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SC WRITES TO CENTRE, SEEKS
REMOVAL OF EX-CJI CHANDRACHUD
FROM OFFICIAL RESIDENCE



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ECI FLIP-FLOPS, BACKS ‘SIR’ IN BIHAR AFTER AD EASES RULES

Confusion emerged after Bihar CEO ad in newspaper said ‘now only forms are to be filled. There is no need to submit documents’.

AGENCIES
PATNA

The Election Commission on Sunday asserted that Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar was “being implemented smoothly at the ground level” and “there is no change in instructions”. The EC on June 24 issued instructions to carry out an SIR in Bihar, apparently to weed out ineligible names and ensure only eligible citizens are included in the electoral roll. In a statement here, the EC made it clear that while voters were required to “submit their documents anytime before July 25, 2025”, those who failed to do so would get an opportunity “during the Claims



A view of voter awareness e-rickshaws ahead of the 2025 Bihar legislative Assembly Elections, in Patna on Saturday. (ANI Photo)

& Objections period also”. The EC also urged people to “beware of statements being made by a few persons, who without reading the SIR order dated 24 June 2025... are attempting to confuse the public

When people rise, BJP backtracks, says Kharge; RJD, TMC move SC

NEW DELHI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge accused the BJP on Sunday of conspiring to deprive the people of Bihar of their voter rights through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and said the voters of the state would teach the saffron party a lesson for its attack on democracy and the Constitution. He cited a new advertisement issued by the Election Commission (EC), urging the voters of Bihar to only fill a form under the SIR, and alleged that “when people rise, BJP backtracks”. “With the support of the Election

lished in a newspaper claiming “now only forms are to be filled. There is no need to submit documents”.

In an advertisement carried in newspapers in Hindi, the office of the Bihar

CEO says: “Fill and submit your enumeration forms with documents and your photograph to BLOs as early as possible. If you do not have requisite documents, send the filled-out, signed

BRICS remains powerful force for global good: PM in Brazil

Xi, Putin skip summit

AGENCIES
RIO DE JANEIRO

The BRICS remains a powerful force for economic co-operation and global good, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday as several top leaders of the member nations of the grouping converged in this seaside Brazilian city to hold summit talks. Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the session on ‘Peace and Security and Reform of Global Governance’, at the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Sunday. (aLutaOfficial/X/ANI

counterpart Vladimir Putin skipped the summit, being hosted by Brazil in its capacity as the current chair of the

influential grouping. The BRICS has emerged as an influential grouping as it brings

Monsoon fury leaves 78 dead in Himachal; waterlogging in J&K

AGENCIES
SHIMLA

At least 78 people have lost their lives in Himachal Pradesh since the onset of the monsoon on June 20, according to the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA). Of these, 50 deaths were caused

by rain-related incidents such as landslides, flash floods, and cloudbursts, while 28 fatalities were reported in road accidents. “The cumulative toll due to various monsoon-related disasters in Himachal Pradesh has reached 78 as of July 6,” the State Disaster Man-

agement Authority stated. The rain-induced tragedies include 14 deaths from flash floods, eight due to drowning, eight from electrocution and accidental falls, and smaller numbers in landslides, lightning strikes, and snake bites. Severe waterlogging was



India wins first test at Birmingham in 58 years. Agencies

REPORT ON P16

Assault over Hindi row in Maha: BJP leader likens it to Pahalgam

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

Amid row over Hindi imposition in Maharashtra and the recent violence over the issue, Maharashtra Minister Ashish Shelar on Sunday compared the agony of the Pahalgam terror attack, where Hindus were killed in the name of religion, and those getting “beaten up” in the name of language. He said that these incidents were distressing for him. “In the Pahalgam terror attack,

‘Thackerays’ united show rattled MVA’

MUMBAI: The coming together of Maharashtra Navnirman Sena president Raj Thackeray and Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray has unnerved ruling Mahayuti leaders, including Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut said on Sunday.

Raut, who belongs to the Sena (UBT), told reporters here that leaders of the Mahayuti have been left clueless after the Thackeray cousins held their “victory” rally on Saturday to celebrate the rollback of the Hindi language GRs (Government Resolutions) by the BJP-led government. The two Thackerays shared a political stage for the first time in two decades, with Uddhav also hinting that there could be a political alliance between

Bhupendra Patel’s quiet governance

RAKESH SINGH
NEW DELHI

In an era of high-octane politics and larger-than-life chief ministers, Gujarat’s current helmsman, Bhupendra Patel, stands quietly apart. Ascending to the role in September 2021, Patel—an engineer-turned-politician with no prior ministerial experience—has led Gujarat through transformative policies and

steady governance, all while maintaining a remarkably low political profile.

From Grassroots to Governance:

Born on July 15, 1962, in Ahmedabad, Patel’s journey began at the community level. He served multiple terms as a councillor in Memnagar and later chaired the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority. His reputation for being soft-spoken, diligent,



NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

In a fresh attempt to resolve one of country’s most contentious inter-state water disputes, the Centre has convened a high-stakes meeting

between Punjab and Haryana over the long-pending Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal issue.

Scheduled for July 9 in Delhi, the meeting will be chaired by Union Jal Shakti



Bhupendra Patel,
Chief Minister of Gujarat

and effective paved his path to the BJP legislative leadership after Vijay Ru-

pani’s resignation. When asked about his leadership philosophy, Patel offered a concise, telling analogy: “I’m here to play a Test, not a T20 match.” This perfectly encapsulates his patient, long-term approach to governing.

A Flood of Progressive Policies:

Under his stewardship, Gujarat has unveiled over a dozen transformative policies, spanning technology,



United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio sent a message saying the US remains “firmly committed to promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of Tibetans.” The Tibetan leader also received birthday wishes from former US presidents George W Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama via video messages.

under Chinese occupation in the 1960s.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is abroad, extended

SC WRITES TO CENTRE, SEEKS REMOVAL OF EX-CJI CHANDRACHUD FROM OFFICIAL RESIDENCE

Former CJI has stayed nearly eight months post-retirement, exceeding the six-month limit set by 2022 rules.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In an unprecedented move, the Supreme Court administration has written to the Centre for vacating the official residence of the Chief Justice of India at Krishna Menon Marg here, noting that the current occupant ex-CJIDY Chandrachud has stayed beyond the permissible period. In a communication on July 1 to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the apex court administration said the designated residence for the sitting Chief Justice of India -- Bungalow No. 5 on Krishna Menon Marg -- be vacated and returned to the court's housing pool, sources said.

The letter requested the MoHUA secretary to take possession of the bungalow from the former CJI without any further delay as not only the permission



that was granted to him for retention of the accommodation expired on May 31, 2025 but also the period of six months provided under the 2022 Rules on May 10, 2025. Under Rule 3B of the Supreme Court Judges (Amendment) Rules, 2022, a retired Chief Justice of India can retain type VII bungalow, a level below the 5, Krishna Menon Marg bungalow, for a maximum period of six months post-

retirement.

Justice Chandrachud, who has served as the 50th CJI between November 2022 and November 2024, is currently occupying the official residence of Chief Justice of India nearly eight months after demitting office.

Former Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, who succeeded Justice Chandrachud, chose not to move into the official accommodation during his six months ten-

ure. Even incumbent CJI BR Gavai opted to continue living in a previously allotted bungalow.

On December 18, last year, Justice Chandrachud has written to then CJI Khanna requesting him to allow him continue residing in the 5, Krishna Menon Marge residence till April 30, 2025, saying although he has been allotted Bungalow No. 14 on Tughlak Road in accordance with 2022 rules, renovation work at the new residence was going on.

Then CJI Khanna gave his nod pursuant to which MoHUA approved the retention of the type VIII bungalow at Krishna Menon Marg by Justice Chandrachud from December 11, 2024, to April 30, 2025 on payment of licence fees of around Rs 5,000 per month.

The ministry conveyed the approval to the Supreme Court administration by a letter of February 13, 2025.

Subsequently, Justice Chandrachud made an oral request to then CJI Khanna to continue residing in the same residence till May 31, 2025, which was also approved by the then CJI with a condition that no further extension would be granted as several new judges had to put in guest houses or have to make alternate arrangements for accommodation in the national capital.

The July 1 letter of apex court administration further flagged the breach of both the timelines and the legal framework, and said the Krishna Menon Marg residence was permitted due to "special circumstances", the understanding was that it would be vacated after the agreed-upon extension till May-end.

It requested the Centre to take possession of the official CJI bungalow without any further delay and inform the Supreme Court.

BJP, Nitish Kumar made Bihar crime capital of India: Rahul on Khemka killing

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

With prominent businessman Gopal Khemka being shot dead outside his residence in Patna, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said the incident has once again proven that the BJP and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar have together made Bihar the "crime capital of India". Gandhi also asserted that in the upcoming assembly polls, the vote will not be just to change the government, but to save the state.

Khemka was shot dead outside his residence in Patna by a bike-borne assailant, seven years after miscreants had gunned down his son in Hajipur, police said on Saturday.

The incident took place around 11.40 pm on Friday near the gate of Khemka's house in Gandhi Maidan locality as he was about to alight from his car, they said.

In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said the shooting of businessman Gopal Khemka in Patna has once again proven that the BJP and



'Mark my words, PM Modi will meekly bow to Trump tariff deadline'

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday once again trained his guns at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over India-US tariff trade deal and said 'mark my words', he will meekly bow to President Donald Trump tariff deadline.

In a post on X, formerly Twitter, Rahul Gandhi said: "Piy-

ush Goyal can beat his chest all he wants, mark my words, Modi will meekly bow to the Trump tariff deadline."

His remarks came even as Indian and US negotiators are working to meet the deadline on US tariff deadline of July 9 and Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal asserting that India will not hurry into signing a free trade agreement under pressure from any deadline.

Nitish Kumar have together made Bihar the "crime capital of India".

"Today, Bihar is living under the shadow of loot, gunshots and murder.

Chirag says he will contest Bihar polls, backs demand for domicile policy in govt jobs

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

Asserting that he was contesting the upcoming assembly elections in Bihar, Union minister Chirag Paswan on Sunday voiced his support for the introduction of domicile policy in government jobs in the state.

Paswan, who heads the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), made the announcement while addressing a rally in Saran district that borders his Hajipur Lok Sabha constituency.

"People have been asking me whether Chirag Paswan will contest the assembly elections. I want to announce from Saran that yes, Chirag Paswan will contest the elections for the sake of a better future of Bihar," he said, evoking thunderous applause.

"I will contest the election for the people of Bihar, for my brothers, mothers, for



my sisters. We will build a system in Bihar that will truly take the state forward on the path of development. I will realise the dreams of my father and work for 'Bihar first, Bihari first'. I will live and die for Bihar and its people," he added.

Paswan also supported the demand for introducing a domicile policy for government jobs in the state, becoming the only NDA leader to do so. Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav has promised implementation of "100 per cent domicile" if the Mahagathbandhan, helmed by his RJD, came to power in the state after the elections.

"For the sake of the youth of Bihar, I am in support of the

introduction of a domicile policy in government jobs. This has been a long-standing demand of job seekers," Paswan said.

"I must inform you that the domicile policy was introduced in 2006, but it was withdrawn by the opposition parties when they came to power. The RJD and Congress never think about the betterment of the youth of the state. They always mislead people. If they come to power, they will snatch over half of your wealth via inheritance tax," he claimed.

The Nitish Kumar government has already ruled out the possibility of the introduction of a domicile policy, stating that any such move would be against the Constitution. Attacking the RJD, Paswan alleged that the people talking about Bihar's development now are the ones who had ruined the state in the '90s..

SIR row: TMC's Mahua moves SC

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

TMC MP Mahua Moitra on Sunday alleged that ECI's order for Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar was intended to deprive the bonafide young electorate from voting in this year's polling, and the panel's next target would be West Bengal.

Moitra, who has moved the Supreme Court challenging the order of the ECI, alleged that it violates several provisions of the Constitution and the Representation of People (RP) Act, 1950.

"They (EC) have now introduced it to deprive the bonafide young electorate of Bihar, where elections are slated to be held shortly. Later, they will target Bengal, where elections are due in 2026," Moitra said.

TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee has already flagged this issue and talked about the EC's "diabolical game plan", she said.

"Leaders of different opposition parties have also voiced concern over the move and asked EC not to go ahead with it. We have now moved the Supreme Court to intervene in the issue," the Krish-

nanagar MP said.

Moitra said the order for the SIR was "aimed at disabling lakhs of bonafide voters who were born between July 1, 1987 and December 2, 2004 and help the BJP at the Centre.

In her plea to the apex court,



Moitra sought a direction to restrain the Election Commission of India from issuing similar orders in other states of the country.

The EC on June 24 issued instructions to carry out an SIR in Bihar, apparently to weed out ineligible names and ensure only eligible citizens are included in the electoral roll. Attaching a video of her statement before PTI, Moitra later posted on X handle, "The @ECISVEEP is now @BJP4India's arm - executing its Machiavellian plans on ground.

Pakistan based terror hurting Islam: Naqvi

ABHINANDAN MISHRA
NEW DELHI

Former Union Cabinet Minister and senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi attacked the Pakistan sponsored terrorism saying that "the Made in Islamabad terror toys are proving terrible for tenets of the Islam and a tragedy for Islamabad."

Naqvi was in Prayagraj to attend Muharram programme at his native Bhadari village.

Naqvi said that "bulldozing the beasts of barbarity" is a must to keep the country and humanity safe. "The brave hearts of the Indian Armed Forces damaged, destroyed, dismantled the "territory of terrorism" and gave such a punishment that will be remembered for generations to come to the "manufactures of terrible terror toys", he said.

According to him, the Modi Government is carrying forward the glorious journey of good governance with continuity and commitment to "Iqbal" (authority), "Imaan" (integrity) and "Insaaf" (justice). This is for the first time after Independence, that a non-Congress government at

the Centre is setting records of good governance and success on all fronts with stability and that too without any "Congress' remote and support". This is the reason behind the frustration and bitterness of the "feudal clan".

While attacking the Congress and the Samajwadi Party, Naqvi said that these political parties are engaged in "drive of deception" but the people are repeatedly defeating their arrogance on the "political pitch". The reason behind "failures of frustrated fraternity is their foolishness to consider Democracy as a Disneyland of the Defaulter Dynasty".

Naqvi said that Modi-Yogi or any other BJP-ruled state has never discriminated against the Muslims in terms of development, irrespective of the fact that most of the Muslims had displayed stinginess in voting for the BJP for a long time. The time has come when we have to get rid of "this mood of intolerance and untouchability against the BJP. The BJP is the reality of the country and ignoring it is not good for the country and the Muslims." We will

have to put a 'shutter of trust on the gutter of fear and confusion'.

He added that the country will have to be cautious about the communal infection of the so-called pseudo-secular syndicate, who are history-sheeters of playing the game of communalism wearing the "veil of secularism". Those who want to become "feudal without fiefdom and landlord without land" are trying to paint the BJP as a "villain" only to block the inclusion of the Muslims into the mainstream political and development process. Naqvi said that by defeating "political untouchability towards the BJP and political intolerance towards Modi Ji", Bharat is witnessing a golden period of Constitutional reforms and inclusive empowerment for welfare and prosperity of the people. Revolutionary and visionary economic, cultural, social, educational, administrative, electoral, health, agricultural reforms under the able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi have made India a credible global brand of inclusive reforms and good governance.

Manipur: Amit Shah lauded by BJP leader for prompt action

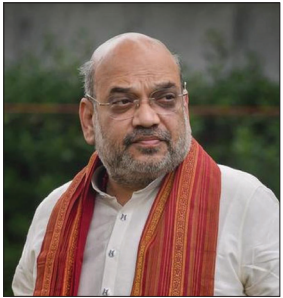
NIBIR DEKA
MANIPUR

Amid continuing efforts to restore peace in Manipur, MLA Yumnam Khemchand Singh of the Singjamei Assembly Constituency released a press statement today highlighting recent developments in tackling the two-year-long crisis that erupted on May 3, 2023.

As per press statement, the Central Government has been actively conducting operations to recover illicit arms and ammunition. Over the past month alone, security forces have seized a substantial quantity of illegal arms from various parts of the valley districts. Additionally, a significant weapons cache was recovered from the hill districts.

"These actions are vital in maintaining law and order and have instilled a sense of hope and security among the people," the statement read.

The MLA also acknowledged the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for its ongoing dialogue efforts



with various stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), to bring peace and normalcy to the region. Khemchand Singh especially praised the leadership of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, stating, "Several initiatives have been undertaken as a first step towards resolving the crisis. His responsible and accountable approach to addressing the situation, which may take considerable time to resolve, is highly commendable." Meanwhile, Manipur Chief Secretary PK Singh announced on Friday that the state government aims to shut down all relief camps by December 2025, with a three-phase plan to resettle internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Assam cracks down on illegal bangladeshis

TDG NETWORK
GUWAHATI

Eighteen Bangladeshis, living without valid documents in Assam, were pushed back on Saturday, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

He said the pushbacks were done from the Cachar and Sribhumi districts.

"Oh look who's going back to their home? In Assam, we welcome guests with open arms but those trying to illegally prolong their stay are treated with the special gesture of PUSHBACK," Sarma said in a post on X.

He also said, "18 illegal Bangladeshis pushed back today in wee hours from Cachar and Sribhumi." The Assam Police have launched a statewide crackdown on illegal immigrants, particularly Bangladeshis, residing without valid documents.

Sarma had said earlier that nearly 330 illegal immigrants have been sent back from Assam in about last one month, with more expected to be pushed back soon.

Meghalaya pressure group demands Amit Shah for ILP extension

NIBIR DEKA
MEGHALAYA

Meghalaya pressure group Hynniewtrep Integrated Territorial Organization (HITO), has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, seeking the urgent extension of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) regime to the entire state.

The letter raises serious concerns over growing internal security threats, demographic shifts, and alleged infiltration along the India-Bangladesh border.

In a detailed memorandum submitted to the Home Minister, HITO highlighted what it termed as "alarming geopolitical developments" that have implications for Meghalaya's internal security. The group cited recent ceasefire developments along the India-Pakistan western front and the "credible intelligence" on increased infiltra-



tion from Bangladesh, allegedly supported by Pakistan's ISI, as pressing reasons to tighten border regulations in the Northeast.

Speaking to NewsX, "The recent conflict and subsequent ceasefire between India and Pakistan along the western front has once again highlighted the need for heightened internal security across all sensitive border regions, including those in the North East. More concerning

is the credible intelligence emerging regarding increased infiltration along the India-Bangladesh border, including Meghalaya, and the establishment of a strategic base by Pakistan's ISI in Bangladesh, which poses a serious national security threat. In this context, the growing number of illegal infiltrations into Meghalaya—allegedly facilitated through monetary inducements—raises pressing concerns.

Major crackdown in Srinagar: Police attach terror-linked assets

ASHIQ MIR
SRINAGAR

Srinagar Police has attached a residential property measuring 8 marlas and 202 square feet, including the building structure, valued at approximately Rs 1.5 crore. The action was taken under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in connection with an ongoing investigation into terror-related activities.

According to Police statement, the property, located in Mir Masjid Mohalla, Shalabagh Khanyar, is recorded in the name of Mohammad Yousuf Shah S/o Hafiz Waliullah Shah.

"It is currently in the possession of Masood Hussain Shah S/o Mohammad Yousuf Shah. The attachment has been carried out under the relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities

(Prevention) Act (UAPA) in connection with FIR No. 48/2024 under Sections 109 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 7/27 of the Indian Arms Act, and Sections 16, 18, 19, 20, and 39 of the UAP Act, registered at Police Station Khanyar," reads the statement.

Investigations have revealed that the property was acquired using funds generated through terror-related activities.

"Acting under Section 25 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the immovable asset has been officially seized and attached in accordance with due legal procedure," the statement read.

It added through this attachment notice, the owner is prohibited from selling, leasing, or transferring the said property in any manner.

DON'T LINK EVERY ISSUE TO TERRORISM: KHURSHID AMID ROW OVER 'TROUSER' INCIDENT

TDG NETWORK
MUZAFFARNAGAR

Senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid on Sunday cautioned against linking every objectionable occurrence to terrorism amid a row over an alleged misbehaviour incident involving a hotel staffer on the Kanwar pilgrimage route here. Talking to reporters during his visit to Muzaffarnagar, Khurshid said, "Every condemnable act should not be equated with terrorism. You can criticise an act, but that doesn't make it terrorism. These are internal matters of our society. We should ensure we do not hurt one another."

Senior Samajwadi Party leader S T Hasan on Wednesday condemned the actions of some vigilante groups engaged in religious profiling of eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route and equated such acts with terrorism. "Asking hotel staff and lo-

cal vendors to reveal their names and forcing them to undress to identify their religion is no different from what terrorists did in Pahalgam. This, too, is a form of terrorism," Hasan had told PTI.

When asked about the alleged incident of forcing a hotel worker to lower his pants to prove his religion, Khurshid responded, "Whoever did that, it was wrong. It goes against our Ganga-Jamuni culture. We live together; we have a shared national identity and also one rooted in our respective faiths."

On the issue of nameplates on eateries on the Kanwar pilgrimage route, Khurshid said, "We must respect everyone. People of different communities and faiths live in this country. We may belong to different religions, but we are not divided. Respect for each other's beliefs is essential."

Commenting on the Waqf (Amendment) Act, the Con-

gress leader said the issue is currently before the Supreme Court.

"The apex court has heard the matter in detail. We are all awaiting its verdict," he added.

Responding to questions about the opposition alliance in Uttar Pradesh, Khurshid said, "Our earlier alliance has not broken. Senior leaders from the party discuss alliances from time to time."

On the Congress party's current state in Uttar Pradesh, Khurshid acknowledged the gap between organisational strength and electoral success.

"Our roots are strong, but sometimes the crop doesn't yield. The weather has to be right. We are reflecting on what needs to be done to ensure results," he said.

He said he was visiting Muzaffarnagar to encourage the newly appointed district and city committees of the Congress.

Monsoon havoc: 78 dead in Himachal, waterlogging in J&K

CONTINUED FROM P1

witnessed at an under-construction underpass at Sangoor on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Udhampur on Sunday. Waterlogging occurred due to incessant heavy rainfall, submerging two vehicles under nearly four to five feet of water. Heavy rainfall has caused the rise of water levels in the Dharhali and Saktoh rivers in Rajouri district. Several states are facing heavy rainfall after the arrival of monsoon, causing waterlogging, floods and rising water levels in rivers and low-level areas. Mandi district reported the highest number of rain-related deaths at 17, followed by Kangra with

11. Other severely affected districts include Kullu (3 deaths), Chamba (3), and Shimla (3). The road accidents, which claimed 28 lives, were recorded across various districts, with Chamba reporting the highest at six, followed by Bilaspur, Kullu, and Kangra. Beyond human casualties, the state has also suffered widespread infrastructure and economic damage. As per SDMA data, 269 roads have been blocked, 285 power transformers have been affected, and 278 water supply schemes have been affected. The total loss to public and private property has been estimated at over Rs 57 crore. Monsoon-triggered incidents have also led to crop losses,

damage to homes and cowsheds, and disruption in health and education infrastructure. Authorities have deployed National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams across critical regions. Search and rescue operations are still underway, especially in parts of Mandi and Kullu where missing persons have been reported. The SDMA continues to monitor the situation closely, urging residents to stay alert as rainfall activity remains active across the state.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday issued an alert of heavy rainfall in Uttarakhand for the next four days.

Heavy rainfall is expected in dis-

tricts including Uttarkashi, Tehri, Bageshwar, Dehradun, and Rudrapur. Earlier today, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami conducted an aerial survey of the disaster-affected Silai Band and Ojri Band stretches along the Yamunotri road in Uttarkashi district, where recent heavy rains caused sections of the national highway to be washed away, disrupting connectivity to the pilgrimage site.

BJP state president Mahendra Bhatt also accompanied him during the survey.

Earlier in the week, the Yamunotri National Highway was blocked at two points between Silai Band and Ojri, severely affecting local travel and pilgrimage traffic.

'When people rise, BJP backtracks'

CONTINUED FROM P1

Commission, the master plan that the BJP had devised to deprive crores of people in Bihar of their voting rights now seems to be ensnaring the BJP itself," Kharge alleged in a post in Hindi on X.

Meanwhile, RJD MP Manoj Jha has challenged the Election Commission's (EC) controversial Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the Supreme Court ahead of the Bihar assembly polls.

Kharge said from the very first day, the Congress has been raising its voice against the SIR. "Why are people who have been voting election after election being asked to show their documents for voting? "Forcibly depriving the poor, weak, deprived, Dalits, oppressed and backward people of their voting rights is the conspiracy of the BJP-RSS," he alleged. The Congress chief claimed that nearly eight

crore people will suffer because of the SIR. "The responsibility to correct the voter list lies with the EC, not the public. "When the pressure from the opposition, the public and civil society increased, the Election Commission hurriedly published these advertisements today, which state that now only a form needs to be filled and showing documents is not necessary," he claimed.

"This is part of the BJP's tactic to mislead and confuse the public. The truth is that the BJP has decided it will crush democracy at all costs. But when faced with public opposition, it cleverly takes a step back," the leader of opposition in the Rajya Sabha alleged.

Noting that Bihar is the birthplace of democracy, Kharge said the people of the state will surely respond to the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) attack on democracy and the Constitution in the upcoming Assembly election.

ECI flip-flops, backs 'SIR' in Bihar

CONTINUED FROM P1

forms to the BLOs."

Alleging that the SIR was a "conspiracy by BJP-RSS to snatch away the voting rights of Dalits and other deprived sections", Kharge had said that the BJP, which ruled the Centre and shared power in Bihar, "is now getting trapped in its own master plan". Echoing Kharge's post on X, Bihar Congress president Rajesh Kumar alleged at a press conference: "The ad exposes the incompetence of the EC and gives rise to doubts of unethical help extended to the ruling party". Assembly polls are due in Bihar in a couple of months, and the EC exercise, which seeks to cover nearly eight crore voters by July 25, has become a major bone of contention in the state. Leader of the opposition in the state assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, has questioned why, unlike the previous revision which took place in 2003 across

the country, the current exercise was being carried out only in Bihar. INDIA bloc leaders have also held parleys with EC officials in New Delhi and Patna to share their anxieties. However, the BJP-led NDA defended the exercise, accusing the opposition of trying to come up with an "excuse ahead of a certain defeat in elections". In the backdrop of the controversy arising out of the advertisement, the office of the state Chief Electoral Officer said on Sunday: "SIR in Bihar is progressing as per EC's order dated 24 June 2025. As per that order, the draft electoral rolls that will be issued on 1 August 2025 will contain the names of the existing electors whose enumeration forms are received". "All measures are being taken to facilitate the existing electors to complete the documentation. These existing voters will have time to submit the docu-

ments even after first submitting their Enumeration Forms. All activities are exactly as per EC's order dated 24.06.2025," said the CEO in another post. Shortly afterwards, "EC sources" were quoted in another, more strongly worded statement, shared by the poll panel in its WhatsApp group.

The statement said, "SIR in Bihar is being implemented smoothly at the ground level. SIR is being conducted as per instructions dated 24.06.2025 only, and there is no change in the instructions". According to the EC, the exercise was necessitated by rapid urbanisation, frequent migration, young citizens becoming eligible to vote, non-reporting of deaths, and inclusion of the names of foreign illegal immigrants. The poll panel said that with the exercise, it wants to ensure the integrity and preparation of error-free electoral rolls.

Assault over Hindi in Maharashtra

CONTINUED FROM P1

people were asked about their religion (by terrorists) before shooting them. Here, people are being attacked based on their language, which is disappointing. "The state is watching how these leaders are enjoying other Hindus being beaten up," Shelar told reporters when asked about attacks on Hindi-speaking people allegedly by MNS workers. His remarks come after some incidents of violence and vandalism were reported in the state amid the ongoing Hindi-Marathi controversy. Five workers of Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) were arrested in connection with the vandalism at entrepreneur Sushil Kedia's office in Worli, police said on Saturday. A case has been



registered against them under Sections 223, 189(2), 189(3), 190, 191(2), 191(3), and 125 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. Kedia, who found himself in the middle of the language row in Maharashtra over his recent remarks against MNS and its chief Raj Thackeray, stated that he made these comments in haste and has now realised his mistake. In another incident, as per a

viral video, a group of men allegedly associated with a regional party beat up a shop owner for not speaking in Marathi. The incident occurred in the Mira-Bhayandar area near Mumbai. On Friday, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis warned of strict legal action against those engaging in "hooliganism" in the name of Marathi.

Reuters' X account unblocked in India after govt intervenes

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had been withheld in India "in response to a legal demand".

However, a government spokesperson said no legal requirement was made to withhold the account.

Earlier in the day, sources said a demand for blocking the account alongside several hundreds of other accounts was made during Operation Sindoor in May. While many of them were blocked, the Reuters handle wasn't.

X seems to have now acted on that request and blocked Reuters'

handle in India. And since the issue isn't relevant now, the government has asked X to explain the blocking and lift the embargo, they said.

The official accounts of Chinese media organisation Global Times and Turkish media house TRT World on X were also blocked again citing a legal demand, which the government said was not required now.

"There is no requirement from the government of India to withhold the Global Times News/trtworld handle. We are continuously work-

ing with X to resolve the problem," the spokesperson had said.

On random check, it was found that Chinese Xinhua News and some other media outlets, that were also blocked during Operation Sindoor, continued to be accessible.

"An order was issued on May 7 (during Operation Sindoor) but it was not enforced. X seems to have enforced that order now which is a mistake on their part. Government has reached out to X for resolving it at the earliest," an official source said.

An e-mail sent to Reuters seeking comments did not elicit a response.

While affiliated X handles such as Reuters Tech News, Reuters Fact Check, Reuters Asia, and Reuters China were accessible in India, both official X accounts of the global news agency as well as Reuters World handles were inaccessible earlier.

X users attempting to access the main account could see a message that read: "Account withheld. @Reuters has been withheld in IN in response to a legal demand."

BRICS remains powerful force: PM

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together 11 major emerging economies of the world, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade. BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025.

Modi arrived here last

night on the fourth leg of his five-nation tour. He has already visited Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago and Argentina.

The situation in West Asia, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and challenges facing the Global South are likely to figure prominently at the BRICS Summit.

"Grateful to President Lula for hosting this year's BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro. BRICS remains a powerful force for economic cooperation and global good," Modi said in a social media post after he was welcomed at

the venue of the summit by the Brazilian leader.

The motto of the Brazilian presidency of BRICS is "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance".

The summit will culminate in two high-level declarations on financing the climate change regime and the governance of artificial intelligence.

Enhancing the use of national currencies in settling intra-BRICS trade may also figure in the discussions at the summit.

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel's

CONTINUED FROM P1

entrepreneurship, agriculture, renewable energy, and health. Key among them are the Gujarat IT/ITeS Policy 2022-27, aiming to generate 100,000 direct jobs and elevate exports from Rs 3,000 crore to Rs 25,000 crore, and similarly ambitious programs in semiconductors, green hydrogen, biotechnology, and cinematic tourism. In agriculture, Patel has overseen impressive strides, with tribal district of Dang achieving 100% natural farming. What began as a pilot has grown into a transformative model with wide economic, ecological, and social implications. Meanwhile, ongoing water conservation campaigns, such as the Sujalam Sufalam Jal Abhiyaan, (SSJA) - First

introduced in 2018 and restarted in 2025 as SSJA 2.0. - Its main goal is to help Gujarat become a leading example for the rest of India in managing water resources wisely and planning for climate-related challenges in a sustainable way.

Patel's commitment to inclusive welfare shines through in health and nutrition programs like the Suposhit Mata, Swasth Bal Yojana, focused on maternal and child well-being. Apart from this Healthcare infrastructure has seen rapid expansion, including the launch of AIIMS Rajkot, new medical colleges, improved dialysis services, and a doubling of coverage under PMJAY-MA from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh per family.

warm wishes to the Dalai Lama, and said he has been an enduring symbol of love, compassion, patience and moral discipline.

Modi said on X, "I join 1.4 billion Indians in extending our warmest wishes to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday. He has been an enduring symbol of love, compassion, patience and moral discipline."

He added, "His message has inspired respect and admiration across all faiths. We pray for his continued good health and long life."

Union ministers Kiren Rijiju and Rajiv Ranjan

Singh, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Sikkim minister Sonam Lama, and Hollywood actor Richard Gere addressed the gathering here.

"Many lamas who spoke out during discussion ... were openly declaring that his holiness Dalai Lama does not belong to only Tibet anymore, his holiness belongs to the world," Gere said.

The opulent ceremony was held just days after his announcement that the institution of the Dalai Lama will continue and only the Gaden Phodrang Trust will have the authority

to recognise his future reincarnation put an end to the speculations about the discontinuation of the Dalai Lama institution.

China insists on having a say in the choice of successor to the current Dalai Lama.

On Saturday, to irk China further, the Tibetan spiritual leader said he hopes to live for another 30-40 years.

The birthday was attended by the representatives of various Tibetan Buddhist sects, school children, dancers and singers from different countries, and Buddhists from across the world.

Speaking at the ceremony,

seated in front of a nine-tier cake, Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso said that it is the love of the people that motivates him to continue on the path of serving all sentient beings.

"So on my part, I reflect on Shantideva's Bodhisattvacharyavatara, the Bodhisattva way of life, considering all sentient beings as my relatives and friends, and I always think of serving all sentient beings to the best of my ability. On this birthday celebration, you have come here with great joy. So thank you," he said.

"The more people, the more joy expressed from

their hearts. I also feel inspired because I practise Bodhichitta. Instead of focusing on selfish goals to get people's admiration, my focus on serving others and holding others dearer than myself helps me gather people around and to have their admiration," the Nobel laureate said to a ground full of admirers lined up wall to wall.

The celebrations started with a song for the Dalai Lama performed by Switzerland-based Tibetan singer Jamyan Choeden. It was followed by a dance performance by a group of Mongolian and Albanian artists.

GOYAL SLAMS K'TAKA CM FOR LINKING HEART ATTACKS WITH COVID VACCINE

BELLIE THOMAS
NEW DELHI

In a scathing attack on the Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for linking the alleged hasty rollout of Covid vaccines to the recent spurt in fatal heart attack cases in the state, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal questioned whether Siddaramaiah was pushing the agenda of foreign companies.

He was speaking to the media after attending an interactive session with industrial leaders organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Bengaluru on Saturday.

"In a large country like India, 250 crore vaccine doses were given for free because our companies had the capacity and produced vaccines for less than Rs 100," Goyal said.

"The Chief Minister of this state - when he insults and undermines our scientists and pharmaceutical sector - I question his intentions. Is he working to further the agenda of foreign companies?" Goyal asked.

"Are these foreign com-



panies, which are trying to harm India's pharmaceutical industry and are worried about our economic progress and capabilities, being supported by the Congress government, its Chief Minister, and its allies? Are they deliberately portraying Indian companies in a bad light?" he questioned.

"Is something suspicious going on? The Chief Minister must answer and apologise to Indian scientists and pharmaceutical companies," Goyal demanded.

"Fake narratives cannot dilute the extraordinary work done by our scientists and the pharmaceutical industry in our fight against COVID," he said.

Answering another question, Goyal said, "India does not negotiate under pressure or deadlines. We negotiate in the national interest. That remains paramount in everything we do."

He pointed out that under the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government, India has entered into Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with countries like Mauritius, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and the United Kingdom and others. "We are also in talks with developed nations including the EU bloc of 27 countries, the United States, Oman, Peru, and Chile," he added.

"Today, India negotiates from a position of strength. We are self-confident and can compete with anyone in the world. This is not the weak India of the Congress-led UPA that signed deals not aligned with national interests," he remarked.

Speaking about the interactive session, Goyal said he was truly delighted to engage with Bengaluru's vibrant industry. "I thank the Confederation of Indian Industry and all participating organizations, and Kar-

nataka's Minister for Large and Medium Industries, M. B. Patil, for the opportunity to hear some valuable suggestions," he said.

"Engaging with the industry, which has enormous potential to power India's growth, was immensely productive. I was also pleased when one of the participants appreciated the government's strong response under Operation Sindoor to the recent terrorist attack," he noted.

"That attack was not just on India's people, but also on our progress, integrity, and sovereignty. I also believe that the deep-tech industry and startup ecosystem, which thrive in Bengaluru, are jewels in our crown," Goyal said.

"We are proud of the excellent work being done by the tech sector and the global capability centers. The Government of India will always fully support the technology and startup ecosystem," he added.

"Just three days ago, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Union Cabinet approved a scheme to provide Rs 1 lakh crore for promoting

research, development, and innovation," he said.

"We have also launched Rs2 lakh crore employment generation incentive scheme, alongside several other initiatives such as skill development programmes, the PM Internship Programme, and a Rs 10,000 crore startup fund. Together, these initiatives will provide strong support to our growing startup, tech, and manufacturing ecosystems," he stated.

"When we speak to industrialists, we rise above politics and engage constructively," he said.

Karnataka Minister for Large and Medium Industries M. B. Patil said, "The meeting was organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry and other industry bodies in Karnataka, who wanted a direct interaction. The meeting went well."

"We briefed Union Minister on the developments in Karnataka. The questions ranged from startup growth to funding access. As a minister representing the state, I am committed to prioritizing the state's interests over politics and differences," Patil added.

Syama Prasad helped retain WB's identity: BJP state chief, attacks TMC

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

West Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya on Sunday said Syama Prasad Mookerjee ensured that West Bengal retained its identity during Partition, and he was helped in this mission by Communist leader Jyoti Basu.

Bhattacharya attacked the ruling TMC in the same vein, stating that from having leaders like Mookerjee and Basu who ensured that Bengali Hindus did not face any atrocities, West Bengal now has a regime that was "patronising" radical elements, which were trying to bring back the days of the pre-Partition violence.

Bhattacharya has been evoking the names of Mookerjee and Basu in the same breath after taking over as the state BJP president two days back, as the party tries to reach out to the anti-TMC Left voters ahead of the 2026 assembly elections.

"Islamic fundamentalism has become a menace worldwide, and all of us have to fight the menace. The radical



elements should be defeated in Bengal, and I urge every right-thinking party and individual to join hands in this battle," he said, addressing a function to mark Mookerjee's birth anniversary.

"Due to its appeasement politics, the TMC has failed to address the growth of radical Islamists in Bengal. The poor, ordinary, and nationalist Muslims have been used by the party for votes even as their economic condition remained the same," he alleged.

Bhattacharya said the BJP will continue to fight "radical elements" and work for the upliftment of every community, including backwards Muslims.

Remembering Mookerjee, he said it was because of his efforts that West Bengal re-

tained its identity after Partition.

"He was helped in this mission by a Communist figure like Jyoti Basu. From having such figures, we are now under a regime that has led Bengal to a situation similar to 1946. We must prevent that at this hour. We must live up to Syama Prasad's dreams," he said.

Hundreds of people paid tributes to Mookerjee at the BJP state headquarters in central Kolkata and the leader's residence in Bhabanipur.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also paid tribute to the Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder.

"My humble tribute and respect to Dr Syamaprasad Mukhopadhyay on his birth anniversary," she said in a post on X in Bengali.

Kolkata case: Guv expresses concern over college affairs

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose on Sunday expressed concern over the "disturbing reports" regarding the state of affairs at the South Calcutta Law College, where a first-year student was allegedly gang-raped by an alumnus and two of her seniors recently.

Bose is also the chancellor of the Calcutta University to which the institute was affiliated.

"No one, however powerful or well-connected, can be allowed to hold an educational institution hostage or to exert totalitarian power with elements of violence," Bose was quoted as saying in a statement released by the Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

The prime accused in the

case, Monojit Mishra, had been involved with the student wing of the state's ruling Trinamool Congress. A contractual employee of the college, Mishra was expelled from the institute after the June 25 incident.

The Governor urged students to continue with their studies without fear, confident that the college administration, university authorities, and law enforcement agencies are united in protecting their welfare.

Bose has also urged Vice Chancellor Prof Santa Datta (De) to take every necessary step to safeguard the interests of the students and to ensure that the administration of the colleges under the varsity functions strictly in accordance with established rules and regulations, the statement said.

KTR accepts Revanth Reddy's challenge for public debate on farmer welfare

RAJ KIRAN BATHULA
NEW DELHI

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has formally accepted Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's public challenge to debate on what each government has done for Telangana's farmers. In a sharp rebuttal delivered at Telangana Bhavan, KTR invited Revanth to fix the date, time, and place of the discussion, declaring his readiness to face the debate "anywhere, anytime."

KTR, however, took a jibe at the Chief Minister's preparedness, stating, "Revanth Reddy doesn't even have basic knowledge on agriculture. I am generously giving him 72 hours to prepare. Otherwise, he'll show up and talk about 'basins' and 'okra', making a mockery of himself and the office he holds." He said even a bull next to a farmer could explain how agriculture thrived under the

leadership of KCR.

Accusing Revanth Reddy of acting as a covert ally of Chandrababu Naidu, KTR said Telangana's water resources were being diverted to Andhra Pradesh under the guise of projects like



Banakacharla. "Revanth is looting Telangana's water and funds, all to please his political mentor. This is not public governance — this is covert rule," KTR charged.

Drawing a sharp contrast between the BRS and the Congress administrations,

KTR said that while BRS ushered in 'Raithu Rajyam' (Farmer's Rule), the Congress has brought back a version of 'Emergency Rule' reminiscent of Indira Gandhi's regime. "From punishing farmers to pushing them into endless queues for fertilisers, Congress has only brought suffering," he added.

Taking direct aim at Congress, KTR said the Revanth Reddy government had defaulted on its major promises. "Not a single woman is receiving the Rs2,500 monthly promised by the Congress. Scooters, jobs, unemployment allowance all turned out to be lies. Telangana's daughters and sons are waiting for answers."

He further alleged that Congress has cheated farmers by reducing the promised Rs50,000 crore farm loan waiver to just Rs12,000 crore.

"The Revanth government owes every farmer Rs19,000 under Rythu Bharosa. They

have not paid even the crop insurance premiums for three months," he said.

KTR also ridiculed the Congress party's attempts to claim credit for schemes and appointments made during the BRS regime. "Revanth is boasting about issuing appointment letters for jobs already filled during our tenure. Would he dare say the same in Ashok Nagar?" he challenged.

KTR extended an open invitation for the debate: "You can choose the Assembly, Ambedkar statue, Kondareddyapalle, Chintamadaka, or Kondangal. If none of these suit you, I'll be at Somajiguda Press Club at 11 AM on July 8 — ready to expose the truth before the media."

KTR concluded with a strong message "During our rule, we never made noise even after transferring Rs73,000 crore to farmers. Revanth celebrates after giving just one crop's worth of support.

Studying in one's mother tongue instils strong values CJI

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan Gavai on Sunday stated that studying in one's mother tongue enhances conceptual understanding and instils strong values for life, as he reminisced about his student days at a Marathi-medium school in Mumbai. Having studied from primary to secondary levels at this very institution, he expressed deep gratitude to the teachers who shaped his early life, an official release stated.

"Whatever position I have reached today, my teachers and this school have played a significant role in it. The education and values I received here gave direction to my life. My journey in public speaking began on this very stage. Through speech competitions and cultural programs, I gained confidence. It is because of those opportunities that I am what I

am today," he said. Recalling his schooling in Marathi-medium, the CJI stated that studying in one's mother tongue helps in better conceptual understanding, and also instils strong values



that stay with you for life.

He visited the classrooms, library, and art section of the school, interacting warmly with his old classmates and reliving fond memories.

The CJI felt proud and deeply emotional after the heartfelt tribute given by the students, the release stated.

Attacks on Hindi speakers: MNS strategy, challenges for Fadnavis Govt

RAKESH SINGH
NEW DELHI

In recent days, a political storm has erupted in Maharashtra following attacks on Hindi-speaking traders and common citizens by workers of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS). Particularly in regions like Mumbai and Thane, incidents have surfaced where shopkeepers were assaulted for not speaking Marathi or responding in Hindi. These incidents, especially the assault on a Gujarati shopkeeper, Bagharam Chaudhary, in Mira-Bhayandar, have become a focal point of public debate. Questions are now being raised: Is this aggression by the MNS driven by the upcoming Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections? And how will Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' government handle this crisis? Let's break it down in simple terms.

MNS's Strategy: Eyes on the BMC Elections:

Founded in 2006 by Raj Thackeray, the MNS has long built its political identity around "Marathi Asmita" (Marathi pride) and the idea of the "Marathi Manus" (Marathi person). The party has a history of aggressive rhetoric and violent actions against non-Marathis, particularly Hindi-speaking North Indians. Recent incidents—such as



the assault on a shopkeeper in Mira Road, the attack over a social media post against Raj Thackeray in Pune, and anti-Hindi posters—indicate that MNS is once again trying to capitalize on the issue of "Marathi

pride."

Political analysts believe this strategy is linked to the upcoming BMC elections. Mumbai, the financial capital of India, has a municipal budget of several thousand crores, making BMC a prized institution for political parties. MNS's voter base has significantly eroded over the years—from winning

13 assembly seats in 2009 to none in 2024. In this context, the MNS appears to be reviving the Marathi vs non-Marathi sentiment to polarize voters and woo the Marathi electorate. The Challenge for the

Fadnavis Government: The Mahayuti government, led by Devendra Fadnavis and comprising the BJP, Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena faction, and the NCP, finds itself in a tricky situation. On one hand, it must uphold the sentiments of Marathi pride, which remains a sensitive issue in Maharashtra's politics. On the other hand, Mumbai is home to nearly 4.5 million Hindi-speaking people who can play a decisive role in the BMC elections. Failure to take strict action against MNS's hooliganism could damage the government's image, particularly among Hindi-speaking voters.

Recently, when the government proposed making Hindi a mandatory third language in schools, the MNS and Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT) strongly opposed it, accusing the government of imposing Hindi. Under pressure, the Fadnavis government withdrew the proposal and formed a committee headed by

Recently, when the government proposed making Hindi a mandatory third language in schools, the MNS and Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT) strongly opposed it, accusing the government of imposing Hindi.

Dr. Narendra Jadhav. This move reflects the government's attempt to balance the interests of both Marathi and Hindi-speaking communities. However, the violent actions of MNS have made this balancing act even more difficult.

Government's Response So Far: Following the attacks by MNS workers on Hindi speakers, the government and police response has come under scrutiny. In the Mira Road incident, FIRs were filed against seven MNS workers, but no arrests have been made so far. Police claimed the matter was minor, and thus no strict action was taken. This delay has sparked anger among Hindi-speaking traders, prompting a

bandh (shutdown) in Mira-Bhayandar.

Maharashtra's Minister of State for Home Affairs, Yogesh Kadam (Shinde faction of Shiv Sena), stated, "Marathi must be spoken in Maharashtra," but also condemned the violence. This reflects the government's dual approach—supporting Marathi pride while trying to avoid endorsing violence. Fadnavis also reiterated, "Marathi is our pride," but denied any intention to impose Hindi.

HOW WILL FADNAVIS HANDLE THE SITUATION?

1. Strict Law and Order Enforcement: The government must crack down on MNS's hooliganism. Viral

videos of the incidents in Mira Road and Pune have triggered public outrage. The Fadnavis administration needs to instruct police to take strict action against offenders to restore trust within the Hindi-speaking community.

2. Political Balancing: Ahead of the BMC polls, the government must strike a balance between Marathi and non-Marathi voters. This could include promoting Marathi culture—through literature, arts, and events—without targeting Hindi-speaking citizens.

3. Language Policy Through Committee Recommendations: The committee led by Narendra Jadhav is expected to submit its report in three months. The government may use it to frame a language policy that prioritizes Marathi while keeping Hindi and other languages optional, not mandatory.

4. Promoting Social Harmony: The Fadnavis government needs to run

awareness campaigns promoting unity and inclusiveness. In a cosmopolitan city like Mumbai, which hosts people of diverse languages and cultures, the message must be clear: every community deserves respect.

5. Political Pressure on MNS: The BJP and its allies need to politically isolate MNS. If MNS realizes that its violent tactics are not translating into votes, it may scale down such aggression.

Mumbai's diverse population will not tolerate such violence for long. Fadnavis faces the dual challenge of maintaining law and order, winning the trust of Hindi-speaking voters, and respecting Marathi pride. It's a tightrope walk, but his political acumen and administrative experience could help him navigate this crisis. The coming months will be critical ahead of the BMC elections, and the government's actions now will shape the outcome.

NADDA, CM GIVE OUT APPOINTMENT LETTERS TO 1,400 NURSES

Centre and Delhi government aim to strengthen healthcare staff and expand access.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

As Union Health Minister JP Nadda and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta distributed appointment letters to 1400 nurses on Sunday, CM Gupta said that the government is making efforts to tackle the shortage of medical staff and medicines.

Rekha Gupta told the reporters, "It is a matter of great joy that, after many years in the history of the Delhi government, appointment letters for permanent nursing staff have been distributed by the government. For years, due to a shortage of staff, Delhi's hospitals have been running in a disorganised manner. The government has made significant efforts within its tenure to fill these vacancies, and today, approximately 1,400 nurses have been given appointment letters."

Delhi CM further congratulated the health department and the Health



Ministry.

"Our effort is to ensure that there is no shortage of medicines, doctors, staff, or infrastructure in Delhi's hospitals. From the bottom of our hearts, we extend heartfelt congratulations to the entire health department, the Health Ministry, and the Health Minister. We request everyone to

come together and serve the people of Delhi," CM Gupta said.

During the same event, Union Minister Nadda and CM Rekha Gupta also flagged off Ayushman Bharat Registration Vans in Vigyan Bhawan on Sunday.

Addressing the event, the BJP chief slammed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for not

using Rs 1700 crore under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme for public welfare.

He said, "Under PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, we had given Rs 1700 crore to Delhi between 2021 to February 2025, but not one penny was spent, and now the responsibility of the expenditure of this fund for the

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 1,400 nurses appointed: Letters distributed for permanent nursing posts in Delhi hospitals.
- Staff shortage addressed: CM Rekha Gupta says hospitals were disorganised due to lack of staff.
- Ayushman vans launched: Registration vans flagged off to boost scheme outreach.
- AAP criticised: Nadda slams AAP for not utilising Rs 1,700 crore Ayushman funds.

public welfare has fallen on the shoulders of (Delhi CM) Rekha ji."

Continuing his attack against AAP, he added, "We were ready to quench Delhi's thirst with water, but you kept the vessel upside down, so what could be done? On February 20, you turned up the vessel, so you got Ayushman Bharat. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was ready to provide Rs 5 lakh for the poor's healthcare since September 2, 2017.

Their pride came in between. They did injustice to

the poor."

Lauding Ayushman Arogya Mandir, Nadda targeted Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinic and called AAP shortsighted.

"A wise man is farsighted and thinks of Ayushman Arogya Mandir, and shortsighted ones bring Mohalla Clinics.

From the time a mother conceives a child to the time the child turns two, Ayushman Arogya Mandir takes care of all the vaccinations. India is playing a lead role in reproductive and child health care," JP Nadda said.

Nadda, CM Rekha flag off Ayushman Bharat registration vans

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta flagged off Ayushman Bharat registration vans in Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday.

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Delhi Govt to cover Munak canal with solar panels

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In an effort to reduce water loss and generate renewable energy, the Delhi government is planning to repair a 17-km section of Munak canal and cover it with solar panels, water minister Parvesh Verma said on Sunday.

The Munak canal has two main branches -- the Delhi Sub-Branch (DSB) and the Carrier Lined Channel (CLC) -- that are suffering from significant leakage and inefficiency.

In a first-of-its-kind move, the DSB, a raw water stream starting from Haryana and merging with the Munak canal, will be covered with solar panels. A feasibility study is being carried out by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). Water Minister Verma

inspected the Munak canal last week and reviewed conditions on-site along with senior officials.

"The Munak canal is a lifeline for Delhi's water supply. But in its current form, it is also a major source of water loss, pollution and risk. Our plan to cover it with solar panels will help us save water, produce clean power and make the canal safer and more secure for the people of Delhi," Verma said. "In the DSB, nearly 30 per cent of the water is lost due to seepage and evaporation. Beyond water loss, the Munak canal also faces persistent issues of garbage dumping and accidental drownings. "Open and unguarded stretches of the canal pose a danger to both residents and passersby," a government statement said.

Rain lashes Delhi, IMD predicts more showers

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Rain lashed parts of Delhi on Sunday morning as the India Meteorological Department predicted light to moderate rain accompanied by thunderstorms likely to occur over Delhi during the next two days.

IMD Delhi in a press release stated, "Generally cloudy sky. Light to moderate rain accompanied with thunderstorm/lightning likely to occur over Delhi during next 2 days."

IMD said that there is no large change in minimum temperatures and maximum temperatures in the past 24 hours over Delhi.

"The maximum temperatures were in the range of 36-37°C and the minimum temperatures are in the range of



25-29°C respectively. The minimum temperatures are near normal and maximum temperatures were near normal over Delhi. South-westerly winds prevailed with wind speed upto 15 kmph over Delhi," IMD said.

IMD said that the monsoon trough at mean sea level now passes through Suratgarh, Sirsa, Delhi, Lucknow, Varanasi, Daltonganj, Bankura, Digha and thence southeastwards to northeast Bay of Bengal and an upper

air cyclonic circulation lies over Himachal Pradesh and adjoining Punjab at 1.5 km above mean sea level.

Meanwhile, the cumulative death toll in Himachal Pradesh's ongoing monsoon season has climbed to 75, combining 45 rain-related fatalities and 30 accidental deaths, including those from road mishaps, electrocution, and a gas explosion, according to official data released by the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC).

Congress questions ED probe in Herald case

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Defending Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in the Enforcement Directorate's money laundering case linked to the National Herald, Congress leaders Supriya Shrinete and Pawan Khhera questioned the basis of the ED investigation, calling it a "strange" case as there has been "no exchange of money."

Addressing the media on Saturday, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said, "This is such a strange case where there is a charge of money laundering, but there has been no exchange of money in it. Neither has there been any property transfer nor any assets. The Congress party gave the



money for its revival as AJL (Associated Journal Limited) was not a simple institution -- it was founded during the freedom movement of the country. We wanted to protect such an institution."

Reiterating the party's stand, Congress leader Pawan Khhera argued that the ED was overstepping its jurisdiction by questioning financial decisions made by the party.

"We had raised a question that the ED cannot question

why we hadn't sold properties for loan repayment. We gave the loan interest-free as it was credited the objectives of publishing a newspaper, and if they cannot pay the loan, who is the ED to ask the question?" Khhera said.

Earlier on Saturday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's counsel told the Rouse Avenue court, which is hearing the National Herald case that Young Indian was created to revive Associated Journal Limited (AJL) and not to earn rent, "AJL is freedom-fighting legacy, our purpose is to save it, not to earn rent from its properties. It was founded by Jawaharlal Nehru, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and other leaders before Independence. Motive was its revival, not to earn rent," the counsel mentioned.

Delhi Laadli Yojana beneficiaries down by 60% in 15 years: RTI

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The number of people who took benefits under the Laadli Yojana in Delhi has decreased by about 60 per cent in the last 15 years, information shared by the government under the Right to Information Act has revealed.

Laadli Yojana was started in the national capital on January 1, 2008, with the aim to empower young women and reduce gender inequality.

The Women and Child Development Department of the Delhi government, in response to an RTI application, said that since the launch of the scheme, till



2025, 13,52,564 girls have been registered.

According to the information it shared with PTI-Bhasha, while the number of beneficiaries was 1,26,965 in 2008-2009, in 2024-25, their number had fallen to 53,001 -- a decrease of 58 per cent and the second lowest in the last five years.

In 2019-2020, only 30,192 girls benefited from the scheme.

Delhi Women and Child Development Department Director Mitali Namchoom could not be contacted despite several attempts for a comment on the decline in the number of beneficiaries.

According to information

shared by the WCD department, the number of beneficiaries in 2009-2010 was 1,39,223, 1,05,737 in 2010-2011, 1,06,585 in 2011-2012, 96,800 in 2012-2013, 89,243 in 2013-2014, and 82,669 in 2014-2015.

A total of 74,846 girls benefitted from the scheme in 2015-2016, 68,193 in 2016-2017, 67,070 in 2017-2018, 60,903 in 2018-2019, 30,192 in 2019-2020, 61,546 in 2020-2021, 62,749 in 2021-2022, 64,637 in 2022-2023, and 62,205 in 2023-2024.

An official of the WCD department, on condition of anonymity, said that one of the reasons behind the decrease was girls dropping out of school.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Celebrating a centuries-old tradition rooted in devotion and community spirit, Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party President Virendra Sachdeva joined hundreds of participants in the fifth symbolic Pandharpur Yatra held in the national capital.

The event mirrors the annual Pandharpur Wari in Maharashtra, one of India's most well-known pilgrimages, dedicated to Lord Vitthal.

Speaking to ANI during the event, Sachdeva said, "This is Pandharpur yatra that is carried out all over in Maharashtra with lot of



excitement and devotion. This is an 800-year-old tradition that was started by Sant Gyaneshwar and Sant Tukaram."

He added, "This is our 5th wari (Yatra) in Delhi. We have been trying continually to organise such Yatras in Delhi where everyone can

participate. We celebrate this Yatra of Vitthal with a lot of excitement and faith."

The Pandharpur Wari, also known as the Pandharpur Yatra, is a major Hindu pilgrimage that brings together thousands of devotees, known as Warkaris. Every year, they

walk around 250 kilometres to reach the holy town of Pandharpur in Maharashtra.

Held in honour of Lord Vitthal, a form of Lord Vishnu, and his consort Rukmini, the Wari has been followed for centuries. It is closely associated with the teachings and lives of revered saints like Sant Tukaram Maharaj and Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj, who are credited with starting and popularising the tradition.

Large processions, known as Palkhis, begin from the towns of Dehu and Alandi -- birthplaces of Sant Tukaram and Sant Dnyaneshwar.

30th 'Fit India Sundays on Cycle' held with RWA support

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The main event of the 30th edition of 'Fit India Sundays on Cycle' took place in Delhi on Sunday. Cyclists began from Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, rode around the India Gate C Hexagon, continued to Vijay Chowk along Kartavya Path, and returned to the stadium.

Visuals from the event showed cyclists riding along Kartavya Path with India Gate in the back-



ground.

"Fit India Sundays" was organised at 6,000 locations across India on July 6 in partnership with Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs). The Delhi event

was flagged off at 7 AM from Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium.

"Fit India Sundays on Cycle has gradually become a mass movement. This week, we will be

organising the event in partnership with RWAs. I urge all citizens and communities to become part of this initiative and indulge in fitness-related activities like cycling and yoga to avoid lifestyle diseases and reduce pollution levels in their area," Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya said as quoted by the SAI Media press release on Friday.

The objective of organising the event with RWAs is to promote sustainability and connect with local com-

munities across India. As per official estimates, there are 5-6 lakh RWAs in India whose role is to increase awareness about adopting a healthy and active lifestyle. The RWAs are encouraging residents in their areas to participate in cycling, yoga and fitness activities daily.

Sharing an X post on Friday, the Union Sports Minister wrote, "Sunday will become Fitness Day! This Sunday, the #SundaysOnCycle event will be organized at over 6,000 locations across the country.

Vaishnaw, Sachdeva, CM Rekha pay tribute to Mookerjee

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President Virendra Sachdeva, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and other party leaders on Sunday paid floral tribute to Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the founder of Jana Sangh, on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

Syama Prasad Mookerjee was the founder of Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the ideological parent organisation of the BJP.

Born on July 6, 1901, in Calcutta, was a multifaceted personality - patriot, educationist, parliamentarian, statesman, and

humanitarian. He inherited a legacy of erudition and nationalism from his father, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee, an esteemed Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University and Judge of the Calcutta High Court.

This upbringing instilled in him a deep respect for India's cultural heritage and a keen interest in modern scientific thought. Mookerjee's academic brilliance was evident from an early age. After excelling at the Presidency College, he earned degrees in law and literature, including a D.Litt. and LL.D.

His tenure as the youngest Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University (1934) allowed him to implement his progressive vision for education.

DELHI GOVT ENSURING HEALTH WITH DIGNITY UNDER AYUSHMAN VAY VANDANA: NADDA

Union Minister Nadda praises Delhi’s efforts to expand inclusive and dignified healthcare.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister JP Nadda expressed his satisfaction over the the BJP-led Delhi government in ensuring that every person gets the “right to be healthy,” as he distributed appointment letters to Delhi Nursing Officers and Paramedical staff and flagged off Ayushman Bharat Registration Vans at Delhi’s Vigyan Bhawan on Sunday.

Nadda underlined that Delhi observes the highest healthcare load as people

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Ayushman Vay Vandana push:
- 2 lakh senior citizens in Delhi received cards under the new scheme.
- Healthcare recruitment drive:
- Over 1,400 nursing and paramedical staff appointed to fill long-standing vacancies.
- Ayushman Bharat Vans launched: 70 mobile units to deliver Ayushman Cards directly across all constituencies.
- Focus on infrastructure:Delhi to set up 1,100 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs by March 2026.

across the country come to Delhi for treatment, and earlier, the healthcare system faced negligence. He commended the efforts of the current Delhi government for strengthening the healthcare infrastructure and implementing Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) and Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM- ABHIM).

According to an official

statement from the health ministry, the letters were distributed in the presence of Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Ministers of Government of NCT Delhi, Pan-kaj Kumar Singh, Minister, Health and Family Welfare & Transport and Information Technology, Ravinder Indraj Singh, Minister, Social Welfare, Welfare for SC & ST, Cooperative and Election and Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Minister, Industries, Food & Supplies, Environment, For-

est & Wild Life, Members of Parliament (Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Praveen Khandelwal, Yogender Chandolia and Bansuri Swaraj).

He stated that “under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ayushman Vay Vandana was introduced to ensure healthcare to the senior citizens above the age of 70. The Delhi government is working in this direction of ensuring the right to be healthy throughout life with dignity under

Vay Vandana. To date, 4 lakh Ayushman Cards have been issued in Delhi, with 2 lakh cards issued under Vay Vandana.” He urged all stakeholders to work dedicatedly towards implementing PM-ABHIM in Delhi and fulfil the target of opening 1100 Ayushman Arogya mandirs by March 31, 2026, the statement mentioned.

Nadda underlined that “in 1997, the Health Policy focused primarily on curative care, while under the visionary leadership of PM, the New Health Policy 2017 was introduced with a philosophy of comprehensive care--preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative-- with a special focus on geriatric care.

As per the statement, Nadda emphasised the important role of Ayushman Arogya Mandirs in providing equal, affordable and accessible healthcare for all. He highlighted that “special emphasis is being given to preventive healthcare under which initiatives for early diagnosis for different diseases have been undertaken.

Congress questions World Bank report on Indian poverty, inequality

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Congress expressed concerns on Sunday over a recent World Bank report that said poverty and inequality remain concerningly high in India, and requested the Centre to take steps, including bringing in GST reforms and ending corporate favouritism.

Citing the World Bank’s poverty and equity brief for India in April 2025, Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said three months after its release, the Narendra Modi government’s “drumbeaters and cheerleaders have begun spinning the World Bank’s data to make the staggeringly out-of-touch claim that India is among the world’s most equal societies”.

He said in a statement issued on April 27, the Congress had highlighted some of the key concerns that the World Bank had raised in its report.

“These concerns continue to be relevant, and any



attempt to engage with the report must grapple with them seriously,” the Congress leader said.

He said the World Bank report highlights that wage disparity is high in India, with the median earnings of the top 10 per cent being 13 times higher than the bottom 10 per cent in 2023-24.

“Moreover, ‘sampling and data limitations suggest that consumption inequality (as measured by government data) may be underestimated’.

“More updated data (adoption of purchasing power parity conversion factor from 2021 as compared to that of 2017) would result in a higher rate of extreme

poverty,” Ramesh said in a statement, citing the report.

He said the report also stated that changes in the questionnaire design, survey implementation and sampling in the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2022-23 “present challenges for making comparisons over time”.

“As a lower middle-income country, the appropriate rate to measure poverty in India is that of USD 3.65/day. By this measure, the poverty rate for India in 2022 is significantly higher at 28.1 per cent,” Ramesh said, citing the report.

“The report is therefore rather clear: poverty remains concerningly high, and so does inequality,” the former Union minister added.

He said the good news that the Centre is so desperately trying to wrangle out of this report is partly attributable to the limited availability and uncertain quality of government data as well as to the selection of benchmarks to measure poverty.

Assam CM unveils ‘Bodoland Speaks’ to strengthen linguistic inclusivity

TDG NETWORK
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday inaugurated ‘Bodoland Speaks: From Vision to Action’, an initiative of the Bodoland Territorial Council under Bodoland Happiness Mission at a programme held at Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra in Guwahati.

CM Sarma also launched BTR Communication Bridge, A Practical Resource of 1001 words and 1001 sentences in 18 languages of the region, Transforming Bodoland- a journey of change in BTR, Lookin’ Within: My Reflections authored by CEM BTC Pramod Boro and Annual Report of the Bodoland Happiness Mission (2024-25).

CM Sarma, on the occasion, also conferred the Bodoland Lifetime Achiev-



ers Award on 18 personalities who contributed immensely to the enrichment of folk cultures in the BTR.

The Chief Minister hailed the Bodoland Happiness Mission said that the mission is an excellent effort to strengthen the peace and stability that the people of BTR achieved over the last five years.

He said that the Bodoland Happiness Mission launched in the BTR has been hugely successful in forging happiness

in the BTR areas.

Giving a contrasting situation that existed in the Bodoland areas since 1968 which witnessed violence, turmoil and more, CM Sarma said that the demand of self-determination of the Bodo people and the associated fear psychosis generated among the people belonging to other communities living in the areas made Bodoland one of the most disturbed areas.

Sarma said that maintaining peace and harmony in the BTR is a shared responsibility, and the Bodo community including the 26 tribal communities residing in the region are playing a pivotal role.

Speaking about four years of BJP-led governance om the state, the Chief Minister said that during this time he never heard the sound of any gunshot which he attributed to the success of the peace accord.

“Dreaming” about coming to power: BRS MLC Kavitha lashes out at Congress, BJP

TDG NETWORK
HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha on Sunday hit out at the ruling Congress and the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Telangana, saying that both the parties were “dreaming” about coming to power in the state.

She expressed confidence that her party will return to power in Telangana, as they have stood firmly with marginalised groups. She said that the Congress government in the state has “utterly failed” while the BJP has “sabotaged” the MLC membership of a leader belonging to the Yerukula community.

“Today, the Congress Govt



has utterly failed in Telangana. In a short span of 18 months, they have failed every section and failed to address everybody. They are hoping to come back to power, which is really something that the people of Telangana are unable to understand. However, at the same time, the BJP has directly affected the MLC membership of Satyanarayana, who belongs to the Yerukula community. When KCR

gave him an MLC seat, they sabotaged his nomination and rejected it at the Governor level. This is nothing but political. Therefore, we believe that when you sabotage communities like this, you cannot regain power in Telangana. The BJP is only dreaming that it will come back to power. Congress is also dreaming, but BRS is the only party that stood by these communities, and we are going to come back to power,” Kavitha told ANI.

Earlier, BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) accepted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy’s public challenge to debate on what each government has done for Telangana’s farmers.

Govt will urge SC to allow uniform rules on overage vehicles: Delhi CM Gupta

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Sunday said her government will urge the Supreme Court to allow uniform rules on overage vehicles in the national capital in line with those followed across the country.

Last week, the Delhi government urged the Centre’s air quality panel to immediately suspend the fuel ban on overage vehicles and said it will make “all-out efforts” to resolve issues related to restrictions on the movement of end-of-life vehicles on city roads.

Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, in his letter to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) chairman



Rajesh Verma, said the fuel ban is not feasible and cannot be implemented due to technological challenges.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of an event here, Gupta said the government will echo the sentiments of the people before the Supreme Court.

“We will tell the Supreme Court about the pol-

lution control measures taken by the government. The parameters that are applicable in the entire country should also apply to Delhi. We want Delhiites not to face any inconvenience,” she said.

The chief minister said they are committed to providing relief to people.

A 2018 Supreme Court

‘Make CO, SDM massage their feet’: Akhilesh on Kanwar route name row

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday proposed that the Uttar Pradesh government issues an order that prompts the top officials to invest their time in providing various facilities related to food and health to the Kanwar yatriss, who will be undertaking their pilgrimage walk in the holy month of Shravan.

“They should, the Commissioner, DM and SP should be deployed to make food arrangements for the Kanwar yatriss. CO and SDM ko lagao unke pair dabane ke liye (CO, SDM should be deployed



to provide them with ease). This will perhaps give them relief. This is our Vedic custom. The government should issue an order that says that DM, SP will make food and health arrangements for the Kanwar yatriss and CO, SDM unke pair vair daba kar sewa karenge,” Yadav, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, told reporters.

Over 1,200 Rolls of Banned Chinese Manjha Seized in Delhi

ARZU SETH
NEW DELHI

As the national capital gears up for Independence Day and Raksha Bandhan, the Delhi Police Crime Branch is waging a determined war against the deadly menace of Chinese Manjha — a banned nylon-based kite string notorious for causing severe injuries and even deaths.

In a major crackdown over the past week, over 1,226 rolls of this hazardous string have been seized and three accused arrested in three separate operations.

The colourful joy of kite flying has long been a part of Delhi’s cultural fabric — but in recent years, the fun has turned dangerous. With the rise of synthetic threads



like Chinese Manjha, the city has seen a sharp spike in tragic incidents involving deep cuts, fatal accidents, and harm to birds and animals. Despite being outlawed, the illegal trade has quietly continued until now.

The Crime Branch has launched a focused campaign to identify and dismantle the network behind this deadly product. Here’s a closer look at the operations that led to this significant re-

covery: 922 ROLLS SEIZED IN UTTAM NAGAR

Crime Branch team raided a godown in Uttam Nagar, arrested Raju Chaurasia (51), and seized 922 rolls of Chinese Manjha. Raju, despite previous FIRs, continued selling banned Manjha for high profits through local shops and social media. FIR No. 160/2025 registered under Environment Protection Act and BNS

Let’s follow path shown by Imam Hussain: Rahul on Muharram

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

On the 10th day of Muharram being observed as Ashura today, Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday, appealed to follow the path shown by Hazrat Imam Hussain, leading toward humanity, peace, and unity.

In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi shared, “On this day

of Muharram, we should resolve to follow the path shown by Hazrat Imam Hussain, which, through struggle, sacrifice, and dedication, leads us toward humanity, peace, and unity.”

Muharram holds significant religious importance for Shia Muslims. In India, 7-8 crore Shia Muslim community, along with people of different religions, participate in large processions and tazias.

With Muharram processions and the ongoing Kanwar Yatra taking place across several districts in Uttar Pradesh, including Sambhal, Lucknow and Moradabad, the state administration has stepped up security measures to ensure peace and prevent any untoward incidents.

A large number of people participated in the Muharram processions in various parts of the state. In view



of the Kanwar Yatra happening at the same time, police forces have been deployed in sensitive areas, with drones and CCTV cameras monitoring the situation.

Speaking to ANI, Sambhal District Magistrate Dr Rajender Pensiya said, “We have held various peace committee meetings at the village, neighbourhood, and district levels. In these discussions, people from all sides were invited. All communities

were called, and their issues related to electricity, water, and other problems were addressed... Clear instructions have been given to inform us if any issues arise.”

He added, “We have appointed magistrates at every location, accompanied by police officers. Any procession, whether for Kanwar Yatra or Muharram, will be conducted in a box format, with our officers stationed on all four sides. Continuous monitor-

ing is also being carried out through drones. Currently, we have over 13,000 CCTV cameras integrated. All necessary arrangements are in place, and action is underway to ban more than 900 persons. Section 163 is in effect. We are confident that everything will be conducted peacefully.”

In Lucknow, the police have taken extra precautions in the western zone, also known as Old Lucknow,

which is considered highly sensitive during Muharram.

DCP Lucknow West Vishwajeet Srivastava told ANI, “During Muharram, Lucknow’s western zone, also called Old Lucknow, remains highly sensitive. There is always a zonal sector system 24/7 here. Separate arrangements are made for the processions held in this area.”

He explained that security during processions is arranged in three layers.

FM HOLDS TALKS WITH RUSSIAN, BRAZILIAN AND CHINESE COUNTERPARTS

Finance Minister discusses bilateral ties, Global South, climate finance, and BRICS priorities.

AGENCIES
RIO DE JANEIRO

Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman held separate bilateral meetings with her counterparts from Russia, Brazil and China during the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

In her meeting with Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov, Sitharaman reaffirmed the “long-standing” partnership between India and Russia. She also thanked Russian President Vladimir Putin for his unwavering support after the recent terror attack in Palahgam.

Sitharaman said that both countries enjoy “exemplary levels of mutual trust and understanding,” and underlined the strength of the “Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership”. The two ministers discussed

SITHARAMAN HOLDS KEY BRICS TALKS

- Russia: Reaffirmed strategic ties and discussed New Development Bank, financial cooperation.
- Brazil: Focus on climate finance, Global South, and multilateral platforms like G20 and WTO.
- China: Emphasised cooperation to promote inclusive global growth and amplify developing nations’ voice.
- BRICS vision: India backs multipolar world order, pledges support for Brazil’s BRICS leadership.



bilateral financial cooperation, developments at the New Development Bank (NDB), and new initiatives under the BRICS framework.

She also congratulated Russia for successfully chairing BRICS in 2024 and said that India remains committed to boosting South-South cooperation through the platform.

“The two sides also discussed issues of bilateral

cooperation, including co-operation in the financial sector, along with matters related to NDB,” the Ministry of Finance said in a post on X.

Sitharaman also met Brazilian Finance Minister Fernando Haddad. During the meeting, both sides shared views on raising the voice of the Global South, climate finance before COP30 and working together at global platforms such as the UN,

G20, WTO, BRICS and IBSA.

“The two leaders discussed issues of mutual interest, including South-South cooperation, amplifying the voice of the Global South, COP30 and climate finance issues, and engagement in regional and global forums such as the United Nations, G20, BRICS, WTO and IBSA,” the Finance Ministry in its post said.

She praised Brazil’s lead-

ership of BRICS, especially its efforts to build a “multipolar world order” and expand the grouping. She said India would support Brazil’s priorities and would focus on practical cooperation when it takes over the BRICS Chairship in January 2026. Sitharaman also spoke about the strategic importance of India-Brazil ties and their growing collaboration in different sectors.

“India and Brazil, as strategic partners, share warm and cordial ties spanning across multiple sectors, and are cooperating closely in multiple sectors to further strengthen the strategic partnership,” the Finance Ministry quoting Sitharaman said.

Earlier, Sitharaman met China’s Finance Minister Lan Fo’an. She recalled meeting him earlier in Samarkand during the AIIB Annual Meetings in September 2024.

Mcap of 6 of top 10 valued firms erodes by Rs 70 325.5 cr

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The combined market valuation of six of the top-10 valued firms eroded by Rs 70,325.5 crore last week, with HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank emerging as the worst-hit in line with a bearish trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex dropped 626.01 points or 0.74 per cent.

In the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, State Bank of India, Infosys and Hindustan Unilever Ltd were the gainers, while HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Bajaj Finance faced erosion from their market valuation.

HDFC Bank’s valuation declined by Rs 19,284.8 crore to



Rs 15,25,339.72 crore. ICICI Bank lost Rs 13,566.92 crore in its market valuation which stood at Rs 10,29,470.57 crore.

The valuation of Bajaj Finance dropped by Rs 13,236.44 crore to Rs 5,74,977.11 crore and that of LIC diminished by Rs 10,246.49 crore to Rs 5,95,277.16 crore.

TCS faced an erosion of Rs 8,032.15 crore from its market capitalisation (mcap) which stood at Rs 12,37,729.65 crore.

The mcap of Bharti Airtel

fell by Rs 5,958.7 crore to Rs 11,50,371.24 crore.

However, the market valuation of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 15,359.36 crore to Rs 20,66,949.87 crore.

Infosys added Rs 13,127.51 crore in its valuation to Rs 6,81,383.80 crore. The mcap of Hindustan Unilever climbed Rs 7,906.37 crore to Rs 5,49,757.36 crore and that of State Bank of India went up by Rs 5,756.38 crore to Rs 7,24,545.28 crore.

Negotiations on with over dozen countries for finalising BITs: Official

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India is actively negotiating bilateral investment treaties (BITs) with over a dozen countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Israel, Oman, European Union, Switzerland, Russia, and Australia, a government official said.

Besides these nations, talks are underway with Tajikistan, Cambodia, Uruguay, Maldives, Switzerland, and Kuwait.

These investment treaties help in protecting and promoting investments in each other’s countries.

With India approaching to become the third-largest economy and a hub for global manufacturing, the government is taking a se-



ries of measures to further improve its investment regime that encourages investors.

“It is expected that in the next 3-6 months, BIT with some of these countries will be finalised and announced,” the official added.

The government in the last Budget has announced revamping the current model of BITs to make it more investor-friendly and attract foreign players. The country signed BITs with two countries in 2024.

India’s forex reserves rebound by \$4.8 bn to \$702.78 bn

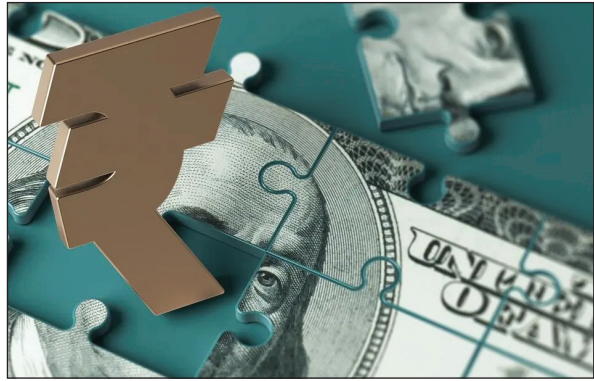
AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India’s foreign exchange reserves (forex) witnessed an uptick of USD 4.8 billion to USD 702.78 billion for the week ending June 27, after a decline in the previous week, official data released by the Reserve Bank of India showed.

In the week ending 20 June, forex stood at USD 697.93 billion, down by USD 1.02 billion from the previous week.

In the week ending June 27, the major component of the forex reserves, the foreign currency assets, increased by USD 5.75 billion to USD 594.82 billion, the RBI data shows.

The Gold reserves, however, witnessed a dip of USD 1.23 billion, standing at USD 84.5 billion, the weekly data revealed. Central banks worldwide increasingly accumulating safe-haven gold in their foreign exchange reserves kitty, and India is no exception. The share of gold maintained by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its foreign exchange reserves



has almost doubled since 2021, till recently.

In 2023, India added around USD 58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, contrasting with a cumulative decline of USD 71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over USD 20 billion, touching an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in end-September 2024.

India’s foreign exchange reserves (Forex) are sufficient to meet 11 months of the country’s imports and about 96 per cent of external debt, said Governor Sanjay Malhotra while announcing the outcome of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decisions.

The RBI governor expressed confidence, stating that India’s external sector is resilient and key external sector vulnerability indicators are improving.

Foreign exchange reserves, or FX reserves, are assets held by a nation’s central bank or monetary authority, primarily in reserve currencies such as the US Dollar, with smaller portions in the Euro, Japanese Yen, and Pound Sterling.

The RBI often intervenes by managing liquidity, including selling dollars, to prevent steep Rupee depreciation. The RBI strategically buys dollars when the Rupee is strong and sells when it weakens.

Public sector banks to hire about 50, 000 manpower in current fiscal

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Public sector banks will recruit about 50,000 manpower during the ongoing financial year to meet their growing business requirement and expansion.

Of the total fresh recruitment, about 21,000 would be officers and remaining would be staff including clerks, as per data collated from various banks.

Of the 12 public sector banks, the biggest player State Bank of India (SBI) is going to employ close to 20,000 including specialised officers in the financial year.

Initiating the process, SBI has already hired 505 Probationary Officers (POs) and 13,455 junior associates to enhance customer expe-



rience at its branches across the country.

The recruitment of 13,455 junior associates is aimed to fill vacancies across 35 states and Union Territories.

The total staff strength of SBI stood at 2,36,226 as of March 2025. Of this, 1,15,066 officers were on the rolls of the bank at the end of last fiscal.

Average hiring cost per full-time employee for 2024-25 was Rs 40,440.59.

SBI has a consistent track record of having attrition below 2 per cent each year, which is the result of the best-in-class engagement and welfare practices.

Country’s second biggest public sector lender Punjab National Bank (PNB) intends to increase its headcount to over 5,500 in the current financial year.

As of March 2025, PNB has a total staff strength of 1,02,746.

Gold may turn volatile as traders await Fed, tariff cues: Analysts

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Gold prices may see heightened volatility in the coming week as investors track a crucial July 9 tariff deadline, policy signals from major central banks, including the US Federal Reserve, and key global macroeconomic data, analysts said.

“These factors could influence the near-term trajectory of gold prices,” analysts said, adding that traders are expected to remain cautious ahead of any major policy cues or geopolitical developments.

The 90-day suspension of Trump tariffs on imports



from several countries, including India, ends on July 9, reviving the risk of a 26 per cent additional duty on Indian goods entering the US.

“Going ahead, the focus will be on the interest rate cuts by key central banks, especially US Fed Reserve,

the outcome of trade negotiation between US and its trading partners, incoming global economic data, which could impact the near-term gold prices,” Pranav Mer, Vice President, EBG, Commodity & Currency Research at JM Financial Services Ltd, said.

Investors will also closely monitor the release of the US Fed’s FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) meeting minutes.

Last week, the precious metal futures for August delivery rose Rs 1,563, or 1.61 per cent, on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

N S Ramaswamy, Head of Commodities Desk and CRM at Ventura, said gold prices in the international market, currently at USD 3,345 per ounce, could remain under selling pressure due to the solid US macroeconomic data that dented hopes of a July interest rate cut by the Federal Reserve.

FPIs invest Rs 14 590 cr in Jun, early July sees withdrawal

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Foreign investors put in Rs 14,590 crore in the country’s equity market in June, marking the third straight month of investment, supported by improving global liquidity conditions, easing geopolitical tensions, and a rate cut by the Reserve Bank of India.

However, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) turned net sellers in July and pulled out Rs 1,421 crore in the first week of the month, data with the depositories showed.

Going forward, in the near term, FPI flows are expected to remain choppy on account of tariff deadline developments



and US data volatility, Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst, Angel One, said.

In addition, FPIs buying will hinge on Q1FY26 result indications. “If the results indicate earnings recovery, that will be positive. Disappointment on these factors can impact the market and, thereby, flows,” V

K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments, said.

According to the data with the depositories, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 14,590 crore in equities in June.

This positive momentum follows a net investment of Rs 19,860 crore in May and

Rs 4,223 crore in April. Prior to this, FPIs had pulled out Rs 3,973 crore in March, Rs 34,574 crore in February, and a substantial Rs 78,027 crore in January.

With this, FPIs’ outflow stood at Rs 79,322 crore in 2025 so far.

“FPIs exhibited a cautious yet improving stance in June 2025, beginning the month with notable outflows from the equity markets driven by elevated US bond yields, trade tensions, overvalued Indian stocks and deteriorating geopolitical environment,” Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment, said.

Private capex is on the rise: CII President Rajiv Memani

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) President, Rajiv Memani, has countered prevailing market sentiment about private capital expenditure, asserting that while there’s a perception of a slowdown, private capex is actually taking place across various industry sectors in the country.

“There’s an atmosphere suggesting that private ca-

pex is not happening, but actually capex is happening,” Memani stated, citing data showing consistent private investment over the past three years.

The CII President pointed to robust corporate fundamentals as evidence of ongoing investment activity. “If you look at listed companies and attend their AGMs, you’ll find that CII members are looking to increase capex. Everyone has



strong balance sheets, low debt, and the ability to raise funds from public markets,” he explained.

Memani emphasized that companies understand future growth imperatives. “There’s a realization that

if growth doesn’t happen going forward, the market valuation benefits currently being received won’t continue,” he noted, suggesting this awareness is driving investment decisions.

While acknowledging a slowdown in the past 6-8 months, Memani attributed this to external factors rather than structural issues. “The trade-related and tariff-related issues globally are causing uncertainty.

Industries need stability - if they’re producing a product today, they need to know what duties will be imposed,” he explained.

This uncertainty, according to Memani, makes capital expenditure decisions challenging. “Once these issues get resolved, the pace will pick up again,” the president of the industry body predicted.

The CII chief identified two key bottlenecks af-

fecting large-scale projects. “Where thousands of skilled workers are needed, they’re not getting mobilized properly, causing process slowdowns,” he said, highlighting the skilled manpower shortage.

Environmental clearances present another significant hurdle. “Earlier, clearances took time, but now environmental clearances alone take 12 months. Every process takes time,

causing delays in capital deployment even after project announcements,” Memani explained.

To address these challenges, Memani called for targeted reforms. “We need to see if we can implement some reforms, increase skilled manpower, and support MSMEs. When large projects get investment, MSMEs will also benefit if we can provide them support,” he suggested.

DR SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE

A LEGACY TO BE CHERISHED

OPINION

SHIVPRAKASH



Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee was born on 6 July 1901 in Calcutta (now Kolkata), into the family of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee and Mrs. Jogmaya Devi. He was the second of seven children of his parents. Endowed with a sharp intellect and great erudition, Dr. Mukherjee pursued higher studies with excellence. Following his academic achievements, he became the youngest Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta—and he served in that capacity twice.

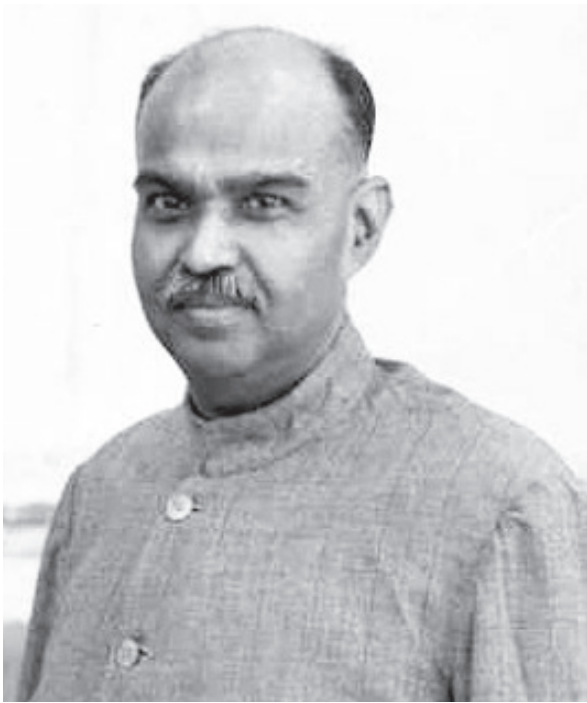
Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee, while serving as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, implemented numerous pioneering reforms in the field of education. At the time, Bharat was under British rule, and he endeavoured to restore dignity and self-pride in education. He replaced the colonial emblem of the university by redesigning it, thus, removing the symbol of English subjugation and featuring a fully bloomed lotus with the auspicious symbol “Sri” at its center, a representation of Bhartiya culture.

During that time, university convocation ceremonies were conducted in English. In 1937, during his tenure, he invited Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore to deliver the convocation address—and for the first time ever at the University of Calcutta, Tagore delivered it in Bengali, seeding a new tradition. Promotion of women’s education, crafting educational opportunities for Bhartiya scholars and intellectuals, integrating Bhartiya Culture with the academic curriculum are some of the initiatives taken by Dr. Mukherjee in the field of education.

In 1929, Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee was elected to the Bengal Legislative

Council from the University of Calcutta constituency. In order to protest against the oppression of Hindus by the erstwhile coalition government of Muslim League and Krishak Praja Party in Bengal, Dr. Mukherjee entered into politics. Later, Dr. Mukherjee joined the Hindu Mahasabha, eventually becoming its national president.

During that time, Bengal’s Chief Minister Dr. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was advocating for a “United Bengal” on linguistic grounds. His plan was aimed to prevent the partition of Bengal, proposing that the entire province should join Pakistan. Some Congress leaders, unaware of the implications, supported this proposal. Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee recognised this nefarious design and firmly stated: “We will neither live in Pakistan, nor in a united Bengal. We are part of Bharat—and we will stay with Bharat.” He launched a vigorous political campaign against the scheme. Through letters and dialogues with Congress leaders and Lord Mountbatten, he successfully argued that if Punjab could be partitioned, why not Bengal? Today, we can take pride in knowing that without Dr. Mukherjee, Bengal might not have become part of Bharat. This realization gains even more significance when compared



with current events in Bangladesh—where Hindu communities, their revered goddess Kali, and their temples face insecurity, and statues of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore—the author of the national anthem—are being desecrated.

Those who refuse to recognize their ancestors like Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman will never safeguard the Hindu community. Dr. Mukherjee foresaw all this. Had Bengal not remained with Bharat, Bharat’s northeast would also have been lost. Today, we understand the strategic importance of the Chicken Neck that connects Northeast Bharat with the rest, as well as the economic significance of the Bay of Bengal and the city of Kolkata. These are some realities that Dr. Mukherjee anticipated by keeping Bengal in the Bhartiya fold. However, this very crisis now re-emerges before us in Bengal.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee served as the Minister for Industry in Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru’s government. He was deeply distressed by the forced conversions and atrocities against Hindus living in Pakistan during Bharat’s partition, and by the neglect of Hindu refugees who sought shelter in Bharat. In protest against the Liaquat–Nehru Pact—which he viewed as a biased agreement, while failing to address the refugee crisis—he resigned from the Nehru cabinet on April 06, 1950 and moved to Calcutta, dedicating himself to the service of Hindu refugee communities who had arrived from East Pakistan and other regions.

While serving as Industry Minister in 1948, Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee formulated Bharat’s national industrial policy. In order to channel industrial finance, he established the Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI) in 1948. He gave an industrial policy which was guided by the principle of Aatmanirbharta (Self-Reliance). Defence, Nuclear Energy, Railways and Civil Aviation are the focus areas of his industrial plan. He was instrumental in setting up several major industrial projects that continue to serve the nation today, including Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, Hindustan Aircraft Factory (now Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, HAL), Sindri Fertilizer Plant, Dhanbad projects, Damodar Valley Corporation, Hirakud Dam, Bhilai Steel Plant.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee was not just a politician, but a compassionate, service-oriented leader. In 1943, Bengal was ravaged by a devastating famine, with an estimated death toll of nearly thirty lakh people. It was not merely a natural disaster rather it was driven by the failures of British rule. Government relief efforts were slow, mismanaged, and often discriminatory, abandoning the common people to rely on divine fate. Dr. Mukherjee strongly condemned both the British government and Bengal’s chief minister for their failed policies. He personally led relief operations, gathering aid from society and directing sustained service efforts. So immersed was he in the relief work that he could not even attend his daughter’s wedding ceremony—specifically, the ritual of “sampradan” (a ritual usually performed by the father of bride)—because he was actively serving famine victims.

After Independence, Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh to uphold nationalist ideals and defend democracy. At its inception, he declared “We need a nationalist alternative to the Congress.” During the first Parliament, he led a United Front, known as the National Democratic Party (N.D.P.), in opposition to Prime Minister Nehru’s authoritarian tendencies. This coalition comprised 34 Lok Sabha MPs and 20 Rajya Sabha MPs. In response to this Nehru reportedly remarked “I will crush the Jan Sangh.” Dr Mukherjee firmly retorted Nehru by

stating “I will crush this crushing mentality.” This exchange powerfully reflects his unwavering faith in democracy and moral courage.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee served as the President of the Maha Bodhi Society from 1942 until his death in 1953. He played a leading role in the 1952 International Buddhist Conference, overseeing the enshrinement of sacred relics of Sariputra and Mahamoggallana at Sanchi—an event marking a major restoration of Buddhist heritage in Bharat. He also traveled extensively in Myanmar (Burma), Vietnam, and Thailand, promoting Buddhist culture. A firm proponent of national unity, Dr. Mukherjee ideologically rejected the idea of Article 370 and the concept of multiple flags, heads of state, or constitutions within a single country. He championed the mantra: “Ek desh mein do nishan, do pradhan, do vidhan nahi challenge.”

On June 23, 1953, he made the ultimate sacrifice for this vision, passing away during his protest in Jammu & Kashmir—a cause he died defending. Today, when we are fulfilling his resolution, nation pays a humble tribute to this unwavering guardian of national unity and cultural heritage.

Shivprakash is the National Jt. General Secretary (Organisation) of the Bhartiya Janta Party.)

A BEACON AMID GEOPOLITICAL TURMOIL

Why the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation matters now

OPINION

KALYANI YEOLA

The recent reaffirmation by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama that the institution of his reincarnation will continue constitutes a significant development, not merely within the sphere of Tibetan religious practice but within the broader dynamics of international relations. While the succession of religious leaders has often been considered peripheral to state-centric analyses, this event underscores the interweaving of spiritual authority and geopolitical contestation. It emerges precisely at a time when the international order is undergoing unprecedented transformations, marked by the resurgence of major power rivalries, the proliferation of revisionist ambitions, and the erosion of normative frameworks that once underpinned global stability.

The contemporary international system is defined by what many scholars have termed a “polycrisis” in which discrete challenges converge to produce systemic turbulence. The Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has fundamentally disrupted European security architecture and revitalized military alliances previously in decline. Concurrently, the People’s Republic of China has articulated

its ambition to reshape international norms and institutions to reflect its own preferences and conceptions of order. These shifts have eroded confidence in the liberal international order, consolidated in the aftermath of the Second World War and strengthened during the so-called “unipolar moment” of the 1990s. Instead, the emergent order is characterized by intensifying competition across military, economic, technological, and ideological domains.

Among the most salient features of this reconfiguration is the reassertion of nuclear deterrence as a central determinant of state behavior. Russia’s repeated nuclear signaling, combined with North Korea’s persistence in developing nuclear capabilities, has shattered the assumption that the nuclear taboo retains its constraining force. The potential for proliferation in West Asia, particularly in relation to Iran’s nuclear program, compounds the risk of regional instability with global repercussions. These dynamics reflect the waning influence of institutional mechanisms, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty and multilateral crisis management forums, in sustaining

norms of restraint.

Parallel to these developments, regional orders are becoming increasingly contested. In the Indo-Pacific, maritime and territorial disputes have intensified. The Taiwan Strait has emerged as a critical flashpoint, with senior United States officials warning that a crisis could trigger cascading economic and security consequences. Along the India–China border, recurring confrontations in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh illustrate how rapidly ostensibly frozen disputes can escalate. The Middle East has witnessed recurrent episodes of violence, driven by the entrenchment of proxy conflicts and the collapse of traditional balance-of-power arrangements. Collectively, these trends attest to a broader erosion of trust in multilateral institutions and the normative architecture designed to manage international conflict.

It is within this volatile context that the Dalai Lama’s announcement acquires significance beyond its religious dimension. The institution of the Dalai Lama has historically functioned as both a spiritual authority and a symbol of Tibetan identity and political aspiration. In exile since 1959, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama has cultivated a transnational moral presence that exceeds the boundaries of the Tibetan diaspora. His advocacy of universal compassion, interdependence, and nonviolence constitutes a distinct counter-narrative to the realpolitik ethos that has regained prominence in



global affairs. The reaffirmation that his reincarnation will proceed in accordance with Tibetan Buddhist protocols reflects an assertion of religious autonomy against efforts to instrumentalize spiritual traditions for geopolitical gain.

Indeed, the Chinese government has consistently maintained that it retains the prerogative to determine the reincarnation process, citing historical precedents and state regulations such as the 2007 Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas. The Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamshala have categorically rejected these claims, arguing that no secular authority possesses the legitimacy to intervene in matters of religious succession. The prospect of rival claimants a Dalai Lama designated by

Chinese authorities within Tibet and another recognized by the exile community raises profound questions regarding the fragmentation of religious authority and the legitimacy of spiritual institutions under conditions of occupation and political coercion.

Scholars of religion and international politics have noted that the instrumentalization of spiritual authority serves broader projects of legitimization and social control. In this respect, China’s insistence on controlling the reincarnation process functions as a strategy to domesticate Tibetan Buddhism within the ideological parameters of the Chinese state. Simultaneously, it reflects a broader pattern in which the Chinese Communist Party seeks to redefine the boundaries of permissible cultural expression as part of its

nation-building project. The potential co-optation of Tibetan religious institutions thus embodies a microcosm of the struggle over identity, memory, and legitimacy in contested spaces.

At a normative level, the Dalai Lama’s declaration signals an enduring commitment to ethical leadership amid the proliferation of instrumental rationality in global politics. As international cooperation becomes increasingly tenuous, institutions and figures capable of articulating moral principles may acquire renewed relevance. The fragility of collective mechanisms exemplified by the paralysis of the United Nations Security Council in the face of large-scale aggression has generated a search for alternative sources of normative guidance. In this context, the continued vitality of a tradition premised on compassion and self-restraint offers an implicit critique of the normalization of coercion and expediency.

The Indian context further illuminates the intersection of spiritual legitimacy, civilizational identity, and strategic interest. Since 1959, India has hosted the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan exile community, situating itself as both a sanctuary and a stakeholder in the preservation of Tibetan culture. India’s civilizational philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*—the notion that the world is a single family—has underpinned its normative commitments to pluralism and the protection of spiritual traditions. This

ethos found expression in the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954, which articulated principles of peaceful coexistence and non-interference. However, the historical record also reveals the limits of these ideals, as illustrated by the Sino-Indian War of 1962 and the recurrent crises along the Line of Actual Control. The entanglement of Tibet’s political fate with India’s security calculations underscores the impossibility of compartmentalizing spiritual and strategic considerations.

In the contemporary moment, India aspires to project itself as a responsible global power committed to inclusive and democratic values. The question of the Dalai Lama’s succession thus constitutes both a civilizational and a geopolitical test. As Amitabh Mattoo has argued, acquiescing to Beijing’s claims over the reincarnation process would represent a form of cultural erasure, a “capturing of the soul” of a people under the veneer of procedural legitimacy. Supporting the Dalai Lama’s right to determine his own successor is therefore not merely a symbolic gesture but an affirmation of the principle that spiritual and cultural autonomy must be defended against political appropriation.

The broader implication is that ethical leadership remains indispensable in sustaining the normative foundations of international order. While realist perspectives contend that power considerations inevitably trump moral com-

mitments, the endurance of institutions dedicated to nonviolence and compassion demonstrates that alternative logics of legitimacy persist. Whether these traditions can survive the intensification of geopolitical competition remains an open question. Yet the Dalai Lama’s insistence that spiritual authority be grounded in conscience rather than coercion is a salient reminder that the legitimacy of institutions—religious or political—ultimately depends on their capacity to embody and transmit values that transcend expediency.

In sum, the Dalai Lama’s declaration is not merely an episode in the longue durée of Tibetan history. It is a moment that crystallizes the entanglement of spiritual traditions with geopolitical contestation and highlights the fragility of normative commitments in an era of systemic flux. As crises ranging from nuclear proliferation to climate vulnerability expose the limitations of institutional cooperation, the preservation of ethical leadership assumes renewed urgency. For India and the international community, supporting the integrity of this process is both a civilizational responsibility and a strategic imperative consistent with the aspiration to build a world order grounded not only in power but also in principles of dignity and compassion.

Kalyani Yeola has defended her PhD in Tibetan studies from BITS Pilani, Goa campus. She is currently working as Research Assistant at ICS, New Delhi.

INDIA'S ECONOMIC SURGE

WITH 6.5% GDP GROWTH, INDIA STANDS AS THE FASTEST GROWING MAJOR ECONOMY

India's economy remains the fastest-growing among major nations, with robust GDP growth, easing inflation, and strong market confidence. Supported by rising exports, high foreign investment, and resilient domestic demand, the country's economic performance highlights stability and strength. India continues to stand out globally as a bright and promising economic leader.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India's economy continues to grow at a steady and confident pace, standing out as the fastest growing major economy in the world. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measure of size and health of the economy. It is the total value of all the goods and services produced within a country. In 2024-25, real GDP growth was estimated at 6.5 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India expects the same rate to continue in 2025-26. This performance comes at a time when the global economy faces uncertainty, making India's steady momentum all the more significant.

Supported by strong domestic demand, easing inflation, robust capital markets and rising exports, the broader economic picture is one of resilience and balance. Key indicators such as record foreign exchange reserves, a manageable current account deficit, and increasing foreign investment reflect growing global trust in India's long-term prospects. Together, these trends show an economy that is not only expanding but doing so with strength across sectors.

ROBUST GDP GROWTH

India's growth story continues to draw global attention, backed by strong fundamentals and consistent performance. Real GDP, which measures the economy's output after removing the effects of inflation, expanded by 6.5 per cent in

2024-25. The Reserve Bank of India expects this pace to continue into 2025-26. Other projections echo this optimism, with the United Nations forecasting growth of 6.3 per cent this year and 6.4 per cent next year, while the Confederation of Indian Industry places its estimate slightly higher at 6.40 to 6.70 per cent.

This sustained performance is being driven by strong domestic demand. Rural consumption has picked up, city spending is rising, and private investment is on the upswing. Businesses are expanding capacity, with many operating near their maximum output levels. At the same time, public investment remains high, especially in infrastructure, while stable borrowing conditions are helping firms and consumers make forward-looking decisions.

Global conditions, by contrast, remain fragile. The United Nations has described the world economy as being in a "precarious moment," citing trade tensions, policy uncertainties, and declining cross-border investments. Amid this, India continues to stand out as a bright spot, with global institutions and industry bodies expressing confidence in its growth prospects.

Over the past decade, India's economic size has expanded sharply. In 2014-15, the GDP at current prices was Rs 106.57 lakh crore. This figure is expected to rise to Rs 331.03 lakh crore in 2024-25, nearly tripling in ten years. In the past year alone, nominal GDP increased by 9.9 per

cent, while real GDP rose by 6.5 per cent, underscoring the economy's continued resilience and vigour.

INFLATION UNDER CONTROL

Inflation in India has eased sharply, offering relief to both households and businesses. In May 2025, the year-on-year inflation rate based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 2.82 per cent. This marks the lowest level since February 2019. It also reflects a drop of 34 basis points from the previous month.

Food prices, which often have a big impact on overall inflation, have also cooled. The Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) recorded an inflation rate of just 0.99 per cent in May 2025. This is the lowest food inflation seen since October 2021. Rural and urban food inflation were almost identical, at 0.95 per cent and 0.96 per cent, respectively. Compared to April 2025, food inflation declined by 79 basis points, showing a clear downward trend in essential items like vegetables and grains.

According to the Reserve Bank of India's Financial Stability Report released in June 2025, the outlook for inflation remains favourable. Food prices are expected to stay stable due to robust crop production. On the global front, the risk of imported inflation appears low for now. A slowdown in global demand is likely to keep prices of crude oil and other commodities in check. However, recent tensions in the Middle East have added some uncertainty to this picture.

Overall, the Reserve Bank believes that inflation will

stay aligned with its medium-term target of 4 per cent. In fact, it may even fall slightly below that level in the coming months. This easing trend gives confidence that the current price stability is not temporary, but part of a broader pattern of economic stability.

MARKET CONFIDENCE AT RECORD LEVELS

India's capital markets are booming, and the confidence is visible. They have become a powerful engine for economic growth by turning household savings into investments. Despite global tensions and domestic uncertainties, the stock market maintained strong performance by December 2024. It outperformed many other emerging economies, showing how investors, both local and global, trust India's growth story.

Retail participation has risen sharply. The number of retail investors jumped from 4.9 crore in 2019 to 13.2 crore by the end of 2024. This increase shows a growing public interest in equity markets and a belief in the country's long-term potential. More people now see the stock market as a way to build wealth, not just for large companies but for ordinary citizens too.

The primary market, where companies raise funds by selling shares to the public, has also been very active. Between April and December 2024, India saw 259 initial public offerings or IPOs. This was a 32.1 per cent rise compared to the same period the year before. The total money raised through these IPOs almost tripled, rising from Rs 53,023 crore to Rs 1,53,987 crore. India's

share in global IPO listings rose from 17 per cent in 2023 to 30 per cent in 2024, the highest in the world.

STRENGTHENING EXTERNAL SECTOR

India's external sector continues to provide a strong cushion for the economy. With rising foreign exchange reserves, a manageable current account balance, and steady inflows of foreign investment, India is well placed to deal with global uncertainties. These indicators reflect growing international confidence in the country's economic policies and long-term stability.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

India continues to be a top choice for global investors. The country has an investor-friendly FDI policy, allowing 100 per cent foreign ownership in most sectors through the automatic route. As a result, FDI inflows rose to a USD 81.04 billion (provisional) in FY 2024-25, marking a 14 per cent increase from USD 71.28 billion in FY 2023-24. This is more than double the USD 36.05 billion received in FY 2013-14, showing long-term progress.

The services sector led the inflow of equity investments, attracting 19 per cent of total FDI in FY 2024-25. This was followed by computer software and hardware at 16 per cent, and trading at 8 per cent. FDI into the services sector grew by 40.77 per cent, reaching USD 9.35 billion, compared to USD 6.64 billion the previous year. In the manufacturing segment, FDI grew by 18 per cent, from USD 16.12 billion in FY 2023-24 to USD 19.04

billion in FY 2024-25.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES

India's foreign exchange reserves stood at USD 697.9 billion as of 20 June 2025. These reserves are enough to cover more than 11 months of goods imports, providing a safety net in times of global shocks. This means that even if exports slow down, India has enough foreign currency to pay for essential imports. At the same time, external debt remains at a moderate level, accounting for 19.1 per cent of the GDP as of March 2025. These numbers show that India's financial position with the rest of the world is healthy and stable.

CURRENT ACCOUNT DYNAMICS

India's current account balance recorded a surplus of USD 13.5 billion (1.3 per cent of GDP) in Q4:2024-25, compared with USD 4.6 billion (0.5 per cent of GDP) in the same quarter of the previous year. This improvement highlights the growing strength of India's export earnings and the stability of foreign inflows.

In FY 2024-25, the current account deficit was contained at just 0.6 per cent of GDP. The low deficit was mainly due to strong services exports and steady remittances from Indians living abroad.

MANUFACTURING AND EXPORTS

India's export performance continues to reflect the growing strength of its economy, particularly in services and high-value manufacturing. Over the past decade, the country has steadily expanded its footprint in global

trade. This growth has been powered by stronger industrial capacity, greater competitiveness in services, and the rise of strategic sectors like defence production and electronics.

India's total exports touched a new high of USD 824.9 billion in 2024-25, growing by 6.01 per cent from USD 778.1 billion in 2023-24. This marks a sharp rise from USD 466.22 billion in 2013-14, underlining a decade of sustained export momentum.

Services exports remain a key contributor. In 2024-25, India exported USD 387.5 billion worth of services, a 13.6 per cent increase over the previous year's USD 341.1 billion. A decade ago, in 2013-14, services exports stood at USD 152 billion. This strong and consistent growth highlights India's ability to deliver high-quality services to global clients, particularly in IT, consulting, finance, and digital technologies.

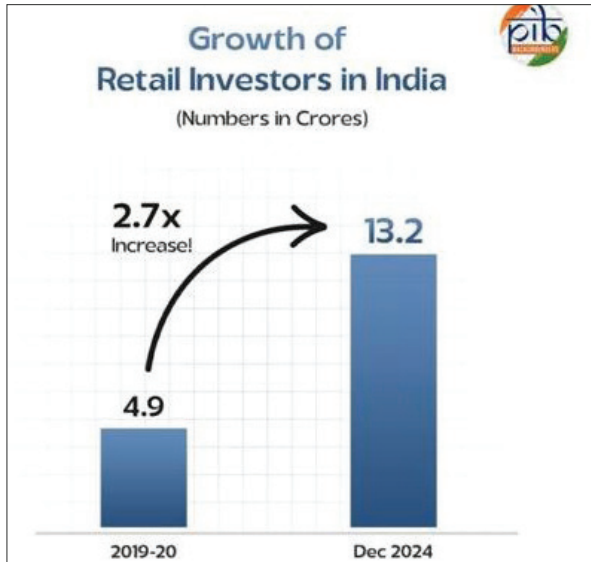
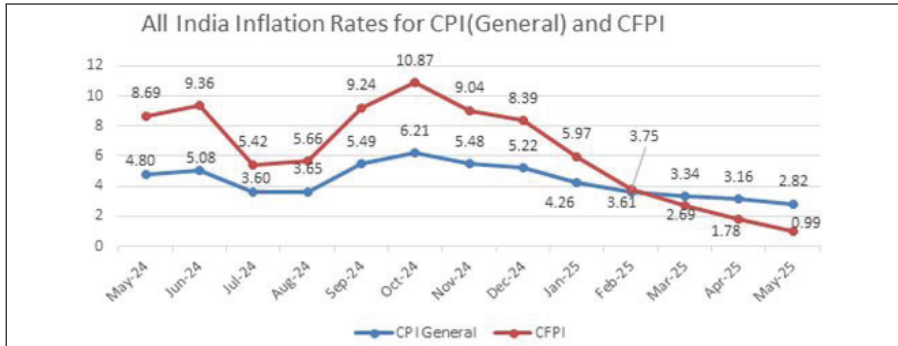
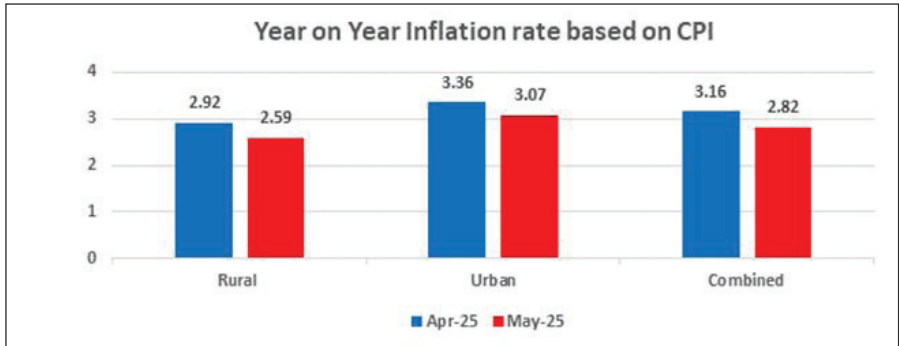
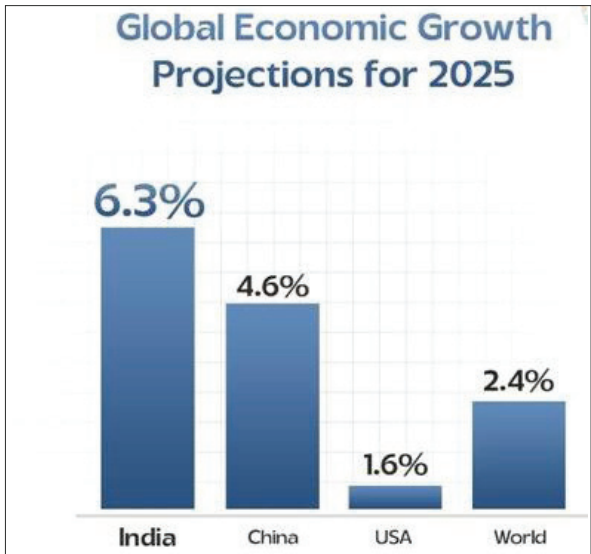
Merchandise exports, excluding petroleum products, also achieved a record. In 2024-25, these exports reached USD 374.1 billion, growing by 6.0 per cent from USD 352.9 billion in the previous year. This is the highest non-petroleum merchandise export figure ever recorded. It also reflects a significant improvement from USD 314 billion in 2013-14. Much of this growth has come from sectors such as machinery, chemicals, electronics, and defence equipment, which are gaining traction in global markets.

Underlying this export growth is the steady rise in manufacturing. As per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the Gross Value Added (GVA) of manufacturing at constant prices rose from Rs 15.6 lakh crore in 2013-14 to Rs 27.5 lakh crore in 2023-24. The sector's share in the economy remained stable at around 17.3 per cent, but the nearly twofold increase in output shows its expanding base.

CONCLUSION

India's economic performance over the past year reflects not just growth, but a deeper sense of stability and direction. With real GDP rising at 6.5 per cent and inflation easing to its lowest in years, the country has shown that it can balance expansion with price stability. At the same time, strong participation in capital markets, record levels of exports, and healthy foreign exchange reserves point to growing confidence both at home and abroad.

Key sectors such as manufacturing, services, and infrastructure are pushing ahead, supported by steady investment and policy focus. External risks remain, but India's fundamentals are sound. As the global economy continues to face challenges, India's consistent performance offers reassurance that it is well placed to lead from the front and keep building a stronger, more inclusive future.



BEYOND RITUALS - WHY RELIGIOUS PLACES MATTER IN MODERN LIFE



DR KAILASHE PRAGY SUTHAR

In a fast-paced world dominated by technology, deadlines, and material pursuits, the importance of spiritual wellness often gets overlooked. Among the many practices that nurture the spirit, visiting religious places and temples holds a unique and time-honored significance. Be it a majestic temple atop a hill, a peaceful church nestled in the countryside, a quiet mosque in a busy city, or a serene gurudwara — these sacred spaces offer more than just rituals and prayers. They are centers of inner peace, cultural continuity, emotional healing, and community connection.

1. A GATEWAY TO SPIRITUAL CONNECTION

One of the most fundamental reasons to visit a religious place is to deepen one's spiritual connection. These places are designed to uplift the soul and provide a space to reflect upon the divine, the higher self, or the universe. Temples and other places of worship often radiate a unique energy, fostered by centuries of prayer, devotion, and faith. The architecture, rituals, hymns, chants, and symbols all come together to create a sacred environment where people can feel closer to God or the divine power they believe in.

This spiritual resonance

isn't confined to any one religion; across the world, devotees speak of feeling a sense of calm, clarity, and transcendence when they step into a place of worship. It reminds us that we are part of something larger and helps align our inner self with higher values like compassion, gratitude, humility, and forgiveness.

2. MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Religious places offer a haven for mental peace. In a world increasingly afflicted by anxiety, depression, and emotional burnout, these spaces serve as sanctuaries where people can unburden their hearts. The simple act of sitting quietly in a temple, lighting a lamp, or listening to devotional music can reduce stress levels and foster emotional resilience.

Meditation and chanting — both commonly practiced in religious environments — have been scientifically proven to lower blood pressure, stabilize mood, and promote overall well-being. The rhythmic repetition of mantras or prayers can induce a meditative state, calming the mind and helping individuals process grief, confusion, or inner turmoil.

3. A PLACE OF CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL LEARNING

Religious places are living museums of heritage and tradition. Temples and other places of worship are often centuries old and are built with intricate architecture, sculpture, art, and inscriptions that narrate stories from ancient scriptures, mythology, and history. Visiting them helps us stay connected to our cultural roots and gives a deeper appreciation of our ancestors' wisdom and vision.



wisdom and vision.

Children and young adults, in particular, benefit greatly from these visits. They get to witness rituals, participate in festivals, and listen to stories that instill values, ethics, and a sense of belonging to a larger community. It helps in shaping a morally conscious and culturally aware generation.

4. BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Temples and religious spaces serve as community hubs where people from diverse backgrounds come together. Whether it is a collective prayer, a festival celebration, a spiritual discourse, or a charitable event, these gatherings foster social harmony and unity.

In rural areas or small towns, temples often act as the heart of social life. They

offer a space where elders share stories, children play, and families bond over shared beliefs. Even in cities, religious institutions create opportunities for people to meet, volunteer, support each other during crises, or simply share a smile.

Moreover, these interactions strengthen emotional bonds and reduce the feeling of isolation that is so common in modern urban life.

5. ENCOURAGING CHARITY AND SERVICE

Most religious places emphasize the importance of seva or selfless service. Many temples and worship spaces run charitable initiatives like food distribution (langars, annadaan), medical camps, education programs, or shelters for the needy.

Visiting these places and participating in such activities instills the value of giving back to society. It teaches empathy, gratitude, and social responsibility — qualities that are essential for a balanced and compassionate society.

Young visitors, in particular, learn through example how service to others is an important expression of faith and humanity.

6. A REMINDER OF HUMILITY AND PERSPECTIVE

Religious places naturally inspire humility. When standing in a grand temple or sitting before a deity or sacred altar, one becomes acutely aware of one's small place in the vast cosmic order. This perspective can be incredibly grounding. It helps reduce ego, pride, and arrogance — traits that are

often the root of personal and interpersonal conflicts.

People who regularly visit temples often develop a habit of introspection. The practice of bowing before the divine, acknowledging one's faults, and seeking guidance fosters a more balanced and thoughtful personality.

7. STRENGTHENING FAITH IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Life is unpredictable and filled with ups and downs. During periods of personal crisis — be it illness, loss, heartbreak, or failure — people often turn to temples and other sacred places for solace. The act of prayer, the comforting atmosphere, and the supportive community can provide much-needed strength to endure adversity.

In such times, faith be-



comes a healing force. The belief that there is a higher power watching over us or that our suffering has a deeper purpose can be profoundly comforting. Religious places help anchor that belief, especially when everything else feels uncertain.

8. CREATING POSITIVE HABITS AND DISCIPLINE

Regular visits to religious places instill a sense of discipline, routine, and mindfulness. Whether it is waking up early for morning darshan or participating in evening aarti, these habits shape a more intentional lifestyle.

Moreover, being in a sacred space often discourages negative behavior. One is less likely to lie, gossip, or indulge in anger or envy in the environment of a temple. Over time, this has a

ripple effect on one's overall conduct, encouraging ethical behavior even outside the religious space.

Visiting temples and religious places is not merely a ritualistic obligation; it is a deeply enriching experience that nurtures the soul, strengthens the mind, and binds communities together. In an age where distractions are many and real connections are few, these sacred spaces offer timeless solace, wisdom, and purpose.

Whether one is a devout believer or a spiritual seeker, stepping into a temple or religious place is like entering a timeless realm; one where the heart is quiet, the soul listens, and the mind finds peace. In these moments, we remember who we are, where we come from, and what truly matters.

Deshnok's Karni Mata temple: A divine abode of devotion and curiosity

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

Rajasthan, the land of vibrant traditions and majestic architecture, houses several temples with deep spiritual and cultural importance. Among them stands a shrine that defies conventional understanding — the Karni Mata Temple of Deshnok, famously known as the Rat Temple. Located about 30 km south of Bikaner, this temple attracts not only devout pilgrims but also curious travelers from around the world. The uniqueness of this temple lies not only in its legend but also in its astonishing residents — thousands of rats that are worshipped as sacred.

A GLIMPSE INTO HISTORY AND LEGEND

Karni Mata Temple is dedicated to Karni Mata, a 14th-century mystic believed to be an incarnation of Goddess Durga. She was revered by her followers as a spiritual guide, healer, and protector. According to legend, Karni Mata once tried to bring a deceased child from her clan back to life. When Yama, the god of death, refused, she declared that her devotees would no longer face death but would instead be reincarnated as kabas — holy rats — and continue to live in her temple until they are reborn as humans.

Thus, the rats residing in the temple are believed to be the souls of her devotees, and their presence is considered a divine blessing. This myth forms

the foundation of the temple's unusual reverence for rodents, which might otherwise be seen as pests in any other context.

ARCHITECTURAL GRANDEUR IN MARBLE AND SILVER

Built in the early 20th century by Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner, the temple's architecture is a blend of Rajputana style and Mughal influences. The structure is made of intricately carved marble, with silver doors and ornate carvings depicting scenes from Hindu mythology.

The temple entrance is marked by a grand silver gate, and inside, the sanctum houses the idol of Karni Mata adorned in royal attire. The inner courtyard is surrounded by pillared corridors, while the floors are paved with white marble. Despite being home to thousands of rats, the temple is kept remarkably clean, reflecting the devotion and discipline of the caretakers.

THE SACRED RATS: REVERENCE, NOT FEAR

One of the most astonishing sights for visitors is the presence of more than 25,000 rats, freely roaming the temple premises. These kabas are fed daily by temple priests and visiting devotees. Offerings of grains, sweets, and milk are placed in large metal bowls. It is considered highly auspicious if a rat eats from your hand or runs across your feet.



Even more revered are the rare white rats, believed to be manifestations of Karni Mata herself and her immediate family. Spotting a white rat is considered a once-in-a-lifetime blessing. The rats are treated with utmost care

— even accidental harm to a rat results in the donor funding a life-size silver rat statue to compensate.

What might seem bizarre to outsiders is deeply rooted in faith and cultural symbolism. The rats symbolize immortality,

protection, and devotion, and their presence reflects the core belief that the soul never dies but simply transitions between forms.

A PLACE OF PILGRIMAGE AND FAITH



The temple is a major pilgrimage site, especially during Navratri (the nine-day festival dedicated to the goddess). During this period, thousands of devotees gather at Deshnok to seek Karni Mata's blessings. Her followers believe that praying at this temple grants protection from misfortune, helps overcome fear, and strengthens family ties.

Deshnok's temple is also spiritually connected to several royal families of Rajasthan. The Rathore clan of Bikaner considered Karni Mata their kuldevi (family deity) and sought her blessings before battles and major decisions.

A TOURIST'S CURIOSITY, A DEVOTEE'S SANCTUARY

Over the years, Deshnok's Rat Temple has earned global fame. Travel documentaries, international tourists, and even scientists have shown interest in the

temple. For tourists, the idea of worshipping rats might be unusual or even discomforting, but for locals and devotees, it is an act of faith, love, and surrender.

Visitors are advised to remove their shoes before entering the temple, as per tradition, but some choose to wear socks. Despite the large number of rats, the temple has a surprisingly low record of illness or disease, something devotees attribute to the divine grace of Karni Mata.

A SYMBOL OF ACCEPTANCE AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Beyond its religious significance, the Karni Mata Temple is a symbol of how Indian spirituality embraces the unconventional. While most societies consider rats as pests, Deshnok transforms them into sacred beings, teaching us a powerful lesson in tolerance, reverence for all life forms,

and the mystical relationship between humans and nature.

In a broader sense, it invites us to look beyond appearances and appreciate the deeper layers of belief systems that shape people's values and lives.

The Karni Mata Temple in Deshnok stands as a remarkable example of India's spiritual diversity and cultural richness. It is not just a place of worship but a living symbol of devotion, legend, and unique faith.

Whether you approach it with reverence, curiosity, or fascination, a visit to this temple is bound to leave a lasting impression on the mind and spirit.

As you step through its gates, welcomed not by silence but by the soft rustle of holy rats, you realize that in this temple, the ordinary becomes extraordinary — and the mystical becomes beautifully real.

BRICS SUMMIT OVERSHADOWED BY TRUMP TARIFFS, MIDEAST TENSIONS

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Egypt's Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi are also absent from the gathering in Rio de Janeiro.

Brazil is playing host to a summit of the BRICS bloc of developing economies Sunday and Monday during which pressing topics like Israel's attack on Iran, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and trade tariffs imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump are expected to be handled with caution. Analysts and diplomats have said the lack of cohesion in an enlarged BRICS, which doubled in size last year, may affect its ability to become another pole in world affairs. They also see the summit's moderate agenda as an attempt by member countries to stay off Trump's radar.

Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has some of his priorities, such as debates on artificial intelligence and climate change,

front and center for the talks with key leaders not in attendance.

Lula said in his speech on Sunday that "we are witnessing the unparalled collapse of multilateralism" and that the meeting is taking place "in the most adverse global scenario" of the four times Brazil has hosted it. He called for the group to promote peace and mediate conflicts.

"If international governance does not reflect the new multipolar reality of the 21st century, it is up to the BRICS to contribute to its renovation," Lula said at the opening of the summit.

China's President Xi Jinping did not attend a BRICS summit for the first time since he became his country's leader in 2012. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who will make an appearance via videoconference, continues to mostly avoid traveling abroad due to an international arrest warrant issued after Russia invaded Ukraine.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Egypt's Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi are also absent from the gathering in Rio de Janeiro.

THREE JOINT STATEMENTS EXPECTED

The restraint expected in Rio de Janeiro marks a departure from last year's summit hosted by Russia in Kazan, when the Kremlin sought to develop alternatives to U.S.-dominated payment systems which would allow it to dodge Western sanctions imposed after



Leaders attending the 17th annual BRICS summit pose for a group photo in Rio de Janeiro. Agencies



People stand by the entrance of the BRICS summit in Rio de Janeiro. Agencies

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

A source involved in the negotiations told journalists Friday that some members of the group want more aggressive language on the situation in Gaza and Israel's attack on Iran. The source spoke under the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak

about the matter publicly.

"Brazil wants to keep the summit as technical as possible," said Oliver Stuenkel, a professor at the Getulio Vargas Foundation think tank and university.

Consequently, observers expect a vague final declaration regarding Russia's war in Ukraine and conflicts in the Middle East.

As well as suiting Brazil, a watered-down and non-controversial statement may be made easier by the absences of Putin and Xi, Stuenkel said. Those two countries have pushed for a stronger anti-Western stance, as opposed to Brazil and India that prefer non-alignment.

A Brazilian government official told The Associated Press on Thursday that the group is expected to produce three joint statements and a final declaration, "all of which less bounded by current geopolitical tensions." The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the summit's preparations.

João Alfredo Nyegray, an international business and geopolitics professor at the Pontifical Catholic University in Parana, said the sum-

mit could have played a role in showing an alternative to an unstable world, but won't do so.

"The withdrawal of Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and the uncertainty about the level of representation for countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are confirming the difficulty for the BRICS to establish themselves as a cohesive pole of global leadership," Nyegray said. "This moment demands high level articulation, but we are actually seeing dispersion."

AVOID TRUMP'S TARIFFS

Brazil, the country that chairs the bloc, has picked six strategic priorities for the summit: global cooperation in healthcare; trade, investment and finance; climate change; governance for ar-

tificial intelligence; peace-making and security; and institutional development.

It has decided to focus on less controversial issues, such as promoting trade relations between members and global health, after Trump returned to the White House, said Ana Garcia, a professor at the Rio de Janeiro Federal Rural University.

"Brazil wants the least amount of damage possible and to avoid drawing the attention of the Trump administration to prevent any type of risk to the Brazilian economy," Garcia said.

While Brazil advocated on Sunday for the reform of Western-led global institutions, a cornerstone policy of the group, the country's government wants to avoid becoming the target of tariffs — a predicament it has so far largely escaped.

Trump has threatened to impose 100% tariffs against the bloc if they take any moves to undermine the dollar.

'BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR EMERGING COUNTRIES'



BRICS was founded by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, but the group last year expanded to include Indonesia, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab

Emirates.

As well as new members, the bloc has 10 strategic partner countries, a category created at last year's summit that includes Belarus, Cuba and Vietnam.

That rapid expansion led Brazil to put housekeeping issues — officially termed institutional development — on the agenda to better integrate new members and boost internal cohesion.

Despite notable absences, the summit is important for attendees, especially in the context of instability provoked by Trump's tariff wars, said Bruce Scheidl, a researcher at the University of Sao Paulo's BRICS study group.

"The summit offers the best opportunity for emerging countries to respond, in the sense of seeking alternatives and diversifying their economic partnerships," Scheidl said.

For Lula, the summit is a welcome pause from a difficult domestic scenario, marked by a drop in popularity and conflict with Congress.

The meeting also represents an opportunity to advance climate negotiations and com-

mitments on protecting the environment before November's COP 30 climate talks in the Amazonian city of Belem.

● RIO DE JANEIRO

Xi move to share power fuels talk of political future

AGENCIES
BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping, widely regarded as a leader for life, is beginning to delegate authority to key organs of the ruling Communist Party, a first in his over 12-year rule.

Xi's move sparked speculation that he may be laying the groundwork for an orderly power transition or scaling back his role in preparation for possible retirement.

Speculation about Xi's power transition was rife after state-run Xinhua news agency recently reported that the powerful 24-member Political Bureau of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) in its meeting on Jun 30 reviewed a set of new regulations on the work of the party's institutions.

The meeting presided over by Xi himself stressed that the regulations will further standardise the establishment, responsibilities, and operations of the CPC Central Committee's decision-making, deliberative, and coordinating institutions.

Such institutions should exercise more effective leadership and coordination over major tasks and focus on planning, discussing, and overseeing major tasks,



the Xinhua report said.

While the overseas Chinese dissident community in recent months was abuzz with speculation of a power struggle within the secretive and tightly controlled CPC, a China-based political analyst who spoke on condition of anonymity said the regulations on these party bodies could hint at preparations for Xi's retirement.

"The rules may be set up to regulate the bodies because it's a key time for power transition," the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post on Sunday quoted the analyst as saying.

Other experts, however, averred that Xi, regarded as the most powerful leader after CPC founder Mao Zedong, may be delegating some powers to focus on larger issues.

"It does seem that Xi might pay less attention to day-to-

day details, which necessitates a policing mechanism to ensure that his policy priorities are still being carried out by lower-level officials," Victor Shih, a specialist in Chinese elite politics and finance at the University of California San Diego, told the Post.

Xi also skipped the BRICS summit being held in Rio de Janeiro from Sunday. This is the first time since he became president that he will be missing the summit of the emerging economies. Chinese Premier Li Qiang is heading China's delegation at the summit.

Xi's move of delegating power comes amid US President Donald Trump's tariff war disrupting China's USD 440 billion exports to America, besides major headwinds faced by the Chinese economy, with growth falling due to continued slowdown, and the collapse of the housing market, the mainstay of the economic growth.

The crisis was exacerbated by the government's attempts to rein in the corporate sector and the unsuccessful zero COVID policy of shutting down Chinese cities during the height of the pandemic, resulting in the industry and business coming to a grinding halt.

INDIANS CAN GET UAE GOLDEN VISA WITHOUT TRADE LICENCE

AGENCIES
DUBAI

The United Arab Emirates government has started a new type of Golden Visa, which will be based on nomination, albeit with some conditions, unlike the current practice of investing large amounts in either property or business here.

Until now, one of the ways to get Dubai's Golden Visa from India was to invest in property whose value should be at least AED Two Million (Rs 4.66 crore), or invest a large amount in business in the country.

Under the "new nomination-based visa policy," Indians can now enjoy the UAE's Golden Visa for life by paying a fee of AED 1,00,000 (INR around 23.30 lakh), beneficiaries and people involved in the process have said.

Over 5,000 Indians will apply for this nomination-based visa in three months, they said.

India and Bangladesh have been selected for the first phase of testing this visa, and a consultancy named Rayad Group has been chosen to test the initial form of the nomination-based golden visa in India.

Rayad Kamal Ayub, Managing Director of Rayad Group, said this is a golden

opportunity for Indians to get the UAE's Golden Visa.

Whenever an applicant applies for this Golden Visa, we will first check their background, which will include anti-money laundering and criminal record checks, as well as their social media," said Rayad Kamal.

The background check will also show if and how the applicant can benefit the UAE's market and business activities in any other way such as culture, finance, trade, science, Start Up, professional services, etc.

"After this, RayadGroup will send the application to the government, which will make the final decision on the nomination-based Golden Visa," he added.

Applicants seeking the UAE Golden Visa under the nomination category may obtain pre-approval from their home country without the need to visit Dubai.

"Applications can be submitted through One VASCO centres (visa concierge service company) in India and Bangladesh, our registered offices, our online portal, or our dedicated call centre," he added.

After getting the Golden Visa, one gets the freedom to bring his or her family members to Dubai. "You can also keep servants and drivers based on this visa.

Russia downs 120 Ukrainian drones overnight, Defence Min says

AGENCIES
MOSCOW

Russia's anti-aircraft systems downed 120 Ukrainian drones overnight, mostly in regions bordering Ukraine, the Russian Defence Ministry said on Sunday, reporting no damage.

More than three years into the war, Ukraine has increasingly been using drones to attack targets deep

inside Russia.

The Defence Ministry said the drones that were intercepted overnight included 30 over the western Bryansk region, 29 in the Kursk region and 17 in Belgorod - all of which share a border with Ukraine.

Another 18 drones were downed over the Oryol region, which borders Kursk and has been hit by previ-

ous Ukrainian drone attacks targeting oil facilities.

Russia's civil aviation authority, Rosaviatsiya, said it had lifted restrictions that were introduced overnight to ensure safety due to the drones at airports in St. Petersburg, Kaluga, Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod.

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ZELENSKY-TRUMP TALK SPURS US AID; UKRAINE HITS RUSSIAN AIRBASE

Russia downs 93 Ukrainian drones in day.

AGENCIES
KYIV

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday said he had a productive phone call with US President Donald Trump and that he appreciated the readiness of the US to assist Ukraine.

In a post on X, he said, "As per drones, we've also reached an agreement with one of the leading American companies to significantly increase our joint efforts. We had an extremely fruitful conversation with the President of the United States yesterday, during which we discussed air defense. I'm grateful for the readiness to assist. Patriot systems are the key to defending against ballistic threats."

AT A GLANCE

- Zelenskyy, Trump discuss air defense; US to boost drone support.
- Zelenskyy calls Patriot missiles key to stopping Russian attacks.
- Ukraine strikes Russian airbase; Moscow downs 94 drones overnight.
- Trump slams Putin, says he's unwilling to stop the war.



Meanwhile, Ukraine's military claimed an attack on the Borisoglebsk airbase in Russia's Voronezh region, hitting a depot containing glide bombs and training aircraft. Russian officials did not immediately comment on the attack, Al Jazeera reported.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said Russian air defences shot down four Ukrainian drones headed for the Russian capital, forcing one of Moscow's main airports to temporarily halt outgoing flights.

This came as Russia's Ministry of Defence said

its air defences had intercepted 48 Ukrainian drones in a period of just over five hours into Saturday evening, and 45 more during the day. Earlier, the ministry said that 94 drones had been destroyed over Russia overnight, as per Al Jazeera. In Ukraine, the Air

27 die in Karachi building collapse

AGENCIES
KARACHI

The total death toll from the collapse of a five-storey building in the Lyari area of Pakistan's Karachi has climbed to 27, with rescue teams still searching for survivors under the debris, as reported by the Dawn on Sunday, citing officials.

As per the Dawn, citing South Deputy Commissioner Javed Nabi Khoso, the rescue efforts continued through Friday night at the site on Fida Husain Shaikh Road near Lea Market in Karachi and by Saturday, approximately 80 per cent of the operation had been completed.

Rescue 1122 spokesperson Hassaanul Haseeb Khan told Dawn that it would take another five to six hours to complete the operation.

While several people remain unaccounted for, Khan stated that they could



Karachi building collapses in Lyari's Baghdadi area. X post/ @Thetradesman

Several people remain unaccounted for, search continues.

transported to Civil Hospital Karachi. Ten of the injured have been treated and discharged.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said emergency rescue operations began immediately to locate trapped individuals and confirmed the deceased have been returned to their families and echoed estimates that the rescue would wrap up later in the day.

He promised a full investigation into the collapse, noting that committees had already been formed.

Iran orders millions of Afghans to leave country or face arrest

AGENCIES
TEHRAN

Iran has ordered millions of Afghan refugees and migrants to leave the country or risk being arrested as a government-imposed deadline expires, as reported by Al Jazeera.

Tehran set the deadline date for July 6 for the Afghans who were in the country and left Afghanistan to escape the war, poverty, or Taliban rule after the organisation came back to power in 2021 following the withdrawal of US and NATO forces.

The enforcement comes amid heightened tensions and security fears following a 12-day war with Israel, during which the US also targeted Iran's nuclear sites on June 21-22 under "Operation Midnight Hammer".

Humanitarian groups have raised con-



Over 256,000 Afghans returned from Iran in June alone. X post/ @UNmigration

cerns, warning that mass deportations could further destabilise Afghanistan, already one of the poorest nations in the world.

Iran currently hosts around 4 million Afghans, many of whom have lived there for years. In 2023, the Iranian government began a crackdown on undocumented foreigners. In March 2025, authorities gave Afghans without legal

residency until early July to leave voluntarily or face expulsion.

Since then, over 700,000 Afghans have left, including more than 230,000 in June alone, Al Jazeera reported, citing the United Nations' International Organisation for Migration. Hundreds of thousands more remain at risk of being deported.

UNHCR reported Iran ramped up deportations during the conflict with Israel, sending back more than 30,000 Afghans per day--up sharply from the previous daily average of 2,000.

Iranian officials insist they are not singling out Afghans and say the actions are based on national security concerns.

"We have always striven to be good hosts, but national security is a priority, and naturally, illegal nationals must return," Iranian government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani said on Tuesday.

Israel strikes 130 targets across Gaza

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

Israeli forces struck around 130 terror targets in the Gaza Strip over the past 24 hours, as the military intensified its operations against Hamas and other terror groups, the Israel Defense Forces said on Sunday. Ground forces conducted raids and strikes throughout the Gaza Strip.

In southern Gaza, combat teams uncovered weapons and equipment in Khan Yunis, and destroyed terror tunnels in Rafah's Jenina neighborhood.

In Gaza City in the northern area of the Strip, soldiers eliminated terrorists and dismantled observation posts and terror installations.

Forces also destroyed an explosives depot, hit several Hamas buildings, and engaged terrorists in the areas of Jabaliya and Daraj-Tuffah.

The IDF said the air force,

with support from ground troops, carried out airstrikes on command centers, weapons storage sites, rocket launchers, and terrorist squads.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Netanyahu and the US blamed Hamas for a grenade attack that wounded two American aid workers in southern Gaza on Saturday. The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation said the explosives, packed with ball bearings, were thrown at a distribution site, calling it a Hamas-led assault. Netanyahu condemned the incident as a terror attack, while Washington cited it as proof of Hamas's depravity.

At least 1,180 people were killed, and 252 Israelis and foreigners were taken hostage in Hamas's attacks on Israeli communities near the Gaza border on October 7. Of the 50 remaining hostages, around 30 are believed to be dead.

UK deploys engineers to repair British Royal Navy aircraft stranded in Kerala

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

UK authorities have accepted the offer of space in a Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility for the British Royal Navy F-35B fighter jet stranded in Thiruvananthapuram and are in discussions to finalise arrangements with relevant authorities, a British High Commission Spokesperson said on Sunday.

The statement further said that following the standard procedure, the aircraft will be moved after the arrival of UK engineers.

"A UK engineering team has deployed to Thiruvananthapuram International Airport to assess and repair the UK F-35B aircraft, which landed following an emergency diversion," the statement said.

"The UK has accepted



British Royal Air Force Airbus A400M Atlas arrives at the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport. X post/ @hrsx_tory

the offer of a space in the Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility, and are in discussions to finalise arrangements with relevant authorities. In line with standard procedure, the aircraft will be moved following the arrival of UK engineers, who are carrying specialist equipment necessary for the movement and repair process," the statement added.

The High Commissioner thanked India for its support to the UK in this mat-

ter. "The UK remains very grateful for the continued support and collaboration of the Indian authorities and airport teams."

A team of around 25 technical experts from the British Royal Air Force arrived aboard an A400M Atlas military transport aircraft to inspect the F-35B fighter jet that made an emergency landing at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on the night of June 14, sources said.

Texas flash floods: At least 50 killed, rescue operations underway

AGENCIES
TEXAS

Torrential rains which resulted in sudden flash floods in parts of central Texas has resulted in the deaths of more than 50 people, as reported by CNN. In the backdrop to the disaster, Secretary Kristi Noem of Homeland Security assured of speedy action to rescue people. The Governor of Texas signed a proclama-

tion declaring Sunday as the Day of Prayer in Texas in response to the floods.

According to CNN, in Kerr County, more than 20 girls are missing from Camp Mystic, a private Christian summer camp located along a river that rose more than 20 feet in less than two hours. Throughout Kerr County, hundreds of people have been rescued or evacuated so far, many by helicopter,

authorities said.

Some areas saw a month's worth of rain in just a few hours overnight into Friday.

In a post on X, late on Saturday night (local time) Noem shared that the US Coast Guard has 'saved or assisted' in saving the lives of 223 people.

"The number one priority right now is people-making sure we are finding them as fast as possible and are re-



At least 50 lives lost and 23 girls missing after flash floods hit Camp Mystic, a Christian summer camp near the Guadalupe River in Central Texas. X post

turning them to their families and throughout the process we will get into what damage was done to public infrastructure", Noem said in a video message shared on her official X account.

She wrote on X, "Our hearts are with those impacted by the Central Texas floods. I thank Gov. Abbott, state officials, and the U.S. Coast Guard for their swift, heroic response."

She noted that the US President is committed to deploying all federal resources to unify families, rescue the missing, and return recovered loved ones promptly.

"DHS remains fully engaged, and I am in constant contact with the President -- working around the clock and providing him with real-time updates. God bless Texas", Noem wrote in her

post. Sharing the spirit of resilience of Texans, Governor Greg Abbott wrote on X that the responders would continue working until every missing person is found.

In a post on X, he said, "Declared this Sunday, July 6th, as a Day of Prayer in Texas in response to the floods in the Hill Country. I invite Texans to join me in prayer for the communities affected by this disaster."

ANURAG'S 'METRO...IN DINO' EARNS RS 9.5 CRORE

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

"Metro...In Dino", directed by acclaimed filmmaker Anurag Basu, has collected Rs 9.5 crore nett at the domestic box office in two days.

Featuring a star-studded cast of Aditya Roy Kapur, Sara Ali Khan, Pankaj Tripathi, Konkana Sen Sharma, Ali Fazal, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Anupam Kher and Neena Gupta, the film released in theatres world-wide on Friday.

According to the tracking site Sacnilk, the film has collected Rs 6 crore nett at the domestic box office on its second day, after opening with Rs 3.5 crore.

The film has earned Rs 1 crore overseas in two days taking its gross collection at the domestic box office to Rs 11.40 crore. The total world-wide box office collection of



"Metro...In Dino" stands at Rs 12.40 crore.

The film follows the bitter-sweet relationships of four couples in a contemporary

setting, and is a follow-up to Basu's "Life in a... Metro".

It released in 2007 starring late actor Irrfan Khan, Kay Kay Menon, Sharma,

Kangana Ranaut, Shilpa Shetty Kundra, Shiney Ahuja and Shiney Ahuja. Sharma is the only actor, who featured in both films.

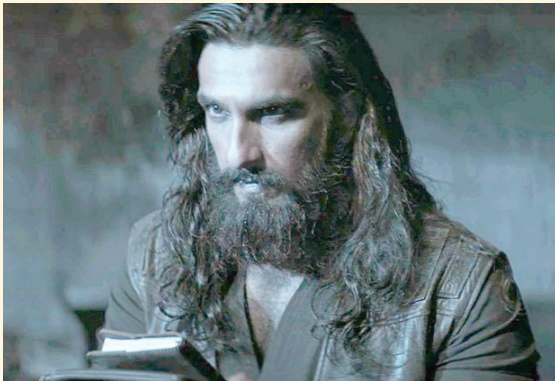
'Dhurandhar' to hit big screen on December 5

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

"Dhurandhar", featuring Bollywood star Ranveer Singh in the lead role, is set to release in theatres worldwide on December 5, the makers said on Sunday.

Helmed by Aditya Dhar of "Uri: The Surgical Strike" fame, the upcoming film is presented by Jio Studios and B62 Studios, and produced by Aditya alongside Jyoti Deshpande and Lokesh Dhar.

The makers released the first look of the action thriller across social media platforms on the actor's 40th birthday. It featured



Ranveer in an intense avatar and had glimpses of the fighting scenes from the film.

Uploading the teaser on his Instagram handle, the actor wrote, "An inferno will rise. Uncover the true story of The Unknown

Men. #Dhurandhar on 5th December 2025." The film, which was announced by Ranveer in July last year, also stars Sanjay Dutt, Akshaye Khanna, R Madhavan, and Arjun Rampal in pivotal roles.

The first look features

an original composition by Shashwat, with vocals provided by Jasmine Sandlas. The track includes a collaboration with Hanu-mankind, the rising new-age artist whose genre-blending approach brings an edge to the project's sonic landscape, according to a press release.

Ranveer's last film is "Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani", which released in 2023. Directed by Karan Johar, the romantic drama also featured Alia Bhatt, Shabana Azmi, Dharmendra, Anjali Anand and Jaya Bachchan among others. It emerged as a hit at the box office.

Zareen takes Katrina's autograph in throwback video



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Bollywood actor Zareen Khan walked down memory lane and shared a throwback video of herself taking an autograph from Katrina Kaif during the premiere of "Race".

Zareen penned a lengthy note alongside the video and she didn't think she would be a part of the film industry later. The video shows Zareen walking towards Katrina, who signs an autograph for her.

"Oh my Goddd! Came across this video and the

memory is still so fresh. I clearly remember this moment ... it's from the premiere of the movie 'RACE'. Thanks to a friend who got us passes, we were able to experience the magic firsthand. At that point, I was just a wide-eyed fan, never imagining I'd one day be a part of the film industry," the 38-year-old actor wrote in the caption.

"But look at how happy I am in this video, a total fangirl grinning from ear to ear, getting an autograph from the woman I thought was and is breathtakingly beautiful," she added.

Directed by Abbas Bur-

mawalla and Mustan Burmawalla, "Race" released in 2008. It was the first installment of the franchise, which later had additions "Race 2" and "Race 3", released in 2013 and 2018 respectively.

"Race" also featured Saif Ali Khan, Bipasha Basu and Akshaye Khanna in the lead roles.

Zareen made her acting debut in 2010 with "Veer" opposite Salman Khan. The film was directed by Anil Sharma. She later went on to star in films such as "Housefull 2", "Hate Story 3" and Punjabi film "Jatt James Bond".

Ashley Tisdale on secret to her successful 10-year marriage

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

Actress and singer Ashley Tisdale opened up about why her marriage with husband Christopher French remains successful after 10 years, reported People.

The pair dated for eight months before getting engaged in 2013, and they tied the knot in September 2014. They share two daughters, Jupiter, 4, and Emerson, 10 months, and Tisdale is opening up about why their relationship remains successful.



"No matter what in life, things change," said Tisdale, adding, "I think the biggest thing is to always just try to stay on the same page

throughout that." "Communication is key to everything. That's a big one for us," added the Phineas and Ferb actress and CEO

of the wellness brand Being Frenshe, reported People.

Tisdale and French shared a great bond as a married couple for nearly six years before welcoming Jupiter in March 2021. "We definitely had a really good foundation of years to just learn about each other before having kids, which I think is so important because just kids change everything," she said.

"One of the things I noticed is that it brings out the flaws more in each other, the flaws that you've always known about your person.



Rasha Thadani poses for her social media. (Instagram)

Amitabh feels 'proud' of Abhishek's performance

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Amitabh Bachchan feels like a proud father of his son, Abhishek Bachchan, as the latter receives widespread acclaim for his performance in the recent film 'Kaalidhar Laapata'.

Taking to his X handle, Amitabh shared a brilliant performance review of Abhishek Bachchan by director Tinnu Anand, saying that it filled his heart with "pride" for his son.

"T 5433 - When someone of the eminence of dear friend and my Director, Tinnu Anand sends this, it says more than just words .. my gratitude. Sirjee, as I don't have Abhishek's

number, could you please congratulate him on my behalf? He is absolutely brilliant in Kaalidhar Lapata. Warmth," wrote Amitabh Bachchan.

While sharing his reaction to Abhishek's worldwide praise for his performance in Kaalidhar Laapata, the 'Sholay' actor wrote, "T 5434 - with the

mountains of praise coming for Abhishek and the film Kaalidhar Laapata. Mountains of pride fill my heart and mind for my SON."

Directed by Madhumita, 'Kaalidhar Laapata' stars Abhishek as Kaalidhar--a middle-aged man grappling with memory loss, abandonment and a lifetime of quiet betrayals.

When he overhears his siblings' cruel plan to abandon him at the crowded Maha Kumbh Mela, Kaalidhar decides to disappear on his own terms.

Fate intervenes in the form of Ballu (Daivik Bhagela), an outspoken, street-smart 8-year-old who's been surviving solo on India's chaotic streets.



Rishabh Pant reveals details of his horrific accident

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Star batter Rishabh Pant made his first-ever appearance on 'The Great Indian Kapil Show' and spoke about his journey after the serious road accident he suffered in December 2022.

In the latest episode of the Netflix comedy show, Rishabh appeared along-



side fellow cricketers Abhishek Sharma, Yuzvendra Chahal, and Team India's coach Gautam Gambhir.

While the show had many fun and light-hearted moments, it also turned emotional when Pant talked about his recovery and the difficult months that followed the accident. Host Kapil Sharma welcomed the cricketer

warmly and praised him for his strength and determination in making a strong comeback.

Talking about the days after the accident, Rishabh shared how his body reacted to the heavy medication and how eating even basic food became a challenge. "Accident jab hua tha na... toh itni saare dawayaan andar chali gayi thi.

Caitlyn Jenner's manager Sophia Hutchins dies at 29 in ATV crash

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

Manager and close friend of Caitlyn Jenner, Sophia Hutchins, has died at the age of 29. She passed away on Wednesday in Malibu, California, after a tragic ATV accident, as confirmed by People magazine.

According to TMZ, Hutchins was riding an all-terrain vehicle when it collided with another moving vehicle. The crash threw her off the road, and she



was pronounced dead at the scene.

Sophia became publicly known after she started

working with Caitlyn Jenner soon after Jenner came out as a transgender woman in 2015.

Malavika Sarukkai mesmerizes at the Sixth Edition of Madhavi Festival with “Darshan”



TDG NETWORK

The sixth edition of the Madhavi Festival captivated audiences with Darshan, a powerful Bharatanatyam presentation by renowned dancer Malavika Sarukkai. Held at Kamani Auditorium and presented by the Madhavi Foundation for Creative Excellence, Madhavi Festival is a tribute to Madhavi Gopalakrishnan, mother of dancer Rama Vaidyanathan and her siblings. Darshan, a 90 minutes

performance unfolded in four evocative segments, performs with a live ensemble of four musicians in an evening brimming with bhakti. Each segment is a masterfully reimagined choreography that revealed new spiritual depths. The performance opened with a segment on Shiva, followed by the poignant tale of Maricha from Tulsidas' Ramayana. A tender episode between Krishna and Yashoda offered a glimpse of the divine,



Darshan, a 90 minutes performance unfolded in four evocative segments, performs with a live ensemble of four musicians in an evening brimming with bhakti.

culminating in the Raas dance from the Bhagavata Purana, symbolizing the soul's ecstatic union with the Supreme. Rama Vaidyanathan

says, “It is an honour to have Malavika Sarukkai, a dancer whom I have always admired for her in- depth understanding and interpretation of Bharatanatyam. She is one of India's prima donnas and Madhavi Foundation is extremely delighted to host her performance in Delhi”

The Redefined Artistic Odyssey: Artix 4.0 Returns to Paint New Delhi's Canvas

TDG NETWORK

Opening avenues to experience the magic of indigenous and global art and artists for art concessionaires, enthusiasts, and critics, Artix 4.0 ignites the artistic realm by offering an unparalleled tapestry of innovation and creativity. Laden with two-day insightful sessions and an artistic eye towards emerging talent, Indian traditional textiles like chikankari and jamdani, and convergence of art and luxury, this edition is set to kick start on August 2 and August 3, 2025 at The Claridges Hotel, New Delhi.

A unique visualization that redefines the interaction between art and artisans, Artix unites indigenous and global artistic energies by converting hotel rooms into private preview spaces where every corner tells a tale of creative endeavour and luxury. This approach defies the traditional gallery norms, offering an extravagant and imaginative atmosphere where the artist's vision can be deeply felt.

“Spearheaded by Payal



This approach defies the traditional gallery norms, offering an extravagant and imaginative atmosphere where the artist's vision can be deeply felt.

Kapoor, Malvika Poddar, and Sethu Vaidyanathan, this edition will feature an impressive lineup of art galleries, solo artists, textiles, accessories and jewelry including - Ashvita's, Art Nouveau, Arushi Arts , 108 Art Projects, Shruti Kasma Gupta, Prarthana Modi, Parnika Mittal, Akansha Chaturvedi, House of Tarina, Aadyam Handwoven, Dharki Handwoven, Baroque by Samiksha Chowdhary and Lotus Art De Vivre to name a few, transforming the artistic landscape. In their

words, “Artix 4.0 is more than just an exhibition; it's a unique, more intimate and immersive idea in the art world. This season, we're infusing new energy and fresh appeal to brighten the artistic tapestry and cultivate a new generation of art enthusiasts and collectors. At Artix, we celebrate all forms of art and create a dynamic platform that connects the entire art fraternity, transcending traditional boundaries.”

Join us to explore this surreal extravaganza of creative geniuses like never before.

‘क से कहानी’: Sudha Murty’s Beloved Tale Comes Alive on Stage with Storee Ki Boree

TDG NETWORK

Delhi-based theatre collective Storee Ki Boree, known for its emotionally rich, child-led storytelling, is all set to stage its latest production ‘क से कहानी’ on Sunday, July 13, 2025 at 6:30 PM at the LTG Auditorium, Mandi House, New Delhi.

The production is a moving adaptation inspired by one of India's most beloved short stories — How I Taught My Grandmother to Read by Sudha Murty. The play follows the quiet yet radical journey of Vijaya who is a sixty-year-old grandmother in a North Karnataka village and decides to learn to read, guided by her young granddaughter Seeya. What begins as a summer routine of storytelling turns into a life-

changing quest for dignity, agency and self-worth.

“This story is gentle, but its message is powerful,” says Shradha Gupta, founder of Storee Ki Boree. “We are not just staging a play, instead we are celebrating the belief that it's never too late to learn, to dream, or to

“This story is gentle, but its message is powerful,” says Shradha Gupta, founder of Storee Ki Boree. “We are not just staging a play, instead we are celebrating the belief that it's never too late to learn, to dream, or to begin again.”

begin again.” Directed by Munish Sharma, the production weaves together theatre, movement and music to create an immersive experience that resonates with audiences across

generations. Dialogues are by Mrinal Mathur, with dramaturgy support from Kavitha (Vishwa Shilpi Art Consultation, Bengaluru).

‘क से कहानी’ is more than a tribute to the well-known story, ‘How I taught my Grandmother to read’ — it is a reflection of Storee Ki

live performance, the collective has touched hearts from ages 3 to 80.

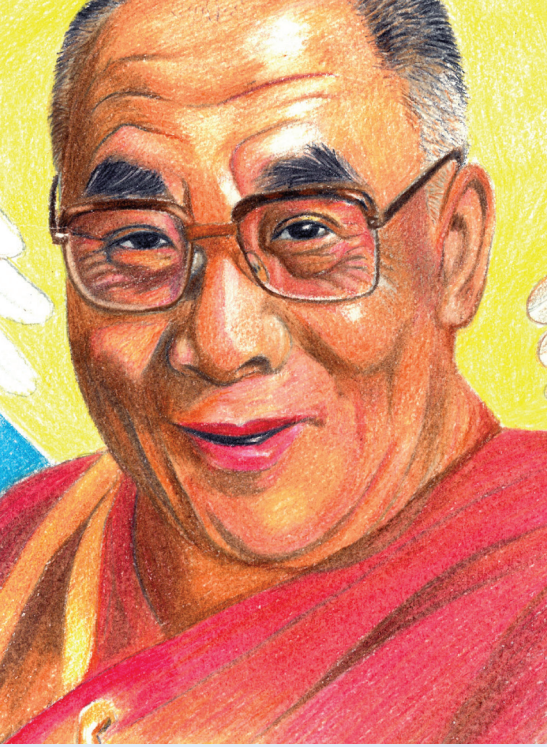
At the core of this effort is Storee Ki Boree founded by Shradha Gupta — a

team of theatre-makers and educators who have spent over a decade creating safe, joyful spaces where children's voices are amplified and cele-

brated. Much like Sudha Murty, Shradha believes in the lasting impact of value-based stories, especially when told with honesty and heart.



Celebrating His Holiness the Dalai Lama through Children's Art



TDG NETWORK

Commemorating the 90th birthday of His Holiness, this international exhibition showcases innovative paintings and multimedia artworks by Tibetan children expressing heartfelt gratitude for his life, legacy, and

invaluable teachings. Their art is a powerful testament to how His Holiness continues to inspire generations.

In collaboration with Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Khadhok: Tibetan Arts' Collective.



Indian Women are Redefining Global Travel — One Sustainable Journey at a Time



VARSHA AGARWAL

The new generation of Indian travellers seems to have evolved with autonomy and inquisitiveness; the new kind of traveller considers purpose just as much as a passport stamp. Indian women constitute the very spirit of this movement, quietly but powerfully revamping how we travel.

They're not just ticking off tourist hotspots or filling suitcases with souvenirs; they're choosing eco-conscious stays, supporting local economies, and seeking experiences that leave a positive footprint. Simply put, they are recasting global travel in light of ethics and sustainability.

A CONSCIOUS SHIFT IN WOMEN TRAVELLER'S MINDSET

Over the last decade, international travel from India has seen exponential growth.

And post-COVID, it's no longer just about the "best deals" or "Instagrammable" moments. Increasingly, Indian women travellers are asking: Where is my money going? Is this experience helping the local community? How is this impacting the environment?

This mindset shift is especially visible among solo travellers, young professionals, and millennial mothers who are blending family vacations with values-led choices. From staying in women-run homestays in Bali to volunteering at reforestation camps in Costa Rica, the Indian women travellers today are driven by purpose, not just pleasure.

WOMEN FOUNDERS & TRAVELLERS CREATING GLOBAL IMPACT

From Mumbai to Manali, Indian women entrepreneurs are launching travel platforms with sustainability at their core. Take, for example, Travgreen, a female-led eco-luxury travel brand that curates low-impact travel experiences centred on nature, culture, and community. Whether it's an artisan-led textile trail in Vietnam or an organic farm stay in Sri Lanka, these experiences allow Indian travellers to connect more deeply with



places and people.

Social media has played a massive role in amplifying these ideas. Influencers and content creators are regularly sharing sustainable travel tips. From promoting reusable packing to supporting carbon-neutral flights, these influencers are creating a ripple effect among their

followers.

THE RISE OF ETHICAL TRAVEL DECISIONS

Selectively pleasing, more and more Indian women travellers are changing the very notion of ethical tourism by putting an emphasis not only on the destination but also on the manner in



which they experience it. They stand for boutique eco-hotel accommodations rather than luxurious brand chains, purchasing goods from women's cooperatives in Morocco instead of duty-free shops at the airport, and prioritising ethical activities such as wildlife sanctuaries over exploitative ones like



elephant rides.

Many women travellers also partake in cultural immersion by acquiring skills relevant to the area, such as cooking in Tuscany or Ikat weaving in Uzbekistan; these activities help local economies and preserve culture. From an environmental standpoint, this extends to taking public transport and skipping their usual daily linen change, making a very strong statement of intent to travel responsibly and sustainably.

COMMUNITY, SAFETY & SISTERHOOD ABROAD

Another major reason Indian

women are drawn to this new form of travel is the sense of community it brings. Sustainable travel groups often foster safer, more intimate environments. For solo Indian women, especially first-time travellers, this support system is invaluable.

WHY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

Travel becomes more critical with every passing day, especially with climate change moving in full swing and tourism industry caught in the midst of environmental and social justice allegations. Indian women are leading the way,

not just for the rest of India but for the world at large.

They exhibit that being mindful can go hand in hand with being adventurous: global yet grounded. Intellectually hungry yet nurtured. Their message is clear: The women are ready not just to see the world but to respect, protect, and uplift it.

From Kerala to Kyoto and Goa to Greece, Indian women are leading a new travel narrative. One that's slower, deeper, and infinitely more meaningful.

By Varsha Agarwal Co-Founder - TravGreen - A Sustainable Luxury Travel Company

Delhiites flock to the Himalayas: Monsoon bookings surge

TDG NETWORK

A few years ago, Delhi enjoyed pleasant monsoon months. Now, even the rainy season is hot and muggy, driving Delhiites to the cooler climes of the Himalayas.

The hill stations of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are particularly stunning during the rains. The monsoon brings lush greenery, rejuvenating the landscape after the dry summer months. The rain clears the air of heat and pollution and attracts fireflies. Travelers can also enjoy low-lying clouds, flowing streams, and beautiful rainbows.

Ramit Sethi, Founder of Seclude, explains, "Delhiites are seeking a refreshing escape from the city's relentless heat and humidity. The Himalayas offer a perfect sanctuary, especially during the monsoon, when the natural beauty of these regions is at its peak. Seclude (www.seclude.in), a luxury homestay and boutique resort operator in India,"

watching, is also home to animals like the Sambhar, Barking Deer, Leopard, Yellow-bellied Himalayan Weasel, Leopard Cat, Wild Boar, and Red Fox.



Palampur, the tea capital of Northwest India, has meadows in full bloom and offers views of the snow-capped Dhauladhar Range through the monsoon clouds.

Many Delhi travellers avoid driving during the rainy season due to slippery roads and gushing streams. Instead, they prefer desti-

nations accessible by rail, such as Ramgarh, Pangot, and Palampur. Ramgarh and Pangot are near Kathgodam Railway Station, about a two-hour drive away,

while Palampur is closest to Pathankot station.

Travel tips: Carry mosquito repellents and don't be afraid to soak in the drizzles!



Ramgarh, a picturesque village in Uttarakhand, has become a favourite destination.

Seclude, an experiential luxury player operating in the homestay and boutique resort segment in India, is seeing a significant increase in bookings for the July-August season, primarily from Delhiites. Despite an exceptionally hot June, Seclude and other hospitality brands anticipate a 40-50% surge in monsoon bookings for 2024 compared to last year.

Ramgarh, a picturesque village in Uttarakhand, has become a favourite destination. Away from the busy Nainital, Ramgarh boasts stunning orchards of apples, apricots, and peaches in full bloom. Pangot, known for its bird-



The Grandeur of Bundelkhand

RAVI VALLURI

Lalitpur Power Generation Unit (LPGU) is a thermal power generation complex situated in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh; a region steeped in history and replete with multitudinous nuggets which attracts the attention of populace both domestic and overseas.

This modern structure is situated near the historical town of Jhansi and generates 1,980 megawatts of power. Lalitpur Power Generation Co. Ltd., has synchronised its Unit 3 of 660 MW capacity. Three units of this gargantuan powerhouse are vitally critical to supply 'power' to this arid region of the state.

Come monsoon, this seemingly infecund and parched land metamorphoses into a verdant area. This mystery of nature perennially leaves one wonder struck. How is it that the vapid and baked landscape, during monsoon and winter blossoms into a viridescent landscape?

Sandwiched between the super thermal power house and smaller stations on the way, is a detour to the town of Orchha.

The Ram Raja Temple is a sacred place for the faithful, situated in Orchha and attracts devotees in significant numbers regularly. Interestingly, this is the only temple in the subcontinent where Lord Ram is worshipped as a king.

The Orchha Fort complex bearing the stamp of nagara architecture houses several ancient monuments including the fort, palaces, temple, and other prominent edifices. The majestic fort and other structures in the precincts were constructed by the Bundela Rajput sovereigns, beginning from the early 16th century by King Rudra Pratap Singh, and extended by other valorous kings who subsequently ruled.

As the evening sun sinks in the ancient city of Jhansi, a coruscating and lambent glow spreads across the robust fort of Jhansi and the surrounding skyline. The sheer grandeur and majesty of the fort transports the tourist's febrile minds aeons back. They witness history

the Bundela Rajput chief and ruler of the kingdom of Orchha, Veer Singh ji Deo Bundela in 1613. Though the kingdom was administered by several rulers, it is singularly associated with Raja Gangadhar Rao and his wife Maharani Lakshmi Bai. The pious Shaivite was

nor General invoked the instrument of Doctrine of Lapse and usurped the kingdom.

Soon began the movement to free Jhansi from the clutches of the East India Company by Maharani Lakshmi Bai and led to her pact with Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and other



chieftains spawning from parts of India. The bugle of independence was first sounded during the First War of Independence in 1857. Jhansi ki Rani succumbed to injuries while in action on 18 June 1858.

But she fired the imagination of millions of women of India who scrimmage for their rights to this day. India was free from the foreign yoke on 15 August 1947, but not before, Netaji Bose had formed a Lakshmi Bai regiment in his celebrated Indian National Army.

Ravi Valluri is working as the CEO of Chhattisgarh Est Railway Ltd. He is the author of Bombay Review and Other Stories.



INDIA CRUSH ENGLAND BY 337 RUNS

AGENCIES
BIRMINGHAM

India recorded a dominant 337-run win in the second Test after dismissing England for 271 in their second innings on the final day here on Sunday.

With the thumping win -- India's first-ever in Tests at Edgbaston -- Shubman Gil and Co. levelled the five-match series 1-1.

Resuming the day at 72 for 3, England were reduced to 153 for 6 by lunch, with India's bowlers maintaining relentless pressure.

Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant and his English counterpart Jamie Smith made history, as they together secured the highest aggregate by wicketkeeper-batters during a Test series in England.

The duo secured this record during the second Test at Birmingham.

While Rishabh scored just 25 in the first innings, contributing very little to India's first innings total of 587 runs, Jamie scored an unbeaten 184* in 207 balls



India's Akash Deep shows the ball on completing his maiden five-wicket haul during Day 5 of the 2nd test match against England, at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Sunday. (©BCCI X/ANI Photo)

in England's first innings, consisting of 21 fours and four sixes as a part of a 303-run stand with Harry Brook following an early collapse which left England at 89/5. Brook and Jamie made sure England reached 407 runs, trailing by 180 runs still.

Jamie attained the highest individual score by an England wicketkeeper-batter in Tests, overtaking Alec Stewart's 173 back in 1997 against New Zealand.

In the second innings, Pant had an attacking 110-run fourth-wicket partnership

with skipper Gill, scoring an entertaining 65 in 58 balls, with eight fours and three sixes. This knock had it all, be it bat slips, shots with him falling on the ground and some exhibition of brute strength. India declared at 427/6, extending their lead

BRIEF SCORE

India: 587 (Shubman Gill 269, Ravindra Jadeja 89, Shoaib Bashir 3/167) against **England:** 407 (Jamie Smith 184*, Harry Brook 158; Mohammed Siraj 6/70/). India 427/6 d (Shubman Gill 161, Ravindra Jadeja 69*; 2/119) England 153/6 (Ben Stokes 33, Jamie Smith 32*; Akash Deep 4/58).

to 607 runs and setting 608 runs for England to win. During the run-chase, Smith proved to be the sole ray of hope for England, scoring 88 in 99 balls, with nine fours and four sixes.

So far, the wicketkeeping duo has scored a combined 698 runs in the series, surpassing the 674 runs scored by Alec Stewart (378) and Australia's Ian Healy (296) in the 1993 Ashes. Jamie is the second-highest run-getter in the series, with 356 runs in two matches and four innings at an average of 178.00 and a strike rate of 86.19, with a century and fifty.



Players and fans observe a minute of silent in memory of Portugal international and Liverpool player Diogo Jota and his brother André Silva prior the Club World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Real Madrid and Borussia Dortmund in East Rutherford, N.J., Saturday, July 5, 2025. (Agency)

Djokovic registers 100th win overall in competition

AGENCIES
LONDON

Olympic tennis champion Novak Djokovic sealed his 100th victory at Wimbledon on Saturday, July 5, beating Serbian compatriot Miomir Kecmanovic 6-3, 6-0, 6-4 in the third round at the Championships 2025 on Saturday.

Next up for the seven-time Wimbledon men's singles champion is a showdown with 11th seed Alex de Minaur of Australia in the round of 16. The pair were due to meet in SW19 last year before the Australian withdrew ahead of the final eight clash.

"You're not super excited to play Alex de Minaur on grass because he's so quick and he's a complete player, all around. He has gained pace on his serve, as well. He hits his spots very well. Just a very tough challenge expecting me. I'm looking forward to it. I think it's going to be a great test to see where my game is at against a top player like Alex," Djokovic said of his next opponent during his press conference as quoted by Olympics.com.

With world number one Jannik Sinner brushing aside Pedro Martinez in Saturday's opening match on Centre Court, a Sinner-Djokovic



semi-final remains on the cards.

His 20th Championships appearance and 20 years after his debut, Djokovic has reached the magic century of victories and now holds a 100-12 record at SW19.

He is just the third singles player in tennis history to achieve the feat, joining 20-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer and 18-time major winner Martina Navratilova.

"I did enjoy myself, except maybe the last couple of games. Tennis has made me who I am. I try not to take anything for granted, particularly at this age, still going strong...I feel blessed," Djokovic said on the court post-match. It was plain sailing for the world number six, who registered his first bagel (a 6-0 scoreline) of the Grand Slam season and sealed the win in an hour and 47 min-

utes. But if Djokovic had to be summed up in one point, refer to the moment when he was at deuce at 4-3 up in the first set. A diving backhand winner after angled drop shots and a tweener from Kecmanovic brought Centre Court to its feet in pure awe.

A point that looked wiser to concede than chase, yet the 38-year-old just did not stop. He rarely stops - not until he wins - somehow salvaging the point with his masterful defence and calculated lunges to take advantage and subsequently break.

"It was like ecstasy in that moment, I was super, super happy. It came at a really important moment...I was pumped for that one. I'm not diving as much on the courts; the only surface where you would dive is grass. But I'm not used to it as much. So these unique, rare moments are something you cherish,"

Kidambi Srikanth's semi-final loss ends India's campaign at Canada Open 2025

AGENCIES
ONTARIO

India's campaign at the BWF Super 300 tournament ended as Kidambi Srikanth, the former world No. 1, lost to Kenta Nishimoto in the semi-finals of the men's singles event at the Canada Open 2025 badminton tournament in Ontario on Sunday, Olympics.com reported.

Kidambi Srikanth, 49th in the men's singles badminton rankings, won the first game but squandered the lead to lose 19-21, 21-14, 21-18 to Japan's Kenta Nishimoto, the world No. 12 and third seed, in an hour and 18 minutes, according to Olympics.com.

The Indian badminton player, who defeated Chou Tien-Chen of Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinals, also had a strong start against Kenta Nishimoto. Kidambi Srikanth overcame a trail of 18-16 to win the first



match.

According to the Olympics.com report, Srikanth maintained his momentum and quickly jumped out to a 9-4 lead in the second game after Kenta Nishimoto tied the score at 14-all. At that moment, the Japanese increased their speed and won the following seven points in a row to tie the score.

The decider, a tense one, swayed like a pendulum. Once 6-1 behind, a fruitful phase in the middle saw Srikanth lead 12-8. Kenta Nishimoto also responded to draw level at 18-18 before wrapping up the game

and match.

This was Kidambi Srikanth's fifth loss to Kenta Nishimoto in 11 meetings. The head-to-head was tied at five-all heading into Saturday's fixture.

Kidambi Srikanth was the only Indian challenge left at the Canada Open. In women's singles, Shriyanshi Valishetty's spirited run came to an end in the quarterfinals.

The 18-year-old pushed Amalie Schulz to the brink in a three-game thriller but eventually lost 21-12, 19-21, 19-21, wrapping up a memorable campaign.

Yuki Bambri-Robert Galloway reach third round at Wimbledon 2025

AGENCIES
LONDON

India's Yuki Bhambri, along with America's Robert Galloway, marched into the third round of the men's doubles event in the Wimbledon 2025 Grand Slam in the ongoing Wimbledon 2025 Grand Slam on Saturday.

Squaring off against Portugal's Nuno Borges and America's Marcos Giron at the All England Club, Yuki Bhambri and Robert Galloway, the 16th seeds, converted a breakpoint in the eighth game of the first set to take the lead, as per Olympics.com.

Further, according to Olympics.com, the Indo-American tennis pair then lost serve in the second game of the next set but broke back when Nuno Borges and Marcos Giron were serving to

win the second set. Bhambri and Galloway then went on to win the tie break to close out the match 6-3, 7(8)-6(6) and advanced to the next round. Yuki Bhambri is also in contention in the mixed doubles event. The Indian tennis player, partnering Jiang Xinyu of the People's Republic of China, won their opening-round match and will be in action again on Sunday. Meanwhile, Rithvik Bollipalli and his Colombian partner, Nicolas Barrientos, bowed out of the men's doubles event after losing to British duo Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski in the second round. Up against the sixth seeds, Rithvik Bollipalli and Nicolas Barrientos dropped a service game early in the first set and squandered three set points in a tense second-set tiebreak, ultimately going down 6-4, 7(9)-6(7).

Diksha moves up three spots in Irish Open

AGENCIES
KILDARE

Diksha Dagar closed her third round with a birdie to gain three places to move to Tied 53rd at the 2025 KPMG Women's Irish Open on the Ladies European Tour.

Diksha with cards of 75-73-73 is 2-over. She moved three places up from her previous T-56th when she made the cut on the line. Diksha, 10th on the LET Order of Merit, had a bogey on the second and then had a run of 11 pars before she got her first birdies on the Par-3 14th, but again dropped a shot

on the 16th.

She closed with a birdie to walk off with a smile.

English amateur Lottie Woad continued her excellent form, firing a bogey-free 67 (-6) to hold a seven-shot lead heading into the final day. The world number one amateur held a three-shot lead at the halfway stage at Carton House, and picked up where she left off on Saturday. Woad began the day with a birdie on the first before making another on the third hole, and she continued to stretch her advantage with birdies at six and eight to make the turn in four-under.

Sakshi opens India's gold medal account at World Boxing Cup in Astana

AGENCIES
ASTANA

Two-time youth world champion Sakshi bagged India's first gold medal at the World Boxing Cup - Astana, Kazakhstan 2025 with a dominant performance in the women's 54kg final here on Sunday.

The 24-year-old was at her attacking best against USA's Yosline Perez to get a unanimous verdict from the judges, as per a press release from the Boxing Federation of India (BFI).

The Indian contingent



has had a fruitful outing at the World Boxing Cup here and is assured of a total of 11 medals. India had bagged six medals in the first leg in Brazil, including a gold and a silver.

There were four Indian boxers in action in the first session on Sunday, and it was Sakshi who managed to stand atop the podium with a stellar display that combined speed and com-

bination punches.

Earlier, Meenakshi pushed hard for victory against local favourite Nazym Kyzaibay in the 48kg final but ended on the wrong side of a 3:2 verdict.

Jugnoo (men's 85kg) and Pooja Rani (women's 80kg) will also return home with silver medals after losing their respective finals.

Jugnoo lost 0:5 against Bekzad Nurdauletov of Kazakhstan, while Pooja went down by an identical score line against Australia's Eseta Flint.

Deepika's goal nominated for Poligras Magic Skill Award

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Indian Women's Hockey Team forward Deepika has been nominated for the Poligras Magic Skill Award for her incredible solo field goal against World No.1, the Netherlands during the 2024-25 FIH Hockey Pro League season, as per a press release from Hockey India.

The nominations for the Poligras Magic Skill Award for the 2024/25 FIH Hockey Pro League season were released on Friday, and the deadline to vote is 14th July at 3:29 a.m. IST. The winner will be announced once the

voting ends. The winner of the Poligras Magic Skill Award is decided by hockey fans across the world based on who they think had the best moment and goal during the season.

Deepika's iconic moment took place in February 2025 during the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Hockey Pro League when the Indian Team defeated the Netherlands in the shootout after a 2-2 draw at the Kalinga Stadium.

In the 35th minute, Deepika scored an amazing field goal as India were trailing by two goals. In the 35th minute, Deepika dribbled



down the left flank brilliantly as she went around the Netherlands' backline, kissed the baseline, dinked the ball over a defender's stick and finished the move with a wonderful strike past

the keeper and into the net.

"That goal against the Netherlands is one of the most special moments of my career. Everything just clicked and it helped us equalise and win the game

in shootout. I'm honoured to be nominated for the Poligras Magic Skill Award and grateful for the support of our fans. Moments like these are what we train so hard for. Your votes and support motivate me to keep pushing my limits and give it my all for India. I also want to thank my coaches, the support staff, and most importantly, my teammates for their constant encouragement and belief in me," the 21-year-old prolific attacker said as quoted by a press release from Hockey India.

Apart from Deepika's goal, the women nominees for the

Poligras Magic Skill Award feature two more wonderful flashes of brilliance on the field. Patricia Alvarez's incredible 3D Skills and goal for Spain against Australia has made the cut. Patricia showed brilliant technique to win the ball and juggle the ball with her stick over the rushing goalkeeper and found the net.

The third nomination is for the wonderful team goal by Australia's women's team against England. The Hockeyroos orchestrated a brilliant passage of play with five passes in the opposing half and a brilliant strike into the goal.

Neeraj sets eyes on defending crown at World Athletics Championships

AGENCIES
BENGALURU

India's javelin spearhead, Neeraj Chopra, has set his eyes on the World Athletics Championships after striking gold at the inaugural NC Classic 2025 here on Saturday, a competition named

strive hard to defend his title. In 2023, Neeraj produced one of the best performances of his career with a throw of 88.17m and took the gold medal home.

Before the competition, Neeraj aims to refine his technique by working with his coach, Jan Zelezny, to bol-



after him.

The Sri Kanteerava Outdoor Stadium, filled with thousands of fans, clapping in harmony when Neeraj took the javelin, sprinted down the track and aimed for glory. On a windy yet cool evening in Bengaluru, the 27-year-old heaved his javelin to a solid distance of 86.18m to walk away with the top honours before the night ended. With another accolade in his cabinet, Neeraj will shift his focus to the World Athletics Championships scheduled to be held from September 13 to 21 in Tokyo, where he will

ster his chances of retaining the crown.

"It is the biggest competition of this year, and we won gold last time in the World Championship. We will work hard to defend that title, and we have to work hard for that. I will work with my coach to improve my technique," Neeraj told ANI.

In the Neeraj Chopra (NC) Classic 2025, there were plenty of 80m-plus throws as the javelin went left and right. Neeraj, too excited before his first throw, fouled the attempt and had to be calmed by his coach.