked if, as leader of a powerful AI company, he felt like physicist J Robert Oppenheimer, who led US development of the atomic bomb. Reflecting on the parallels, he said AI's impact "is going to transform the trajectory of human history over a long period of time." But, he said, he felt the weight of responsibility. At the centre of the debate underway is the conviction that these machines can, and even must, build more capable versions of themselves, with no human intervention, to reach a lofty goal known as artificial general intelligence, or AGI. Researchers earlier this month warned that AGI was far more imminent than previously believed and could come in as few as three years, launching a wave of concern from politicians and tech leaders about AI systems.

US-Iran war: How faulty intel, old images and AI led to deadly school strike in Minab

The school was located at a site that had once been part of a military compound. But the area had later been separated from the military facility by walls and was operating openly as a school.

world.(Agency)

A US missile strike on an Iranian school that killed more than 120 children in February was the result of a chain of intelligence failures, outdated imagery and excessive reliance on artificial intelligence, according to a report by Bloomberg.

The outlet reported how the US military identified, assessed and approved the target before two Tomahawk missiles struck the Shajarah Tayyebah Elementary School in Minab on February 28. Pentagon investigators found that faulty intelligence and dated imagery contributed to the strike, while some personnel relied heavily on AI-generated assessments during the targeting

process. How the school became a US target The school was located at a site that had once been part of a military compound. But the area had later been separated from the military facility by walls and was operating openly as a school. According to Bloomberg's reporting, the rapid pace of the US air campaign left military personnel with less time to verify targets. The US had struck more than 1,000 targets during the first 24 hours of its assault on Iran, adding pressure to the targeting process. At the same time, cuts to personnel involved in protecting civilians created additional gaps in the process. US Central Command personnel reportedly also relied heavily on Palantir's Maven Smart System, an AI-enabled intelligence platform. Investigators found that some personnel appeared to expect the system to identify stale or contradictory information rather than treating those issues as requiring further human verification. The result was that information suggesting the site had changed from its earlier military use was not adequately accounted for before the strike.

Congo begins Ebola vaccinations for health workers in the epicentre of outbreak

BUNIA.(Agency)

Congo on Saturday began vaccinating healthcare staff against Ebola in Bunia, the epicenter of the fastest-growing outbreak of the disease in history as they are "particularly exposed and deeply involved in the response," the provincial governor said. Health workers and other front-line workers in the Ebola response are being prioritized to receive the Ervebo vaccine that was effective in past Ebola outbreaks caused by a different, more common type of virus. Clinical trials are ongoing to find a licensed vaccine for the current outbreak, caused by the Bundibugyo virus, which has no licensed vaccine or treatment. The rollout is targeting the Bunia and Mongbwalu zones in Ituri province, health authorities said Saturday. Both areas are among the hardest-hit by the virus. "Our collective duty is to protect life. Launching this

vaccination drive for front-line staff in Ituri is not an arbitrary choice, as these workers are particularly exposed and deeply involved in the response," the military governor of Ituri, Maj. Gen. Gaby Kasongo Mulumba, said Saturday. The campaign in Ituri and North Kivu is expected to cover 20,000 front-line workers over a period of six to nine months. As of Saturday, the country had recorded 7,541 confirmed cases, including 3,639 deaths, according to government figures, while 1,823 people have recovered. The outbreak is concentrated in Ituri province and is known to be the deadliest of all past 17 Ebola outbreaks in the country.

The outbreak is spreading under extremely difficult conditions, fueled by insecurity, displacement, a health workers' strike and intense population movements. The World Health

Organization has said it remains out of control and is on track to surpass the 2014-2016 West Africa Ebola outbreak, the deadliest on record, which killed more

receive it," he said. "Some people here had already received the previous vaccine. I received it myself, because it was mandatory." Another front-line health

worker, Dr. Jean Paul Uzele, who was vaccinated with Ervebo during the 10th Ebola outbreak, said it was unclear to him whether he should get vaccinated again. "If it arrives, we will receive it too," he said. "But the question is whether we need to be vaccinated a second time."

Last month, the Ervebo vaccine was rolled out in Kisangani in the Tshopo province. The campaign was expected to cover 14 health zones in Tshopo, Bas-Uele and Haut-Uele provinces. The use of Ervebo is taking place in a specific scientific context. The vaccine is licensed for use against Ebola virus disease caused by the Zaire strain — a different, more common type of Ebola virus.



than 11,000 people, primarily in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Dr. Jeannot Elua, whom The Associated Press met at a health facility in Bunia, said the vaccine was "beneficial." "We healthcare workers don't really have a choice: we are going to

Syria says arrested Assad-era general who led attacks on rebels

DAMASCUS.(Agency)

Syrian authorities on Saturday said they arrested a general who served under the rule of ousted president Bashar al-Assad, saying he led operations against formerly rebel-held areas during the country's 13-year civil war. In a statement, security forces announced "the arrest of former Major General Ahmed Mohammad Ismail, a high-ranking commander in the Republican Guard of the former regime's army". Military records indicate that "he began his service as a platoon commander, then served as a company commander in the 2nd Battalion of the 101st Airborne Regiment. He was subsequently promoted, at the beginning of 2016, to Chief of Operations of the same regiment, and directly participated in

commanding military assaults on the cities of Aleppo and Daraa, as well as on Eastern Ghouta." Located near Damascus, Eastern Ghouta was a rebel stronghold during the civil war



until 2018, and the site of a major chemical attack five years prior. US intelligence says more than 1,000 people were killed with sarin nerve gas in the suburb of the Syrian capital Damascus, in 2013 during Syria's civil war. The attack was attributed to

the Syrian government under the rule of Bashar al-Assad, who was toppled in late 2024. The government at the time denied involvement and blamed rebels. Since Assad was overthrown in December 2024, Syria's new Islamist authorities have arrested dozens of former security officials, while trials began in April. Earlier this month Syrian authorities said they had arrested nine former pilots including three generals accused of taking part in lethal bombings of towns and villages under Assad's rule. Syria sentenced Bashar al-Assad, his brother Maher al-Assad, and five other security officials to death in absentia in August for atrocities committed during the civil war. The former president fled Syria as his government fell and is believed to be living in Russia.

US issues West Asia travel advisory, urges Americans to reconsider travel amid Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

The United States on Saturday urged Americans to reconsider travel to and through West Asia amid heightened regional tensions, warning of possible rapid escalation, flight disruptions and attacks targeting US interests, as Yemen's Houthi fighters launched missile and drone attacks towards Saudi Arabia. In a worldwide caution issued by the US Department of State, Americans currently in West Asia were advised to exercise heightened vigilance and remain prepared for possible flight cancellations, airspace closures and other travel disruptions. The department also warned that Iran and groups supportive of Tehran could target US interests, businesses and institutions overseas. "Due to tensions in the Middle East, the security environment remains complex with the potential for unforeseen escalation," the State Department

said in its advisory. The warning came as Saudi Arabia reported that a ballistic missile launched by Yemen's Houthis towards Riyadh was intercepted. The Saudi-led coalition also said the Houthis attempted to target civilian

local laws concerning social media activity. The State Department said Iranian missiles and drones have previously targeted cities, infrastructure, airports, military bases, diplomatic facilities and energy installations in Saudi Arabia. It also warned that falling debris from intercepted projectiles could pose a risk. US government employees in Saudi Arabia face additional restrictions, including a prohibition on travel within 20 miles of the Yemen border. Special authorisation is required for travel to Jizan, Asir, Najran and Qatif. The department also warned that commercial flights from Saudi Arabia remain operational but have faced significant disruptions amid the conflict. Meanwhile, Yemen remains under a Level 4 - Do Not Travel advisory, with the State Department citing terrorism, armed conflict, kidnapping, unrest and other security risks.



infrastructure in Bisha, Taif, Farasan and Yanbu. For Saudi Arabia, the US Department of State has maintained a Level 3 - Reconsider Travel advisory. The department cites the risk of Iranian drone and missile attacks targeting American interests, armed conflict, terrorism, exit bans and

US military says it killed four in strike on alleged drug-smuggling boat in the Caribbean

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

The U.S. military attacked a boat suspected of being used to smuggle drugs in the Caribbean Sea on Saturday, killing four people, as the Trump administration continues its monthslong campaign against alleged traffickers in Latin America.

The latest attack brings the number of people who have been killed in boat strikes by the U.S. military to at least 231 in 69 strikes since the Trump administration began targeting those it calls "narcoterrorists" almost a year ago. As with most of the military's statements on strikes in the eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea, U.S. Southern Command said it targeted the alleged drug traffickers



along known smuggling routes. The military did not provide evidence that the vessel was ferrying drugs. A video posted on X showed an image of what appeared to be a moving boat followed by a flash. The Trump administration is pursuing deals with allied nations to extend its offensive to land across multiple Latin American countries. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said during a visit to Panama last month that Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras had agreed to allow the U.S. to carry out joint military operations against criminal groups on their soil. Guatemala denied reaching such a deal. Ecuador launched similar missions with the U.S. in March. President Donald Trump has said the U.S. is in "armed conflict" with cartels in Latin America and has justified the attacks as a necessary escalation to stem the flow of drugs into the United States and fatal overdoses claiming American lives. But his administration has offered little evidence to support its claims of killing smugglers.

France's debt climbs to highest since 1978: ministry

PARIS.(Agency)

France's debt mountain is growing and will this year be at its highest level since 1978 because of a soaring deficit, the country's finance ministry said Saturday. A ministry source told reporters the public debt would reach 119.3 percent of GDP in 2026 and 121.7 percent in 2027 -- more than double the 60-percent-of-GDP reference limit EU member countries are required to aim for. Those figures are unprecedented since 1978, according to France's statistics institute Insee. The source said the rise in France's debt was "automatic" as "a consequence of a deficit that remains high".

France is the third most indebted country in the eurozone, behind only Greece and Italy. In Spain, debt passed below 100 percent of GDP in July, and Portugal got its debt to below 90 percent of GDP in 2025. Under EU rules, the public deficit -- the annual shortfall of revenue to spending -- is meant to be no more than three percent of GDP. But last year, it came in at 5.1 percent of GDP, and the government forecasts it will hit

5.4 percent this year. France, which has been under special EU monitoring for the past two years because of those high figures, expects its deficit to drop to five percent next year -- when it holds elections to choose its next president and government. The government



has submitted its draft 2027 budget measures to an independent fiscal watchdog, the High Council of Public Finances (HCFP), to evaluate their viability in macroeconomic terms. Prime Minister Sebastian Lecornu, as he outlined the draft budget Thursday, said the government planned to make adjustments

and cuts worth 54 billion euros (\$62 billion) in the 2027 budget. But with elections on the horizon, he left it to parliament to decide some of the more sensitive measures, such as a government proposal to reduce tax breaks for pensioners. The head of the parliament's finance committee, Eric Coquerel of the hard-left France Unbowed (LFI) party, has already objected that budget cuts will hit all parts of the population indiscriminately -- and thus hit the poorest hardest. But in an interview with the daily Le Parisien, the head of the HCFP said there was still time to correct course. "The crisis is neither certain nor guaranteed -- nor is it the only outcome," said Amelie de Montchalin. "France is not doomed, provided the choices made are swift and responsible," she argued. The growth forecast for 2026 has recently been revised down, with the French economy hit by weak consumer spending and, more recently, the surge in energy prices from the US-Israeli war against Iran.