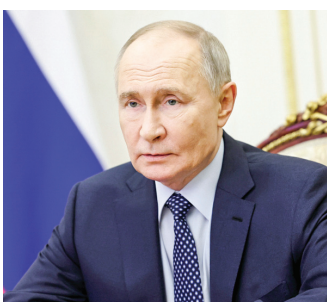




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KHARGE QUESTIONS  
MODI GOVT'S CHINA  
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# NO PROGRESS WITHOUT VOICE OF GLOBAL SOUTH: PM MODI

PM underscores the need for credible reforms in global governance

AGENCIES  
ACCRA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said a strong India will contribute to a more stable and prosperous world as he pushed for credible and effective reforms in global governance in the wake of changing circumstances.

In his address to the Parliament in Ghana, Modi also said that progress cannot come without giving voice to the Global South.

"In these times of global uncertainty, India's democratic stability shines as a ray of hope. India's rapid progress is a catalyst for global growth. As the world's largest democracy, India is a pillar of strength for the world. A strong India will contribute to a more stable and prosper-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, ahead of his address to the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, in Accra on Thursday. ANI

ous world," the Prime Minister said.

Noting that India is the fastest-growing emerging

economy, Modi said that on the foundations of stable polity and governance, India will soon become the

third-largest economy. "We already contribute nearly 16% to global growth. Our demography

is paying its dividend. India now has the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem. India is an innovation and technology hub, where global companies want to converge," he said.

The Prime Minister underlined that the world order created after World War II is changing fast. "The revolution in technology, the rise of the Global South, and the shifting demographics are contributing to its pace and scale," he said.

"The world is also facing new and complex crises such as climate change, pandemics, terrorism and cybersecurity. Institutions created in the last century are struggling to respond. The changing circumstances demand credible and effective reforms in global governance," he added.

## Fewer House disruptions have resulted in increased work productivity: Birla

AJITH MAINDOLA  
GURUGRAM

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday said that frequent disruptions in Parliament have reduced significantly, resulting in increased work productivity and meaningful discussions. Inaugurating the first National Conference of Chairpersons of Urban Local Bodies of States and Union Territories in Manesar in Haryana, the Lok Sabha Speaker said that sessions lower House go on till late night and debates take place for a long time which shows that the democratic culture is maturing and becoming responsible.

Ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, Birla also urged all political parties to reduce disruptions in House proceedings and asserted it is time to change past practices.

Parliament's Monsoon Session is scheduled to begin on July 21 and continue



till August 21, a week longer than the original plan to conclude on August 12.

He called upon the urban local bodies to hold regular meetings, develop strong committee systems and adopt well-organised processes along with increasing people's participation to further strengthen democracy at the grassroots level.

Emphasising the importance of incorporating well-established democratic practices such as Question Hour and Zero Hour in ULBs, Birla told the delegates that such provisions in Parliament have played a vital role in holding the ex-

## All-party meet on July 19

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

The Central government will convene an all-party meeting on July 19, ahead of the monsoon session, said Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday.

Rijiju said: "The Central government called an all-party meeting on July 19 regarding the monsoon session of Parliament. The monsoon session of Parliament is starting from July 21 and will run till August 21."

There will be no Parliament sittings on August 13 and 14 due to Independence Day celebrations.

Opposition leaders to convene a special session of Parliament upon the arrival of all-party delegations to discuss various issues, es-

## Mother, son found in Lajpat Nagar home with throat slit

Double murder sends shockwaves across Delhi

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

A 42-year-old woman and her 14-year-old son were murdered by slitting their throats on Wednesday night, sending shockwave across Delhi. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) South East, Hemant Tiwari said a PCR call was received at 9:43 p.m. on July 2 at the police station when a 44-year-old man reported that his wife and son were not responding to his calls. The door was closed, and there were blood stains at the gate and on the stairs.

Upon receiving the call, the PCR and investigative officer reached the location where caller Kuldeep informed that there were visible blood stains on the staircase and his wife and son are not answering his calls.

Meanwhile, the SHO also reached the spot and the gate was forcibly opened. Inside the premises, the dead bodies of a woman and a boy were found.

The victims were identified as 42-year-old Ruchika Sewani, who operates a garment shop along with his



husband in the Lajpat Nagar area, and their 14-year-old son Krish who was a student of Class 10th.

The DCP said Ruchika's body was found with the throat slit in the bedroom, while the body of her 14-year-old son was recovered from the bathroom. The police have apprehended the main accused Mukesh, who is a resident of Bihar's Hajipur. He was apprehended from a train by the UP police at the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay station.

## Killings an 'act of revenge' by family help

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

In an "act of revenge", a 24-year-old man killed his employer's wife and teenage son at their home in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar after the woman allegedly scolded him publicly for not repaying a loan of around Rs 40,000, police on Thursday said.

The man, identified as Mukesh Kumar, worked as a helper at Kuldeep Sewani's garment shop in the Lajpat Nagar market. Kumar would also transport garment.

The accused, a native of Bihar's Hajipur, was nabbed by Uttar Pradesh Railway Police from a train while he was trying to flee, police said.

Both were killed with a sharp weapon, he added.

Mukesh was working

## Two days after rollout, Delhi govt rolls back policy on EoL vehicles

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Merely two days after its rollout, the Delhi government has put its End-of-Life (EoL) vehicle impounding on hold, which involved a ban on providing fuel to diesel vehicles older than 10 years and petrol vehicles older than 15 years.

Amid the backlash from opposition and public outcry, Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa confirmed that the



city will not impound old vehicles for now and formally wrote to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to suspend the policy.

Sirsa raised concerns over the Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras, saying they are not functioning properly.

In a letter to the Commission, Delhi Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa wrote that the implementation of this direction, which came into effect July 1, 2025, has

revealed "certain issues" that must be addressed before they are fully implemented.

At a press conference, Sirsa raised concerns over the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, saying they are not functioning properly.

He pointed out issues like technical glitches, non-working sensors, and the failure to identify High Security Registration Plate (HSRP) plates.

## RBI asks banks not to impose fine on home loan switch

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

In a major relief for borrowers, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that banks and other regulated lenders will no longer be allowed to impose pre-payment charges on loans taken by individuals for purposes other than business.



## India and US agree on 10-year framework on defence, strategic ties

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Defence minister Rajnath Singh and his American counterpart Pete Hegseth have agreed to firm up a 10-year framework to further expand defence and strategic ties between India and the US.

The decision on the defence framework was men-

tioned in a Pentagon statement that was released on Wednesday, a day after Singh and US Defence Secretary Hegseth held a phone conversation.

"Secretary Hegseth and Minister Singh agreed to sign the next 10-year US-India Defence Framework when they next meet this year," it said.

It said the two sides dis-



cussed pending major US defence sales to India and the imperative of close defence industrial cooperation

between the two countries. "Secretary Hegseth emphasised the priority the United States places on India as its key defence partner in South Asia," the Pentagon said.

It said the two leaders reviewed the "considerable progress" both countries have made toward achieving the defence goals set out

## Farmers in debt trap, says Rahul

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday alleged that farmers are sinking "deeper" into debt every day and stated that this system is "killing" farmers quietly, but relentlessly, while Modi ji who promised to "double" farmer's income is "busy" watching his own PR spectacle.

DETAILS P2

PANDAVSHEELA IN HIMACHAL CRIES OUT IN SILENCE



After relentless rains-triggered landslides, residents of Pandavsheel, a remote village in Mandi district, have been left to fend for themselves. REPORT ON P2

MANOJ JOSHI  
EDGBASTON

As Shubman Gill batted on many a record tumbled. Monumental records of Rahul Dravid, Sunil Gavaskar and Sachin Tendulkar were all broken in a single day on Thursday. The English crowd could only watch and applaud. What would you call such a performance? A marvel? A historic feat?

Gill became the first Indian captain to score a



## HOW INDIA CAN WIN

The bowlers must now target each English batter smartly. Zak Crawley can be tested with deliveries angled in; Ben Duckett should be tied down with a leg-side field, a play that worked well during the Rakjot Test. Joe Root's footwork remains tentative early in his innings, so varying lengths could pay dividends. A double-spin attack might prove effective in unsettling Harry Brook. India have already shown they can win without Jasprit Bumrah — after all, they clinched the Champions Trophy recently without him.

Gill's heroics have not only rewritten the record books but have also reignited India's hopes for another famous overseas victory.



# FARMERS SINKING INTO DEBT, NO MSP GUARANTEE: RAHUL SLAMS CENTRE

In a post on X, Cong leader Rahul says 767 farmers died by suicide in Maharashtra in 3 months, blames govt for apathy.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday alleged that farmers are sinking “deeper” into debt every day and stated that this system is “killing” farmers quietly, but relentlessly, while Modi ji who promised to “double” farmer’s income is “busy” watching his own PR spectacle.

In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi cited a media report that claimed 767 farmers in Maharashtra have taken their own lives in just three months. “Imagine... in just 3 months, 767 farmers in Maharashtra have taken their own lives. Is this just a statistic? No. These are 767 shattered homes. 767 families that will never recover. And the government? Silent. Watching with indifference”.

Rahul Gandhi highlighted that, “Farmers are sinking



deeper into debt every day—seeds are expensive, fertilizers are expensive... but there’s no guarantee of MSP. When they demand loan waivers, they are ignored”

He alleged, “But those with billions? Their loans are easily waived by the Modi government. Just look at today’s news—Anil Ambani’s 48,000 crore SBI “fraud.””

“Modi ji promised to double farmers’ income—today, the reality is that the lives of those who feed the nation are being cut in half. This system is killing farmers—quietly,

## No idea where Rahul got farmer suicide figures, will check: Maha Min

**Mumbai:** Maharashtra agriculture minister Manikrao Kokate on Thursday said he will have to check the figures of farmer suicides put out by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a social media post.

Earlier in the day, Gandhi attacked the Narendra Modi government over farmer suicides in Maharashtra, saying it remains indifferent to farmers’ plight even as they sink deeper into debt every day.

In a post on X in Hindi, the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha accused the gov-

ernment of ignoring farmers’ demands for a loan waiver and a legal guarantee for minimum support price (MSP) for crops. Gandhi also shared a screenshot of a news report which put the number of farmer suicides in Maharashtra in the first three months at 767.

“I am not associated with the Centre, I am part of the state government. I need to check this figure of farmer suicides. I don’t know where he [Gandhi] got these numbers,” Kokate told PTI Videos.

but relentlessly, while Modi ji is busy watching his own PR spectacle,” the Congress MP noted.

Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday, raised concerns over In-

dia’s growing dependence on “Made in China” products, calling it a serious threat to the nation’s agricultural backbone.

In a post on X, Rahul cited

a media report that claimed that India’s agricultural sector, the backbone of its economy, is facing a severe crisis due to foreign dependence on essential fertilisers. The country imports 80% of its specialty fertilisers from China, and the recent halt in supplies has sent shockwaves through the farming community.

“India is an agrarian country, and the farmer is the backbone of our economy. But today, that very backbone is bending under the weight of foreign dependence. India imports 80% of its specialty fertilisers from China, and now China has halted the supply,” he said.

Rahul Gandhi said that the farmers are already struggling with shortages of essential fertilisers like urea and DAP. The addition of specialty fertilisers to the list of scarce resources has further exacerbated the situation.

# Centre to convene all-party meet on July 19 ahead of Monsoon Session

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Central government will convene an all-party meeting on July 19, ahead of the Monsoon Session 2025, said Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday.

Rijiju said, “The central government called an all-party meeting on July 19 regarding the monsoon session of Parliament. The monsoon session of Parliament is starting from July 21 and will run till August 21.”

The Monsoon Session of Parliament will be held from July 21 to August 21. There will be no Parliament sittings on August 13 and 14 due to Independence Day celebrations.

Earlier in a post on X, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju wrote, “The Hon’ble President of India has approved the proposal of the Government to convene the Monsoon Session of Parliament from 21st July to 21st August, 2025. In view of the Independence Day celebrations, there will be no sittings on



the 13th and 14th of August.”

This comes amid the demand by Opposition leaders to convene a special session of Parliament upon the arrival of all-party delegations to discuss various issues, especially the developments that followed the ghastly Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The upcoming Monsoon session will be the first Parliament session following Operation Sindoor, which was launched by India on May 7 in response to a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pahalgam, which claimed 26 lives.

The Budget session of Parliament began on January 31 this year. The Budget Session saw the passage of significant legislation, including Waqf Amendment Bill. Rijiju held a press conference after the end of the

Budget Session, informing that the first part of the Budget Session yielded a total of 9 sittings of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. In the second part of the Session, there were 17 sittings of both Houses. During the entire Budget Session, in total, there were 26 sittings.

During the second part of the Session, Demands for Grants of individual Ministries of Railways, Jal Shakti and Agriculture & Farmers Welfare were discussed and voted in Lok Sabha.

In the end the Demands for Grants of the remaining Ministries/ Departments were put to the Vote of the House on Friday, the 21st of March, 2025. The related Appropriation Bill was also introduced, considered and passed by Lok Sabha on 21.03.2025 itself.

# Gurugram waste management row: HC notice to Haryana

TDG NETWORK  
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has issued a notice of motion to the Haryana government in response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) highlighting the worsening civic crisis in Gurugram, despite an estimated Rs 1800 crore being spent on sanitation and waste management over the past four years.

The PIL, filed by petitioner Gautam Dua, accuses the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) of gross mismanagement, alleging that streets remain littered, waste goes uncollected,

and key infrastructure is crumbling, even after such a large financial outlay. The petition calls for the annulment of contracts re-



lated to door-to-door solid waste collection, terming them “illegal, arbitrary, and unconstitutional.” Once

seen as a model for urban development, Gurugram is now facing mounting civic problems. Citing multiple media reports published be-

# Defence ministry clears capital projects worth over Rs 1 lakh crore

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The defence ministry on Thursday cleared capital acquisition of military hardware and platforms worth approximately Rs 1.05 lakh crore.

The procurement projects were cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

The DAC accorded approval for procurement of armoured recovery vehicles, electronic warfare system, integrated common inventory management system for the tri-services and

surface-to-air missiles, according to an official readout.

These procurements will provide higher mobility, effective air defence, better supply chain management and augment the operational preparedness of the armed forces, it said.

Approvals were also accorded for procurement of mine counter measure vessels, super rapid gun mount and submersible autonomous vessels. “These procurements will enable mitigation of potential risks posed to the naval and merchant vessels,” the ministry said.

# RSS’ three-day prant pracharaks’ meeting to begin from today

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Senior RSS pracharaks from 46 provinces will assemble at its office here next month to attend a three-day annual meeting to report and review the outcomes of the organisation’s training camps concluded in different parts of the country recently.

The meeting to be attended by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale will also discuss the year-long programmes to be organised to mark its centenary year starting from the Vijaydashmi this year.

“The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh’s (RSS) annual national level prant pracharak (provincial in-charge pracharak) meeting is scheduled to be held in ‘Keshav Kunj’, the RSS office in Delhi, from July 4 to July 6,” said Sunil Ambekar, the organisation’s national publicity and media department head, in a statement.

All prant pracharaks, sah prant pracharaks, kshetra pracharaks and sah kshetra pracharaks will attend this meet. The national organising secretaries of various RSS-inspired organisations will also be present at the meeting, said Ambekar.

“This meet will mainly be attended by Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat, Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale, all sah sarkaryavahs (joint general secretaries), including Dr Krishnagopal, CR Mukund, Arun Kumar, Ramdutt, Atul Limaye and Alok Kumar, all national level karya vibhag pramukhs (working vertical in-charges) and other executive council members,” he added.

The RSS chief will arrive for this meeting in Delhi on June 28, said Ambedkar.

As per RSS organisational structure, there are a total 11 ‘kshetras’ (regions) and 46 ‘prants’ (provinces).

# Caretaker, wife arrested for elderly woman’s murder in Guwahati

NIBIR DEKA  
ASSAM

A woman was found dead under suspicious circumstances inside a locked room in Guwahati’s Kharghuli locality on Wednesday morning, triggering concerns of foul play. The elderly lady aged 71 years was survived by a caretaker along with his wife.

According to ADCP (Central) Sambhavi Mitra, the city police received information about the murder around 6 AM.

The elderly woman, who had been living alone since the death of her husband

in 2001 and had no children, was found dead on her bed with injuries on her neck caused by a knife. The primary suspects were her live-in caretaker and his wife, who were staying in an adjacent room on the same premises.

Speaking to media, Sambhavi Mitra said, “we go the information in early morning that the victim was found dead.

Our OC and local police went to the spot and found that she was leaving alone with her caretaker and his wife.” As per police sources, Ratul had confession upon interrogation.

# Bihar elections: NDA’s alliance and political path

RAKESH KUMAR SINGH  
DELHI

The political heat for the 2025 Bihar Assembly elections is intensifying. This election is not just a battle for power but also a blend of social equations, promises of development, and alliance strategies. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is putting in all its efforts to further strengthen its hold in Bihar this time. The NDA’s strategy and the dynamics of its alliance are adding new colors to the state’s politics.

The NDA alliance in Bihar is a strong coalition comprising the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Janata Dal (United) [JD(U)], Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) [LJP(R)], Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM), and Rash-



triya Lok Morcha (RLM). According to sources, the NDA has almost finalized its seat-sharing formula: JD(U) is likely to get 102-103 seats, BJP 109-112 seats, Chirag Paswan’s LJP(R) 18-25 seats, Jitan Ram Manjhi’s HAM 6-7 seats, and Upendra Kushwaha’s RLM 4-5 seats. This distribution clearly shows that the NDA has considered each ally’s strength and social base.

This time, the NDA’s politics will focus on the ‘Women, Temple, and Modi’

(MMM) triad. The BJP is preparing to woo voters through the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his rallies, while on the other hand, Nitish Kumar’s JD(U) is devising a strategy centered on development and welfare schemes. The announcement of constructing a grand temple for Goddess Sita in Sitamarhi is an example of this, as it not only connects with religious sentiments but also promises to boost tourism and employment. This strategy aims not only to attract religious voters but also to promise economic development for Bihar.

Speaking of social equations, the NDA enjoys the support of Brahmins, Bhumihars, Kurmis, and

some Extremely Backward Castes (EBCs). Chirag Paswan has a strong hold over the Paswan community, while Nitish Kumar relies on the Kurmi and Koeri votes. However, when it comes to the votes of the Mallah and some Dalit communities, there is tough competition with the INDIA alliance. The NDA’s strategy is to keep its vote bank consolidated and bring along the smaller castes too.

Nonetheless, the NDA also faces significant challenges. Questions are being raised about Nitish Kumar’s health and age, which the opposition is trying to exploit. Despite this, the NDA alliance hopes to return to power on the strength of its unity and strategy.

# Buried homes, broken hope: Pandavsheelaa cries out in silence amid rain, landslides

ANURAG SHARMA  
MANDI

The residents of Pandavsheelaa, a remote village in the Janjehli region of Himachal Pradesh’s Mandi district, have been left to fend for themselves after relentless rains triggered landslides and widespread destruction beginning late on June 30.

Three days later, the village remains completely cut off from the rest of the state. Mobile networks are down, roads have collapsed, and

no relief team has reached the area. The village, once known for its peace and natural beauty, now stands as a grim symbol of abandonment.

Locals describe scenes of devastation—six to seven homes have been entirely buried under debris. Several cowsheds have collapsed, resulting in the loss of livestock crucial to the villagers’ livelihoods. In nearby Rushaad, two individuals remain missing, while the body of one deceased villager has been recovered.

Despite the gravity of the situation, no official from the district administration, local panchayat, or disaster response team has visited the area. Villagers say they have had no access to food, drinking water, or medical assistance since the disaster began.

In an emotional plea to local media, a woman from the village said, “Our village may be small, but we are still alive. We feel completely abandoned. Please, don’t wait for more deaths to take us seriously.”



*The situation has turned Pandavsheelaa into a “black zone”—not just off the grid, but seemingly off the radar of state authorities.*

The situation has turned Pandavsheelaa into a “black zone”—not just off the grid, but seemingly off the radar of state authorities. Residents have resorted to clearing debris by hand and rationing what little food remains. With each passing hour, anxiety is mounting.

This humanitarian crisis has raised serious concerns about disaster prepared-

ness in remote Himalayan regions, especially as climate change brings more extreme and unpredictable weather events. Local leaders and villagers are calling for immediate action, demanding emergency supply of food and clean drinking water, deployment of search and rescue teams for the missing, compensation for destroyed homes and

livestock and restoration of road access and mobile connectivity. Pandavsheelaa may be a small village, but its cries for help reflect a larger question: Do remote communities matter less when disaster strikes?

As one local put it: “We’re not asking for charity. We’re asking to be seen. To be helped. To be treated as human.”

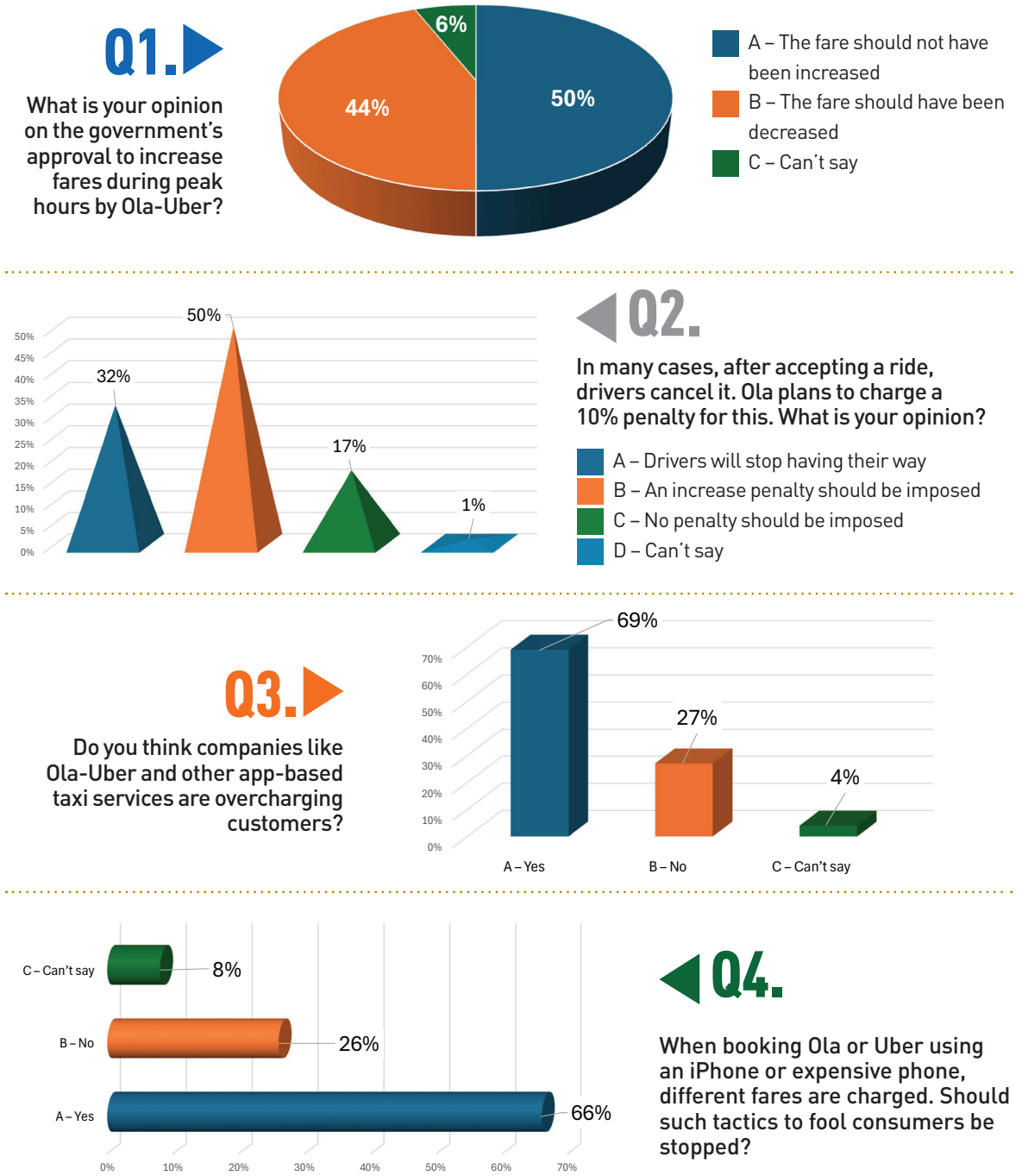
The silence from the authorities is now deafening. For the people of Pandavsheelaa, help cannot come soon enough.



THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON OLA UBER SURGE PRICING

69% believe app-based taxi services are overcharging customers

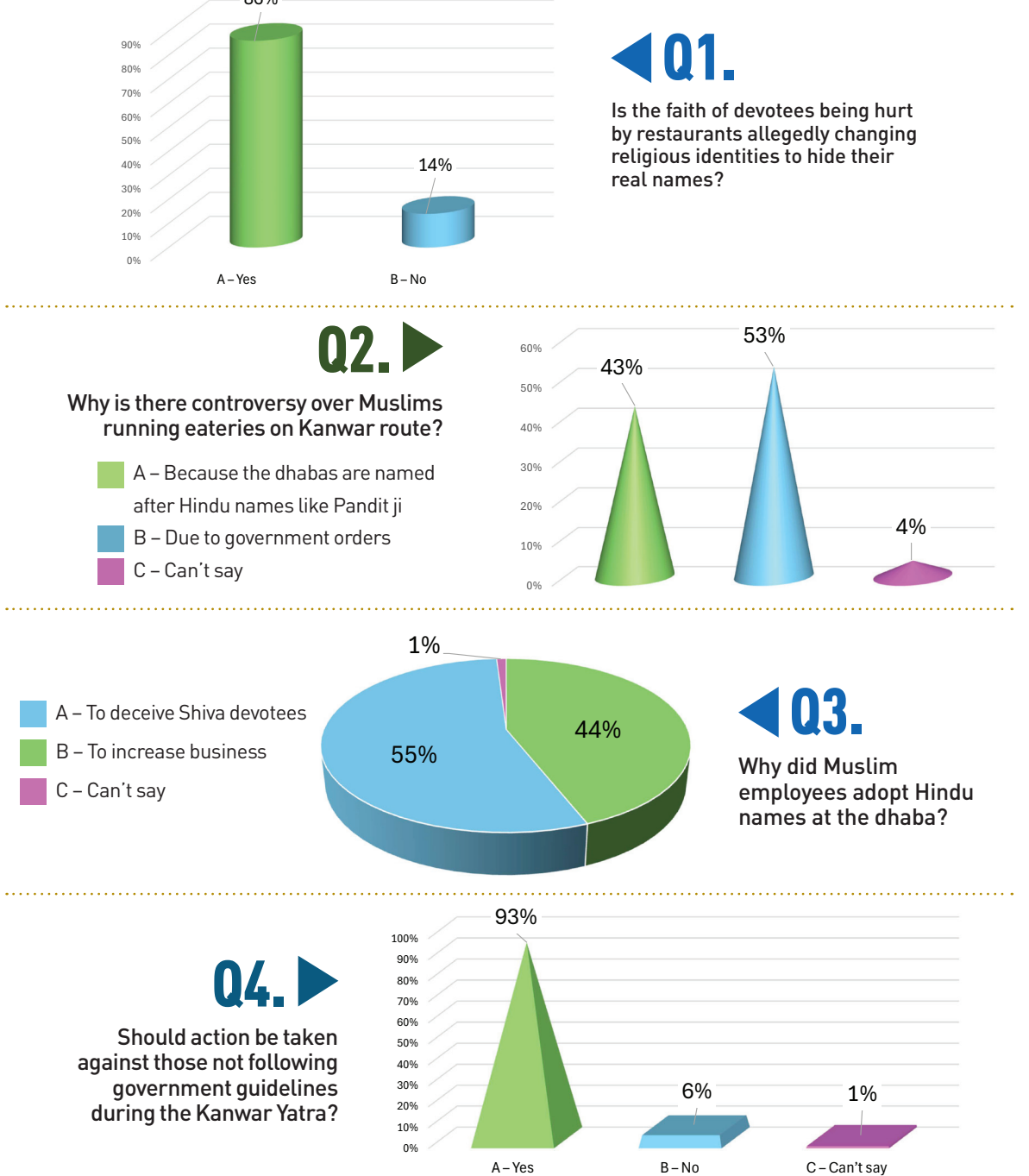
The Centre’s new Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines 2025 allow Ola and Uber to charge up to twice the base fare during peak hours and at least 50% during off-peak times. A Rs 100 penalty (10% of fare) applies to unjustified cancellations by drivers or passengers. States must adopt these norms within three months, with optional additions.



THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON MUZAFFARNAGAR DHABA CONTROVERSY

55% believe Muslims adopt Hindu names at dhabas to increase business

Ahead of the Kanwar Yatra, a controversy erupted in Muzaffarnagar after a dhaba worker, initially identifying as “Gopal,” was revealed to be Tajammul. Hindu groups’ identity checks led to a scuffle and police notices. Tajammul later admitted his employer forced him to use a Hindu name. The incident has sparked political uproar and demands for investigation.



## Fewer House disruptions

CONTINUED FROM P1

ecutive accountable and in systematically articulating public concerns.

Noting that short, irregular or ad-hoc municipal meetings undermine local governance, the Speaker advocated regular, structured sessions, formation of standing committees and extensive public consultation.

Like Parliament, ULBs too must avoid disruptions and have constructive and inclu-

sive discussions. Shri Birla said that urban transformation in cities like Gurugram reflects both economic vibrancy and democratic participation.

Gurugram’s journey from being rooted in India’s civilisational heritage to becoming a hub of innovation and enterprise demonstrates what can be achieved through coordinated efforts of governments and empowered local institutions.

Birla emphasised that with over 600 million peo-

ple projected to live in urban areas by 2030, the scale and scope of urban governance must evolve accordingly. He said urban local bodies must not be confined to the traditional roles of service delivery but contribute to nation building by emerging as true institutions of self-governance.

He urged the delegates to look at the conference as a platform for strengthening democracy and institutional development, moving beyond policy dialogue.

## No progress without Global South

CONTINUED FROM P1

He said progress cannot come without giving voice to the Global South. “We need more than slogans. We need action. That is why, during India’s G20 Presidency, we worked with the vision - One Earth, One Family, One Future,” he added.

“We put emphasis on Africa’s rightful place at the global high table. We are proud that the African Union became a permanent member of the G20 during our Presidency,” he said.

The Prime Minister said India “remains a committed partner” in Africa’s

development journey. “We support Africa’s Development Framework, Agenda 2063, to secure a bright and sustainable future for its people.”

“Africa’s goals are our priorities. Our approach is to grow together as equals. Our development partnership with Africa is demand-driven. It is focused on building local capacities and creating local opportunities. Our objective is not just to invest, but to empower,” he said.

In his address, PM Modi said it was a privilege to be in Ghana - a land that radiates the spirit of democracy, dignity, and resilience.

“When we look at Ghana, we see a nation that shines with courage, that rises above history, that meets every challenge with dignity and grace. Your commitment to democratic ideals and inclusive progress truly makes Ghana a beacon of inspiration for the entire African continent,” he said. Modi, who was conferred with ‘The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana’, the country’s national honour, said it was a deeply moving experience and he will always cherish it. “I dedicate it to the enduring friendship and shared values that bind India and Ghana,” he said.

## No fine on home loan switch

CONTINUED FROM P1

The RBI observed that some lenders were using restrictive clauses in loan contracts to discourage borrowers from switching to other lenders offering better interest rates or services.

As per the new guidelines released on Wednesday, these directions will come into force for all loans and advances sanctioned or renewed on or after January 1, 2026. This rule applies whether the loan has a co-obligant or not.

The RBI has clarified that, no pre-payment charges will be levied on floating rate loans taken by individuals

for non-business purposes. The new rule will be applicable to all commercial banks (excluding payment banks), co-operative banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), and All India Financial Institutions.

The central bank also added that this holds true irrespective of whether the loan is being repaid in full or in part and regardless of the source of funds used for the repayment.

RBI stated that there is no minimum lock-in period for availing this benefit. Even in the case of dual or special rate loans (a mix of fixed and floating rates).

## All-party meet on July 19

CONTINUED FROM P1

pecially the developments that followed the ghastly Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The upcoming session will be the first Parliament sitting following Operation Sindoor, which was launched by India on May 7 in response to a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pahalgam, which claimed 26 lives.

The Budget session of Parliament began on January 31 this year. The Budget Session saw the passage of significant legislation, including Waqf Amendment Bill.

Rijiju held a press conference after the end of the Budget Session, informing that the first part of the Budget Session yielded

a total of 9 sittings of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. In the second part of the Session, there were 17 sittings of both Houses. During the entire Budget Session, in total, there were 26 sittings.

During the second part of the Session, Demands for Grants of individual Ministries of Railways, Jal Shakti and Agriculture & Farmers Welfare were discussed and voted in Lok Sabha. In the end the Demands for Grants of the remaining Ministries/ Departments were put to the Vote of the House on Friday, the 21st of March, 2025. The related Appropriation Bill was also introduced, considered and passed by Lok Sabha on 21.03.2025 itself.

## ‘An act of revenge’ by family help

CONTINUED FROM P1

with the family for the past 3-4 years in their shop and had an access to their house as the family used to store their products in a house godown, police said.

Though he was employed as a shop help in Lajpat Nagar, he also assisted Kuldeep and Ruchika to drive their vehicle, they said.

Kuldeep and Ruchika jointly ran the business

Another police officer privy to the investigation said, “Prima facie the incident took place between 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm on Wednesday. The accused

was scolded by the woman during the day which appears to have triggered the act of revenge. It seems that he first slit the throat of the woman and then killed the boy.”

A source said that Mukesh was under pressure after borrowing over Rs 40,000 from his employer and being reprimanded for not working properly and taking leaves repeatedly.

“Mukesh had taken an eight-day leave to visit his village for his engagement, but he failed to return even after 25 days. Upon his return a few days ago, he again demanded more

money and additional leave, which led to a confrontation with his employers -- Kuldeep and Ruchika,” said the source.

The couple scolded him for his irregular behaviour and demanded that he return two mobile phones given to him along with the borrowed money, police said.

When Kuldeep was at his shop on Wednesday evening, Mukesh allegedly told him that he was going to the house godown to collect some cloth. Instead, he procured a sharp-edged weapon and went straight to the residence, they said.

## Shubhman, the Superman

CONTINUED FROM P1

double century on English soil, surpassing Dravid’s 23-year-old record of 217 at The Oval. He then went on to break Gavaskar’s 46-year-old mark of 221, which had remained the highest score by an Indian in England.

Not stopping there, Gill also overtook Tendulkar’s record of 241 — the highest by an Indian outside Asia. His monumental innings left the English bowling attack clueless and searching for answers. In the previous Test at Leeds, India’s lower-order batting had been a major concern, but this time the tail wagged fiercely, piling on the agony for England. Partnerships for the sixth and seventh wickets ensured that the hosts were pushed further on the back foot — something they likely hadn’t imagined in their wildest nightmares.

Gill battled with remarkable discipline, taking calculated risks only when Ben Stokes brought fielders up to apply pressure. On the first evening, his square

cuts were a treat to watch, while on Thursday his cover drives, straight drives, and reverse sweeps added more sparkle to his innings. He never lunged at the ball but

*Gill became the first Indian captain to score a double century on English soil, surpassing Dravid’s 23-year-old record of 217 at The Oval.*

let it come close, playing late — a hallmark of batting success in English conditions.

Supporting him were Ravindra Jadeja’s elegant drives and Washington Sundar’s deft leg-side manoeuvres, which ensured India posted a mammoth first-innings total. With the pitch already showing signs of turn before tea on Day 2 — highlighted by Joe Root dismissing Sundar — India’s hopes of forcing a result have brightened considerably. With two quality spinners in the ranks, the visitors can sense an opportunity.

## Delhi rolls back policy on EoL vehicles

CONTINUED FROM P1

He also noted that the system has not been integrated with NCR data and has not been implemented in cities like Gurgaon, Faridabad, and Ghaziabad.

“We have informed them that the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras that were installed are not a robust system, and there are still many challenges with them. Technical glitches, non-working sensors, and malfunctioning speakers,

all these challenges are there. It has not been integrated with the NCR data yet. It is not able to identify HSRP plates. We also said that such a law has not been implemented in Gurgaon, Faridabad and Ghaziabad and the rest of NCR till now,” Sirsa said.

Just a day earlier, only 80 end-of-life vehicles were impounded on the first day of Delhi’s newly enforced fuel ban targeting old vehicles. Officials attributed the low number to fewer

vehicles showing up at fuel stations.

According to official records, Delhi has around 60.14 lakh deregistered End-of-Life (EoL) vehicles, with a significant number still in active use.

Data from the VAHAN database shows the city has over 62 lakh EoL vehicles, including 41 lakh two-wheelers and 18 lakh four-wheelers. This means nearly 62 lakh vehicles would have been affected by the rule.

## India and US agree on defence ties

CONTINUED FROM P1

in the February 2025 joint statement by President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

“The two discussed pending major US defence sales to India and the imperative of close defence industrial cooperation between the two countries,” the Pentagon readout said without providing further details.

In the phone conversation

on Tuesday, Singh urged Hegseth to expedite the delivery of GE F404 engines to power the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, people familiar with the matter said.

Singh also pitched for early finalisation of a proposed deal between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and US defence major GE Aerospace for joint production of F414 jet engines in India, they said.

The delay in the supply of F404 engines by GE Aero-

space has resulted in HAL missing the deadline to supply Tejas Mark 1A aircraft to the Indian Air Force.

“They agreed to further build upon the momentum of this critical and mutually beneficial partnership across all its pillars such as interoperability, integration of defence industrial supply chains, logistics sharing, increased joint military exercises and cooperation with other like-minded partners,” it said.



# 'HYDRO' GANJA BIG CHALLENGE, SAYS MAHA CM AMID ANTI-DRUG CRACKDOWN

**TDG NETWORK**  
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Thursday that 'hydro' ganja is proving to be a big challenge for the government and asserted that the Centre and state have intensified their fight against the drug business.

Replying to a calling attention motion in the legislative council, he also raised concerns over synthetic drugs and said that even terminal cancer patients are being used as drug carriers.

The number of cases has increased because of the government's anti-drug crackdown, he said.

It was found that ports in Gujarat and the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), the country's largest container port located in Maharashtra's Raigad district, were used to bring in drugs concealed in cargo consignments, he said.



"Scanners that can detect concealed drugs have been installed in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Randomised checking of shipments from certain countries, where there is a possibility of drug supply, is being done," he said.

Five days ago, two Indonesian nationals were arrested with 21 kg of hydroponic ganja valued at Rs 21.55 crore in Mumbai, he said.

Hydroponic ganja refers to cannabis plants grown without soil. This method gives growers precise con-

trol over the plant's environment, which can result in faster growth and higher yields.

Since drug peddlers secure bail and again resort to similar activities, the state government is amending the laws to book them under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, he said. Under MCOCA, it is difficult to get bail.

"Hydro ganja is proving to be a challenge. Thailand and the US have made it legal. So, hydro ganja is being pushed into the country through

*Replying to a calling attention motion in the legislative council, he also raised concerns over synthetic drugs and said that even terminal cancer patients are being used as drug carriers.*

courier services and other routes," Fadnavis said.

The CM highlighted the deportation of alleged drug cartel operator Naveen Chichkar from Malaysia to India in May. He said Chichkar had bought an island in Australia and acquired its citizenship.

Chichkar used to send hydroponic ganja from Thailand and the US through courier. He was arrested along with a few associated with the postal and Customs departments and two policemen, who have since been sacked," said the CM.

"The policy (of the government) is of zero tolerance (towards drugs)," Fadnavis said.

## YSRCP slams Telangana CM Naidu's derogatory remarks, 'anti-Dalit' actions

**RAJ KIRAN BATHULA**  
HYDERABAD

YSRCP former Minister Sake Sailajanath, along with YSRCP SC Cell Working President Kommuri Kanaka Rao and Party State General Secretary Jupudi Prabhakar, criticized Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for equating Sattenapalli's deceased Dalit, Singaiah, with a dog, calling it a vile display of casteist arrogance.

Speaking at the YSRCP Central Office in Tadepalli, Sailajanath highlighted Singaiah's wife, Lourdu Mary, who exposed suspicious circumstances surrounding her husband's death. She alleged that Singaiah was conscious after the accident but died under unclear conditions after being moved to an ambulance. She also claimed that Nara Lokesh's men intimidated her for speaking out, revealing Naidu's plot to defame Former CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Sailajanath condemned Naidu's 45-year



political career for its persistent use of derogatory rhetoric against Dalits. He cited incidents such as the Tenali police brutality, the Chandragiri assault on a Dalit woman, and the Mangalagiri road purification ritual as evidence of systemic anti-Dalit actions under Naidu's regime. He also questioned Naidu's accountability for deaths during the Godavari Pushkaralu (29 fatalities), the Kandukur roadshow (7 deaths), and the Guntur saree distri-

bution (3 women killed), events at which Naidu was present.

Jupudi Prabhakar criticized Naidu for resorting to diversionary politics to deflect attention from his unfulfilled promises, suppressing YSRCP's voice, and obstructing YS Jagan's public tours by denying permissions or providing unsafe helicopter landing sites.

Prabhakar condemned Naidu's "corpse politics," accusing him and Lokesh of spreading false propaganda against YS Jagan, including the use of artificial intelligence, driven by jealousy over Jagan's public support. He highlighted governance failures such as serving contaminated food to students, a cockroach found in Home Minister Anita's meal, and mortgaging public assets for loans. Prabhakar demanded answers regarding the Pushkaralu deaths and criticized the coalition government for betraying voters, cutting welfare programs like Thalli Ki Vandanam, and neglecting public welfare.

## Oppn to back govt on removal of judge Yashwant Varma

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Prominent opposition parties have given their in-principle approval to support the motion to remove Allahabad High Court judge Yashwant Varma and the process of collecting signatures could begin soon, Union minister Kiren Rijiju said on Thursday.

He said the government is yet to decide whether the motion would be brought in the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha.

For Lok Sabha, signatures of a minimum 100 MPs is required. For the Rajya Sabha, the requirement is the support of at least 50 MPs. He said the signatures will be collected after the government decides on the House where the motion will be brought.

The Monsoon session will commence from July 21 and end on August 21.

According to the Judges



(Inquiry) Act of 1968, once a motion to remove a judge is admitted in any of the houses, the speaker or the chairman, as the case may be, will constitute a three-member committee to investigate the grounds on which the removal (or, in popular term, impeachment) has been sought.

The committee consists of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) or a Supreme Court judge, the chief justice of one of the 25 high courts and a "distinguished jurist."

Rijiju said since the matter involves corruption in the judiciary, the government wants all political parties to

be on board.

On being asked about the report of the in-committee which proved the cash discovery incident at Justice Varma's official residence here, he said the report of the three-judge panel had not indicted Justice Varma and was meant to recommend future course of action as Parliament can only remove a judge.

A fire incident at Justice Varma's residence in the national capital in March, when he was a judge at the Delhi High Court, had led to the discovery of several burnt sacks of banknotes in the outhouse.

Though the judge claimed ignorance about the cash, the Supreme Court-appointed committee indicted him after speaking to a number of witnesses and recording his statement.

Then-CJI Sanjiv Khanna is believed to have prodded him to resign but Justice Varma dug in his heels.

## Patnaik credits Odisha's 5th rank in school grading to his govt's 5T

**ANAND SINGH**  
NEW DELHI

Former Odisha Chief Minister and Biju Janata Dal leader Naveen Patnaik congratulated the state on it earning fifth rank nationally in School Grading System, as per Performance Grading Index (PGI-2.0) report released by the Centre and said it was under his government's 5T initiative that transformed over 7,000 schools to unleash new aspirations for school students.

Patnaik took to X and wrote, "Glad to share that Odisha has earned 5th rank nationally in School Grading System, as per Performance Grading Index (PGI-2.0) Report released by Government of India. Odisha has achieved score of 595.6 and secured PRACHESTA-3 grade for the academic year 2023-24, up from 14th in 2019. The PGI 2.0 evaluates school edu-

cation through 73 indicators across two categories: Outcomes and Governance and Management."

The former Chief Minister highlighted: "Under our 5T initiative, we transformed about 7,000 schools to unleash new aspirations and open new horizons for school students."

The BJD chief said: "We always believed that New Odisha will be built by empowering every child with the power of education. Glad that the robust foundation for government school education helping students excel. Thank all the teachers, parents, administrators and support staff for the huge transformation."

Even VK Pandian, who is a close aide of Patnaik also said, "When 5T targets were being set up across sectors in 2019, CM Naveen Patnaik had stated that a credible 5T target in school education would be for Odisha to cross Kerala.

## Kharge questions Modi Govt's China policy

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday targeted the Modi government over reports of Chinese engineers exiting from a manufacturing plant in India and China placing restrictions on export of rare earth magnets, saying the government's "Chinese guarantee" has no expiry date.

He also questioned the government's silence on Chinese restrictions on supply of speciality fertilisers.

"Narendramodi ji, According to reports, China has withdrawn its officials from India's manufacturing sector. Is it not true that the Modi government, which has completely failed on 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', had forgotten Doklam and Galwan and rolled out 'red carpet' for Chinese companies and made it easier to issue visas



to Chinese citizens so that they could benefit from the PLI scheme?" he asked in a post in Hindi on X.

He was apparently referring to reports of Chinese engineers exiting Foxconn's iPhone plant in south India.

Claiming that China has imposed strict restrictions on export of rare earth magnets and minerals to India, which are extremely essential for automobiles, EV, defense and high security currency printing, he said, "Is it not true that the Modi government is not taking any action on this and the Chinese officials

have not even given official appointment or consent to the delegation of the Indian Automobile Industry?"

Noting that China has stopped exporting speciality fertilisers to India in the last two months while continuing to supply to other countries, he said India imports 80 percent of speciality fertilisers from China, and these are important for increasing the yield of fruits, vegetables and other profitable crops.

"Will this not harm our crores of farmers, who are already facing a crisis of Urea and DAP fertilisers?" he asked.

"Your government's 'Chinese guarantee' has no expiry date. You gave a 'clean chit' to China five years ago, after the sacrifice of 20 brave soldiers of Galwan. Today China is taking full advantage of it and it seems that we are watching helplessly," the Congress president further alleged.

## Centre clarifies separate ST status for Thadou & Kuki tribes

**NIBIR DEKA**  
MANIPUR

In response to an unstarred question raised by MP Dr. Angomcha Bimol Akojam in the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has provided clarity on the inclusion of various tribes in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list of Manipur, specifically regarding the category "Any Kuki Tribe."

Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, Durgadas Uikey, stated that the Scheduled Tribes list of Manipur includes both "Thadou" and "Any Kuki Tribes" as separate entries. Thadou is listed at Entry 27, while "Any Kuki Tribes" is listed

at Entry 33 in the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order for Manipur.

Dr. Akojam's question sought details on whether tribes such as Aimol, Anal, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kom, Lamkang, Paite, Simte, Zou, Vaiphei, and others are included under the "Any Kuki Tribe" classification or are listed separately. The Ministry replied that the complete ST list is available in the annexure but did not specify the individual placement of each tribe mentioned.

Regarding the distinction, the Ministry noted that Thadou is a recognized Scheduled Tribe with a distinct entry in the

list, and "Any Kuki Tribes" is also recognized separately. While the exact ethnographic or administrative criteria distinguishing these categories were not elaborated upon, the constitutional listing treats them as two separate tribal identities.

The clarification holds significance amid ongoing debates around tribal identity, representation, and categorization in Manipur—particularly in the context of socio-political tensions and demands for clearer recognition of community affiliations.

Speaking to NewsX, T. Michael Lamjathang Haokip from the Thadou

Students' Association welcomed the decision. "This clear distinction by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs affirms what we have been saying for long—that Thadou is a distinct tribe, separate from AKT—and it is crucial for policymakers and the public to recognize this reality to ensure fair representation, community understanding, and peacebuilding efforts in Manipur," added Michael. He further urged the media to refrain from labeling all non-Naga hill communities as "Kuki" or "Kuki-Zo," as this imposes an identity not accepted by everyone.

## I.N.D.I.A bloc plans court move, rallies in Bihar over rolls revision

**ANAND SINGH**  
NEW DELHI

Even as a delegation of INDIA bloc leaders met the Election Commission over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter rolls in Bihar, sources on Thursday revealed that the alliance partners may go to court and also launch state wide campaign against the poll panels steps, which they allege that it will leave over two crore voters may be disenfranchised by this exercise being done just ahead of assembly elections later this year.

A source from the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance or INDIA bloc revealed that if the poll panel does not agree with their demands then they will have to knock the Court's door over the issue.

He also stated that INDIA bloc partners in Bihar, which comprises of the Congress, Lalu Prasad Yadav-led Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Left parties may also hold discus-



sions to decide on the joint campaign in the state over the poll panel's plans to carry out SIR of voter rolls.

He stated that in the coming days, when the alliance partners meet again they will chalk out strategy to take on the poll panel exercise by planning state wide protest or through the joint rallies to highlight the issue.

The leaders feel that the exercise of the Commission is aimed to deny the right to vote to poor, SC/STs, migratory people in the state, as they will have to make their submission within a month time to get their names enrolled in the voter list. The source said

that in the coming days, the alliance partners of the Mahagathbandhan will decide on the strategy and reveal it with the people.

The source further stated that it is however, too early to reveal the entire plan of the Mahagathbandhan till the time meeting happens. On Wednesday, 11 parties delegation met with the CEC Gyanesh Kumar and other elections commissioners for over three hours and alleged that it will leave over two crore voters may be disenfranchised by this exercise being done just ahead of assembly elections later this year.

## Man posing as delivery agent rapes techie at home

**TDG NETWORK**  
PUNE

An unidentified man allegedly raped a 22-year-old IT professional after entering her flat in Pune city by posing as a courier delivery executive, and was yet to be nabbed nearly 24 hours after the crime.

He clicked a selfie using the woman's phone in which her back and a part of his face

are seen, and left a message warning that he had taken her pictures and would release them on social media if she reported the incident, police said.

"I will come again," the message read, according to police.

The incident took place at a housing society in Kondhwa area of the city at around 7.30 pm on Wednesday, said Deputy Commissioner of

Police (Zone 5) Rajkumar Shinde.

The woman, who works in a private firm, was alone at home as her brother had gone out of town, the official said.

The accused told her he was a courier delivery person and showed her what looked like a bank-related document, she told police.

He asked for a pen to sign a document, and as she turned

her back on him, he stepped inside the apartment and latched the door before forcing himself on her, as per the complaint.

The woman told police that she passed out at this point. "She does not remember anything (after this) as she gained consciousness around 8.30 pm. She then informed her relatives and the police were alerted," DCP Shinde said.



# KILLING AN 'ACT OF REVENGE' BY FAMILY HELP: POLICE

## Helper, native of Bihar, kills employer's wife and son over loan dispute in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In an "act of revenge", a 24-year-old man killed his employer's wife and teenage son at their home in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar after the woman allegedly scolded him publicly for not repaying a loan of around Rs 40,000, police on Thursday said.

The man, identified as Mukesh Kumar, worked as a helper at Kuldeep Sewani's garment shop in the Lajpat Nagar market. Kumar would also transport garment.

The accused, a native of Bihar's Hajipur, was nabbed by Uttar Pradesh Railway Police from a train while he was trying to flee, police said.

Both were killed with a sharp weapon, he added.

Mukesh was working with the family for the past 3-4

years in their shop and had an access to their house as the family used to store their products in a house godown, police said.

Though he was employed as a shop help in Lajpat Nagar, he also assisted Kuldeep and Ruchika to drive their vehicle, they said.

Kuldeep and Ruchika jointly ran the business.

Another police officer privy to the investigation said, "Prima facie the incident took place between 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm on Wednesday. The accused was scolded by the woman during the day which appears to have triggered the act of revenge. It seems that he first slit the throat of the woman and then killed the boy."

A source said that Mukesh was under pressure after borrowing over Rs 40,000

### DOUBLE MURDER OVER RS 40,000 LOAN DISPUTE

- 24-year-old Mukesh Kumar killed employer's wife and teenage son with sharp weapon.
- Motive believed to be revenge after woman scolded him over unpaid Rs 40,000 loan.
- Accused fled toward Bihar; nabbed from train by Uttar Pradesh Railway Police.
- He had worked for the family for years and had house access.



from his employer and being reprimanded for not working properly and taking leaves repeatedly.

"Mukesh had taken an eight-day leave to visit his village for his engagement, but he failed to return even after 25 days. Upon his re-

turn a few days ago, he again demanded more money and additional leave, which led to a confrontation with his employers -- Kuldeep and Ruchika," said the source.

The couple scolded him for his irregular behaviour and demanded that he return

two mobile phones given to him along with the borrowed money, police said.

When Kuldeep was at his shop on Wednesday evening, Mukesh allegedly told him that he was going to the house godown to collect some cloth. Instead, he pro-

cured a sharp-edged weapon and went straight to the residence, they said.

"He rang the bell and told Ruchika that he needed to pick up products from the godown. Once inside, he allegedly attacked her with the weapon. When her 14-year-old son came downstairs upon hearing the commotion, Mukesh, hiding near the bathroom, attacked him as well before fleeing the scene," the DCP said.

Mukesh was tracked down and arrested from a train in Uttar Pradesh with assistance from local police.

After an information about the double murder was received, multiple teams were formed and the photo of the accused was shared with police and railway police of other states, the officer said. He said that after killing

the two, Mukesh locked the house from outside and fled with his belongings.

He was traced with the help of technical surveillance and arrested from a train at Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction by Uttar Pradesh Railway Police while he was heading towards Bihar.

"The accused will be brought to Delhi for questioning and formal arrest. We are also checking the CCTV footage from nearby locations to verify whether the accused also stole any valuables from the house before fleeing," the officer said.

A case has been registered in the matter and further investigation is underway, police said.

Jangpura MLA Tarvinder Singh Marwah visited the area and said that he spoke

to senior police officers soon after the incident.

"When I got a call about the incident, I spoke to the DCP and other senior police officers. The SHO, ACP and DCP have been working since last night and the accused was apprehended overnight. Everything should be investigated thoroughly," he said.

Police cordoned off the area as curious residents and onlookers gathered near the Sewanis' residence.

Sunil Varma, a local resident, said, "I live across the park and came when I heard that there had been a murder. I later got to know that the family ran a kurta shop and had been living here for the past 10 to 15 years.

The shop was quite old. I did not know them personally."

## Police busy in 'political work': AAP slams Govt over double murder

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj has attacked the Delhi government over the Lajpat Nagar double murder case. The AAP leader said that the Delhi police is busy with "political work."

Bharadwaj alleged that, despite a shortage in the police force, the Delhi government deployed personnel for "VIP" security.

"Delhi Police is busy with political work... There was already a shortage of Police in Delhi, and the BJP has deployed the remaining in VIP security", Bharadwaj said to the media.

Bodies of a 42-year-old woman and her 14-year-old son were found with their throats slit in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar area on Wednesday night.

Noting that all the BJP ministers and MLAs have taken security for themselves, the Delhi minister asked why BJP leaders are scared. He said that the recruitment of police is im-



portant for the State and that the Centre had been delaying the process for over a decade. "All the BJP MLAs and Ministers in Delhi have taken security.

Even the Delhi BJP President has taken security. Why are they so scared? AAP leaders did not take security. I didn't take any security either... Police recruitment is crucial for improving law and order in Delhi, and the central government has been delaying this process for the past decade", he said.

As per DCP South East, Hemant Tiwari, a PCR call was received at 9:43 p.m. on July 2 at the police station, when a 44-year-old man reported that his wife and son were not responding to his

calls. The door was closed, and there were blood stains at the gate and on the stairs.

Upon receiving the call, the PCR and investigative officer reached the location where caller Kuldeep, informed that there were visible blood stains on the staircase and his wife and son are not answering his calls.

Meanwhile, the SHO reached the site and the gate was forcibly opened. Inside the premises, the bodies of a woman and a boy were found.

The victims were identified as 42-year-old Ruchika Sewani, who operates a garment shop along with her husband in the Lajpat Nagar area, and their 14-year-old son Krish, who a Class 10th student.

The police have apprehended the main accused of the incident, Mukesh, who is a resident of Bihar's Hajipur.

He was apprehended from a train by the Uttar Pradesh police at the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay station. He used to work as a driver and helper at the garment shop.

## Will provide all required help to family: BJP MLA Marwah

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Addressing the issue of the double murder case in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar, BJP MLA Tarvinder Singh Marwah on Thursday praised the Delhi police for their "efforts" and mentioned that as soon as the information related to the case was received, eight to ten teams found the location of the accused, following which he was caught.

Bodies of a 42-year-old woman and her 14-year-old son were found with their throats slit in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar area on Wednesday night.

The BJP MLA said that he has spoken to DCP South East Delhi, Hemant Tiwari and the family of the victim will be given all the necessary assistance.

"As soon as we got the information, we talked to DCP South East, Hemant Tiwari. He constituted 8-10 teams and found the location of the culprit... I am thankful for his efforts. They have caught the culprit. We will provide all



the required assistance to the family", the BJP MLA said.

Earlier today, Aam Aadmi Party Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj attacked the Delhi government over the Lajpat Nagar double murder case. The AAP leader said that the Delhi police is busy with "political work".

Bharadwaj mentioned that the Delhi government have deployed the police in the "VIP" security despite a shortage in the police force.

"Delhi Police is busy with political work... There was already a shortage of Police in Delhi, and the BJP has deployed the remaining in VIP security", Saurabh Bharadwaj said. The former Delhi minister mentioned that all

## Mentors appointed in 56 Delhi govt schools, focus on improving performance

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Education, Delhi, has appointed senior officers as mentors in 56 government schools that recorded the lowest pass percentage (up to 45%) in classes 9 and 11 during the 2024-25 session. Each officer will guide one school until the 2025-26 session, conduct inspections every fortnight, and upload reports on the MIS portal, said a senior official in the Directorate of Education.

This initiative is linked to the 'Mission Mathematics' and special enrichment classes campaign aimed at strengthening foundational



understanding of mathematics for classes 6 to 10. The inspection reports will include assessments of subject-wise performance, student attendance, use of teaching-learning materials (TLM), and more. District and zonal officers will oversee the effective implementation of these programmes. The Delhi government is planning to introduce an ordinance to regulate private school fees.

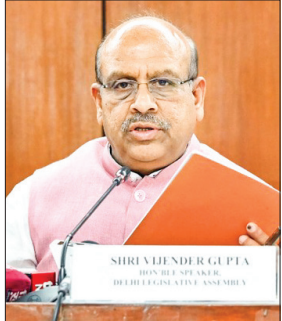
## Assembly Speaker constitutes 11 more legislative committees for 2025-26

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta has announced the constitution of 11 new Committees, in addition to the 18 already constituted, bringing the total number to 29 Committees.

As per an official release, 11 Committees were constituted in the first phase, followed by 7 in the second. The latest set of 11 Committees includes the Committee on Women and Child Welfare, the Committee on Welfare of Minorities, and the Committee on Welfare of Other Backwards Classes.

These Committees aim to strengthen further the institutional framework for addressing the concerns of margin-



alised and underrepresented communities. An additional six Committees are expected to be announced in due course. While announcing the constitution of the Committees, Gupta stated that all political parties have been given due representation to ensure that principles of participatory and inclusive democracy are upheld. He

hoped that these committees would achieve their desired goals by working for the betterment of Delhi's citizens. The 11 committees for the financial year 2025-26 are: Committee on Delegated Legislation; Committee of Privileges; Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; Committee on Papers Laid on the Table; Committee on Women and Child Welfare; Committee on Welfare of Students and Youth; Committee on Environment; Committee on Ethics; Committee on Welfare of Minorities; Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes; and Committee on Issues Related to Unauthorised Colonies.

## ED questions AAP leader Jain in DJB irregularities case

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) questioned former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Minister Satyendar Jain in connection with a case related to alleged irregularities in the Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

The 60-year-old politician deposited before the investigators at ED headquarters earlier this morning and the financial probe agency is examining his role in suspected financial misconduct during his tenure.

The case pertains to alleged procedural lapses and irregular contracts awarded under the DJB, which is responsible for water supply and sewage disposal in the



capital. Jain, who previously held the water portfolio in the Delhi government and also served as DJB Chairman, has been under the scrutiny of central agencies in multiple cases, including those involving money laundering. According to the ED and other investigative agencies, several contracts issued

by the DJB during Jain's tenure as the Water Minister are under scrutiny. These contracts allegedly involved inflated project costs, favouritism in awarding tenders, and possible kickbacks. The ED is probing whether money laundering was involved in siphoning off public funds through these deals.

## Previous Delhi Govts neglected plantation: CM at Van Mahotsav

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday alleged that the previous government showed no interest in such plantation drives or Delhi's environment and tree plantation was never a priority as she launched the Van Mahotsav 2025, a city-wide tree plantation drive under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign inspired

by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Delhi CM also criticised the previous Aam Aadmi Party-led government for not showing sufficient concern for the city's environment.

Addressing the media, she emphasised the initiative's goal to involve every Delhi resident in making the city greener. Speaking at the launch, CM Gupta said, "A

new chapter is being written in Delhi through Van Mahotsav. This festival, Season 2 of Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, reflects a shift in mindset. In the past, governments showed no interest in such plantation drives or Delhi's environment. Tree plantation was never a priority." CM Gupta criticised previous administrations for neglecting Delhi's environmental needs.

## Delhi Rent Control Act anachronistic legislation: HC

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High court has called the Delhi Rent Control Act an "anachronistic piece of legislation" the "egregious" misuse of which has forced property owners into desperate circumstances as well-off tenants "unjustly occupy premises for decades on-end".

Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani was hearing petitions against the 2013 orders of the additional rent controller (ARC) that dismissed eviction petitions of the UK

and Dubai-based owners of a property in Sadar Bazar and ruled in favour of tenants.

"This court is compelled to record that while manning the Rent Control Roster it has found that cases abound where very well-off tenants enjoying financial prosperity persist in unjustly occupying premises for decades on-end, paying pittance for rent, while in the process their landlords are forced into impecunious and desperate circumstances, resulting from egregious misuse of an anachronistic



piece of legislation, namely the Delhi Rent Control Act," the court said.

The high court, as a result, allowed the petitioners to

evict the tenants.

The petitioners sought the eviction of the premises on the ground that they run two restaurants in London and require the space for expanding the business in India.

The ARC had denied the eviction, noting that the petitioners were settled-in and were running their businesses in London and Dubai, and did not require the premises for their "subsistence or survival", and that their bona fide requirement did not amount to being an "actual need".

It also said the premises were too small to run a sit-in restaurant from.

The high court set aside the eviction order and said "the financial wellbeing of a landlord, or the financial ill-health of a tenant, were not relevant considerations while deciding an eviction petition under section 14(1)(e) of the DRC Act".

The court further said whether the petitioners were able to run a full-fledged, sit-down restaurant or a smaller food takeaway vend was entirely their prerogative.



# NATIONAL HERALD CASE: CLASSIC CASE OF MONEY LAUNDERING, ED TELLS DELHI COURT

ED calls National Herald case a textbook example of political money laundering conspiracy.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

This is a classic case where the offence of money laundering is made against all accused, the Enforcement Directorate on Thursday argued before a Delhi court in the National Herald case.

Continuing his argument on the point of chargesheet's cognisance before special judge Vishal Gogne, additional solicitor general S V Raju said Sonia and Rahul Gandhi were

## CONSPIRACY

- ED accuses Sonia, Rahul Gandhi of conspiring to take over AJL assets.
- Rs 90 crore loan from AICC allegedly used to gain control via Young Indian.
- Properties worth over Rs 2,000 crore fraudulently acquired, says Additional Solicitor General.
- Other accused include Suman Dubey, Sam Pitroda, Dotex, and Sunil Bhandari.



the "beneficial owners" of Young Indian and acquired 100 per cent control after the death of other shareholders.

"These two persons controlled the All India Congress Committee (AICC). They saw that AICC released a Rs 90 crore loan (to Associated Journals Limited or AJL, a Rs 2,000 crore company, the publisher of the National Herald newspaper). The purpose... target was to have Rs 2,000 crore," Raju said.

The Gandhis were responsible for the conduct of the business of Young Indian and that the "sham

transaction" could not have been conducted without their consent, he added.

Raju said the fraudulent takeover of properties valued over Rs 2,000 crore belonging to the AJL was with the connivance and consent of the accused, including the Gandhis.

Highlighting the role of the other accused, the ASG said Suman Dubey was one of the directors of Young Indian, who transferred 550 shares to Sonia.

"The shareholding (by Dubey) was only for name-sake. He was a puppet of Gandhis. The sham transaction could not have taken

place without his connivance," Raju argued.

He said accused Sam Pitroda had demanded the letter of conversion, Dotex Merchandise Private Limited assisted in the acquisition of proceeds of crime by giving a sham loan and Sunil Bhandari was the person responsible for conducting Dotex's business.

"This is a classic case where the offence of money laundering is made against all the accused. I request you to take cognisance," Raju said.

The hearing would continue on July 4.

On July 2, the Enforce-

ment Directorate had alleged that Sonia and Rahul Gandhi wanted to usurp the assets of AJL.

Raju had said a conspiracy was hatched to form Young Indian Private Limited in which the Gandhis held 76 per cent shares to usurp the assets of AJL, which took a Rs 90 crore loan from the All India Congress Committee (AICC) despite having assets worth in crores.

The ED had filed its chargesheet against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and others under Sections 3 (money laundering) and 4 (punished for money laundering) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED accuses the Gandhis, late Congress leaders Motilal Vora and Oscar Fernandes aside from Suman Dubey, Sam Pitroda and a private company Young Indian of conspiracy and money laundering over the fraudulent takeover of properties valued over Rs 2,000 crore belonging to the AJL.

# UP Dy CM Pathak hits out at SP over Kanwar row

TDG NETWORK  
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak on Thursday came down heavily on the Samajwadi Party after one of its legislators stated that there is "no difference between the BJP and terrorists" following the government's directive to display the names of the shops along the Kanwar yatra routes.

Defending the move, Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak, while speaking to the media, said, "The Samajwadi Party leaders are constantly making rubbish statements on Kanwar Yatra. They are comparing Kanwar Yatra devotees with the terrorists. It is highly condemnable. Samajwadi Party wants to implement Sharia law and do appeasement politics in UP. We are determined to organise a systematic and safe Kanwar Yatra in UP. It is the right of every buyer to know from whom they are buying things. It is the duty of every seller to display their name."

The remarks of the Dep-



uty Chief Minister were in response to the Samajwadi Party MLA Ravidas Mehrotra, who termed the identity-related regulations "inappropriate".

"It is completely inappropriate to ask those who set up shop during the Kanwar Yatra about their caste and religion. There is no difference between the Bharatiya Janata Party and terrorists. People of the Bharatiya Janata Party also attack by asking about religion and caste, and terrorists also kill people by asking about their religion," SP MLA Mehrotra told ANI.

Last month, Chief Minister Adityanath met officials

Defending the move, Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak, while speaking to the media, said, "The Samajwadi Party leaders are constantly making rubbish statements on Kanwar Yatra.

and public representatives during the meeting and issued several directives.

In light of the ongoing Kanwar Yatra, the Chief Minister instructed officials to ensure that kanwariyas do not face any inconvenience during their journey.

The Yatra is scheduled to get underway on July 10. In the Kanwar Yatra procession, Kanwariyas collect water from a river and carry it hundreds of kilometres to offer it to the shrines of Lord Shiva. Devotees across the country perform worship, fasting and pilgrimage dedicated to the Lord Shiva.

# NCW Chief Vijaya Rahatkar meets CM Bhupendra Patel during Gujarat visit

TDG NETWORK  
GANDHINAGAR

National Commission for Women (NCW) Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar paid a courtesy visit to Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel in Gandhinagar on Thursday as part of her official two-day tour to the state, according to the official statement.

During the meeting, both leaders discussed various issues related to women's safety, empowerment, and welfare initiatives in the state.

As part of her itinerary, she is scheduled to attend a women's public hearing in Ahmedabad and participate in various official meetings and programs in Gandhinagar and Palanpur, as per the release.

Earlier in the day, Gujarat CM has emphasised making Gujarat a model



of excellent cooperation for the nation and the world through various programmes during the entire International Cooperative Year, 2025.

The International Cooperative Year is being celebrated this year, inspired by the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the country's first Cooperation Minister Amit Shah.

The first quarterly meeting of the high-level committee for planning the statewide celebration of this year was held under the chairmanship of

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

During this meeting, a review was conducted of the action plan for organising various programmes throughout the year as part of the International Cooperative Year celebration.

In this meeting, CM Patel stated that Gujarat, recognised as the birthplace of the cooperative revolution in India, has a great opportunity to accelerate rural empowerment by promoting new cooperative models and thereby make the International Cooperative Year - 2025 a grand success.

He guided that programmes should be organised as per the action plan and celebrated successfully with the participation of cooperative institutions and citizens so that the theme "Cooperatives Build a Better World" is truly realised in Gujarat.

# Congress forgotten 42% reservation promise to Backward Classes: BRS

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha on Thursday demanded that the government should not hold elections until the promise of 42 per cent reservation for Backwards classes in Telangana is fulfilled.

Kavitha said that Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge is in Hyderabad, meeting village-level party heads to prepare for local body elections.

She also urged Congress leaders to stand in support of the BCs in the Rajya Sabha.

Speaking to ANI, K Ka-



vitha said, "Malikarjun Kharge is in Hyderabad. He's meeting village-level Congress party presidents and preparing them for the local body elections. But the Congress party has conveniently forgotten about the promise that they made to the BCs of Telangana about giving 42 per cent reservation to them. We demand that the government here should

not hold the local body elections till then. I request Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi to raise this issue in the Rajya Sabha, Rahul and Priyanka to stand in support of the BCs in Telangana."

Earlier in March, the Congress-led Telangana government had passed two bills, The Telangana Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (reservation of seats in educational institutions and of appointments or posts in services under the State) Bill 2025 and The Telangana Backward Classes (Reservation of seats in Rural and Urban Local Bodies) Bill 2025.

Both the bills aim to give 42 per cent reservation to Backwards Classes, 15 pc to Scheduled Castes, and 10 pc to Scheduled Tribes in various educational institutions, local bodies, and in government jobs.

The bills have been passed in both the Telangana Assembly and the Legislative Council, and is awaiting approval from the Centre.

Just a day after the bills were passed, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that the "revolutionary" promise of 42 per cent reservation would not only break the limit of 49 per cent reservation but also empower long-oppressed communities.

# AIADMK seeks transparent probe into Sivaganga custodial death

TDG NETWORK  
CHENNAI

AIADMK National Spokesperson Kovai Sathyan on Thursday demanded a transparent probe into the alleged custodial death of a security guard in Sivaganga district and added that his party will stand with the family of the deceased.

Kovai Sathyan said, "This is the 25th custodial murder since DMK came to power. Ajith Kumar, a security guard who had been called for an inquiry, and his brother were both exposed to brutality...There is a blatant cover-up of evidence relating to brutality. Plastic pipes, chilli powder, and iron rods were all removed from the scene. This indicates how rattled they



were. We expect a transparent probe. AIADMK will stand by those people who demand justice, particularly Ajith Kumar's family."

The Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday provided financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh, land ownership and a government job to the family of Ajith Kumar.

According to an official statement, the victim's family has been granted a house site patta (land ownership document), Rs 5 lakh in financial assistance, and a

government job.

As Ajith Kumar's younger brother, Naveen Kumar, has completed his ITI course, he has been appointed as a technician at the AAVIN, the state milk cooperative. Tamil Nadu Minister for Cooperation KK Periyakaruppan and District Collector K Porkodi visited and handed over the appointment order to Naveen Kumar, the statement read.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin had on Tuesday said that the state government will transfer the investigation of the alleged custodial death of Ajith Kumar in Sivaganga district to the Central Bureau of Investigation. CM Stalin said that the Tamil Nadu Government will provide full cooperation for the CBI probe.

# Delhi HC rejects Jacqueline's plea against ED's charge-sheet

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday dismissed the petition moved by Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez in connection with the Rs 200 crore money laundering case.

Jacqueline had challenged the charge sheet filed against her in the Rs 200 crores money laundering case. In this case, Suresh Chandrasekhar is also an accused.

Justice Anish Dayal dismissed the petition after hearing counsels at length. The detailed order of judgment is to be uploaded by the High Court.

The High Court had reserved the order on actor Jacqueline Fernandez's petition challenging the Enforcement Director-



ate's complaint under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The case revolves around allegations of her receiving lavish gifts from conman Suresh Chandrasekhar.

Senior Advocate Sidharth Aggarwal, along with Advocate Prashant Patil and Shakti Pandey, represented Jacqueline Fernandez, while Special Counsel Zoheb Hossain appeared on behalf of the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

# Andhra Pradesh High Court grants bail in TTD ghee adulteration case

TDG NETWORK  
AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday granted bail to Pomil Jain, Vipin Jain, and Apurva Chavda, accused in the high-profile case concerning the alleged supply of adulterated cow ghee to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).

The accused were represented by Senior Advocate S. Sriram and Advocate Sushil Kumar, the Managing Partner of Kumar Legal Research LLP, who jointly argued the matter before the High Court.

The bench of Justice Srinivas Reddy allowed the bail pleas after finding serious discrepancies in the investigation. The Court granted relief to Pomil Jain and Vipin Jain, Directors of Bhole Baba

Organic Dairymilk Pvt. Ltd., and Apurva Chavda, CEO of Vyshnavi Dairy. The accused had been in judicial custody since February 2025.

Previously, during the proceedings, the defence counsel strongly contested the manner in which the investigation had progressed. They pointed out that the accused had been initially summoned merely as witnesses, yet were later arrested and incarcerated for an extended period without a sufficient legal basis.

The case stems from an FIR lodged by the General Manager of TTD, alleging that the suppliers had violated tender conditions and delivered adulterated cow ghee meant for use in the sacred rituals at the Tirumala temple. Investigations revealed the ghee

allegedly originated from Bhole Baba Organic Dairy, passed through Vyshnavi Dairy, and was ultimately supplied by AR Dairy to TTD.

The probe is being led by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in coordination with a multi-agency Special Investigation Team (SIT).

Arguing for the petitioners, Senior Counsel S. Sriram and Advocate Sushil Kumar highlighted procedural lapses and irregularities in the investigation. They particularly questioned the delay in lodging FIRs relating to alleged witness intimidation asserting that although SIT and CBI raised the claims in March and April, formal FIRs were filed only in June, suggesting an element of afterthought.

# CM Sukhu reiterates commitment to make Himachal 'Green Energy State'

TDG NETWORK  
SHIMLA

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu flagged off 24 state-of-the-art Volvo buses at Kyari Ghat in Solan, reiterating the state's commitment to providing world-class transport and transforming Himachal Pradesh into a 'Green Energy State.'

Sukhu said that the state government was committed to providing world-class

transport facilities to the people and transforming Himachal Pradesh into a 'Green Energy State'.

The Chief Minister was addressing a public gathering on Wednesday evening at Solan's Kyari Ghat after flagging off 24 state-of-the-art Volvo buses.

According to a release, he said that during the tenure of the present government, "a substantial amount of funds has been allocated to



strengthen the Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC). Over the past two years, the government has provided an annual grant of Rs 1,000 crores to ensure convenient and comfortable transport services for the public.'

He said that the government has procured 500 diesel buses, 300 electric buses and approximately 30 Volvo buses. To further improve transport services

in the future, the government plans to purchase 100 Tempo Travellers. Currently, HRTC receives a monthly subsidy of Rs 60 crores.

The Chief Minister stated that due to the state's limited rail and air connectivity, road transport remains the primary mode of travel for most people, with HRTC buses serving as the primary means of transportation. Continuous efforts were made to improve the corpo-

ration's services for the convenience of commuters.

Sukhu said that extensive work was underway to develop Himachal Pradesh as a 'Green Energy State' and was actively promoting hydrogen-powered e-buses. "In line with the vision of a green Himachal, more charging stations would be set up across the state with an expenditure of Rs 110 crore to realise the dream of a Green Energy State"

Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri stated that the HRTC has completed 50 years of its glorious journey. "The corporation's buses are the lifeline for the people of the state, with four to five lakh passengers travelling daily."

Over the last two years, the government has operated approximately 250 diesel buses and plans to add 250 new buses to the fleet soon, he said.



# CHEMICAL TRADE DEFICIT AT \$31B; NITI AAYOG PROPOSES REFORM BLUEPRINT

A key issue is the country's heavy reliance on imported feedstock.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

**N**ITI Aayog on Thursday released its report "Chemical Industry: Powering India's Participation in Global Value Chains". The report offers an extensive analysis of India's chemical sector, highlighting both opportunities and challenges, and outlining a pathway for positioning India as a key player in global chemical markets.

The global chemical industry is undergoing a major transformation, driven by shifting supply chains, demand for specialty and green chemicals, and heightened focus on innovation and sustainability.

India's chemical sector, while significant in size and GDP contribution, remains fragmented and constrained by infrastructure gaps, regulatory inefficiencies, and

- NITI Aayog pegs \$1 trillion goal for India's chemical sector by 2040, targeting a 12% global value chain share.
- \$31 billion trade deficit highlights India's heavy reliance on imported feedstock and specialty chemicals.
- Sector lags due to low R&D, outdated infrastructure, high logistics costs, and regulatory delays.
- Calls for targeted reforms to boost innovation, green chemistry, and global competitiveness.

low R&D intensity.

India's 3.5 per cent share in global chemical value chains and its chemical trade deficit at \$31 billion in 2023 underscore its high dependence on imported feedstock and specialty chemicals.

However, targeted reforms

## AT A GLANCE



PM Narendra Modi chairs the 10th NITI Aayog Governing Council Meeting on 'Viksit Rajya for Viksit Bharat@2047' at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi in May 24. (ANI Photo)

encompassing a comprehensive range of fiscal and non-fiscal interventions will enable India to have a \$1 trillion chemical sector and achieve 12 per cent GVC share by 2040, thus becoming a global chemical powerhouse.

India's chemical sector faces several structural challenges that constrain its global competitiveness.

A key issue is the country's heavy reliance on imported feedstock, which contributed to a \$31 billion trade deficit in 2023, stemming from

limited domestic backward integration.

Infrastructure gaps, outdated industrial clusters, and high logistics costs have created a cost disadvantage compared to global peers.

Compounding this, India's low investment in R&D, with only 0.7 per cent of investment against the global average of 2.3 per cent, hampers indigenous innovation in high-value chemicals. Regulatory delays, especially in environmental clearances, further stifle industrial agility.

Additionally, the sector is hampered by a 30 per cent shortfall in skilled professionals, particularly in emerging areas such as green chemistry, nanotechnology, and process safety.

NITI Aayog's report outlines several strategic fiscal and non-fiscal interventions aimed at enhancing India's global competitiveness in the chemical sector.

## CII seeks big push for critical minerals, green energy hubs

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Thursday gave key recommendations on the exploration and mining of critical minerals in India.

According to CII, the government should consider allowing automatic rights to mine for players being awarded the Exploration Licence.

"Environmental regulations should be streamlined and enhanced through the adoption of technology. CII recommends implementing a unified compliance framework that consolidates all state and central environmental clearances," said Rajiv Memani, President of CII, during a press conference in New Delhi.

To improve critical minerals data accessibility and transparency, the CII further suggests that a country like India should establish a National Critical Minerals Data Repository.

Acknowledging the sector's long gestation periods and inherent risks, CII em-



Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) President Rajiv Memani addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Thursday. (ANI Photo)

phasised the need for government support through Viability Gap Funding (VGF) and dedicated financial provisions to attract private participation.

CII also highlighted the importance of securing global supply chains by developing exclusive chapters on critical minerals in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with resource-rich nations such as Australia, Peru, Chile, Indonesia, and Oman.

Additionally, "In order to meet India's ambitious

energy transition targets, CII suggests drawing up sector-specific strategies including that of mobility and proactively creating Green Hydrogen and Renewable Energy hubs. CII would also be launching a Mission on Energy transition, to encourage industry to shift to low-carbon alternatives," Rajiv Memani further added.

However, the CII President raised concerns about the critical mineral supply deficiency to the auto sector.

"Auto is a big concern. In some other sectors also there are concerns, in the auto, the concerns are more serious than what's come out till now. In fact, some of the most conservative companies are already starting to give some guidance on lowering their production levels going forward," Memani said in the press conference.

In the same press conference, CII also projected India's economy to grow at a pace of 6.4-6.7 per cent in 2026-27, boosted by strong domestic demand.

## Reliance to transfer all consumer business to new entity

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Reliance Retail is transferring its consumer goods business to a new entity, New Reliance Consumer Products Ltd (New RCPL), under its internal restructuring of the business.

According to the scheme filed before the NCLT, Reliance is transferring and vesting the FMCG brands business from Reliance Retail Ltd (RRL) to a new entity named New Reliance Consumer Products Ltd (New RCPL).

The Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on June 25 asked to convene a meeting for approval of the internal restructuring process, under which its consumer business is transferred as a going concern on Slump Sale.

Explaining the reasons, Reliance firms said the Consumer Brands Business is one of building brands, managing the entire product lifecycle from research, development, manufacturing, distribution and marketing. "This is a large business by itself, requiring specialised and focused attention, expertise and different skill sets as compared to retail business. This business also

entails large capital investments on an ongoing basis and can attract a different set of investors," it said.

This composite scheme, part of the internal restructuring of companies in the RIL group to house the Consumer Brands Business in New RCPL and will have RIL and other investors of RRVL holding the same percentage shareholding as in RRVL, they said.

The scheme proposes transferring and vesting the FMCG brands business from Reliance Retail Ltd (RRL) to the parent firm RRVL as a going concern on Slump Sale, merger of RCPL with RRVL and demerger of consumer goods business from RRVL to New RCPL in the third stage. Both RRL and RCPL are wholly owned arms of RRVL.

Presently, Reliance's consumer goods business is spread in three verticals - RRL, Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) and RCPL. The boards of directors of these companies on April 25, 2025, passed a resolution to transfer the FMCG Brands Business Undertaking from RRL to RRVL.

Reliance Industries Ltd, the parent entity, holds 83.56 per cent in RRVL while other investors hold 16.44 per cent.

## Markets dip on profit booking, US-India trade deal uncertainty

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

India stock benchmarks extended declines on Thursday, weighed down by continued profit booking, following last week's sharp rally.

At the end of the trading session, Nifty was down 48.10 points or 0.19 per cent at 25,405.30 and the BSE's Sensex was down by 170.22 points or 0.20 per cent, reaching 83,239.47.

"The domestic equity market continued to consolidate as profit booking followed last week's sharply rally," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited.

However, investors remained cautious ahead of a potential US-India trade agreement, which kept the overall sentiment subdued.

On Wednesday, US President Donald Trump reaffirmed that India-US will

soon strike a trade deal with "much less tariffs", allowing both countries to compete.

India and the US have been negotiating over a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) before the critical July 9 deadline of the 90-day pause on tariff escalations.

Among the index constituents, Dr Reddy, Apollo Hospital and Hero Moto Corp emerged as the top gainers, while SBI Life and Kotak Bank were the major losers.

On the sectoral front, Nifty Midsmall Healthcare, Nifty Consumer Durables and Nifty Healthcare Index closed in the green zone, while Nifty PSU Bank and Nifty Metal ended the day in the negative zone.

On Thursday, out of 3,025 traded stocks, 1,450 advanced for the day, while 1,472 ended the day in the red territory. 103 stocks remained unchanged for the day.

## 'India-UK FTA to boost exports, remittances, worker mobility'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The recently finalised free-trade agreement (FTA) between India and the United Kingdom (UK) will not only boost Indian exports and increase the mobility of Indian workers in the UK but also support India's economy through higher remittances and domestic spending, noted a report by S&P Global Market Intelligence.

In 2024, Indian workers abroad sent home around \$130 billion, making up 3.3 per cent of the country's GDP.

The UK remains the third-largest source of these remittances, after the US and UAE. Under the new deal, Indian ICT workers posted in the UK will benefit from a waiver on national insurance contributions for up to three years, allowing them to save more and potentially send more money back home.

The FTA also promises to double trade in goods and



*The FTA also promises to double trade in goods and services between India and the UK by 2030, up from \$56.7 billion in 2024.*

services between India and the UK by 2030, up from \$56.7 billion in 2024.

Indian exports, especially textiles and apparel—which face challenges in the US market—are expected to benefit from improved access to the UK market.

For the UK, the deal opens up greater access to India's fast-growing middle class, although immediate trade benefits will be seen in the beverage sector, with tariffs halved on 97 per cent of whisky and gin exports. However, the deal excludes

## Smriti Irani-led alliance at WEF gets Naspers CEO as co-chair

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Alliance for Global Good - Gender Equity and Equality, launched at the World Economic Forum 2024, is accelerating its impact in India and beyond through policy reform, economic inclusion, and large-scale initiatives focused on capacity-building and economic empowerment for women.

The alliance is ensuring women are at the forefront of growth, bridging barriers in entrepreneurship, climate resilience, digital transformation, and care economy reforms.

Recently, joining this movement is the CEO of Naspers, Phuti Mahanyele-Dabengwa.

Speaking on the occasion, she said, "I am honored to join the Alliance for Global Good as Co-Chair and to continue its vital work in advancing gender inclusion and equity. The Alliance's impactful engagement in shaping policies, fostering collaboration, and driving real change demonstrates



the power of collective action."

"Having worked closely with Smriti as Chairperson of the B20 Task Force on Digital Transformation, I have seen firsthand the Alliance's commitment to creating ecosystems and nudges that ensure equitable growth. This shared vision of inclusive growth and shared prosperity aligns deeply with my values, and I am excited to contribute to building a future where every woman and under-



served community can thrive in the digital age," Phuti Mahanyele-Dabengwa added.

Naspers is widely known to be one of the largest technology investors in the world.

Welcoming Phuti Mahanyele-Dabengwa, CEO of Naspers South Africa, as Co-Chair, marks a strategic step in expanding South-South collaboration rooted in India's development models.

"I am eager to expand the

pharmaceutical exports, limiting some of the economic benefits for Britain. There is also a lack of clarity on how UK car exports to India will operate under the new quota system.

The agreement is part of India's larger push to secure trade pacts with key global partners. In 2025 and 2026, India aims to finalize similar deals with countries in the Gulf, Australia, Japan, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

These efforts are aimed at strengthening India's global trade network amid shifting international trade policies.

The swift signing of the India-UK deal is a significant step for the UK as well, helping the country reshape its trade relationships after Brexit and reduce supply chain disruptions.

Overall, the trade agreement is expected to strengthen economic ties between India and the UK, while also enhancing India's position in global trade.

footprint of the Alliance for Global Good in South Africa under the visionary leadership of Phuti Mahanyele-Dabengwa.

Her exceptional commitment to inclusive growth, her strategic insight, and unwavering dedication to empowering women and underserved communities uniquely position her to drive meaningful change. With her strong leadership and deep understanding of the region's challenges and opportunities, I am confident that together, we can accelerate progress toward gender equity, economic inclusion, and sustainable development across South Africa," said Smriti Zubin Irani, Co-Chair of the Alliance for Global Good - Gender Equity and Equality.

At the heart of the Alliance's India strategy is SPARK - The 100k Collective, a flagship initiative poised to empower 1 lakh (100,000) women entrepreneurs across 300 districts, offering them structured support to transition from micro to medium-scale enterprises.

## 'Notable policy development': ILO lauds India's ELI scheme

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

International Labour Organization (ILO) lauded India's just-announced employment linked incentive scheme, asserting that its global evidence suggests that active labour market policies (ALMP) if designed appropriately, can improve youth employment outcomes.

"India's ELI scheme is a notable policy development in this direction," said the India office of the International Labour Organization posted on X.

"ILO's global evidence suggests that Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP), if designed appropriately, can improve youth employment outcomes," the post added.

On Tuesday, the Union Cabinet approved the Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme to support

employment generation, enhance employability and social security across all sectors, with special focus on the manufacturing sector.

Under the Scheme, while the first-time employees will get one month's wage (up to Rs 15,000), the employers will be given incentives for a period of up to two years for generating additional employment, with extended benefits for another two years for the manufacturing sector.

The ELI Scheme was announced in the Union Budget 2024-25 as part of PM's package of five schemes to facilitate employment, skill-building and other opportunities for 4.1 crore youth with a total budget outlay of Rs 2 lakh crore. With an outlay of Rs 99,446 crore, the ELI Scheme aims to incentivize the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs in the country, over a period of 2 years.

## RBI rate cuts lead to cooling in both credit offtake and deposit growth: Report

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

With a 100 basis point repo rate cut by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) since February, Credit offtake and deposit growth have cooled, noted a report by CareEdge.

However, despite the rate cut and banks reducing deposit rates, deposit growth continues to outpace credit offtake in the current fortnight.

"Credit offtake and deposit growth have cooled, with deposit growth continuing to outpace credit offtake in the current fortnight," noted the report

The report highlights that deposits fell by 0.44 per cent sequentially, reaching Rs 230.7 lakh crore as of June 13, 2025, lower than the 12.1 per cent growth (excluding merger impact) recorded last year.

This decline was weighed down by banks' reliance on certificates of deposit to meet their funding needs, amid subdued deposit growth, as competition has intensified in the bulk deposit segment.

Additionally, credit offtake reached Rs 183.1 lakh crore, marking an increase of 9.6 per cent y-o-y, significantly slower than last year's rate of 15.5 per cent.



RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra delivers the Monetary Policy statement, in Mumbai in June 6. (ANI photo)

This slower growth rate in the credit offtake can be attributed to a high base effect and muted growth across segments, including retail.

"The Short-Term Weighted Average Call Rate (WACR) decreased to 5.27% as of Jun 20, 2025, from 6.68% on Jun 21, 2024. This decline follows three successive repo rate cuts and liquidity infusion by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)," CareEdge said.

Furthermore, the Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio also experienced a slight rise, meanwhile, it was still below the 80 per cent mark for the six consecutive fortnights. The rise in CD ratio was driven by deposit outflow compared to a growth in credit offtake of Rs 0.59 lakh crore during the current fortnight.



# BEING SOLD REPEATEDLY IS PAK’S DESTINY!

It is loyal to no one... it goes with whoever offers the highest price!

## OPINION

DR VIJAY DARDA



When US President Donald Trump invited Pakistan's army chief General Asim Munir to lunch instead of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, it sparked discussion. People said that if Trump had wanted to engage with India, he would have invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi. There was also speculation that if Trump considers India a friend, then why did he in-

vite Munir to lunch? After the attack on Iran, it became clear that this lunch was part of a larger conspiracy. The US dangled bait and Munir came running. But the matter doesn't end there. Iranian media has openly accused that in the last week of May, Pakistani army chief Munir met with Iran's top commander Mohammad Hossein Bagheri and gifted him a smartwatch. That smartwatch had a GPS tracker. Munir reportedly gave Israel access to that GPS tracker, and within three weeks, Israel assassinated Mohammad Hossein Bagheri. Bagheri would never have imagined that Pakistan which parades under the flag of Islam would betray him so treacherously, or that Munir would act like an agent of Israeli intelligence, similar

to Mossad agents! Bagheri failed to learn from history: that Pakistan is a country where those who place trust are always betrayed. There are many more such incidents that highlight Pakistan's traitorous role in the Israel-Iran conflict. On one hand, Pakistan condemns attacks on Iran and on the other, it carries out actions that bring ruin to Iran. General Munir is simply continuing the legacy of his predecessors. The army has shaped Pakistan's character in such a way that it aligns with whoever offers a better price. Whoever shows the bigger bait, it gets sold to them. And if someone offers a higher bid tomorrow, Pakistan will switch loyalties and embrace them. When the US needed Pakistan to defeat Soviet Russia in Afghanistan, it opened its purse, and Pakistan readily lay in America's lap. Later, when China opened its bag of wealth, Pakistan wasted no time in shifting to China's lap. At the time of independence, Pakistan only had America's support but even then, it couldn't remain loyal. It took a fortune from the US in exchange for



In May 2025, Pakistan army chief Asim Munir gifted a smart watch to Iran's top Commander Mohammad Hossein Bagheri during a meeting.

*The Ahmadiyya community, known for the slogan “Love for all, hatred for none,” has been destroyed by Pakistani rulers.*

help in Afghanistan while secretly hiding Osama bin Laden in its own backyard. The US was aware of this betrayal but it too was no less cunning! It made full use of Pakistan. Now, Pakistan also has China's lap to fall into. With two laps to

choose from, its disloyalty has grown. If one patron gets upset, it can rely on the other. Both know that Pakistan is unfaithful, but sometimes even the unfaithful can be useful! Tolerating betrayal becomes a necessity of the times. Both

benefactors know that this is an asset up for sale. Reveal your price, and Pakistan will sit in your lap! But this misfortune of Pakistan is truly heart-breaking. I had the opportunity to visit Pakistan three times. I spoke with the public, interacted with the media. Even today, I meet and talk to Pakistanis living abroad. I keep trying to understand as to why the condition in Pakistan is so bad? The pain expressed by

people of Pakistani origin is often chilling. Just recently, while travelling in a car in Canada, the owner Waseem Ahmad shared his sorrow. He belongs to the Ahmadiyya community which was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1889 in Qadian in the Gurdaspur district of Punjab. After independence, many Ahmadis migrated to Pakistan, but they were treated terribly. When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was Prime Minister, a resolution was passed in Parliament declaring that Ahmadis are not Muslims. The Ahmadis moved the court, but dictator Zia-ul-Haq later issued the same decree. Now, the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan is not even allowed to pray in mosques or vote in elections. Thousands have been thrown into jail. In places like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, religious extremists have practically carried out massacres of Ahmadis. Their population there once stood at 40,000; now it's barely 900. Where did all the Ahmadis go? Even the current spiritual leader, Mirza Masroor Ahmad, lives in exile in London and his passport has been cancelled.

This community's slogan is beautiful: “Love for all, hatred for none.” But look at their misfortune. There is so much hatred against them among Pakistan's rulers that even the name of Professor Abdus Salam, Pakistan's first and only Nobel laureate in science, was erased, simply because he belonged to the Ahmadiyya community. Stories of persecution of Hindus and Christians in Pakistan are well known. In truth, Pakistan seems divided into three sections. The first is the army and ISI, which have taken control of the country. The second is cowardly, sycophantic politicians. Betrayal is second nature to both these groups. The third is the unfortunate common people, who, even if they try to stop their country from becoming a commodity for sale, are crushed under military boots. Our sympathies are with them but what can be done? This, for now, is Pakistan's fate. May God help them!

*The author is the chairman, Editorial Board of Lokmat Media and former member of Rajya Sabha.*

# Artificial Intelligence reshaping personality rights jurisprudence?

## OPINION

SHIVANG TRIPATHI AND  
RENUKA



Recently, in *Sadhguru Jagadish Vasudev and Anr. v. Igor Isakov and Ors.* (2025), the Delhi High Court passed an interim order safeguarding the publicity and personality rights of Sadhguru, reigniting the need to understand the interplay between an individual's publicity rights and the evolving digital ecosystem, particularly the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The Court acknowledged the distinct personality traits associated with Sadhguru, for instance, his appearance, argumentation style, voice, etc. Certain AI websites and social media channels were found exploiting his personality traits, without his consent, for commercial gain. The Court observed the scale of violation and long-term repercussions, keeping in mind the virality aspect of social media and digital landscape. Thus, the Court directed the removal of the materials violating Sadhguru's personality rights, mandating further the disclosure of subscriber-related information and asked the DoT and the MeitY to issue blocking directions against the offending accounts and channels.

**PERSONALITY RIGHTS** Personality rights, often referred to as publicity rights, pertain to an individual's control over the commercial use of their unique identity traits, such as name, voice, or signature. These rights allow individuals, especially celebrities and public figures, to control and monetise their personas. Emerging in the 1950s, the concept has evolved globally under the broader umbrellas of the right to privacy and intellectual property laws. In India, personality rights are protected through a mosaic of legal frameworks. Article 21 of the Constitution safeguards them as an extension of the right to privacy, ensuring individual autonomy, identity, and personal choice (Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) v. Union of India, 2018). The Trade Marks Act, 1999, allows for the registration of distinct identity traits as trademarks. For instance, Sachin Tendulkar has trademarked his initials 'SRT'. The Copyright Act, 1957, protects performers' rights under Section 38A and their moral rights under Section 38B, enabling them to re-

strain unauthorised use or distortion of their work. Additionally, if the use of a name, voice, or brand tarnishes an individual's reputation, it may give rise to a claim for defamation. Moreover, the digital or physical use of a person's identity, such as name, voice, or image, to falsely imply endorsement or commercially exploit their persona may constitute the offence of impersonation.

### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A CHALLENGE

AI's ability to access, modify, and reconstruct unique human identity elements, such as name, voice, appearance, and expressive traits, without informed consent poses novel legal dilemmas. Advanced tools like deepfakes and ultra-realistic voice synthesis technologies, e.g., Vocaloid software, enable the near-perfect mimicry of human likeness and sound. The proliferation of user-generated data on the internet allows for easy algorithmic harvesting, particularly in the absence of user control over data access, mining, and processing. India's current legal framework is not equipped to address the algorithmic hijacking of identity through technologies such as deepfakes, voice synthesis, or biometric data mining. Notably, India lacks a comprehensive data protection authority focused on securing informed consent, ensuring algorithmic accountability, and preserving user autonomy in AI-mediated digital ecosystems.

### ROGUE AND HYDRA-HEADED WEBSITES

There is currently no statutory definition of a “rogue website” under Indian law. However, the Draft National E-Commerce Policy (2019) offered some guidance by

defining it as websites “primarily meant for distribution, sale, or offer for sale of pirated content.” Indian courts have since played a key role in shaping the legal understanding of this concept. In *Star India Pvt. Ltd. & Ors. v. Roy Ma & Ors.* (2014), the Delhi High Court issued injunctions against multiple URLs disseminating infringing content. A notable development in this space is the judicial recognition of “hydra-headed websites”, i.e. websites that persistently defy court orders by generating mirror domains, proxy URLs, or alternative links to circumvent blocking measures imposed by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) or other filtering mechanisms. In *UTV Software Communication Ltd. & Ors. v. 1337x.to & Ors.* (2019), the Delhi High Court laid down illustrative criteria to determine whether a website qualifies as a rogue website. These include: (a) primary objective of the website is to facilitate copyright infringement; (b) the scale and magnitude of infringement; (c) whether the majority of content is unauthorised; (d) concealment of registrant information; (e) non-compliance with takedown requests; (f) general disregard for copyright norms; and (g) efforts to evade enforcement mechanisms.

### IS INDIA READY?

Violations of personality rights attract both civil and criminal remedies under Indian law. Criminal proceedings may be initiated under the Trade Marks Act for infringement of registered trademarks, while actions for passing off can be taken under Law of Torts for unregistered trademarks. The Copyright Act, 1957 (Section 55), provides for remedies in cases where infringe-

ment involves economic, moral, or performer rights. Defamation (Section 356, *Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita* or “BNS”) and impersonation (Section 319, BNS read with Section 66D of the Information Technology Act) may also attract criminal liability. Civil remedies include claims for injunctions, damages, and compensation, with injunctions playing a pivotal role in restraining the continued unauthorised use of an individual's identity. However, traditional/static injunctions are often ineffective in the digital age, as infringing content rapidly spreads across platforms and domains. Hence, Indian courts have been granting “dynamic injunctions”, first recognised in *UTV Software Communication Ltd. & Ors. v. 1337x.to & Ors.* (2019). These injunctions allow courts to extend protective measures to future infringing content, ensuring adaptive enforcement of personality rights in a constantly evolving digital environment. Despite judicial innovations, India still lacks statutory codification of personality rights. With increasing online misuse and AI-generated impersonations, the legal framework must evolve accordingly. Drawing inspiration from Article 9 of the French Civil Code, which offers a comprehensive framework for personality rights, covering both online and offline privacy violations, it is imperative for the Indian Parliament to enact robust legislative measures to address these emerging threats.

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# US India trade deal, stuck on agri and dairy products

## OPINION

KRISHAN BIR CHAUDHARY



It is a known fact that India and Indian farmers depend on agriculture as a means of livelihood. Almost all crops of economic importance are grown in India and rank among the first two positions globally. So far in India, only cotton has been approved by the genetic engineering appraisal committee, (GEAC) after trials over the years. More so as it is a non edible crop. No other crop has been approved in spite of tremendous pressure from developed countries so that India which is a large market could be a dumping ground for them. Even FSSAI statutory body responsible for food safety and hygiene within India has ensured availability of safe food for human consumption. Moreover, crops under reference in the trade deal are primarily Soyabean and maize, besides apples, dry fruits which are edible crops directly for human consumption. Therefore, there is no question of importing these from USA or any other developed country since they are not approved by Government of India. In case of dairy, the situation is even worse as we understand, their animals are

fed on a non-veg diet and therefore any product thus would not be acceptable at all because of reasons well known. The game plan is to force India to reduce the import duty on such products to or match on reciprocal basis which would be much lower than the existing tariff rates. This would result in erosion of farmers income, loss of profit and in fact result in major losses to the farming community it is important to understand the genesis which goes back to 1988, when agriculture was included in the GATT agreement without any approval by the Parliament. This was a blunder with far reaching repercussion even today. Similarly the base year of subsidy was agreed as 1986-87 with negative ramifications. It would be long to compare the farmers of USA or any developed country with the Indian farmer on various counts. Over 55% farmers in India are directly or indirectly involved in agriculture, whereas this figure in USA could be meagre 1%. Likewise the landholding for a Farmer in USA would be minimum 180Ha as against a little less than 1 Ha in India. The subsidy per Farmer in dollar terms would be 61,286 USD in America as against \$282 equivalent for the Indian Farmer. Interestingly it must be shared that in USA the farm bill subsidy has increased many fold as they have discreetly tried shift-

ing products from AMBER box( exportable products) & BLUE box ( for domestic consumption ) to GREEN box ( R&D) shaking their entire subsidy allocation. The other logical reasons are danger of cross pollination, resulting in wiping out of the indigenous seed producers. Even today the Farmer is pleading for realising a higher MSP. This relates to WTO meeting in Bali when the then minister Mr Anand Sharma compromised on subsidy PEACE CLAUSE raising the burden component. With an open door policy of imports as envisaged by President Trump, we would not only financially ruin the agriculture sector, but a major risk for the entire country to depend on imports from the path of self Reliance, which has resulted in increased production (we are second largest producer of Agricultural commodities) huge buffer stocks to feed our growing population with easy availability and quality acceptable worldwide. As per Shri Narendra Modi ji our Prime Minister of India is on a growth trajectory and believes in LEVEL PLAYING FIELD to compete in any sector be it be agriculture, defence , pharmaceuticals or infrastructure. The food security of the country is the main currency of the country. It has been proved in the COVID regime when all country was shutdown. The Anndata provides the food security to the country. The seed is the basic need of the food security that should not be surrendered to MNC's. The cross pollination will destroy our native seeds and farmers will be forced to buy every year the very costly seeds. That will increase the cost of production. *Author is President, Bharatiya Krishak Samaj.*





TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In the rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape of the Indo-Pacific region, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, commonly known as the Quad, has emerged as a pivotal multi-lateral forum. Comprising four major democracies—the United States, Japan, India, and Australia—the Quad has grown from an informal dialogue into a strategic platform addressing security, economic, technological, and environmental challenges. Understanding the Quad’s historical evolution and its contemporary significance is essential to grasp the future of regional and global order amid the shifting balance of power.

THE FORMATION

The roots of the Quad trace back to the early 2000s when the four countries, sharing democratic values and strategic interests, began exploring a cooperative framework to promote peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. The initial impetus came from shared concerns about regional security challenges, particularly the rising influence of China and the need to uphold a rules-based international order.

The Quad first formally emerged in 2007, when foreign ministers from the United States, Japan, India, and Australia met on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum. The dialogue was intended to foster cooperation on issues like maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. However, the grouping quickly attracted attention due to the geopolitical implications of its membership and agenda, especially given China’s growing assertiveness.

Despite this promising start, the Quad experienced a period of dormancy after 2008 due to diplomatic sensitivities and diverging national priorities, especially among India and Australia, who were cautious not to antagonize China. For nearly a decade, the initiative remained largely inactive, even as regional dynamics evolved.

REVIVAL AND REINVENTION

The Quad experienced a significant revival around 2017-2018, driven by the changing strategic calculus in the Indo-Pacific. Several factors contributed to this resurgence:

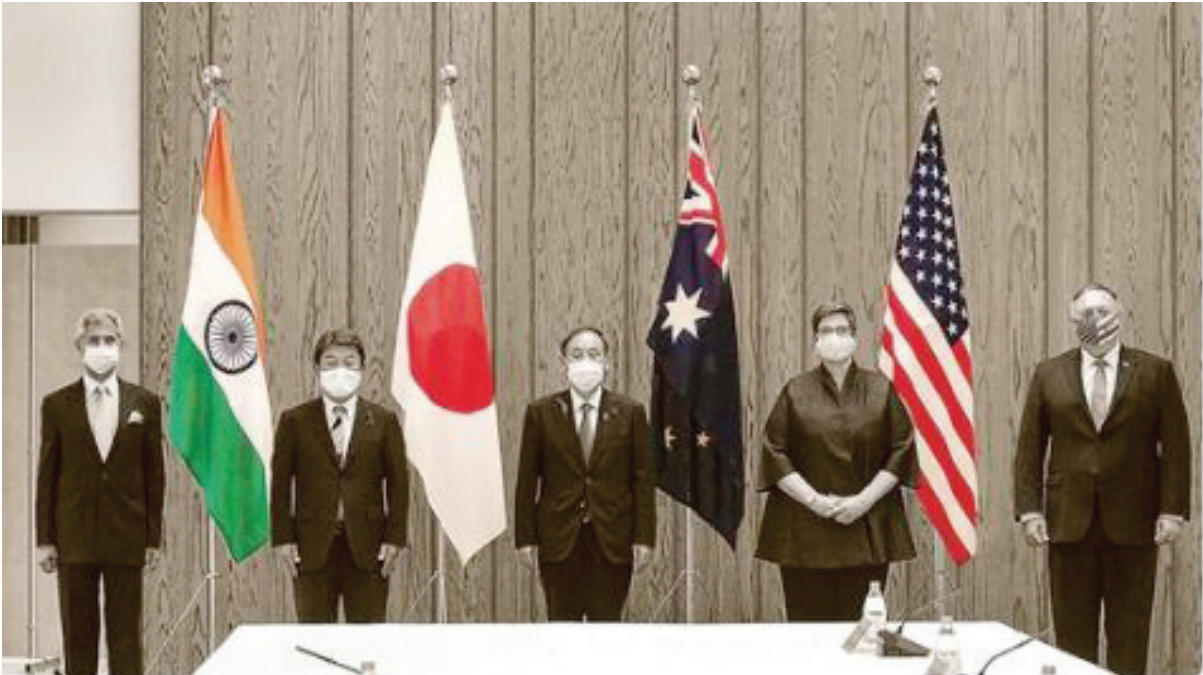
- **China’s Assertiveness:** China’s growing military modernization, aggressive territorial claims in the South China Sea, and construction of artificial islands with military installations alarmed regional actors and outside powers. Its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), perceived as expanding Chinese influence via infrastructure investment, raised concerns about debt dependency and geopolitical leverage.
  - **Shared Democratic Values:** The Quad countries emphasized their common commitment to democracy, freedom of navigation, and international law, contrasting with China’s authoritarian model and perceived disregard for established norms.
  - **Regional Security Needs:** North Korea’s nuclear ambitions and increasing tensions in maritime zones underscored the need for greater coordination among like-minded countries.
- Since its revival, the Quad has expanded its scope beyond security to encompass economic resilience, technological collaboration, climate change mitigation, and health security—reflecting a comprehensive approach to regional stability.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Quad operates as an informal consultative mechanism without a formal treaty or permanent secretariat. Despite this, its growing diplomatic and strategic heft reflects the convergence of interests among its members. Key objectives and co-operation areas include:

- **Defense Cooperation**  
One of the Quad’s most visible roles is enhancing maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. The member states conduct joint naval exercises such as the Malabar Exercise, which has evolved into a more complex and inclusive platform for interoperability, maritime domain awareness, and crisis response.
- **Ensuring freedom of navigation in the South China Sea**

*The Quad, a strategic alliance of the US, India, Japan, and Australia, counters China’s influence in the Indo-Pacific. It promotes a rules-based order, maritime security, economic resilience, and democratic values, reflecting its growing geopolitical importance amid global power shifts and regional challenges.*



The evolving situation in the Indo-Pacific region in the wake of China’s increasing military muscle flexing has become a major talking point among leading global powers. Quad leaders in 2021. File Photo

# QUAD COUNTERS CHINA IN INDO- PACIFIC: GROUP'S EVOLUTION IN RULE-BASED ORDER



and the broader Indo-Pacific region is a cornerstone of the Quad’s security agenda. The forum seeks to deter coercion, protect sea lanes vital to global trade, and uphold international maritime law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The Quad also encourages defense technology sharing, intelligence cooperation, and capacity building, especially with countries vulnerable to regional pressures.

**Economic Resilience**  
The COVID-19 pandemic

exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, particularly for critical goods such as medical supplies, semiconductors, and rare earth minerals. The Quad members have committed to strengthening supply chain resilience and reducing overreliance on any single country.

Collaborative initiatives focus on diversifying production hubs, promoting transparent infrastructure investments, and encouraging private sector participation in secure and sustain-

able economic networks.

**Technology and Cyber-security**

The Quad countries recognize the importance of technological leadership and safeguarding digital infrastructure. Cooperation extends to emerging technologies like 5G, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and cybersecurity frameworks.

This cooperation serves as a counterbalance to concerns over Chinese technology firms’ influence and potential security risks, as well as fostering innovation ecosystems aligned with democratic governance.

**Environmental Cooperation**

The Quad also addresses climate challenges, working on clean energy transitions, disaster response, and promoting sustainable development in the Indo-Pacific. This environmental dimension aligns with the members’ commitments to global climate goals and regional resilience.

**Pandemic Preparedness**

In the wake of COVID-19, the Quad has prioritized health security cooperation. This includes vaccine distribution efforts, strengthening health infrastructure, and coordinating pandemic response strategies to better prepare the region for future crises.

GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Quad’s historical significance in today’s world can be understood through several critical lenses:

**Counterbalancing China’s Rise**

The most prominent driver behind the Quad’s renewed prominence is the rapid rise of China as a geopolitical and military power. China’s expansive Belt and Road Initiative, militarization of the South China Sea, and increasingly assertive foreign policy have altered regional dynamics.

The Quad offers a platform for four democracies to collectively balance China’s influence without overtly framing their cooperation as an alliance explicitly targeting Beijing. This subtlety helps manage diplomatic sensitivities while signaling resolve.

Through enhanced naval exercises, freedom of navigation patrols, and diplomatic engagement, the Quad helps reassure Indo-Pacific nations concerned about China’s territorial claims and coercive diplomacy.

**Reviving Multilateralism**

In an international environment marked by rising authoritarianism, unilateralism, and geopolitical rivalry, the Quad exemplifies renewed multilateralism based on shared democratic principles. It strengthens bonds among countries committed to transparency, rule of law, human rights, and peaceful dispute resolution.

This emphasis contrasts with more transactional or bilateral approaches and showcases the role of like-minded coalitions in maintaining a stable world order.

**Shaping Indo-Pacific**

Order

The Indo-Pacific region has become the centerpiece of global strategic competition. The Quad’s agenda actively shapes the regional order by promoting an open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific where no single power dominates.

By working together, the Quad members encourage smaller nations to participate in this order, resisting coercion and promoting cooperation on issues ranging from trade to climate resilience.

**Technological Leadership**

The Quad’s role in securing supply chains and advancing technological cooperation is increasingly important in a world facing economic fragmentation and technological competition.

Its efforts help diversify sources of critical materials, reduce dependency on potentially adversarial states, and foster innovation aligned with democratic oversight.

**Humanitarian Impact**

Addressing climate change and disaster response reflects the Quad’s recognition that security encompasses more than military might. Its work on clean energy, sustainable development, and pandemic preparedness contributes to regional resilience and human security.

CHALLENGES AND CRITIQUES

While the Quad holds great promise, it faces several challenges:

- **Lack of Formalization:** Unlike NATO or other alliances, the Quad has no binding treaty or permanent structure. This limits its ability to enforce decisions or present a unified front in crises.
- **Diverse National Interests:** The four countries have different historical experiences, strategic priorities, and threat perceptions. India, for instance, balances its ties with both the US and China, while Japan and Australia are more openly wary of China’s rise.
- **China’s Perception and**

Response: Beijing views the Quad as a containment or “Asian NATO” strategy, increasing its suspicions and potentially heightening tensions. This risks escalating a security dilemma in the region.

● **Balancing Act:** The Quad must carefully navigate its ambitions without alienating ASEAN countries or other regional players who prefer non-alignment or fear being forced to choose sides.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The Quad’s trajectory suggests it will continue to deepen cooperation across multiple domains. Key areas likely to gain prominence include:

- **Expanded Membership or Partnerships:** The Quad may explore closer coordination with ASEAN, South Korea, or other like-minded nations to broaden its regional influence.
- **Institutional Development:** While maintaining flexibility, some form of secretariat or regularized mechanisms could enhance effectiveness.
- **Greater Economic Integration:** Beyond security, deeper trade, investment, and technology ties will strengthen the Quad’s role as a comprehensive regional actor.
- **Enhanced Crisis Management:** The Quad may increasingly engage in coordinated responses to regional crises, including natural disasters, pandemics, and geopolitical flash-points.

THE BOTTOMLINE

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue stands as one of the most significant developments in contemporary international relations, especially within the Indo-Pacific context. Emerging from a shared desire to promote peace, stability, and democratic values, the Quad has evolved into a multifaceted forum addressing the complex challenges of the 21st century.

Its historical significance lies in its role as a strategic counterbalance to China’s rising power, a beacon of democratic multilateralism, and a driver of regional security, economic resilience, and technological cooperation. Despite inherent challenges and geopolitical complexities, the Quad symbolizes an important effort by four major democracies to shape a stable, inclusive, and prosperous Indo-Pacific — a task critical to global peace and prosperity in the decades ahead.



Leaders of Quad on 27 May 2022. File Photo

LIST of QUAD Summits				
No.	Date	Host country	Leader (Country)	Location
1st	March 24, 2021	Virtual meeting	Joe Biden (United States), Scott Morrison (Australia), Narendra Modi (India), Yoshihide Suga (Japan)	Video conference
2nd	September 24, 2021	United States	Joe Biden (United States), Scott Morrison (Australia), Narendra Modi (India), Yoshihide Suga (Japan)	Washington, D.C.
3rd	March 4, 2022	Virtual meeting	Joe Biden (United States), Scott Morrison (Australia), Narendra Modi (India), Fumio Kishida (Japan)	Video conference
4th	May 24, 2022	Japan	Fumio Kishida (Japan), Anthony Albanese (Australia), Narendra Modi (India), Joe Biden (United States)	Tokyo
5th	May 20, 2023	Japan	Fumio Kishida (Japan), Anthony Albanese (Australia), Narendra Modi (India), Joe Biden (United States),	Hiroshima
6th	September 21, 2024	United States	Joe Biden (United States), Anthony Albanese (Australia), Narendra Modi (India), Fumio Kishida (Japan)	Wilmington
7th	TBD, 2025	India	Narendra Modi (India), Anthony Albanese (Australia), Shigeru Ishiba (Japan), Donald Trump (United States),	New Delhi



## THEWA JEWELRY: THE GLORIOUS FUSION OF GOLD AND GLASS IN RAJASTHAN

## TDG NETWORK

Rajasthan, the land of royal palaces and vibrant culture, holds within its deserts and forts a treasury of age-old crafts that continue to mesmerize the world. Among these hidden gems is Thewa jewelry, a distinctive and intricate art form that marries the shimmer of gold with the sparkle of colored glass. Originating from a small town in Rajasthan, Thewa jewelry is not merely adornment; it is a heritage passed down generations, echoing tales of royal patronage, artistic mastery, and cultural pride.

## ORIGINS: A ROYAL INCEPTION

Thewa jewelry finds its roots in Pratapgargh, a quaint town in southern Rajasthan, nestled between the Aravalli ranges. It is believed that the art of Thewa was developed in the 17th century, during the reign of Maharawat Samant Singh. The craft is attributed to a talented artisan named Nathu Lal Sonewala, who is said to have pioneered this elaborate technique combining 23-carat gold with multicolored glass. Impressed by the beauty and novelty of the design, the local royals patronized the craft, helping it gain popularity across princely courts of India.

The term Thewa is derived from the Rajasthani word meaning “setting”—a reference to the process of fusing gold sheets onto glass. Over time, this regional specialty became a prized possession in royal collections and was even exchanged as diplomatic gifts.

## THE UNIQUE CRAFTSMANSHIP

What makes Thewa jewelry truly unique is its meticulous craftsmanship. The



process begins with a finely beaten sheet of pure gold. The artisan engraves intricate motifs—often inspired by mythology, Mughal miniatures, hunting scenes, or floral designs—using delicate tools like chisels and needles. These motifs are not randomly chosen; they often tell stories of Krishna's leelas, royal processions, or nature's bounty, all etched with poetic finesse.

Once the design is carved, the gold filigree is carefully fused onto colored glass—traditionally red, green, or blue. This is done by a

secret technique known only to a handful of families from Pratapgargh, who have passed it down orally through generations. The glass serves as the backdrop, giving the gold patterns a luminous, jewel-like effect. The fused piece is then framed in silver or gold and crafted into pendants, earrings, bracelets, or brooches.

## THE SECRET BEHIND THE SPARKLE

What lends Thewa jewelry its brilliance is the intensity of color and contrast be-

tween the vibrant glass and the lustrous gold filigree. The colors are created using traditional techniques involving metallic oxides, which are baked onto the glass at high temperatures. The heat not only fixes the color but also hardens the glass, making it durable.

The result is a breathtaking piece of art—lightweight, intricate, and dazzling. Each piece takes 15–30 days to complete, depending on its complexity. No two Thewa pieces are identical, making them highly valued collectibles.

*The colors are created using traditional techniques involving metallic oxides, which are baked onto the glass at high temperatures. The heat not only fixes the color but also hardens the glass, making it durable.*

## A SYMBOL OF CULTURAL CONTINUITY

Thewa is more than just jewelry; it is a symbol of Rajasthani heritage and identity. In an age of mass-produced ornaments, Thewa holds its ground as a hand-made treasure, representing a fusion of Rajput valor, Mughal aesthetics, and Hindu mythology.

Traditionally, Thewa jewelry was worn during weddings and festivals, passed down as heirlooms from mother to daughter. Today, while it has gained recognition globally, its emotional and cultural significance remains rooted in local traditions.

The artisans of Pratapgargh—mainly from the



Sonewala community—have kept this 400-year-old art alive despite facing economic and technological challenges. In recognition of their dedication, the Indian government granted Geographical Indication (GI) tag status to Thewa in 2008, acknowledging it as a unique product of Rajasthan.

## THEWA IN MODERN TIMES

While the heart of Thewa remains in Pratapgargh, its appeal has reached fashion runways, museums, and global art forums. Designers are now incorporating Thewa elements in contemporary accessories, such as cufflinks, rings, and neckpieces, catering to a newer, global clientele.

International exhibitions and handicraft fairs have provided a platform for artisans to showcase their work, while NGOs and government schemes have attempted to bring modernization in tools and marketing without diluting the authenticity of the craft. Institutions like the National Institute of Design (NID) and Crafts Council of India have also played a role in research and documentation.

Several master artisans from Pratapgargh have been awarded the Shilp Guru and National Award for Handicrafts, further enhancing the profile of this endangered art.

## CHALLENGES AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Despite its allure, Thewa faces multiple challenges. The intricate nature of the work demands years of training and patience, discouraging the younger generation, who often turn to more lucrative professions. The market is also flooded with cheaper imitations and machine-made alternatives

that lack the soul and story of traditional Thewa.

The need of the hour is sustainable revival. Encouraging collaborations between designers and artisans, offering training programs for youth, providing financial incentives, and promoting Thewa through digital marketplaces can help ensure that this legacy not only survives but thrives.

## A JEWEL OF RAJASTHAN'S SOUL

Thewa jewelry, with its opulent artistry and vibrant history, is a shining example of Rajasthan's rich cultural legacy. It represents the confluence of beauty, storytelling, and tradition—etched not just on gold and glass, but in the collective memory of a region that prides itself on its craftsmanship.

In preserving and promoting Thewa, we do not just protect a craft; we safeguard a heritage that speaks of kings and commoners, of devotion and design, of hands that continue to mold history into wearable art.

## Zardozi of Rajasthan - The Golden Thread That Binds Heritage

## TDG NETWORK

Rajasthan, the land of kings, palaces, and vibrant cultural expressions, is renowned not only for its architectural marvels but also for its rich textile traditions. Among the many exquisite crafts that originated and flourished in this desert state, Zardozi embroidery holds a distinct place. Once the pride of royal attire, this intricate needlework of gold and silver threads continues to dazzle in wedding trousseaus, festive garments, and luxury décor. Rooted in regal patronage and perfected by generations of artisans, Zardozi is not just embroidery—it's a shimmering symbol of Rajasthan's opulent legacy.

## HISTORICAL ROOTS: FROM PERSIA TO PRINCELY COURTS

The word Zardozi is derived from Persian, where 'zar' means gold and 'dozi' means embroidery. The art is believed to have originated in ancient Persia and travelled to India through trade and conquests, particularly flourishing under the Mughals during the 16th and 17th centuries. It received exceptional patronage from emperors like Akbar, who encouraged its use in royal garments, ceremonial tents, scabbards, wall hangings, and even the trappings of elephants and horses.

Though it had spread across the subcontinent, it found a particularly vibrant home in Rajasthan, where the royal courts of Jaipur, Udaipur, and Jodhpur embraced Zardozi as a

hallmark of aristocratic fashion and ceremonial splendor. Skilled artisans—often known as zardoos—were invited to these kingdoms to craft elaborate patterns for royal costumes, religious idols, and furnishings.

## THE CRAFTSMANSHIP: THREADS OF GOLD AND PATIENCE

Zardozi embroidery is a labor-intensive and time-honored technique that requires immense precision. Traditionally, pure gold and silver wires were used, along with semi-precious stones, pearls, and beads, all hand-stitched onto fabrics like silk, velvet, and satin. The metallic threads were made by flattening gold or silver into fine wires and then twisting them into spirals known as badla and kasav. These were either sewn directly or couched onto fabric using silk threads.

The motifs in Zardozi are often inspired by nature—floral vines (bel), paisleys (ambi), birds, animals, and geometric patterns. Religious themes and Mughal-influenced designs also play a significant role. Each piece can take weeks to months to complete, depending on its complexity, size, and richness.

In Rajasthan, the use of gota, dabka, naqshi, sequins, and katori further adds to the diversity and regional uniqueness of Zardozi. Jaipur, in particular, became a major hub where Zardozi evolved to incorporate elements of Rajasthani color



aesthetics and folk motifs, making it distinct from its counterparts in Lucknow or Delhi.

## ROYAL PATRONAGE AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Zardozi's glory in Rajasthan

was closely tied to royal patronage. It was an essential component of court costumes, bridal ensembles, and temple textiles. Kings and queens would don elaborately embroidered robes, turbans, and stoles as symbols of prestige. Even today,



for bridal lehengas, odhnis, sherwanis, and even ceremonial dupattas for grooms. The craft's luxurious appeal and meticulous detail make it a popular heirloom, passed from one generation to the next.

## REVIVAL AND RECOGNITION

While Zardozi enjoyed immense popularity during the Mughal and princely eras, its fortunes declined during British rule due to reduced patronage and industrialization. Many artisans were forced to abandon their craft in search of alternative livelihoods. However, the post-inde-

pendence years saw efforts by governments and designers to revive the craft.

In recent decades, Zardozi has experienced a resurgence, thanks to its adoption by fashion designers and its inclusion in global runways. From bridal couture to accessories and home furnishings, Zardozi embroidery has regained visibility and value.

The Government of India has recognized Zardozi as a traditional handicraft and awarded it a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, which protects the uniqueness of the craft and supports the artisan community. In Rajasthan, especially in Jaipur and Ajmer, various training centers, NGOs, and cooperative societies are working to ensure skill transmission to younger generations.

## MODERN ADAPTATIONS AND GLOBAL APPEAL

Modern Zardozi has adapted to changing times by using cheaper materials such as synthetic threads, copper wires with gold polish, and plastic beads in place of expensive gold and silver. This has made Zardozi more affordable and accessible to a larger market.

Fashion designers continue to innovate with Zardozi, combining it with contemporary silhouettes, minimalist designs, and fusion wear to appeal to younger audiences. It is now common to see Zardozi not just on heavy bridal wear but also on clutches, juttis, saree

borders, jackets, and even handbags.

The craft has also found admirers in the international fashion world, with global celebrities wearing Zardozi-embellished garments designed by Indian couturiers. Its ornamental richness and handmade legacy appeal to collectors and connoisseurs of slow, sustainable fashion.

## PRESERVING THE LEGACY

Despite its growing visibility, Zardozi faces challenges, especially related to artisan welfare, fair wages, and training infrastructure. Many artisans still struggle with inconsistent income, lack of recognition, and exploitation by middlemen.

There is a pressing need to strengthen artisan clusters, offer design interventions, and ensure market access through exhibitions, e-commerce platforms, and government schemes. Supporting Zardozi artisans not only sustains livelihoods but also safeguards a centuries-old cultural heritage.

Zardozi is more than a craft—it is a narrative embroidered in gold, reflecting the grandeur of Rajasthan's royal past and the resilience of its artistic soul. Every stitch tells a story of devotion, beauty, and timeless elegance. As the world moves toward handmade luxury and cultural authenticity, the golden threads of Zardozi continue to weave Rajasthan's legacy into the global fabric of art and fashion.



# RUSSIA-AZERBAIJAN STRAIN: PLANE CRASH & CUSTODIAL DEATHS

Russian-Azerbaijani tensions surged after two Azerbaijani brothers died in Russian custody.

Tensions between Russia and Azerbaijan have escalated sharply in recent weeks, sparked by a series of troubling incidents involving the detention and deaths of Azerbaijani nationals in Russia, the arrest of Russian journalists in Azerbaijan, and long-standing grievances exacerbated by an unresolved tragedy involving a civilian airliner. These developments have not only strained bilateral relations but also stirred public outrage and diplomatic fallout on both sides.

**Custodial Deaths**  
The immediate catalyst for the current crisis was a large-scale law enforcement operation carried out by Russian authorities on June 27 in the city of Yekaterinburg, located in the Ural region of Russia. More than 50 Azerbaijani nationals were detained as part of an



Russian President Vladimir Putin (Left) and a Grozny-bound passenger plane mistakenly shot by the Russian Air Defence. File Photo

investigation into a murder case dating back 24 years. This sweep was presented by Russian officials as a legitimate criminal inquiry, but the aftermath of the detentions unleashed a wave of diplomatic fury.

Tragically, two of the detained Azerbaijani brothers, Ziyaddin Safarov and Gusein Safarov, died while in police custody. Their deaths provoked an immediate and forceful response from Azerbaijan, with its Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemning the incident as a “brutal killing.” Azerbaijani authorities alleged that the brothers, along with several other detainees, were subjected to violence and abuse while in custody. Postmortem examinations conducted in Baku reportedly found evidence of severe beatings, contradicting the official Russian narrative.

The Russian side, how-

ever, maintained a different version of events. They stated that one brother had died of heart failure, and that the cause of death of the other remained under investigation. Russian officials emphasized the independence of law enforcement processes and dismissed Azerbaijan’s accusations as politically motivated.

Azerbaijan’s Diplomatic Pushback

In response to the deaths and allegations of mistreatment, Azerbaijan swiftly moved to express its displeasure through various diplomatic and cultural channels. The Ministry of Culture in Azerbaijan canceled all cultural events associated with Russia, including concerts, exhibitions, and festivals, signaling a symbolic withdrawal of goodwill.

On the political front, Azerbaijan’s Parliament withdrew from a planned

bilateral meeting in Moscow, a clear sign of cooling relations. Furthermore, an official visit by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk was called off, underscoring the depth of Azerbaijan’s anger and disappointment.

These steps demonstrate how deeply the issue has impacted Azerbaijan’s government and public sentiment, signaling a readiness to escalate diplomatic consequences in response to

by spokesperson Dmitry Peskov, expressed regret over the rising tensions but firmly supported Russian law enforcement’s role in the case. Peskov stated, “We believe that everything happening in Yekaterinburg is related to the work of law enforcement agencies, and this cannot and should not be a reason for such a reaction.” This response reflects Moscow’s position that the situation is primarily a domestic legal matter and resists framing it as a diplomatic dispute.

Meanwhile, analysts in Azerbaijan have criticized Russia’s stance. Political analyst Emil Mustafayev described the incident as an example of xenophobia and ethnic scapegoating, reflecting broader patterns of discrimination against ethnic minorities within Russia. He said, “The killing of Azeris is part of a pattern of tendentious politics where ethnic minorities are used as scapegoats.” This sentiment echoes longstanding concerns about the treatment of Azeris and other minorities in Russia, fueling mistrust and resentment.

jani nationals detained in Russia. In a tit-for-tat move, Azerbaijan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs announced on June 30 that it had arrested seven individuals at the editorial office of Sputnik Azerbaijan Radio, a media outlet linked to Russia. Among those detained were two Russian nationals — the agency’s Executive Director and Editor-in-Chief.

In addition, a journalist from the Russian media agency Ruptly was summoned for questioning, signaling a broader clampdown on Russian media operations in Azerbaijan. The following day, eight more Russians were arrested, allegedly part of an organized crime group suspected of involvement in drug trafficking, particularly importing drugs from Iran and distributing them online. Reports indicate that some of these detainees showed visible signs of physical abuse.

These arrests have compounded the diplomatic strain, with Russia viewing them as politically motivated actions that target its citizens and interests in Azerbaijan. The detentions

tensions.

**The Plane Crash Incident**

The current crisis is rooted not only in recent events but also in deeper, unresolved issues between the two countries. Azerbaijan hosts around two million ethnic Azeris in Russia, a substantial diaspora community that has often reported experiences of racial discrimination and xenophobia.

One particularly painful flashpoint was the tragic incident in December of the previous year, when Russian air defenses mistakenly shot down a passenger plane en route from Baku to Grozny. The plane was shot down over Chechnya and crashed in Kazakhstan, killing all 38 people on board. The incident severely impacted public opinion in Azerbaijan and intensified criticism of Russia’s handling of the tragedy.

Mirjalil Gasimli, a member of Azerbaijan’s Parliament, strongly condemned the ongoing discrimination faced by Azeris in Russia and linked it to the recent custodial deaths. He called the events “blatant examples of chauvinism, discrimination, and national prejudice in Russia.” Gasimli also criticized Russia’s failure to adequately address the plane crash, describing the lack of accountability as “utterly unacceptable.” He urged Russia to take steps consistent with international law to resolve the matter.

Although Russian President Vladimir Putin offered an apology to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, suggesting the military had

mistaken the plane for a Ukrainian drone, this gesture was widely viewed as insufficient in Baku. The unresolved plane crash remains a sore point in the relationship and contributes to Azerbaijan’s broader mistrust of Russia.

**Broader Implications**

The recent sequence of events involving the custodial deaths, arrests, and diplomatic fallout must be seen within the larger geopolitical and social framework shaping Russia-Azerbaijan relations. Historically, Azerbaijan has balanced its relationships with Russia and the West while maintaining its sovereignty and national identity. However, the recent flare-ups illustrate vulnerabilities in this balance and expose fault lines in ethnic relations and law enforcement practices.

For Russia, managing ethnic minorities within its borders remains a challenge, especially when high-profile cases draw international scrutiny. The tension also reflects Moscow’s broader regional dynamics, as it juggles complex relations with its neighbors and navigates shifting alliances.

For Azerbaijan, these incidents underscore the ongoing concerns about the safety and treatment of its diaspora abroad, as well as its assertiveness in defending its citizens’ rights on the international stage. The cultural and diplomatic retaliations indicate that Baku is willing to escalate pressure to achieve accountability and justice.

● TDG NETWORK

## Immigration crackdown row: Anti-Trump camp is targeting ‘First Lady’ and Barron

As President Donald Trump intensifies calls for stricter immigration laws and deportations, critics have turned their focus on his own family. A viral petition on MoveOn titled “Deport Melania, Melania’s Parents, and Barron in the First Round of Deportations” demands that the First Lady Melania Trump, her son Barron, and her father Viktor Knavs be deported—highlighting what many see as hypocrisy in Trump’s immigration rhetoric.

The petition, which has already gathered over 45,000 signatures, urges that if Trump’s tough immigration policies are to be enforced impartially, his naturalized wife and her family should be “on the first boat out.” It also refers to Barron as an ‘anchor baby,’ a term used to criticize children born in the U.S. to non-citizen parents who can then confer citizenship benefits—a phrase loaded with controversy. The petition also draws attention to Melania’s immigration history and the citizenship status of her late mother, Amalija Knavs.

Melania Trump was born in Slovenia in 1970 and moved to New York in 1996 to pursue a modeling career. She became a U.S. citizen in 2006, making her the first ‘First Lady’ to be naturalized and only the second born outside the U.S. Before obtaining her green card in 2001, her immigration status faced scrutiny, as she was granted residency through the EB-1 visa



Donald Trump and Melania Trump

*Political figures like Congresswoman Maxine Waters have criticized this apparent double standard.*

program—often called the ‘Einstein visa’—reserved for people with “extraordinary ability.” This sparked public debate about whether her case fit the usual criteria.

Political figures like Congresswoman Maxine Waters have criticized this apparent double standard. Speaking at a rally in Los Angeles, Waters suggested Trump should scrutinize Melania’s records if he is serious about cracking down on undocumented immigration. She also questioned the documentation status of Melania’s parents, implying they too should be investigated.

Reports from the New York Times revealed that Melania had sponsored her parents for green cards under family-based immigration, a process Trump has derided as ‘chain migration.’ While

her mother, Amalija Knavs, died in 2024, her father Viktor continues to make public appearances with the Trump family. Critics highlight this as contradictory since Trump has been vocal against chain migration, yet his in-laws benefited from it.

One of the petition’s key messages, noted by WION News, is to avoid any perception of double standards. If immigration enforcement is truly about national security, then Melania and her family should be subject to the same laws and scrutiny as any immigrant. The petition also references Trump’s alleged plans to amend the 14th Amendment to restrict birthright citizenship—an executive order currently challenged in court—underscoring the broader

debate on who qualifies as American.

Initially signed by a few thousand, the petition gained momentum as media outlets nationwide picked up the story. The Economic Times reports that the campaign has ignited widespread discussion on immigration fairness and policy application. Activists emphasize that their demand is not merely symbolic protest or satire but a call for equal enforcement of immigration laws.

The “Deport Melania” campaign has grown from a sharp critique into a potent symbol of popular opposition against perceived hypocrisy in the Trump administration’s immigration policies. Although it remains unclear whether the petition will lead to any official action, it has undeniably sparked a larger conversation on immigration, citizenship, and the principles that govern who belongs in America.

● TDG NETWORK

## Britain’s falling birthrate sparks ministerial concern amid debate over its implications

Britain is facing a significant demographic shift, with birthrates falling to their lowest levels since records began in 1938. This trend has alarmed politicians and policymakers who worry about the long-term implications of an ageing population and a shrinking workforce. Yet, as Larry Elliott argues, this demographic change may not be the disaster many fear; in fact, it could bring some positive outcomes for the UK and its economy.

**An Ageing Population**  
The UK’s population has grown steadily over recent decades, rising from under 60 million at the start of the 2000s to around 67.2 million in 2022. Projections suggest it will increase further by about five million by 2032. Despite this growth, the fertility rate — the average number of children born per woman — in England and Wales currently sits at 1.44. This figure is well below the replacement rate of 2.1 needed to maintain a stable population over time.

If this low birthrate trend continues, and if net migration decreases, the UK’s total population could eventually begin to shrink. This has sparked concerns among government ministers and policymakers, including Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson, who recently voiced “worrying repercussions” and called for policies to make it easier for women to have children.

**SOCIETAL CHANGES AND ECONOMIC REALITIES**

Understanding the reasons behind the decline in fertility is key to assessing whether intervention is necessary or even desirable. For one, women today are better educated and more career-focused



A woman pushes a pram with a child past a polling station during the general election in Northallerton, North Yorkshire, 4 July 2024. File Photo

than ever before. University attendance among women has soared, opening doors to rewarding jobs and career advancement. This has shifted priorities, with many women choosing to delay childbirth or have fewer children in favor of personal and professional development.

Economic challenges also play a crucial role. Housing affordability has become a major barrier for young adults wishing to start families. Since 2000, homeownership among 25- to 34-year-olds in the UK has dropped from 59% to 39%, while rents have risen significantly. These pressures make early family formation less feasible for many.

**Global Efforts & Their Limitations**

Several European countries are grappling with similar demographic challenges and have introduced pronatalist policies aimed at encouraging higher birthrates. Italy offers tax-free “baby bonuses,” France has a “demographic rearmament” plan, and Hungary provides interest-free loans to women with three or more children. Yet, despite these generous incentives, fertility rates remain below the replacement threshold in all these countries.

This suggests that financial incentives alone cannot overcome the deeper social and economic factors that influence reproductive decisions. Career aspirations, housing market conditions, and broader lifestyle preferences often outweigh government handouts.

**FALLING POPULATION AN OPPORTUNITY**

While the prospect of a declining population might seem alarming, it could actually have several benefits. Economist David Miles, who contributes to the Office for Budget Responsibility’s forecasts, argues that fears about shrinking populations are “largely bunkum.” He notes that the global population will continue growing for decades, placing immense pressure on the environment and accelerating climate change.

From this perspective, a gently falling and ageing UK population could alleviate some of these pressures domestically. Fewer people would mean less congestion, lower demand for housing, and reduced strain on public services such as healthcare and transport.

**ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

Economically, a smaller population does not necessarily mean a weaker economy. While total GDP might decline with fewer workers, GDP per capita — a more accurate measure of living standards — could actually increase. Older populations tend to save more, increasing the capital available per worker and potentially boosting productivity.

Japan serves as a real-world example of a country managing a shrinking and ageing population without collapsing economically. Although challenges remain, the experience shows that economic adaptation is possible.

**POLICY ADJUSTMENTS NEEDED**

This demographic shift will require thoughtful policy changes. With fewer young people entering the workforce, it is crucial that those who can work do so productively. This underpins the government’s controversial welfare reforms aimed at encouraging employment.

Making childcare more affordable and accessible is another important step to support working parents. Additionally, as life expectancy rises, extending working lives through pension reforms could help maintain a sustainable labor force.

**THE OUTLOOK**

Ultimately, the focus should not be on artificially boosting birthrates but rather on adapting to demographic realities. A falling population is not inherently negative and may even be beneficial in terms of environmental sustainability and quality of life. Policymakers should concentrate on creating conditions that allow individuals to make their own family choices without undue economic or social pressure.



# 4 KILLED, 14 INJURED IN DRIVE-BY SHOOTING OUTSIDE CHICAGO NIGHTCLUB

The crowd had just exited the club following an album release party.

AGENCIES  
CHICAGO

At least four people were killed and 14 others injured in a drive-by shooting late Wednesday night (local time) outside the Artis Lounge nightclub in Chicago's River North neighbourhood, CBS News reported, citing local police.

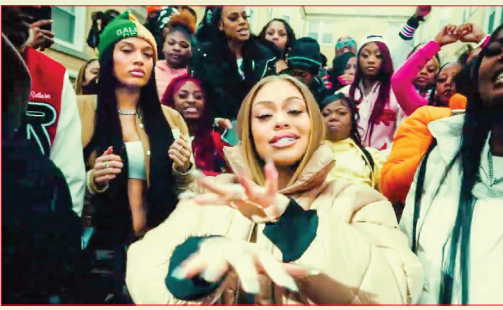
As per CBS News, at around 11 pm on Wednesday, a dark SUV reportedly drove by the nightclub on the 300 block of West Chicago Avenue, where three individuals inside the vehicle opened fire on a crowd gathered outside.

The crowd had just exited the club following an album release party for rapper Mello Buckzz.

Police detailed that among the deceased were two men, one a 24-year-old who was shot in the chest

SUMMARY

- 4 dead, 14 injured in drive-by shooting outside Chicago nightclub after Mello Buckzz's album party.
- Gunmen in SUV opened fire on crowd at 11 PM; victims include two teens and two young men.
- Rapper, pastor call it one of the city's worst mass shootings; scene marked by chaos.
- No arrests yet; same block saw a deadly shooting in 2022.



and another a 25-year-old who was shot in the head, both of whom died at Stroger Hospital. As reported by CBS News.

An 18-year-old woman and a 17-year-old girl, both shot in the chest, were pronounced dead at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

The victims who sus-

tained injuries range from 21 to 32 years old, and two were taken to Illinois Masonic Hospital, two to Mt Sinai, three to Stroger, and six to Northwestern Memorial for treatment. Authorities said four of the injured are in serious to critical condition, CBS News reported.

Rapper Mello Buckzz, in

a social media statement, expressed heartbreak and called for prayers.

"Prayers up for all my sisters, god please wrap your arms around every last one of them... Feel like everything is just weighing down on me...All I can do is talk to god and pray," she said, as quoted by CBS News.

Pastor Donovan Price,

who responded to the scene, described the situation as one of the worst he has ever witnessed, with victims' loved ones desperately searching for each other and their belongings amidst the chaos.

"The worst, the worst I've seen. People wanting to find their other people, find who was alive, finding who was, you know, where their phones were because they dropped them in the chaos, so they couldn't even call or couldn't even find their car keys. It's, it's something that you wouldn't expect to find in the city, we have a lot of shootings, but nothing, nothing like this," he told CBS News.

As of Thursday, no arrests have been made, and the investigation remains ongoing as authorities continue to search for the three suspects.

# Quad reaffirms Indo-Pacific unity

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON, DC

The Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting (QFIM) held in Washington placed strong emphasis on the importance of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and respect for international law, according to a United States State Department official.

The four-nation group, comprising India, the United States, Australia, and Japan, also reaffirmed their joint commitment to a free, open and peaceful Indo-Pacific region, and expressed serious concern about terrorism and ongoing regional challenges.

US State Department Deputy Spokesperson Mignon Houston said that the Quad members had a clear and shared focus during the meeting on core principles that ensure peace and cooperation in the region.

"... I would point to the joint statement that was released by the Quad Partners, where they



*The Quad meeting stressed territorial integrity, rule of law, sovereignty, and regional security.*

focused on the right to territorial integrity and sovereignty and their commitment to the rule of law. These Quad partners make up 35 per cent of the world's GDP. They have an incredible impact and influence on the world. Leveraging their resources, expertise and skills to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific was the priority for this meeting... We look forward to seeing these policies carried forward through the Quad Partners," Houston said.

She said the United States, under President Donald Trump's leadership, remains focused on peace in the Indo-Pacific.

"Territorial integrity, respect

for the rule of law, and sovereignty were all pieces that were part of this meeting. That includes security, as India has suggested. We will continue to focus on that. This administration have been very clear that they are focused on peace. The US President is focused on peace. This is part we're going to continue to work for the Indo-Pacific as well," she added.

During the meeting, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar raised the issue of terrorism and referred to India's recent military action, Operation Sindoor, which was launched in response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

# Trump slams GOP holdouts as House advances 'Big Beautiful Bill'

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON DC

As the US House of Representatives heads for final vote in passing Donald Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill', the US President on Thursday lashed out at Republican party senators for stalling the bill in a procedural vote.

Republicans eventually advanced the tax cut and spending bill with a 219-213 vote but not before Trump took to social media to express his ire stating that the defiance was costing him votes.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said, "Largest Tax Cuts in History and a Booming Economy vs. Biggest



final vote. GOP leaders had to overcome pushback over the Senate's changes, CBS News reported.

That latest vote began at about 9:30pm (local time) Wednesday.

Trump has a self-imposed July 4 deadline on lawmakers to get the bill signed into law.

As of 1 o'clock (local time) Thursday morning, five House Republicans had voted no, which was theoretically enough for the rule vote to fail -- but left the vote open, and lawmakers can change from no to yes. Eight Republicans hadn't voted. Republicans were only able to afford three defections if all members were present

and voting.

The GOP leaders held open the vote on the rule to govern debate on the bill for an extended period of time as they worked to flip "no" votes and win over key holdouts. The tally was 219 to 213 with only one GOP no vote- Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, CNN reported.

House Republican leaders had aimed to move ahead quickly on the signature legislation of Trump's second-term agenda, which includes ramped-up spending for border security, defence and energy production and extends trillions of dollars in tax cuts, partially offset by substantial cuts to health care and nutrition programs.

# Russia claims control over Luhansk as US halts weapons promised to Ukraine

AGENCIES  
KYIV

The Russian occupation governor of Ukraine's eastern Luhansk region claimed it had been entirely conquered making it the first of the four eastern Ukrainian regions Russia has annexed that it fully controls, Al Jazeera reported on Thursday.

"Just a couple of days ago, I received a report that the territory of the Luhansk People's Republic has been 100 percent liberated," Leonid Pasechnik said, although not everyone agreed.

Russian military reporters said two villages remained free, and pointed out that Luhansk had been declared conquered once before, in 2022, before being partially reclaimed in a Ukrainian counteroffensive in September of



that year.

Russian forces have inched towards reconquering the entire territory in the intervening 33 months, and that constitutes a

second milestone within the past month on Ukraine's eastern front.

Russia's advance dealt another blow to Ukraine, more than three years after the full-scale invasion began.

On the same day as Pasechnik's announcement, the United States said it would not be sending Kyiv some weapons that had been promised by the administration of Joe Biden, the former US president, as per Al Jazeera.

"This decision was made to put America's interests first following a review of our nation's military support and assistance to other countries across the globe," said the White House.

Meanwhile, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Thursday thanked the frontline defenders for their work.

# PML-N denies planning no-trust vote against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Govt

TDG NETWORK  
ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has rejected speculations that it is planning to overthrow the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government through a no-confidence vote, Geo News reported.

A meeting held between Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday triggered speculations that the federal government was mulling a plan to oust Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

Speaking on Geo News morning show, PML-N Senator Irfan Siddiqui said it was wrong to term the meeting between Shehbaz Sharif and Faisal Karim Kundi a conspiracy. However, he called the vote of no confidence a legal option, citing the ouster of former Pakistan PM Imran



Khan from power through a no-trust motion in April 2022.

Siddiqui stated that no proposal regarding a no-trust vote was discussed at any level. He said, "We will not resort to any such tactic that could plunge Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into a crisis."

According to official details regarding the meeting, Kundi on Wednesday briefed Shehbaz Sharif on the tragic incident of River Swat, wherein several tourists lost their lives. Sharif expressed grief over the loss of lives and ordered the authorities to bolster their capacity building to stop such incidents, the

Pakistan PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Meanwhile, Pakistan PM's aide on public and political affairs, Rana Sanaullah, while speaking to Geo News, denied claims that PML-N discussed ousting the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government with Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Sanaullah made these remarks while addressing media speculations regarding the meeting between Fazl and Sharif on June 20. He said he was present during the meeting between the Pakistan PM and the JUI-F chief.

# Israel: 'Compensation plan for businesses harmed by Iran conflict'

AGENCIES  
TEL AVIV

The government of Israel approved the implementation of what it called a broad compensation plan for businesses that were economically damaged due to Operation "Rising Lion" against Iran.

The plan includes a spending track for businesses throughout the country, along with unique adjustments to the "temporary unpaid vacation" model (temporary layoffs) in order to ensure a broad safety net for businesses and employees that were damaged due to the war and the Home Front Command's guidelines.

The compensation will be provided to businesses with an annual turnover ranging from 12,000 Shekels (USD 3,557) to 400 million Shekels (USD 118 million), and will be based on the rate of

*The compensation will be provided to businesses with an annual turnover ranging from 12,000 Shekels (USD 3,557) to 400 million Shekels (USD 118 million), and will be based on the rate of damage to the revenue cycle during the months of June or May-June 2025.*

damage to the revenue cycle during the months of June or May-June 2025. Small businesses will receive a fixed grant according to the level of damage, and medium-sized and large businesses will receive partial reimbursement of expenses and salary payments.

# Passenger ferry sinks off Bali Island; 4 dead, over 30 missing

AGENCIES  
JAKARTA

Four people have been confirmed dead after a ferry carrying dozens of people and vehicles sank in the Bali Strait, of Indonesia, local media reported on Thursday.

Indonesia news agency, Antara, said the Tunu Pratama Jaya roll-on/roll-off vessel was carrying 12 crew members, 53 passengers, and 22 vehicles, including 14 large trailer trucks, when it capsized in the rough waters off Bali Island.

The vessel KMP Tunu Pratama Jaya, which departed from Ketapang Port in Banyuwangi en route to Gilimanuk in Bali, sank just 25 minutes after setting sail at 10:56 p.m. local time, going down around 11:20 p.m., according to authorities. The incident was first reported by a harbour patrol officer on duty in Gilimanuk waters.

The country's National Search and Rescue Agency



(Basarnas) said that search and rescue efforts are continuing amid rough conditions.

Media outlet The Jakarta Globe said that the Search and Rescue Vessel (SAR) the KN Permadi was deployed to support search and rescue efforts.

"The total number of people on board was 65. Twenty-three survived, four died," said Nanang Sigit, head of the Surabaya SAR Office today as per the Jakarta Globe. He said that the search still continues for 38 missing persons.

Bodies of the deceased have been transported to Negara

General Hospital in Bali, while survivors are receiving treatment at the Gilimanuk port area.

In a Meteorology report, Bali residents have been advised to remain vigilant against high wind speeds and large waves in the waters of north and south Bali from June 29 to July 2.

Meanwhile, as per Antara news agency, on June 25 this year a long boat carrying 13 soccer players capsized near Batam City in Riau Islands. Ten people survived the accident while three others reportedly went missing.

# India, Australia ink first undersea surveillance pact in boost to defence ties

AGENCIES  
CANBERRA

India and Australia have undertaken the first science and technology project arrangement to improve the detection and tracking of submarines and autonomous underwater vehicles. The agreement is set to boost defence ties in the area of undersea surveillance technologies, Australia's Depart-

ment of Defence said in a statement on Thursday.

As per the Department of Defence, the agreement outlines a three-year joint research project between Australia's Defence Science and Technology Group's (DSTG) Information Sciences Division and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory.

The DSTG is the Australian government's leading agency employing one of the largest number of scientists and engineers who deliver advice, innovative solutions on matters of Defence science and technology.

The Department of Defence noted that the leading-edge research would explore the use of Towed Array Target Motion Analysis technology so as to improve

the reliability, efficiency and interoperability of current surveillance capabilities.

Discipline Leader in DSTG's Information Sciences Division, Amanda Bessell, said that Target Motion Analysis was a collective term for target tracking algorithms, developed to estimate the state of a moving target.

"Target Motion Analysis is the crucial element in

maintaining platform situational awareness, when a passive mode of operation is required," Ms Bessell said as quoted by the Department of Defence.

The research project, therefore, is unique in the way as it utilises a towed array-based signal processing system.

DSTG Senior Researcher, Sanjeev Arulampalam, explained a towed array con-

sisted of a long linear array of hydrophones, towed behind a submarine or surface ship on a flexible cable.

"We need to harness the best minds in innovation, science and technology to build new capabilities, to innovate at greater pace, and to strengthen our strategic partnerships. The hydrophones work together to listen to the undersea environment from various di-

rections," Dr Arulampalam said as cited by the Department of Defence.

"The sound signal is passed through a signal processor, which analyses, filters and detects underwater acoustic signals emitted from maritime targets."

The combination of the Target Motion Analysis with the towed array system is intended to manage noise corruption and explore pos-

sible performance improvements.

This joint project between India and Australia would see novel algorithms put to test, using the strengths and shared knowledge of the two countries.

"The project arrangement will involve the sharing of ideas, investigation trials, algorithm demonstrations and performance analysis," Dr Arulampalam said.



# DEEPIKA FIRST INDIAN TO BE HONoured WITH 'HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME' STAR

AGENCIES  
LOS ANGELES

It's a proud moment for India as Deepika Padukone has been chosen as a recipient of prestigious Hollywood Walk of Fame star in the coming year.

On Wednesday, Deepika's name along with other renowned personalities from the worlds of recordings, motion pictures, television, live theater/live performance and sports entertainment, were announced at a live press conference from Ovation Hollywood, Billboard reported.

Miley Cyrus, Timothee Chalamet, Hollywood actress Emily Blunt, French actress Cotillard, Canadian actress Rachel McAdams, Italian actor Franco Nero,



and celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay will also be honoured with a Hollywood Walk of Fame star.

Deepika's fans have been going gaga ever since the news broke out.

Notably, in 2017, Deepika made her Hollywood debut 'xXx: Return Of Xander Cage'. She has also been featured in TIME's 100 most influential people list and Variety's International Women's Impact Report.

She has also made remarkable appearances at the Cannes Film Festival and Met Gala in previous years.

The honorees were selected by the Walk of Fame selection panel of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce from "hundreds" of nominations at a meeting on June 20.

## 'Ramayana' teaser out

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

The first glimpse of 'Ramayana', directed by Nitesh Tiwari, has been officially unveiled, showcasing Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Ram, Yash as the formidable Ravana, and introducing Sunny Deol in the portrayal of Lord Hanuman.

The introductory footage, now released on the official social media handles of the makers, has generated a storm of excitement for the epic's Diwali 2026 release.

The film's teaser was



captioned as, "Ten years of Aspiration. Relentless Conviction to bring the Greatest Epic of all time to the World. An outcome through a collaboration of some of the world's best to ensure that Ramayana is presented with the greatest amount of Rev-

erence and Respect. Welcome to the Beginning. Let's Celebrate the IMMORTAL story of Rama v/s Ravana. Our Truth. Our History."

The footage has been receiving widespread attention not only for its ambitious reimagining of the

mythological tale but also for its high-end production values.

Backed by Namit Malhotra's Prime Focus Studios in collaboration with VFX giant DNEG and co-produced by Yash's Monster Mind Creations, the project boasts an international crew including Oscar winners and Hollywood stunt veterans.

The introduction video showcases a dark and mystic world where cosmic balance is disturbed by the rise of a powerful force, Ravana, born from vengeance and divine rejection.

## 'Hari Hara Veera Mallu' trailer out



TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

The much-awaited trailer of 'Hari Hara Veera Mallu,' starring actor-politician Pawan Kalyan, is finally out, and fans say the wait was worth it.

The makers, on Thursday, took to their X account to share the trailer along with the caption that read, "The guardian of justice steps into the battlefield. #HHVMTrailer is out now."

The trailer runs for two minutes and fifty-six seconds and opens with a strong voiceover. From the

first few seconds, it's clear that this is not just another period action film. Pawan Kalyan appears in many powerful looks: as a warrior, a rebel, and a legend.

Actor Bobby Deol plays the antagonist, and his scenes with Kalyan suggest a major face-off. His screen presence adds intensity to the trailer. Actress Nidhi Agerwal is also seen in a strong role.

Take a look On Wednesday, the makers took to their X account to share a BTS video showing Kalyan watching the trailer. In the video, the actor-politician is seen closely

watching the trailer and later appreciating director Jyothi Krishna for his work. The caption of the post read, "That's a POWER-PACKED VERDICT. The force behind the storm. @PawanKalyan, has watched the trailer, and even he couldn't hold back the excitement."

Jyothi Krishna has directed the movie, which was written by Radha Krishna Jagarlamudi, Sai Madhav Burra, and Abhimanyu Srivastava. Hari Hara Veera Mallu will be released in multiple languages, including Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam.

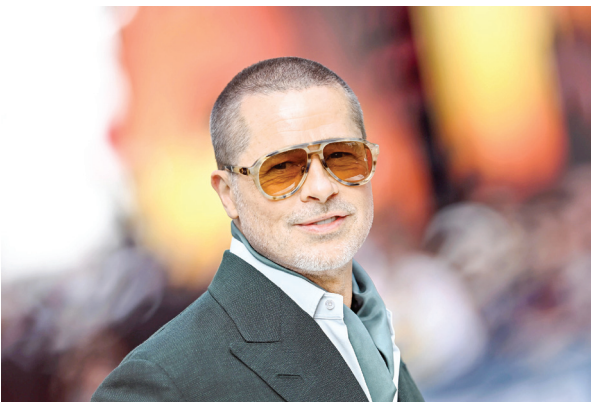
## Brad Pitt advises next generation to avoid pressure of franchises

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

Actor Brad Pitt shared his thoughts on the pressures facing young actors in Hollywood today.

According to Variety, during an interview, which coincided with his promotional tour for 'FT', Pitt expressed both admiration for the new generation of talent and concern over the overwhelming expectations placed on them by the industry.

The Oscar-winning actor, spoke about how the



landscape of Hollywood has evolved since his rise to fame, particularly with regard to the growing emphasis on franchises and

superhero films. While he acknowledged that young actors today have more freedom to explore various artistic avenues, he

warned them about getting "caught up" in the drive for box-office-driven roles.

"I like watching what the new generation is coming in with," Pitt said, adding, "I like to see what they are up against and the way they negotiate and work their way through it. They enjoy it more. We were more uptight and it had to be about acting... like, you didn't sell out, you didn't sell out. But now it's like, 'We can be artists in many different arenas, so let's do it and let's enjoy it,'" as quoted by Variety.

However, the 'Once Upon



Tamanna Bhatia poses for her social media. (Instagram)

## Mandakini mourns loss of father, fans condole

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Actor Mandakini's father, Joseph, passed away. The 'Ram Teri Ganga Maili' actor took to Instagram to grieve the loss of her father.

In a heartfelt message alongside a photograph of her late father, Mandakini wrote, "My heart is shattered today. I lost my beloved father this morning. No words can express the pain of this goodbye. Thank you, Papa, for your endless love, wisdom, and blessings. You will forever live in my heart."

Many fans and fellow celebrities offered their condolences.

"So sorry for your loss Mandakini ji," one social

media user wrote.

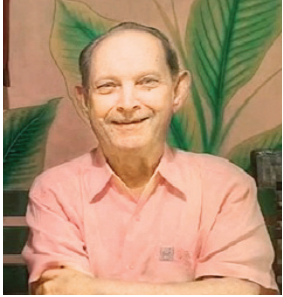
Another fan wrote, "Pls accept our deep heartfelt condolences @mandakiniofficial May Almighty provide strength to the family to bear this irreparable loss." Mandakini, born Yasmeen Joseph in Meerut, is married to Dr Kagyur T Rinpoche Thakur, who runs a Tibetan Herbal Centre.

The couple has two children, a son, Rabbil, and a

daughter, Rabze Innaya.

Known for her debut in the 1985 film 'Ram Teri Ganga Maili,' directed by Raj Kapoor, Mandakini rose to fame in the late 1980s.

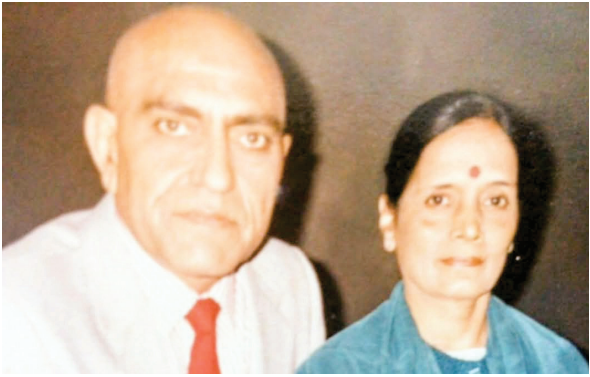
Her filmography includes appearances in movies such as 'Dance Dance' alongside Mithun Chakraborty, 'Kahan Hai Kanon' opposite Aditya Pancholi, and 'Pyaar Karke Dekho' with Govinda.



## Amrish Puri's adorable pictures with wife Urmila Diveker

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Nostalgia alert! Earlier, fans had limited access to the personal details of film stars, unless they willingly shared them through interviews and film promotions. Cut to 2025, all you have to do is be on social media to know what your favourite celebrities are up to.



Bollywood's iconic villain, Amrish Puri, passed away on January 12, 2005, but his legacy and memories live on through his versatile performances and photos shared by his family and fans. His grandson, Vardhan Puri, often treats Amrish Puri's fans to his dad's unseen pictures via his Instagram account.

On July 1, Vardhaan

walked down memory lane and dug out some priceless adorable images of late Amrish Puri and his wife Urmila Diveker, who died eight years ago. Have a look at those vintage pictures here.

On the death anniversary of his dadi, Vardhaan recalled the love both Amrish Puri and his wife had for each other.

## Aamir Khan to be chief guest at Indian Film Festival of Melbourne 2025

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) has announced that superstar Aamir Khan will be the chief guest for the 16th edition of the film gala.

The festival, which is scheduled from August 14 to 24, will include a special retrospective to celebrate Aamir's extraordinary contribution to Indian cinema.

There will also be a spotlight event surrounding



Khan's latest release "Sitare Zameen Par", which features the actor as a bas-

kethall coach who mentors a team of neurodivergent adults for community service.

IFFM 2025 will honour Aamir Khan's artistic impact with a specially curated selection of films that reflect his bold, socially conscious storytelling, a press release said. The screening of Sitare Zameen Par at the festival will be followed by a conversation with Aamir, director RS Prasanna, and Aparna Purohit, CEO of Aamir Khan Films.



# Jewels of glamour

TDG NETWORK

In the ever-evolving world of Bollywood fashion, jewellery has emerged as more than just an accessory—it is a powerful style statement. For India's top actresses, jewellery plays a central role in crafting a memorable look, turning every public appearance into a fashion moment. Whether it's the red carpet, a global premiere, or a festive celebration, these stars use jewellery to convey personality, celebrate tradition, and spark trends.

DEEPIKA PADUKONE: BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL

Deepika Padukone's jewellery choices mirror her commanding screen presence. She is known for her maximalist approach—think oversized chandbalis, multi-stranded necklaces, and heavy chokers. Her love for colourful gemstones and intricate craftsmanship ensures that her jewellery always



steals the show. Whether paired with a saree or a modern gown, Deepika's pieces are always the focal point, making her a true trendsetter in statement jewellery.

AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN: TIMELESS ROYALTY

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan epitomises elegance and tradition. Her jewellery often leans into vintage charm—layered Kundan necklaces, pearl-encrusted chokers, and detailed jhumkas. With a flair for regal styling, she effort-



her go-to. She often lets her jewellery do the talking, subtly elevating her overall look without overshadowing her natural elegance. Her knack for minimalist opulence makes her a red-carpet regular and a muse for contemporary fashion lovers.

SONAM KAPOOR AHUJA: THE FEARLESS FASHIONISTA

Sonam Kapoor is known for taking risks—and that includes her jewellery. She embraces experimental designs, layering chunky necklaces, wearing sculptural rings, and pairing Kundan or Polki with ultra-modern silhouettes. Her looks are carefully curated to make jewellery the centrepiece, not the accessory. With every appearance, she challenges the fashion norm and encourages others to treat jewellery as wearable art.

In Bollywood, jewellery has become a tool of storytelling, self-expression, and style leadership. These actresses aren't just wearing ornaments—they're making statements. By blending heritage with innovation, they're not just following trends—they're setting them.

PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS: GLOBAL DESI DIVA

Priyanka Chopra's jewellery game is as versatile as her international career. She seamlessly blends traditional Indian designs with Western fashion aesthetics. From dazzling chokers and cocktail rings at Hollywood events to rich, emerald-studded sets at Indian weddings, she embodies cross-cultural glamour. Her bold and confident choices ensure that she remains in the global spotlight—both for her acting and her fashion sense.

lessly bridges the past and the present. Her looks are often rooted in Indian heritage, enhancing her sarees and lehengas with an aura of royalty that never fails to make headlines.

KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN: EFFORTLESS LUXE

Kareena Kapoor Khan is the definition of understated luxury. Her jewellery choices balance sophistication with boldness—sleek diamond necklaces, emerald-studded pieces, and clean gold chokers are

# Layered to Last: The Secret to Long-lasting, Mood-Boosting Scents

TDG NETWORK

You step into a café on a crisp morning, the comforting scent of vanilla and cocoa swirling in the air, instantly wrapping you in warmth. A passerby's perfume—notes of jasmine and roses—reminds you of a bouquet of flowers, evoking a flood of cherished memories. And just a hint of citrus in the breeze leaves you feeling refreshed and energized.

Fragrance extends beyond mere sensory indulgence; it is deeply intertwined with emotions, memory, and even physiological responses like mood, stress, and working capacity. This profound connection between scent and mood is rooted in science. The olfactory system's direct link to the limbic system—the brain's emotional and memory centre—explains why certain fragrances can transport us back to special moments or instantly shift our state of mind. Scientific research has shown that olfactory stimulation significantly impacts cognition, mood, and social interactions.

FRAGRANCE AND EMOTIONS

Smell triggers 75% of daily emotions. Different fragrances elicit distinct emotional responses, which is highly subjective and hence challenging for a perfume creator. However, fragrance developers along with neuroscientists and experts in aromachology are using a wide range of scientific tools and AI to create fragrances that would have a positive impact on its users.

For example, citrus notes such as bergamot have been shown to enhance alertness and promote an uplifting effect, making them ideal for boosting energy levels. Floral notes like jasmine and passionfruit flowers contribute to relaxation and



stress reduction. Roses, long regarded as the epitome of romance, have an emotionally soothing and confidence-enhancing quality. Vanilla, with its warm and creamy profile, is associated with comfort and emotional well-being. These examples illustrate the role of scent in emotional regulation and highlight the benefits of incorporating them into daily routines. While scents evoke emotions, their lasting impact depends on how they are worn throughout the day. This is where fragrance layering becomes key. Layering helps one stand out by creating something new and unique.

EXTENDING FRAGRANCE LONGEVITY THROUGH LAYERING

Fragrance longevity depends on several factors, including skin type, environmental conditions, and application techniques. Research indicates that layering complementary scented products—such as body washes, lotions, and perfumes—significantly enhances scent retention. By strategically combining fragrance-infused products, one can maximize olfactory impact while ensuring a lasting, multi-dimensional scent experience.

Optimize Skin Hydration

Start by cleansing to remove impurities and excess oil, creating a fresh base for hydration. Cleansed and moisturized skin retains fragrance longer than dry skin, making hydration essential for lasting scent. Applying a body lotion before perfume creates a binding layer, enhancing diffusion. A perfumed, hydrating lotion adds depth and prolongs fragrance longevity.

Master the Art of Layering Without Overpowering

Effective layering balances intensity and harmony. Using matching products—shower gel, lotion, talc, and perfume—creates a cohesive, long-lasting fragrance experience.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LAYERING:

- While there is always room to experiment, start with something simple, subtle and similar. Use a shower gel, followed by lotion and perfume of the same fragrance notes to keep the perfume last longer.

- While mixing perfumes, start with 2 fragrances. Understanding the fragrance wheel helps to pair fragrances from complementary families to create a harmonious blend.

- Considering the perfume concentration and occasion also helps to

layer effectively.

Apply Fragrance to Pulse Points

Pulse points like the wrists, neck, and behind the ears help diffuse fragrance slowly for lasting impact. Lightly misting perfume on hair or clothing enhances the sillage, ensuring a lingering presence throughout the day.

Maintain Scent Freshness Throughout the Day

Carry your perfume or deodorant for a midday refresh. A light spritz on pulse points reinvigorates the senses, reinforcing the fragrance's presence and emotional impact.

Fragrance is more than just an accessory—it is an integral part of personal expression, emotional well-being, and sensory memory. By understanding the connection between scent and mood, and by adopting strategic layering techniques, one can ensure a long-lasting, immersive fragrance experience. Meticulously crafted fragrances and body care products allow for a sophisticated and enduring olfactory journey. Through careful selection and layering, individuals can not only enhance their personal scent profile but also elevate their daily experiences—one captivating note at a time.

By: Manasa Venkatesh, Product Development Scientist, Enchanteur

# Grandma's Ubtan to Korean Face Masks: What's Better?

TDG NETWORK

TRADITION VS. TREND IN SKINCARE

In the ever-evolving world of skincare, two distinct approaches stand tall — the age-old Indian wisdom of Ubtan and the modern, trendy charm of Korean face masks. Both claim to give you glowing, healthy skin, but they come from very different schools of thought. So what's really better? The answer might surprise you — or at least make you rethink your routine.

THE POWER OF UBTAN: NATURE'S BLEND

Ubtan is not a new beauty fad — it's a tried and tested traditional remedy passed down through generations. Made using natural ingredients like besan (gram flour), haldi (turmeric), sandalwood, rose water, milk, curd, and even neem, ubtan is known for its deep cleansing, tan removal, and brightening properties. Ubtan isn't just a face pack — it's a skincare philosophy that celebrates holistic beauty. It's gentle, chemical-free, customizable, and nourishes the skin while also treating concerns like pigmentation, acne, dullness, and uneven skin tone. For brides, it's almost a ritual — the haldi ceremony is symbolic of purifying both

the body and mind. However, ubtan does take time and consistency. From sourcing pure ingredients to mixing the paste fresh every time, it can feel like a mini kitchen project. It may not give instant results but works wonders in the long run.

THE ALLURE OF KOREAN FACE MASKS: INSTANT GLOW

Korean beauty, or K-beauty, took the world by storm with its quirky packaging and promise of dewy, glass-like skin. Among its most popular exports are sheet masks, sleeping masks, and bubble masks — all designed to offer hydration, soothing, brightening, and anti-ageing benefits with just one use.

Infused with cutting-edge ingredients like snail mucin, hyaluronic acid, ginseng, niacinamide, and even gold flakes, K-beauty masks are all about convenience, innovation, and visible results. They're mess-free, travel-friendly, and a great pick-me-up before an event.

But they're not without flaws. Many masks contain fragrances, alcohol, or preservatives, which might irritate sensitive or acne-prone skin. And over-reliance on masks without a consistent routine may lead to temporary, surface-level results



rather than deep nourishment.

SO, WHAT'S BETTER?

Both ubtan and Korean face masks have their place. If you're looking for long-term benefits, skin health, and a natural route — grandma's

ubtan wins. If you want a quick fix before a party or shoot, K-beauty masks are your go-to.

A smart approach? Blend both worlds. Use ubtan weekly as your natural exfoliant and cleanser. Keep a few Korean masks handy

for hydration boosts or glow on-the-go. Tradition meets trend — and your skin gets the best of both.

After all, skincare isn't about choosing sides — it's about listening to your skin, respecting your roots, and staying open to innovation.

# Pedicure to Knee: Monsoon Skincare Tips

TDG NETWORK

Complete Leg Care Routine for the Rainy Season

Monsoon brings relief from the scorching summer, but it also brings humidity, clogged pores, fungal infections, and constant dampness — especially affecting your feet, legs, and knees. The rain-soaked environment makes leg care essential from the pedicure to the knee. This season, your lower body needs a little extra love to stay clean, smooth, and infection-free.

Here's a complete monsoon skincare routine for your legs — simple, effective, and easy to follow.

Monsoon Leg Care Tips (Pedicure to Knee)

1. Keep Feet Clean & Dry Wash your feet thoroughly after returning from outside. Use an anti-bacterial soap to prevent fungal infections. Pat dry with a clean towel, especially between the toes.
2. Exfoliate Twice a Week Use a mild scrub to remove dead skin cells from feet to knees.
3. Focus on the heels, ankles, and knees where roughness is common.
4. DIY: Mix sugar, honey, and lemon juice for a natural exfoliant.
5. Moisturise Daily Choose a non-greasy, hy-



drating lotion with aloe vera or shea butter.

Apply after bathing and before bedtime to lock in moisture.

Don't skip the knees — they tend to darken if neglected.

4. Pamper with Home Pedicures

Soak your feet in warm water with Epsom salt and a few drops of tea tree oil.

Trim and clean nails, scrub the soles, and push back cuticles.

Finish with a foot cream or oil massage.

5. Use Anti-Fungal Powder or Cream

Prevent infections by dusting your feet and toes with anti-fungal powder, especially before stepping out.

Look out for signs like itching, redness, or white patches.

6. Avoid Closed Footwear for Long Hours

Wet shoes become breeding grounds for bacteria.

Choose open sandals or waterproof shoes that let your feet breathe.

Always keep a spare pair of

socks or footwear if you get wet in the rain.

7. Sunscreen for Legs

Even on cloudy days, UV rays can cause tanning and pigmentation.

Use a lightweight sunscreen on exposed areas, including your legs and feet.

8. Detan Your Legs

Apply a natural detan pack of curd, turmeric, and besan once a week.

Focus on knees and ankles where pigmentation is common during monsoon.

9. Stay Hydrated & Eat Right

Drinking enough water helps maintain skin elasticity and glow.

Add foods rich in Vitamin C, E, and Omega-3 to your diet for skin health.

Monsoon leg care doesn't require expensive salon visits — just consistent attention from pedicure to knee. Cleanse, exfoliate, moisturise, and protect your legs just like you would your face. With these simple tips, you can flaunt smooth, healthy legs all season long — rain or shine!



# “DRUG LORDS OF THE WORLD” EXPLORES THE DANGEROUS WORLD OF DRUGS



PROF SHIV SETHI

Dr. Binoy Gupta is a distinguished Indian author whose works weave intricate tales that resonate deeply with audiences across the globe. He has registered his presence as a visionary novelist whose evocative storytelling and bold imagination have earned him a cherished place in modern literature. Having several books and hundreds of articles to his credit. He has also travelled and lectured extensively which as a writer sharpen his imaginative abilities all the more. Prof Shiv Sethi from the Daily Guardian had a tete-a-tete with the author. Here are the excerpts.

Q. You have written several books. What was your motivation?

A. I have been writing articles since 1995 on a wide range of subjects. These were published in several reputed Newspapers and Magazines. I have also written several books. I will start with my recent book “Drug Lords of the World”. I was always fascinated by the stories of the Drug Lords. Theirs is a world apart. This book explores the dark and dangerous world of drugs, drug lords and drug cartels from the jungles of

South America, across Golden Crescent, through the Golden Triangle to the streets of major cities. This book actually gives an insight into the mysterious and secret world of drug lords. The book is a best seller and available in four languages.

Q. What made you write the book “Law of Transgender Rights in India - a Practical guide”?

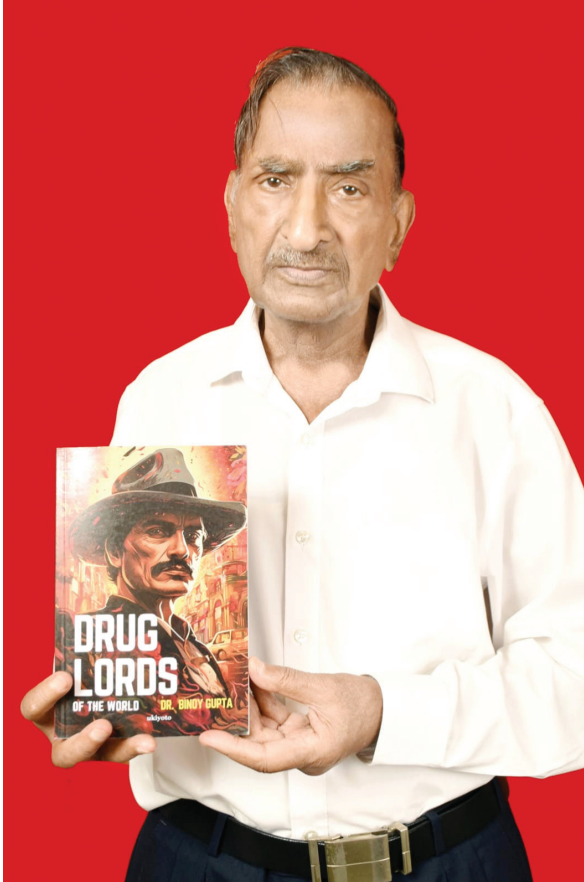
A. Sex, Gender, Transgender, Surgical change of Gender are complex and nascent issues. Transgender has been recognized as a third gender in India. But even lawyers are not conversant with these concepts. This book sheds light on the law relating to transgenders. More important, this book will educate the transgender about their rights and guide the transgender how to actually obtain them.

Q. You have written the book “How to Retire Wealthy & Healthy”. What prompted you to write this book?

A. Retirement is the time to relax, pursue passions, and enjoy the fruits of labour. But without proper planning, it can also become a time of financial stress and health concerns. In this book, I have drawn on my own experiences and extensive research to provide a comprehensive guide to navigating the challenges and opportunities of retirement.

Q. Tell us about Your book “Around the World in 5 Dollars”.

A. This book aims to provide an engaging and informative travel experience through



*Sex, Gender, Transgender, Surgical change of Gender are complex and nascent issues. Transgender has been recognized as a third gender in India. But even lawyers are not conversant with these concepts. This book sheds light on the law relating to transgenders. More important, this book will educate the transgender about their rights and guide the transgender how to actually obtain them.*

my personal experiences and insights gained in more than 6 decades. The book is my sincere attempt to enlighten the reader about several places which he may never visit. It will open the eyes of the reader to what he may miss during his busy schedule.

Q. What about your book “10 Ancient Hindu Temples of India”?

A. I have visited a large number of Hindu temples in India and abroad for more than 6 decades. I have written articles about several of them with photographs taken by me. These have been published in the leading publications in India and also abroad. The temples have taught me a lot. Many temples merit a separate book. In this small book, I have tried to capture the essence of Hinduism as reflected in these ten temples.

Q. Tell us about your Awards and Accolades.

A. To be honest, I do not write for awards and honors. But it is gratifying to see that my work has been acknowledged all across the globe. I have received four best author awards, two each in 2023 and 2024 under non-fiction category which is a big achievement.

Q. What is your advice to budding writers?

A. I encourage all youngsters and even adults to develop the habit of writing ..... start with what every you know. You can share your skills and experiences through social media platform too.

# A revolutionary guide to inner and outer wealth

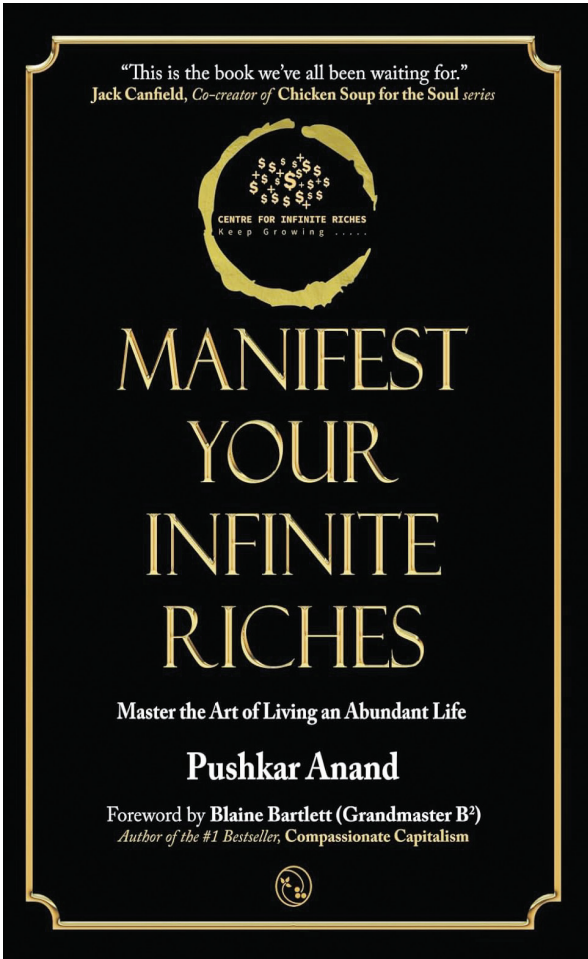
PUSHKAR ANAND

In a world saturated with personal development books, Manifest Your Infinite Riches by Pushkar Anand stands apart as a rare gem—timely, profound, and powerfully transformative. Endorsed by Jack Canfield, co-author of the legendary Chicken Soup for the Soul series, and introduced by Blaine Bartlett, bestselling author of Compassionate Capitalism, Anand's work is nothing short of a spiritual blueprint for financial and personal abundance. As Canfield affirms, “This is the book we’ve all been waiting for”—and indeed, it may be the defining personal growth book of the decade.

From the very first page, Anand makes a bold and empowering declaration: “You are infinitely rich because you are you.” This central truth forms the foundation of the book's teachings, which are steeped in spiritual wisdom, cutting-edge psychology, and a deeply compassionate understanding of human potential. Drawing on over 15 years of intensive research, mentorship under thought leaders like Bartlett, and his academic grounding at Cambridge and the London School of Economics, Anand weaves a narrative that is both intellectually rigorous and spiritually uplifting.

At the heart of the book is Anand's groundbreaking framework—the Six Statutes of Money™—which redefines wealth not merely as financial success, but as a holistic integration of purpose, energy, emotional clarity, and spiritual alignment. Each statute serves as a transformative principle, guiding readers to clear limiting beliefs, elevate their vibrational frequency, and align with their truest selves. This is not just about attracting money; it's about becoming a vessel through which abundance flows effortlessly in all areas of life.

Another standout feature is the Multi-Pronged Model to Manifest Your Infinite Riches™, which invites readers to explore the intersection of soul purpose and material prosperity. This model is deeply practical, offering step-by-step methods to connect intention with action, while honoring individual uniqueness. The book doesn't shy away from the hard questions—how do we find our dharma? How can we create a life that reflects our inner richness?—and provides powerful tools to uncover



the answers.

What elevates this book beyond typical self-help fare is its emphasis on vibrational frequency alignment. Anand delves into the subtle yet powerful energies that shape our reality, helping readers understand how their thoughts, emotions, and intentions influence their external circumstances. By consciously tuning into higher vibrations—such as gratitude, love, and joy—readers can unlock doors that seemed forever closed.

Throughout the book, Anand offers real-life stories of transformation that serve as beacons of hope and proof of the book's effectiveness. These narratives demonstrate that the principles he teaches are not abstract theories but lived experiences—applicable to anyone, anywhere, at any stage of life.

One of the most empowering sections is the focus on Dharma and Guided Action. Unlike many spiritual books that remain in the realm of theory, Manifest Your Infinite Riches grounds its insights in tangible, daily practices. Readers are encouraged to create their own daily ritual, tailored to their lifestyle and spiritual goals. This level of personalization ensures that the transformation Anand advocates isn't fleeting, but sustainable.

Pushkar Anand's own story adds to the authenticity of the book. After a promising start in the corporate world, a life-changing realization in 2008

shifted his trajectory toward a more purposeful path. His dedication to understanding the inner workings of abundance—through studying over 500 books, participating in immersive seminars, and a four-year mentorship with Bartlett—lends the book both credibility and depth.

Manifest Your Infinite Riches is more than a book—it's an initiation into a new way of being. It challenges the reader to rethink their relationship with money, redefine success, and realign with their innate worth. Whether you are a seasoned spiritual seeker or someone newly curious about the laws of attraction and manifestation, this book offers a roadmap to wealth in every sense of the word—material, emotional, and spiritual.

In an age where external chaos often overshadows inner clarity, Manifest Your Infinite Riches arrives as a much-needed guide. It teaches us that true prosperity begins not with external conditions but with inner alignment. As the world searches for more meaningful definitions of success, Anand's message is clear: You already are the source of infinite riches—now it's time to manifest them.

**FINAL VERDICT: 5 OUT OF 5 STARS.**

A must-read for anyone ready to rise into their highest potential and live a life of true, holistic abundance.

Book Review: Manifest Your Infinite Riches by Pushkar Anand

# A novel that explores a spiritual and existential journey

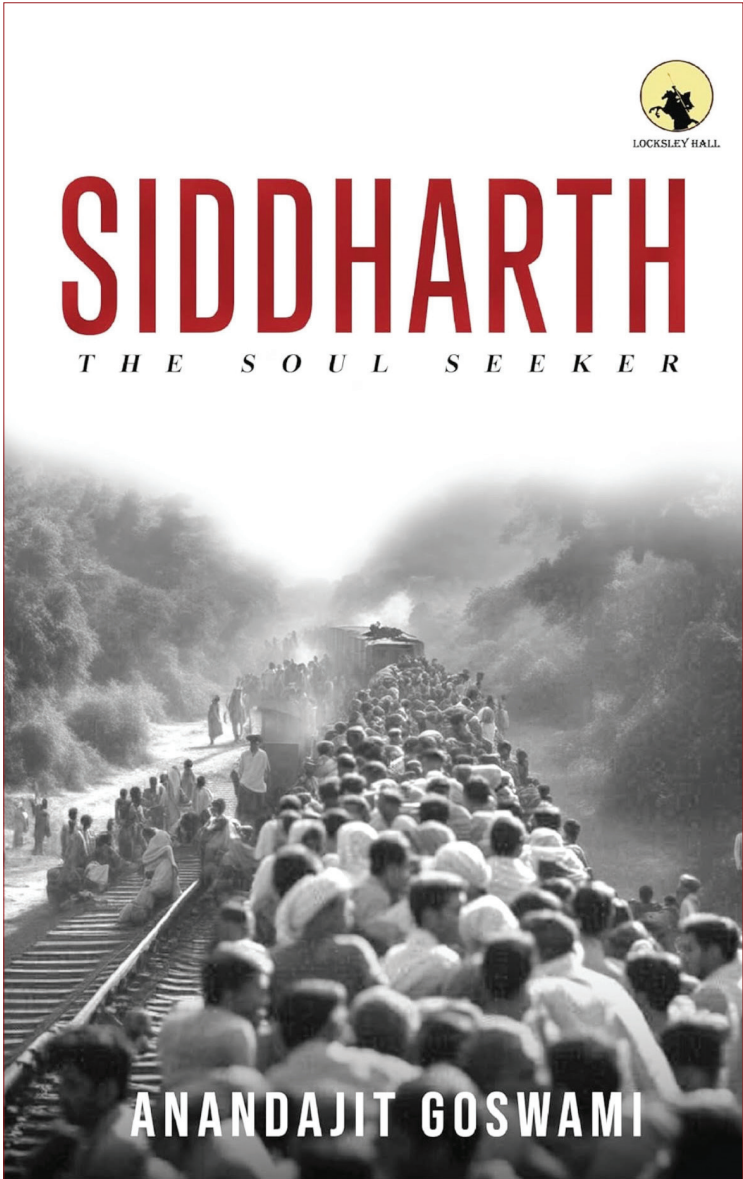
RUPALI SETHI

Anandajit Goswami is one of the most eminent Indian authors who has once again captured the imagination of the readers with his latest book “Siddharth – The Soul Seeker”. As a passionate author, he is constantly occupied in translating his plots and imagination into various genres of fiction writing. Siddharth: The Soul Seeker by Anandajit Goswami is a novel that explores a spiritual and existential journey set against the backdrop of India's tumultuous partition era.

With utmost poignancy and subtleness, the book conjures up a landscape of human emotions and sheds a plethora of light on the predicament of the protagonist Siddharth who has to bear the agony of displacement, partition pangs and deep psychological alienation.

As we leaf through the pages of this inexplicably gripping narrative, we find that Siddharth, the chief character is an ordinary boy who has suffered the mayhem and massacre that lacerates the torso of mankind in the wake of the gory partition of India. The novel also stands as a great testimony to the fact that the finer virtues like humanity and compassion never evaporate from the planet earth even if there is gruesome blood-bath and chaos all around. The hapless child is raised quite in a dotting manner by a compassionate Muslim woman. His falling in love with and marrying a Hindu girl solidifies the noblest ideas of unity across two warring community caught in a bloody conflict.

Resplendent with profound psychological insights, the narrative mirrors the unsavory realities of our contemporary times. The Indian readers spontaneously get connected with the various situations delineated in this most engaging book as it amply elucidate the



existential crisis with which most of us remain perpetually haunted during the course of our life. Deeply driven by existential questions about human existence and his own identity, Siddharth embarks on a journey across India, immersing himself in its diverse cultural and religious practices.

Eventually, this odyssey of the protagonist culminates in a dramatic courtroom battle that seeks

to resolve the mysteries of his identity and purpose. Keeping the readers glued to its pages, the book throws a flood of light on the most poignant and sensitive themes of survival, cultural diversity, spiritual quest and self-discovery. Therefore, it can be rightly remarked that the book is quite rich and intensely packed when it comes to its thematic aspect.

Most of the modern day fiction

writers opine that plot is the soul of a story. Therefore, they invest a major chunk of their energy in weaving a well-knit plot but in their dogged pursuit of creating a fully cohesive and coherent plot, they wittingly or unwittingly leave their characters in somewhat neglected state. Here, deviating from the prevalent culture, the author of this book has been fully cognisant to the needs of his characters. It is the commendably convincing portrayal of his protagonist, through whom, the narrative is unfolded and on the shoulder of whom, the structure of a well-organized plot has been erected. In the context of the plot construction when the term ‘Well-Organized Plot’ has been referred to, it is not to be misconstrued in the sense of the Victorian Era of fiction writing. A well-organised plot is not necessarily shorn of psychological brooding. Goswami's plot is really captivating that gives the readers a sense of deep conviction. And such is the charisma of Goswami's characters that as a critic, you feel enormously impelled to expound on them more and more.

Having a close connect with the characters, a literary critic would fain articulate that the author of this book has adhered to the Literary Canons of Great Greek Master Aristotle who lays strong emphasis on the idea of Probability and Relatability in characterisation. Hence, Goswami's characters appear to be men and women walking shoulder to shoulder with us in our day-to-day real life.

Goswami chooses to keep the language and expression very simple and lucid but yet the content seems to be thoroughly profound and reflective in nature. Similar is the case pertaining to Siddharth – ‘The Soul Seeker’ which is such a remarkable work of fiction that you can't afford to miss.

**POEM**  
AMBIKA ANANTH

### SOOTHING CAPTIVITY

Caught in a blind rush eclipsed by the ego centric shadow	Listen to the song of your mind the rhythm of its beauty
we grapple to achieve surreal heights beyond our mere human stature	It has the very essence of the real you - your real spirit
The petty and temporary fulfilments of desires	Entwine in the tender tendrils of love that your heart beats
stop us from seeing the greater purpose	weave around you to become the best version of you
Our false preoccupations cloud our true nature	Once captured in that sublimity you never will let yourself free
Look into your heart taking in all the dreams and wishes it shares with you	from that soothing captivity soul and heart's a divine unity



# AKASH, SIRAJ STRIKE EARLY AS ENGLAND TOTTER AT 73/3

AGENCIES  
BIRMINGHAM

India's pacers grabbed the opening day by the scruff of the neck, leaving England reeling at 73 for 3 after 20 overs in a tense evening session that saw the ball swing and seam under fading light. Debutant Akash Deep provided the perfect start, setting England back with an incisive opening burst that claimed two wickets in the same over. The right-arm quick removed both openers cheaply, reducing England to 25 for 2 before Mohammed Siraj joined the party.

Zak Crawley (19 off 30) looked the most fluent of the top order, striking three crisp boundaries including a flick past mid-wicket and a well-timed drive wide of mid-off. But just when he seemed to be finding his touch, he perished to a loose shot outside off, edging Siraj (6-2-15-1) to a safe catch by



India's Akash Deep and teammates celebrate the wicket of England's Ben Duckett during Day 2 of the 2nd test match against England, at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Thursday. (ANI Photo)

Karun Nair at slip. That dismissal left England teetering at 25 for 3 in the seventh over. Harry Brook, batting on 12 off 25 balls, has lived dangerously throughout his scratchy stay. He survived

an umpire's call on an LBW review, played and missed multiple times, and was beaten repeatedly outside off by both Akash Deep (7-1-31-2) and Siraj. Brook's only moments of authority came

with a defiant six down the ground off Siraj in the 11th over and a wristy clip for four off Akash Deep's loose delivery down leg.

Joe Root (10\* off 16) has looked more assured, ro-

tating strike and defending solidly. But with England at 50 for 3, the hosts face a stern test to see off the remaining overs without further damage. India, brimming with energy and sharp movement, will eye another breakthrough to tighten their grip on what has already become a challenging day for England's fragile batting line-up.

Records tumbled as India skipper Shubman Gill stood tall with a commanding and unbeaten knock of 265 on day two of the second test against England, propelling the tourists to a mammoth total of 564-7 by tea at Edgbaston on Thursday.

Despite losing his overnight partner Ravindra Jadeja in the first session for 89 - the second India batter to miss out on a century after Yashasvi Jaiswal (87) - Gill looked completely at ease on a flat track that offered precious little assistance.

# Wimbledon: India's Balaji enters second round in men's doubles

AGENCIES  
LONDON

India's N Sriram Balaji joined compatriots Yuki Bhambri and Rithvik Bollipalli in the second round of the men's doubles event at the Wimbledon here on Thursday.

Balaji, world No. 74, and his Mexican partner Miguel Reyes-Varela defeated American duo of Learner Tien and Aleksandar Kovacevic 6-4 6-4 in an opening round match.

The contest lasted 71 minutes and the Indo-Mexican pair broke their opponents once each in both sets to wrap up the match without much fuss.

Balaji, who became a first-time Olympian at Paris 2024 last year, joins fellow Indian tennis players Yuki Bhambri and Rithvik Bollipalli in the second round



of the men's doubles event in the season's penultimate tennis Grand Slam.

Yuki Bhambri and his American partner Robert Galloway beat Romain Arneodo of Monaco and Manuel Guinard of France in the opening round on Wednesday.

Rithvik Bollipalli and his Colombian partner Nicolas Barrientos had defeated Alexandre Muller of France and Belgium's David Goffin to advance.

Rohan Bopanna and his Belgian partner Sander Gillé, however, bowed out

in the opening round itself after going down to the third-seeded German duo of Tim Pütz and Kevin Krawietz.

Meanwhile, the mixed doubles draw for Wimbledon 2025 was also confirmed on Thursday with Yuki Bhambri appearing as the only Indian in the mix.

He will partner the People's Republic of China's Jiang Xinyu and the Indo-Chinese pair will be up against the USA's Nicole Melichar-Martinez and Christian Harrison in the first match.

# World number one Sabalenka marches to 3rd round Wimbledon

AGENCIES  
LONDON

The world number one Aryna Sabalenka continued her Wimbledon campaign with a hard-fought win over Marie Bouzkova in the second round at the Centre Court on Wednesday, as per WTA's official website.

It was another methodical performance from the top-ranked superstar, who edged past Marie by 7-6(4), 6-4.

Sabalenka's next challenge would be the winner of a battle between Grand Slam winners, Marketa Vondrousova and home favourite, Emma Raducanu.

Sabalenka's record this year against opponents outside the WTA Top 20 is



29-4. In the second round of Grand Slams this year, she has a stunning record of 20-4, including 18 straight wins.

In her two Wimbledon appearances, Sabalenka has reached semifinals and she would be aiming to go two steps further to the title, her fourth Grand Slam title.

On Tuesday, it was a shocker of a day in women's singles as number two seed

Coco Gauff, number three Jessica Pegula, and number five, Paris Olympics gold medalist Zheng Qinwen, all lost in their respective matches, marking shocking exits in the first round itself. Gauff lost to Ukraine's Dayana Yastremska, while Pegula registered a loss to Italy's Elisabetta Cocciaretto. Qinwen was defeated by the Czech Republic's Katerina Siniakova.

# Kidambi Srikanth cruises into 2nd round of Canada Open 2025

AGENCIES  
ONTARIO

Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth defeated his compatriot Kidambi Srikanth and marched into the second round of the Canada Open 2025 badminton tournament in Ontario on Wednesday.

Kidambi Srikanth, currently 49th in the badminton rankings, lost the opening game against compatriot Priyanshi Rajawat but rallied back to win the 53-minute contest 18-21, 21-19, 21-14 at the Markham Pan Am Centre, as per Olympics.com.

Former world No. 1 Srikanth had lost both his



matches against Rajawat, the seventh seed and world No. 39, prior to this.

Srikanth's opponent in the pre-quarterfinals will be Chinese Taipei's world No. 71 Wang Po-Wei, who upset Malaysia's Justin Hoh in the opening round.

# Minakshi, Pooja assure India of two medals at World Boxing Kazakhstan

AGENCIES  
ASTANA

Minakshi (48kg) and Pooja Rani (80kg) guaranteed India two medals on Day 3 of the World Boxing Cup-Astana, Kazakhstan 2025 with assured performances in their respective quarter-final bouts.

Minakshi sealed her place in the semifinals with a dominant 5:0 win over Chinese Taipei's Guo Yi-Xuan, showing sharp movement and clean scoring throughout. Pooja Rani followed with a gritty 4:1 split decision victory over Kazakhstan's Gulsaya Yerzhan in the 80kg division, securing her berth in the final four and guaranteeing a podium finish. Earlier in the day, Anamika (51kg) moved into the quarterfinals with a composed performance against Turkey's Aysen Taskin, keeping India's momentum alive.

In the men's draw, Jadu-



mani Singh fought hard in a close contest but lost narrowly to the Philippines' Jay Bryan Baricuatro, bringing his campaign to a close.

With two medals secured on Day 3 and several boxers in contention, Team India continues its promising run at the Astana leg, with sights set on the finals in New Delhi later this year.

Earlier in the tournament, in the women's 54kg category, Sakshi put on a composed display to defeat England's Charley Davison with a unanimous 5:0 decision in her pre-quarterfinal bout. Jaismine followed with a confident showing of her own in the women's

57kg division, overcoming Azerbaijan's Aynur Mikayilova by the same margin to seal her place in the last eight. Lakshya Chahar delivered a gritty performance in the men's 80kg category, moving past Bulgaria's Wilian Chovolov 4:1 in a split verdict. Meanwhile, Manish Rathore exited the competition after a closely contested bout against Rui Yamaguchi of Japan in the men's 55kg category.

Sakshi, Lakshya and Jaismine now join Sachin Siwach, Hitesh Gulia, Muskan, Minakshi and Sanju in the next round, underlining India's strong start to the tournament in Astana.

## SEMIFINAL



United States midfielder Diego Luna [10] celebrates after scoring a goal during the first half of a CONCACAF Gold Cup semifinal soccer match against Guatemala, Wednesday, July 2, 2025, in St. Louis. (Agencies)

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

The 15th Hockey India Sub Junior Women National Championship 2025 began on July 3 at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh AstroTurf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The tournament will run until July 14 and will follow the newly-introduced division-based format - first implemented earlier this year during the Senior Men and Women's National Championships.

This year's edition will feature 28 teams divided into three divisions - Division A, Division B, and Division C - introducing an added competitive edge with promotion and relegation at stake, as per a press release from Hockey India.



Division A, comprising the top 12 performing teams in the country, will see intense action as the defending champions Hockey Jharkhand and last year's runner-up Hockey Madhya Pradesh lead the challenge for the national title. Division B and Division C will serve as competitive battlegrounds for emerging teams to climb the ranks.

\*Division Format and Pool Composition

-Division A (Top-tier Championship Division): Teams compete for the title, and two will face relegation. Pool A: Hockey Jharkhand, Hockey Haryana, Hockey Andhra Pradesh

Pool B: Hockey Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh Hockey, Hockey Chandigarh

Pool C: Hockey Association of Odisha, Hockey Maharashtra, Hockey Punjab

# Liverpool player Diogo Jota and his brother killed in car accident in Spain

AGENCIES  
MADRID

Liverpool player Diogo Jota and his brother were killed in a car accident in Spain when the Lamborghini they were in veered off a road and burst into flames, police said Thursday.

The Spanish Civil Guard confirmed to The Associated Press that the 28-year-old Jota and his 25-year-old brother, André Silva, were found dead near the north-western city of Zamora.

Jota's death comes weeks after he married Rute Cardoso while on vacation from a long season where he helped Liverpool win the Premier League title. On getting married, she wrote in a social media post, "Yes to forever." He leaves behind him three children, the youngest born last year.

Police were investigating the causes of the accident that occurred past midnight local time. They said there were no other vehicles involved and that the brothers

were alone in the car. The bodies were undergoing forensic analysis.

It wasn't clear who was driving the car. Police were looking into the hypothesis that the accident happened because of a blown tire while they tried to overtake another vehicle.

The crash occurred while Jota and Silva, who is also a Portuguese soccer player, were traveling eastward along an isolated stretch of highway about an hour west of Zamora.



Police were investigating the causes of the accident that occurred past midnight local time.

Video images of the aftermath published by Spanish media showed braking tire marks veering off the road toward torn-apart guardrails. The burnt-up car was seen several meters ahead, with some of the vegetation

around it destroyed by the fire. Jota was taking his summer break from soccer after having helped Portugal win the Nations League. That June 8 final against Spain in Munich was his last match. Liverpool's players are due back to start training for next season on Monday. But Jota's participation in the Nations League could have earned him some extra time off before being called back to Liverpool. Liverpool said the club was "devastated by the tragic passing."