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SC REFUSES TO STAY BIHAR ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION

■ The court said it is a democratic process and ‘we cannot stay it’

SAMBHAV SHARMA & AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday refused to stay the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists in Bihar.

“We cannot stop a constitutional body from doing what it is supposed to do. Simultaneously, we will not let them do what they are not supposed to do,” said a bench of Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia and Justice Joyimalya Bagchi.

The Supreme Court has scheduled the matter for a detailed hearing on July 28.

This comes just days ahead of the August 1 release of the draft electoral roll in Bihar.

The court was hearing several petitions claiming the revision could lead to valid voters being unfairly removed from the list. This, petitioners argued, may happen just before the Bihar Assembly elections. The bench noted: “There is a democratic process on — we cannot stay it.”

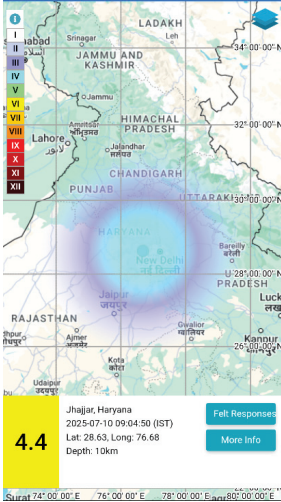
The bench made it clear that the manner in which the revision is being carried out will be subject to judicial scrutiny.

The court issued notice to the Election Commission and sought its response by

Jhajjar jolted by morning earthquake of 4.4 magnitude

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

A moderate earthquake measuring 4.4 on the Richter scale struck Haryana's Jhajjar district on Thursday morning as the tremors felt across the National Capital Region (NCR), including Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Faridabad and surrounding areas.



The National Centre for Seismology (NCS) reported a 4.4-magnitude earthquake hit at around 9:04 AM and with the epicentre in Haryana's Jhajjar. It was located 10 kilometres below the Earth's surface. However, the impact was mild but it has contributed to the widespread intensity of

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LEGAL WRANGLING

- The bench made it clear that the manner in which the revision is being carried out will be subject to judicial scrutiny.
- The Court also recorded the ECI's submission that its list of 11 documents for voter verification is not exhaustive, but illustrative
- The bench directed the Commission to consider Aadhaar, Voter ID (EPIC), and Ration Card as valid identity documents for voter enrolment.



“We cannot stop a Constitutional body from doing what it is supposed to do. Simultaneously, we will not let them do what they are not supposed to do”
— SC bench

- Justice Dhulia observed: ‘The exercise is not the problem, it's the timing.’
- ECI said it was constitutionally sound and necessary to remove duplicate and ineligible entries
- The bench said it was not doubting the credentials and sincerity of the ECI in doing the exercise which was a constitutional mandate.
- The ECI justified the exercise and said Aadhaar wasn't a “proof of citizenship”.

July 28 when the matter will next be heard.

According to the petitioners, this exercise coincides with the run-up to the Bihar elections scheduled for November 2025. The petitioners have challenged the constitutional validity of the SIR, the procedure adopted and the timing of the exercise.

The Court also recorded the ECI's submission that its list of 11 documents for

voter verification is not exhaustive, but illustrative.

The bench directed the Commission to consider Aadhaar, Voter ID (EPIC), and Ration Card as valid identity documents for voter enrolment.

Raising concerns about disenfranchisement, Justice Dhulia observed: ‘The exercise is not the problem, it's the timing.’

Senior Advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the

ECI, defended the process, saying it was constitutionally sound and necessary to remove duplicate and ineligible entries.

The bench said it was not doubting the credentials and sincerity of the election commission in doing the exercise which was a constitutional mandate but said the timing of the process were raising doubts.

Dwivedi said 60 per cent of voters had verified their

credentials and assured the court none of the voter's name will be removed from the electoral rolls, without giving them a hearing.

Earlier in the day, the bench questioned the poll panel on the timing of the SIR drive in poll-bound Bihar saying it went to the “root of democracy and power to vote” while rejecting the argument that the poll panel did not have any power to carry it out.

The ECI also justified the exercise and said Aadhaar wasn't a “proof of citizenship”.

The bench questioned Dwivedi over the exclusion of Aadhaar card in the SIR drive in Bihar and said the ECI had nothing to do with citizenship of a person and it was the Ministry of Home Affairs' domain.

Dwivedi responded while referring to Article 326 of the Constitution and said every voter has to be an Indian citizen and “Aadhaar card is not proof of citizenship”.

Justice Dhulia said, “If you are to check citizenship under SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar, then you should have acted early; it is a bit late.”

The bench, in the meantime, rejected the submission of the petitioners' counsel that the ECI did not have

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AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

In a veiled swipe at Congress MP Shashi Tharoor after he penned an article on the Emergency, party leader Manickam Tagore on Thursday said when a colleague starts repeating BJP lines word for word, one begins to wonder whether “the bird is becoming a parrot”.

Tharoor has said that the Emergency should not be remembered merely as a dark chapter in India's history, but that its lessons must be fully understood.

In an article on the Emergency published in the Malayalam daily on Thursday, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) member recalled the dark era of the Emergency declared by then



“Sanjay Gandhi, the son of Indira Gandhi, led forced sterilisation campaigns which became a notorious example of this.”

prime minister Indira Gandhi between June 25, 1975 and March 21, 1977, and said

that efforts undertaken for discipline and order often turned into acts of cruelty that could not be justified.

Without naming anyone, Tagore, who is a Congress MP from Virudhunagar in Tamil Nadu and the party's whip in the Lok Sabha, said on X, “When a colleague starts repeating BJP lines word for word, you begin to wonder — is the Bird becoming a parrot? Mimicry is cute in birds, not in politics.”

In his article, Tharoor said, “Sanjay Gandhi, the son of Indira Gandhi, led forced sterilisation campaigns which became a notorious example of this. In poor rural areas, violence and coercion were used to meet arbitrary targets.

“In cities like New Delhi,

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Six states get Rs 1,067 cr as flood relief assistance

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Centre has approved Rs 1,066.80 crore for flood and landslide-affected states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Kerala and Uttarakhand as part of the central share under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday.

Financial aid	
Assam	Rs 375.60 cr
Manipur	Rs 29.20 cr
Meghalaya	Rs 30.40 cr
Mizoram	Rs 22.80 cr
Kerala	Rs 153.20 cr
Uttarakhand	Rs 455.60 cr

Shah also said that the Narendra Modi government stands resolutely beside the

states in all situations like flood, landslide and cloud-burst.

“Today the central government has approved Rs 1,066.80 crore for flood and landslide affected states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Kerala and Uttarakhand as part of the central share under SDRF,” he wrote on ‘X’.

The home minister said

■ P3

Punjab okays Rs 10 lakh health cover scheme

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab cabinet on Thursday approved the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna — a first-of-its-kind scheme in the country to provide cashless medical treatment worth Rs 10 lakh to residents of the state. A decision to this effect was taken during a meeting of the Council of Ministers held under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister at his official residence.

A spokesperson from the Chief Minister's Office said the scheme will be rolled out on October 2. Under the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna, every family in the state will



now be eligible for cashless treatment of up to 10 lakh. With this, Punjab has become the first state in India where every household is entitled to such a healthcare coverage.

The scheme will benefit the entire population of three crore residents and more than 550 private hospitals have been empaneled

Previously, a family could avail of treatment only up to Rs 5 lakh; this limit has now been enhanced to Rs 10 lakh.

for the scheme so far and the number will be enhanced to 1,000 in coming days.

Previously, a family could avail of treatment only up to 5 lakh; this limit has now been enhanced to 10 lakh. By launching this initiative, Punjab has set a new benchmark for the rest of the country, becoming the first state to offer free healthcare,

education, electricity, and bus travel to its citizens.

Under this scheme, every citizen of Punjab — including government employees and pensioners — will be entitled to free healthcare, regardless of income level. Previously, only select families qualified for benefits under income-based criteria, but now the scheme covers all residents.

Health cards under the scheme will be issued at Seva Kendras or Common Service Centers (CSCs). Additionally, citizens can register online using their Aadhaar card or Voter ID to obtain a health card. Treatment under the scheme will

■ P3

Woman tennis player shot dead at home by father

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

A 25-year-old state-level tennis player Radhika Yadav (in pic) was shot dead allegedly by her father Deepak Yadav at their residence in Gurugram, the police said on Thursday.

According to the police, the incident occurred around 10:30 am when Deepak Yadav, 49, fired five rounds from his licensed .32 bore revolver while Radhika was in the kitchen. She was hit by three bullets and rushed to a nearby private hospital, where she later succumbed



to her injuries during treatment.

Deepak was arrested soon after the incident. Police have recovered the weapon used in the crime, and a case of murder has

been registered at Sector 56 police station based on a complaint filed by Deepak's brother Kuldeep Yadav.

Preliminary investigation suggests a domestic dispute as the reason behind

the incident. Police sources said Deepak Yadav was reportedly unhappy with Radhika's frequent activity on social media, especially Instagram reels. Tensions had also been brewing over Radhika's decision to run a tennis academy, which her father opposed.

Some unverified reports indicated he was also against a relationship she was involved in, but officials said these angles are still being investigated.

Radhika Yadav was a rising talent in Indian tennis. She had ranked in the top 200 in the ITF Women's

■ P3

Minor students stab principal to death on school premises

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

On the day of Guru Purnima, two minor students allegedly stabbed to death a 50 years old principal of a private school in the school premises in Bas village of Hisar district of Haryana, the police said on Thursday. The students aged around 15-16 years hit the teacher with a knife multiple times after he reportedly reprimanded them for being undisciplined.

The deceased has been identified as Jagbir Singh



Pannu (in pic), Principal of Kartar Memorial Senior Secondary School in Bas village Narnaund of Hisar. The police said that the incident took place on the school premises on Thursday when two minor students studying in class XI and XII fatally stabbed him following a dispute over school discipline as

the principal reportedly reprimanded them for not cutting their hair and asked them to maintain discipline

The police officials associated with the investigation said that the Principal had reportedly scolded the students after repeated warnings regarding their appearance and violation of dress code norms.

According to Hansi Superintendent of Police Amit Yashvardhan, the principal had reprimanded the boys multiple times for failing to get proper haircuts and

■ P3

PUNJAB TO BRING RESOLUTION AGAINST CISF DEPLOYMENT AT BHAKRA DAMS

The Mann govt has officially withdrawn the consent granted by Congress-led govt in 2021

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Amid escalating tensions over water sharing with Haryana, the Bhagwant Mann-led Aam Aadmi Party government in Punjab is set to introduce a resolution in the state assembly on Friday, formally opposing the deployment of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel at the Bhakra-Nangal dams managed by the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB).

“We will bring a resolution in the Assembly to overturn the decision made by the Congress government, which had paved the way for CISF deployment at Punjab’s dams and compromised the state’s rights. If we can guard our borders, we are more than capable of securing our dams ourselves”, Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann said during an interaction with media persons.

The move marks a significant assertion of state authority as Punjab seeks to reclaim control over the



security of its key water infrastructure. The decision follows the Cabinet’s formal withdrawal of consent granted by the previous Congress-led state government in October 2021.

The Mann government has strongly objected to the Centre’s recent move to sanction a contingent of 296 armed CISF personnel at the Nangal dam in Punjab. This deployment, according to the Centre, was meant to provide a counter-terrorist security cover amid a growing dispute between Punjab and Haryana over water allocation.

Addressing the media after a Cabinet meeting earlier this week, Finance Minister Harpal Cheema stated, “The previous Charanjit Singh Channi-led Congress government had consented

to the CISF deployment in October 2021. We have withdrawn that consent with immediate effect and will bring a special resolution in the Assembly to officially reject any central deployment at the dams.”

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann echoed this stance, claiming that the Punjab Police is “fully capable” of securing critical infrastructure in the state. Mann has been a vocal critic of the Centre’s move, having previously raised objections during a NITI Aayog meeting in New Delhi. The Centre’s May decision to deploy CISF troops came amid heightened tensions between Punjab and Haryana over the sharing of river waters, particularly from the Bhakra system. With both states laying claim to

a fair share of water from the Nangal dam and BBMB reservoirs, Punjab sees the central security deployment as an attempt to override the state’s autonomy.

The BBMB, set up under the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966, manages water and power resources shared among Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh. In recent years, Punjab has accused the Centre of trying to dilute its representation in BBMB by appointing officers from outside the state.

In 2022, the Punjab Assembly had passed another resolution objecting to the central government’s decision to appoint non-Punjabi officers to the BBMB board — a move that was seen as an erosion of Punjab’s stake in the dam management system. The resolution against CISF deployment, while not legally binding on the Centre, could intensify the standoff and bring greater focus to Punjab’s ongoing demands for greater autonomy over its water and law enforcement policies.

Cong hails SC suggestions on Bihar voter list revision

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday said the Supreme Court’s suggestion that the Election Commission (EC) should allow Aadhaar cards, voter-ID cards and ration cards in the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls in Bihar has come as a “relief for democracy”.

Congress general secretary, organisation, K C Venugopal pointed out that the apex court will hear the case again later this month, while expressing hope that the EC will go with the court’s suggestion.

“Basically, it is a relief for democracy. The case is again fixed for the 28th of this month,” Venugopal told reporters, when asked about the Supreme Court’s suggestion.

He said the court asking the EC to allow Aadhaar cards, ration cards and voter-ID cards for the identification of voters during the special exercise is in itself a big thing.

“That itself is the biggest thing coming from the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has given its view through that to ensure that Aadhaar cards, ration cards and election-ID cards should be part of a verification process in a democratic set up. I think the EC will go with that suggestion of the Supreme Court. Let us wait for that,” the Congress leader said.

‘Acting like party cell of BJP’: Tejashwi targets ECI over Bihar’s roll revision

Patna : As the Supreme Court is hearing pleas challenging Election Commission’s order to conduct Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in poll-bound Bihar, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav accused the poll body of “not issuing clarifications,” even after being asked several times.

Yadav further alleged that the Election Commission is acting like a “party cell” of the BJP, the ruling party in the centre.

Raising questions, the Bihar Leader of Opposition asked the poll panel reasons for not including Aadhaar Card, Ration Card, Job Card and MNREGA Card as required documents for the

The apex court on Thursday allowed the EC to continue with its Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bihar, calling it a “constitutional mandate”. A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joyimalya Bagchi, however, questioned the timing of the move, besides offering its prima facie view that Aadhaar cards, voter-ID cards and ration cards could be considered during the exercise. “We are of

verification process.

Speaking to reporters, Yadav said, “We have approached the court and presented our side. Let’s see what happens in the Court... The biggest question is why are you rejecting Aadhaar Card, Ration Card, Job Card, MNREGA Card? People of Bihar still do not have documents. Election Commission is not issuing any clarifications. Why can’t the Commissioners hold a press conference and clarify everything? Why are they causing confusion? What ego does the EC have? It feels as if the EC is acting like a party cell of the BJP.”

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise being the prima facie view that Aadhaar cards, voter-ID cards and ration cards be allowed in the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls,” the bench said. Noting that none of the petitioners, including the leaders of 10 opposition parties, had prayed for an interim stay of the poll panel’s exercise, the bench sought the response of the EC on the batch of petitions and posted the hearing on July 28.

Don’t cry, try wooing voters: BJP to Oppn

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday said the apex court allowing the Election Commission to continue with the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls in Bihar was a “setback” to the opposition parties protesting the exercise and asked them to work hard to woo their voters, instead of raising hue and cry over it.

BJP MP and the party’s national spokesperson Rajiv Pratap Rudy said that the poll panel initiated the special intensive revision in Bihar ahead of the assembly polls in the state to ensure that only eligible voters exercise their franchise.

“It’s the Election Commission’s constitutional right,” the MP from Bihar’s Saran Lok Sabha seat said.

“The Opposition parties had approached the Supreme Court on the issue. But, the apex court did not stay the process. It’s a major setback to the political parties which started this campaign (against the revision of electoral rolls in Bihar),” Rudy said, when asked for a comment.

These opposition parties must now be scared and have started sensing their defeat in the upcoming Bihar elections, the former Union minister said.

Zonal councils transformed into ‘engines of cooperation’: Shah

TDG NETWORK
RANCHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said zonal councils have transformed from being mere discussion forums into “engines of cooperation,” noting that 83 per cent of issues taken up in their meetings have been resolved.

Shah made the remark at the 27th Eastern Zonal Council meeting, attended by representatives from the four eastern states — Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, and West Bengal — including Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and his Odisha counterpart Mohan Charan Majhi.

“Under the Modi government, regional councils have evolved from mere ‘Forum of Discussion’ into ‘Engines of Cooperation’.

The resolution of 83 per cent of issues during regional council meetings underlines the effectiveness and growing importance of these forums,” Shah said.

In today’s meeting, long-pending complex issues related to Masanjore Dam,

har, and decisive steps were taken with mutual consent towards their resolution.

Shah said the number of zonal council meetings rose to 63 between 2014 and 2025 as compared to 25 between 2004 and 2014.

“We have moved forward



Taiyabpur Barrage and Indrapuri Reservoir were discussed in detail in addition to the issues related to division of assets and liabilities of many public sector undertakings (PSUs) between Bihar and Jharkhand states, which were pending since the time of division of Bi-

from an average of 2 to 3 meetings per year to holding on average 6 meetings per year.

A total of 1,580 issues were discussed in these meetings out of which 1287, i.e. 83 per cent, issues have been resolved,” Shah asserted.

India-US trade deal: Farmers welcome maize, soybean exclusion

AJIT MAINDOLA
NEW DELHI

Even though America has not taken any decision about India in the tariff matter, the farmers of the country have heaved a sigh of relief by excluding some crops from the trade agreement between the two countries. Farmer organizations have expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this relief. The farmers of India were worried that if there was a trade agreement with America, then there might be an exemption for the export of genetically modified soybean and maize. This would have caused a big loss to the farmers of India. But the Government of India listened to the farmers of the country and did not com-

promise on this issue.

President of Bharat Krishak Samaj, Krishnavir Chaudhary, said that there is a wave of happiness among the farmers of soybean and maize due to the decision of the Government of India. In the trade agreement between America and India, India clearly stated that GM crops will not be allowed to be imported into India, especially genetically modified soybean and maize exported by America, because they pose a risk of destroying the indigenous seeds of Indian farmers through cross-pollination.

Chaudhary said that it is necessary to buy GM seeds every time for every crop, which is not possible for the farmers of India.

ED uncovers Rs 419-crore fraud in crackdown on Probo betting platform

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

In a major crackdown on illegal online betting operations, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), has uncovered financial fraud amounting to over Rs 419 crore during search operations targeting Probo Media Technologies Pvt. Ltd. — the operator of the popular online gaming platform “Probo.”

The raids, conducted on July 8 and 9 at four premises across Gurugram and Jind of Haryana, were part of an investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The ED’s action focused on the company and its promoters, Sachin Subhaschandra Gupta and Ashish Garg, in connection with a web of illegal gambling and betting activities being carried out

across India.

The company, which markets itself as an “opinion trading” platform through its app and website, allegedly lured users by offering monetary rewards for answering simple “Yes or No” questions.

While this was promoted as a skill-based activity, the ED’s probe found that the system functioned purely on chance, making it indistinguishable from gambling — a violation of the Public Gambling Act, 1867.

The investigation revealed that Probo Media Technologies had received Rs 134.84 crore in foreign investments against the issuance of preference shares. These funds were routed from offshore entities based in Mauritius, the Cayman Islands, and other jurisdictions, raising serious concerns about the

legitimacy and intent of the capital flow.

During the raids, the ED seized incriminating documents and digital records. Authorities also froze investments worth Rs 284.5 crore, including fixed deposits and equity holdings. In addition, three bank lockers linked to the accused have been sealed pending further investigation. The probe exposed several disturbing practices — the platform had no checks to prevent minors from registering, failed to follow proper Know Your Customer (KYC) procedures, and used misleading advertisements to attract users. The app also promoted betting disguised as opinion trading, even allowing predictions related to sensitive topics like election results, raising ethical and legal red flags.

Congress to follow Maha strategy in Bihar, set to accept all RJD conditions

AJIT MAINDOLA
NEW DELHI

From the visit of Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi last Wednesday, it has become clear that Congress will adopt the strategy of Maharashtra in Bihar as well. It means that Congress will now accept all the conditions of Rashtriya Janata Dal, which is leading the Mahagathbandhan. In Maharashtra also, Congress had accepted whatever Uddhav Thackeray’s Shiv Sena and Sharad Pawar’s NCP said. Whether it was a matter of seat sharing or ticket denial, Congress accepted all the conditions. Congress



also suffered losses due to this, but Rahul Gandhi is not ready to accept that the election of Maharashtra was fair. That is why Rahul made the issue of irregularities in the election of Maharashtra an issue by linking it to the changes being made in the voter list of Bihar.

By doing this, Congress is trying to kill two birds with one stone.

One is to save its existence in the politics of Maharashtra and the other is to appease RJD in Bihar. With the coming together of the Thackeray brothers, Congress is sure to be isolated

in Maharashtra.

Congress is also realizing that it is difficult to survive the alliance in Maharashtra. That is why it has changed its strategy regarding Bihar. The behavior of Congress in the last few days before Rahul’s visit indicated that Congress was either preparing to contest the elections alone in Bihar or was pressurizing RJD to get more seats.

Because the new in-charge of Congress, Alavaru, and Kanhaiya Kumar had opened a different front. In a way, they were not giving any importance to RJD.

Tripura rains: 250 families displaced, 16 camps set up

NIBIR DEKA
GUWAHATI

Over 250 families have been rendered homeless due to flash floods triggered by incessant rainfall in South Tripura on Wednesday.

While the water level has now receded, 840 people from 250 families were displaced, District Magistrate Md Sajad P said, adding that the families are now being sheltered in 16 relief camps set up across the South Tripura district.

The floods, caused due to the Muhuri River flowing above the danger level of 15.70 metres, submerged both sides of the embankment and affected several low-lying areas in Belonia and Santirbazar subdivisions.



Continuous heavy rainfall has crossed South Tripura has triggered alarming flood conditions, especially along the Muhuri and Feni rivers. The water level of the Muhuri River at the Belonia gauge station recorded a dangerous 15.70 metres at 7:00 PM today, significantly exceeding both the danger level of 15.00 metres and the extreme danger level of 15.50 metres. This rise in

water level is approaching the historical high of 15.74 metres recorded in 1973. Authorities have issued a red alert and are urging residents in low-lying areas to stay alert and be prepared for immediate evacuation if necessary.

In response to the escalating situation, the administration has opened six relief camps in Sabroom to accommodate displaced

families and provide emergency support. The 9th Battalion of Tripura State Rifles (Disaster Management) has been mobilized to the Sabroom Sub-Divisional Magistrate’s office to assist in ongoing rescue and relief operations.

The top district official said that as a part of precautionary measures, all schools and anganwadi centres in the district remained closed for the day, while the rescue teams continued to evacuate victims to elevated areas. “The district administration is fully prepared to handle the situation. A team from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has reached Belonia, and necessary relief measures are underway,” he said.

Indian Army undertakes flood relief operations as heavy rains lash Northeast

NIBIR DEKA
NEW DELHI

In response to the recent wave of heavy rains and urban flooding in the North Eastern region, the Indian Army has launched extensive Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations under

Operation Jal Rahat 2, with coordinated deployment across Nagaland, Assam, and Manipur. These efforts are being led by Headquarters Inspector General Assam Rifles (North) [HQ IGAR (N)] in collaboration with local civil administration.

On 10 July 2025, the Dep-

uty Commissioner of Dimaapur formally requisitioned assistance from the Indian Army to provide immediate flood relief in Singrijan Colony, one of the worst-hit areas. The Army swiftly responded with the deployment of an Engineer Task Force (ETF) team. While a verbal de-requisition was received later in

the day, the Army remains on standby with resources mobilised through the Flood Relief Control Centre at HQ IGAR (N).

In Upper Assam, the Dhansiri River in Golaghat district has breached danger levels. Although water levels are now receding, the Indian Army continues to monitor

the situation closely and is ready to intervene should the need arise.

In Manipur, the Nambol River flowing through Imphal West and Bishnupur districts has also surpassed danger levels. While floodwaters are beginning to recede, the Army remains actively engaged in relief

operations in coordination with civil authorities.

As of 10 July 2025, the Indian Army has intensified its flood relief efforts across the affected regions. A total of 40 relief columns—comprising 24 main and 16 reserve units—have been deployed to assist in rescue and humanitarian operations.

So far, 3,820 individuals have been rescued. The Army has distributed 1,361 food packets and supplied 15,421 water bottles to those in need.

Additionally, medical aid has been provided to 2,095 individuals as part of the ongoing relief efforts.

The Indian Army remains

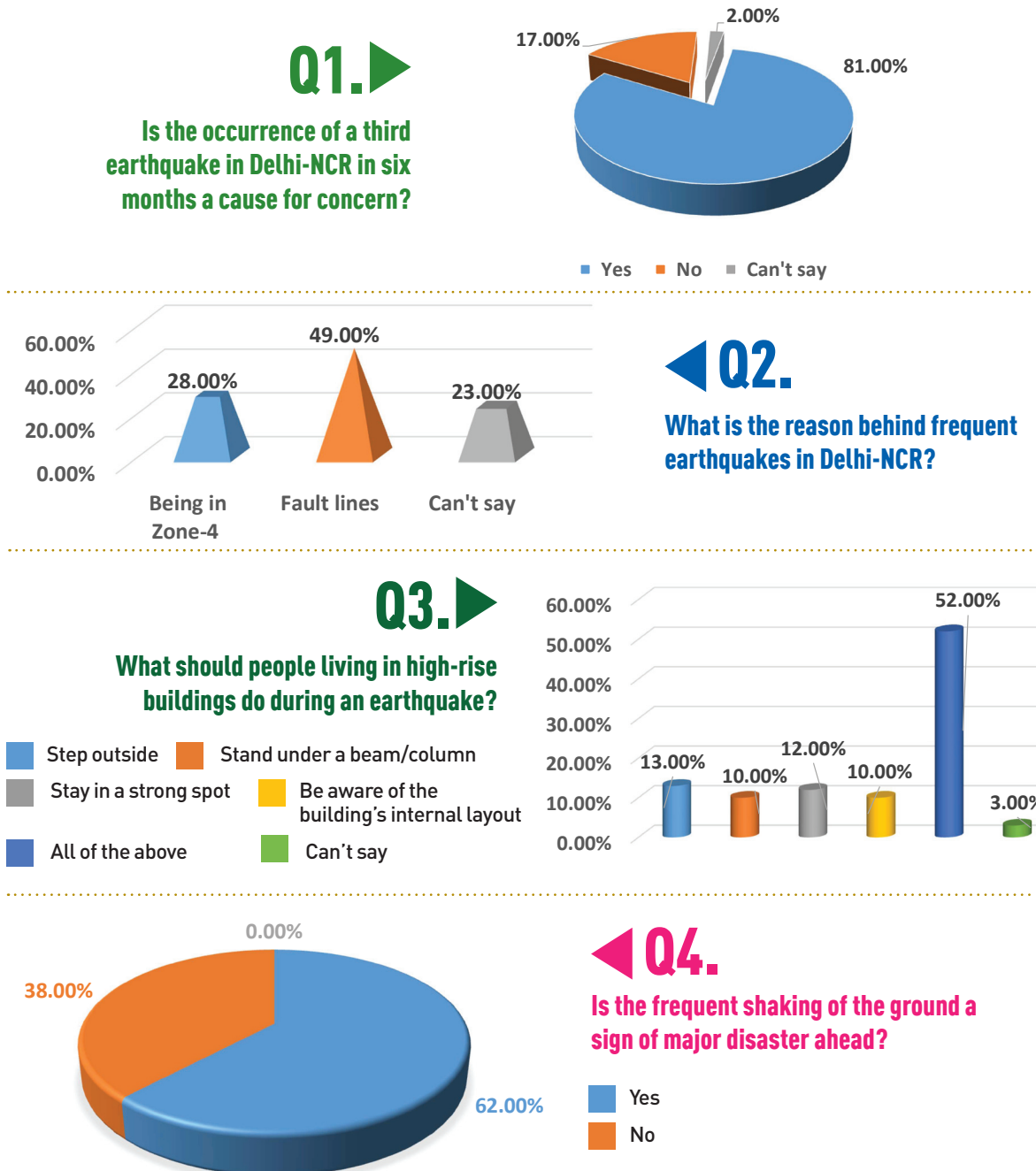
steadfast in its commitment to assist fellow citizens in times of natural calamity. Through timely intervention, rapid mobilisation, and seamless coordination with civil authorities, the Army continues to provide life-saving support and essential relief to the affected population across the North East.

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON EARTHQUAKE IN DELHI NCR

62% of respondents believe frequent shaking of the ground is a sign of major disaster ahead.

A recent survey conducted after the third earthquake in six months in Delhi-NCR reveals growing public concern. Over 80% view repeated tremors as alarming, with

nearly half blaming fault lines. Most respondents believe awareness and preparedness are essential, and 62% fear the quakes may signal a larger disaster ahead.



SC refuses to stay Bihar voter list revision

CONTINUED FROM P1

power to conduct any such exercise in Bihar for it was mandated under the Constitution and the last such exercise happened in 2003. While referring to the petitioners' contentions, the bench said the ECI had to answer three questions as the SIR exercise in Bihar went to "root of democracy and power to vote". The questions of the petitioners, including political parties and their lead-

ers aside from civil society members and organisations, deal with the ECI's power to conduct such an exercise and its timing. Dwivedi said with passage of time, electoral rolls need to be revised to look into inclusion or exclusion of voter names with the SIR being the one exercise to do it. He asked if the ECI did not have the power to revise the electoral roll then who did. The poll panel, however, assured the top court of not leaving out anyone from the

voter list without an opportunity to be heard. At the outset, senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for NGO 'Association for Democratic Reforms', said the revision of electoral rolls can be permitted under the Representation of People Act. The entire SIR will cover around 79 crore citizens, he said, and even the voter ID and Aadhaar cards are not being considered. Over 10 petitions have been filed in the SC, includ-

ing one by NGO 'Association for Democratic Reforms', the lead petitioner. RJD MP Manoj Jha and Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, Congress' K C Venugopal, NCP (SP) leader Supriya Sule, CPI leader D Raja, Samajwadi Party's Harinder Singh Malik, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Arvind Sawant, JMM's Sarfraz Ahmed and Dipankar Bhattacharya of CPI (ML) have also moved the top court, seeking direction for quashing the EC order.

Woman tennis player shot dead at home

CONTINUED FROM P1

Doubles and achieved a career-best ranking of #113. She was ranked #75 in the AITA Girls Under-18 in 2018 and later reached #35 in AITA Women's Singles and #53 in Doubles. After sustaining an injury two years ago, she had shifted her focus to coaching and was running a tennis academy in Gurugram. The police officials associated with the investigation said that the accused has

confessed to the crime. The accused has been taken into custody, and the matter is under investigation. Radhika's former coach Manoj Bharadwaj expressed grief over the incident, calling her "a focused and disciplined player with great potential." The news has sparked shock and outrage across the sporting community and social media, with many questioning how such a tragedy could happen within a family.

Jhajjar jolted by morning earthquake

CONTINUED FROM P1

shaking. The tremors lasted nearly 10 seconds and there were no reports of any major impact on buildings. "It was a powerful tremor—probably the strongest I've ever felt in my life," said Sunil Kumar, a resident of Jhajjar. He added that many people ran out of their homes in panic when the quake struck. In Gurugram and Noida, office workers reported

shaking monitors and floors, with some stepping outside for safety. This morning's earthquake follows a history of minor seismic activity in the region. Earlier this year, in February, a 4.0-magnitude tremor was recorded in Delhi-NCR. Experts note that the region, located near active tectonic plates, is prone to occasional quakes, though major events remain rare.

Six states get Rs 1,067 cr as flood relief

CONTINUED FROM P1

apart from the financial aid, providing all logistic assistance, including deployment of requisite National Disaster Response Force, Army and Air Force, has been the priority of the government. Among the six flood affected states, Assam received Rs 375.60 crore, Rs 29.20 crore was given to Manipur, Rs 30.40 crore to Meghalaya, Rs 22.80 crore to Mizoram, Rs 153.20 crore to Kerala and Rs 455.60 crore to Uttarakhnad as the central share from SDRF, according



to a statement issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs. These states have been affected due to extremely heavy rainfall, floods and landslides during the south-

west monsoon this year. The Modi government has provided more than Rs 8,000 crore from SDRF/ National Disaster Response Fund to various states this

year, the statement said. It has already released Rs 6,166.00 crore from the SDRF to 14 states and Rs 1,988.91 crore from the NDRF to 12 states. In addition, Rs 726.20 crore was released from the State Disaster Mitigation Fund to five states and Rs 17.55 crore from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund was also released to two states, the statement said. During the ongoing monsoon, 104 teams of the NDRF were deployed in 21 states/UTs for rescue and relief operations.

ODISHA ONCE AGAIN SHOWS ITS DISASTER MANAGEMENT SKILLS DURING RATH YATRA STAMPEDE WITH AI AND PROPER PLANNING

RAKESH SINGH
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on number of occasions has praised the disaster response of Odisha on public platforms. The same intent of the state's disaster management was again on display after the recent incident of stampede at the Jagannath Rath Yatra in Puri.

The Odisha Police minimised the disruptions despite the stampede and brought the Rath Yatra back to normal and the Rath Yatra was concluded without further damages. The Rath Yatra this year highlighted exemplary leadership in action by Odisha DGP Y B Khurania's masterful management. The Puri Rath Yatra, one of the world's largest religious festivals, draws millions to Puri for the grand procession of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra. Managing this colossal event demands meticulous planning, seamless coordination and exceptional leadership. This year, the DGPKhurania displayed unparalleled leadership, ensuring the festival's success through innovative technology, strategic collaboration and on-ground presence.

He set a new benchmark for crowd management and public safety. This article highlights seven key aspects of DGP Khurania's leadership during the 2025 Puri Rath Yatra. The state also took pioneering AI-driven traffic management for the first time. Khurania had introduced AI-equipped CCTV

cameras for traffic management, a groundbreaking step for the Rath Yatra. These cameras provided real-time traffic flow analysis, identifying bottlenecks and enabling efficient vehicular movement on the Grand Road (Bada Danda) and surrounding areas. This innovation ensured smoother transit for devotees and emergency services, minimising disruptions.

Khurania's commitment to modernising policing strategies highlights his forward-thinking approach. Another step included commanding from an Advanced Integrated Control Room under DGP Khurania's hands-on oversight from a state-of-the-art integrated control room. Equipped with advanced warning systems, hotspot generation tools, and real-time crowd monitoring, the control room served as the nerve centre for security operations. His presence enabled swift decision-making and proactive responses to potential overcrowding or security risks, showcasing a blend of strategic foresight and operational efficiency.

COLLABORATIVE SYNERGY WITH MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

The Rath Yatra requires seamless coordination, and Khurania excelled in uniting civil administration, temple authorities, health departments, fire services and other agencies.

Through regular meetings and clear communication, he ensured alignment on objectives, proactively



Odisha DGP Y B Khurania

addressing health emergencies, fire safety and logistical challenges. This collaborative ecosystem reflects his ability to lead through partnership and consensus.

For Rath Yatra, building a competent team of senior IPS Officers and Khurania's strategic delegation to a skilled team of senior IPS officers were a cornerstone of success. By assigning roles based on their expertise—crowd control, traffic management, or emergency response—he ensured smooth operations. His trust in his team, along with clear directions, highlights his acumen as a leader who values competence and collaboration.

UNPRECEDENTED MOBILIZATION OF POLICE FORCE

The 2025 Rath Yatra saw an unprecedented deployment of 10,000 police personnel under Khurania's leadership. Meticulously planned, this force secured the procession route and managed entry/exit points. Khurania ensured officers were trained, briefed and positioned effectively, demonstrating his organisational prowess and resource manage-

ment skills.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

Khurania's on-ground presence was a defining feature. Actively overseeing operations, interacting with officers and addressing challenges in real time, he instilled confidence in both the police force and the public. His hands-on approach exemplified leadership that combines strategic planning with direct engagement.

EXEMPLARY EMPATHY AND LEADERSHIP IN CRISIS

Following a tragic stampede that claimed three lives, DGP Khurania demonstrated remarkable empathy and leadership. From ground zero, he led a dedicated team to ensure the injured received prompt medical treatment, personally supervising arrangements until the Sunavesh of Mahaprabhu. His compassionate response and effective management restored public confidence, enabling the largest gathering on Sunavesh day to proceed smoothly under his leadership. This showcased his ability to navigate crises with resilience and care.

'War of birds': Tharoor takes Emergency jibe

CONTINUED FROM P1

slums were mercilessly demolished and cleared. Thousands of people were rendered homeless. Their welfare was not taken into consideration." The Thiruvananthapuram MP wrote that democracy is not something to be taken lightly; it is a precious legacy that must be constantly nurtured and preserved. "Let it serve as a lasting reminder to people everywhere," Tharoor said. According to him, today's India is not the India of 1975. Tharoor and Tagore had also indulged in "bird talk" last month to convey their views. The Tharoor-Congress rift had taken a turn towards what some termed a "war of

birds" as Tagore had sought to establish the pecking order with an X message to his colleague last month. Tharoor, who has been garnering attention for his praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and is known for his wordplay, started the bird analogy battle on Wednesday. Tagore followed the cue a day later. Last month, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge took a jibe at Tharoor and said his party believes in the "country first" mantra but for some, it is "Modi first and country later". Soon after, Tharoor put out a cryptic post on X with an image of a bird and this caption: "Don't ask permission to fly. The wings are yours. And the sky belongs to no one..."

The post was seen by many as the Thiruvananthapuram MP's response to the dig with a veiled message that he would do his own thing and would not be restrained. A day later, Tagore said as if in direct response, "Don't ask permission to fly. Birds don't need clearance to rise... But in today even a free bird must watch the skies -- hawks, vultures, and 'eagles' are always hunting." "Freedom isn't free, especially when the predators wear patriotism as feathers," Tagore said. To drive home his point, he had shared a chart with the list of birds known as "hunters of the sky". The chart contained descriptions of birds such as bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, turkey, vulture and great-

horned owl. In another article last month, Tharoor said the diplomatic outreach following Operation Sindoor was a moment of national resolve and effective communication. The Prime Minister's Office shared Tharoor's article on X. Remarks by the leader, who also headed one of the delegations sent abroad to spread the government's message on Operation Sindoor, were seen as likely to irk the Congress party and widen cracks in his ties with its leadership. Following the Pahalgam terror attack, Tharoor has been making comments on the India-Pakistan conflict and the diplomatic outreach that are at variance with the stand of the Congress.

Minor students stab principal

CONTINUED FROM P1

wearing their uniforms improperly. Agitated over the repeated reprimands, the students allegedly brought a folding knife to school and stabbed the principal multiple times. The incident was captured on the school's CCTV cameras, showing the boys fleeing the scene. One of them was seen discarding the weapon shortly after the attack. Despite efforts by school staff to rush him to a private hospital in Hisar, the principal succumbed to his injuries. The incident took place on the Guru Purnima, a day traditionally dedicated to celebrating the bond between teachers and students — has spread shockwaves among the students and teachers of the school. The police said that the suspects are

currently on the run and the FIR has been registered under relevant sections of the BNS. Police teams were actively pursuing leads, reviewing CCTV footage, and collecting eyewitness accounts to reconstruct the events leading up to the crime. Investigators are also exploring whether the boys were influenced by external elements, such as possible gang affiliations — a possibility that remains under examination. Principal's body has been sent for post-mortem, and a detailed investigation is underway to uncover the full motive behind the attack. The incident reminded the 2018 incident of Yamunanagar when an 18 years old class XII student had gunned down his school principal Ritu Chhabra (36) inside office in Swami Vivekananda Public school in Thapar Colony area of Yamunanagar city.

Punjab okays Rs 10 lakh health cover

CONTINUED FROM P1

be available at all government hospitals and empanelled private hospitals and no resident of Punjab will now have to forgo medical treatment due to financial constraints. In its 2025-26 budget, the Aam Aadmi Party government had announced that it would extend Rs 10 lakh per annum insurance cover each for all the families in Punjab. A sum of Rs 778 crore was allocated for this purpose. So far, 45 lakh families in Punjab are enrolled in government health insurance schemes: 16 lakh families are covered under the Central government's Ayushman Bharat Yojana, and 29 lakh families are covered under the Punjab government's Mukh Mantri Sarbat Sehat Bima Yojana.

29 ACTORS, INFLUENCERS, YOUTUBERS BOOKED OVER ONLINE BETTING PROBE

The probe over money laundering involves celebrities, including Vijay Deverakonda, Rana Daggubati, and Prakash Raj.

TDG NETWORK
HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate has filed a money laundering case to look into the role of more than two dozen celebrities, including actors like Vijay Deverakonda, Rana Daggubati and Prakash Raj, apart from some social media influencers and YouTubers in Telangana as part of a money laundering probe against certain online betting platforms, official sources said on Thursday.

These outlets are alleged to have generated “illicit” funds worth crores of rupees through illegal betting and gambling, the sources said.

The federal probe agency has taken cognisance of as

RACKET

- They are accused of endorsing illegal online betting platforms like Jungle Rummy, JeetWin, and Lotus365.
- These platforms allegedly generated illicit funds worth crores of rupees.
- Celebrities reportedly received endorsement fees; some claim ignorance of the platforms’ true nature.
- ED is recording statements and collecting more FIRs and complaints to track the proceeds of crime.

many as five state police FIRs to book its case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said.

About 29 celebrities, including Deverakonda, Daggubati, Manchu Lak-

shmi, Raj, Nidhi Agarwal, Pranitha Subhash, Ananya Nagalla, TV host Srimukhi apart from local social media influencers and YouTubers have been booked in the ED case.

These celebrities are sus-

pected to have “endorsed” online betting apps like Jungle Rummy, JeetWin, Lotus365 etc. in lieu of getting celebrity or endorsement fee, the sources said.

Some of these “well known” persons, the source-

Cong claims 16 bridge-collapse incidents in Gujarat in last 4 years, seeks SIT probe

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A day after a bridge collapsed in Gujarat, the Congress on Thursday claimed that 16 such incidents took place in the state in the last four years and demanded an SIT to probe them, threatening to take to the streets if its demand is not met.

Seeking the resignation of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, the opposition party also slammed the BJP over the bridge collapse in Vadodara district, alleging its leadership and government have crossed all limits of indifference as they remain busy in making speeches and issuing advertisements in the name of governance.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that there was a leadership crisis, corruption all around and incompetence prevailing under the

BJP rule, and asserted that the people would give a befitting reply when the time comes.

At least 15 people were killed as several vehicles plunged into the Mahisagar river after a portion of a four-decade-old bridge collapsed in Vadodara district on Wednesday morning.

A slab of the Gambhira-Mujpur bridge, which connects central Gujarat to the Saurashtra region of the state, collapsed at around 7 am on Wednesday. This caused the vehicles passing through the bridge to plunge into the river.

“Accidents have become a common thing in the country. Sometimes a train accident, sometimes a bridge developing cracks soon after inauguration. The country has not yet recovered from the plane crash and yesterday the news of a bridge collapse came from Gujarat,” Kharge said in a post on X in Hindi.

“We have deep condolences for the families of the victims,” he said.

Three years ago it was said that the situation was “dangerous” due to “vibrations” in the bridge but still nothing was done, the Congress chief said, citing media reports.

This is the seventh incident of bridge collapse in Gujarat since 2021, he said.

“The BJP leadership and government have crossed all limits of indifference as they remain busy only in making speeches and issuing advertisements in the name of ‘governance’ in the whole country,” Kharge said.

“This is the result of leadership crisis, corruption all around, lack of ability to run the government, and incompetence,” he alleged.

It is hoped that the people of the country are seeing this and will give a befitting reply to it when the time comes, Kharge added.

Ensure J&K safety: Mamata to Centre after Omar meet

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

Following a meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Kolkata, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee requested the Centre to take urgent steps to ensure security of Jammu and Kashmir, saying this is essential to boost tourism in the region.

“The Centre must take steps to ensure safety and security so that more and more tourists visit Kashmir. It must also strengthen border security in the region,” Banerjee told reporters after the meeting in Nabanna, the State secretariat.

After the meeting, Omar Abdulla told the media: “I



West Bengal Chief Minister (CM) Mamata Banerjee with Jammu and Kashmir CM Omar Abdullah during their meeting at the state secretariat Nabanna, in Howrah.

just had a great meeting with Mamata Didi. Our relationship goes back a long way to when we were both in Parliament. I came to thank her because she has always shown sympathy toward Jammu and Kashmir and its people. When

we were going through a tough phase in 2019, Didi was the first to express her concern and say that what was happening was wrong. Recently, in April, after the Pahalgam attack and Operation Sindoor, Didi sent a team to Poonch, Rajouri,

and other areas affected by cross-border shelling to express condolences.”

During the meeting, the two leaders discussed strengthening cooperation between Jammu & Kashmir and West Bengal, particularly in the areas of industry and tourism.

“I want Jammu & Kashmir and West Bengal to work in close coordination in sectors of industry and tourism,” Omar Abdullah said after the meeting.

Banerjee said Abdullah had invited her to visit Kashmir, and she expressed her willingness to travel there after the Durga Puja festivities later this year.

“The people of Jammu and Kashmir are like our brothers and sisters. I have been

es said, have earlier stated that they did not know the exact functioning of the apps and products dished out by them and claimed they did not associate themselves with these platforms for any wrongdoing or illegal activity like betting. The ED is expected to record their statements in the coming days even as it is collecting more FIRs and looking for more complainants who were duped or cheated by these betting platforms.

A comprehensive investigation is underway to find the estimated amount of the “proceeds of crime” generated by these apps and the exact role of the celebrities. Their guilt will be decided following recording of their statements and version, the sources said.

No vacancy for CM post: Sidda on change of guard buzz in Karnataka

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday put all speculations to rest about a possible change of guard in the southern state saying that there is ‘no vacancy’ and he will complete his five year term.

The remarks came in the wake of the power struggle with his deputy, DK Shivakumar, as both have been camping in the national capital for past two days.

It was Shivakumar, who had first arrived on Tuesday and Siddaramaiah arriving a day later. The speculations got strong buzz after Shivakumar, who is also the Karnataka Congress unit chief met party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra at 10 Janpath on Wednesday morning. Responding to NewsX question, Sidda-



ramaiah said, “DK Shivakumar himself said there is no vacancy for the Chief Minister post. And today I am repeating the same that there is no vacancy for the CM post.”

When asked that if the party had agreed to rotational Chief Ministerial post and if there ass any vacancy for the post, he said, “There is no 50-50 formula. I am the Chief Minister of Karnataka.”

Siddaramaiah, when pressed further that few

MLAs have been echoing their sentiments for a change of guard, said, “No discussion taken place.”

He also said that whatever decision is taken by the party high command both of us will follow and full obey. He also said that there is no appointment with Rahul Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge. According to party sources, tension has been simmering in Siddaramaiah as well as Shivakumar camp for the last few months.

The Congress has faced the issue of leadership crisis in Karnataka and the party had to rush incharge Randeep Singh Surjewala to Karnataka earlier this month.

Surjewala had also refuted the claims of any possible change in guard in the state along with Shivakumar.

Toll rises to 17 in Gujarat bridge collapse; search ops to find missing person on

TDG NETWORK
VADODARA

The death toll in the collapse of a bridge over the Mahisagar river in Gujarat’s Vadodara district climbed to 16 on Thursday, and the search operation for three to four missing persons is currently underway, officials said.

Several vehicles fell into the Mahisagar river after a portion of the four-decade-old bridge, connecting Anand and Vadodara districts, caved in near Gambhira village close to Padra town of Vadodara on Wednesday morning.

“So far, 16 bodies have been recovered, while three to four persons are still



missing,” Vadodara district Superintendent of Police Rohan Anand said.

“The search and rescue operation is still on,” he said.

Vadodara Collector Anil Dhameliya has said earlier that teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disas-

ter Response Force (SDRF) are conducting a search in the river to find out the survivors, if any, or bodies of the victims.

“Teams of the NDRF and SDRF are conducting a search up to four kilometres downstream the river... People can call our control room to inform us about

other missing persons,” he told reporters at the site.

“Rain and a thick layer of mud in the river is making the rescue operation a challenging task because no machine is working in such a situation. A special bridge is being constructed on the shore to get closer to the drowned vehicles in the middle of the river,” the collector said.

A slab of the Gambhira-Mujpur bridge, which connects central Gujarat to the Saurashtra region of the state, collapsed at around 7 am on Wednesday.

This caused vehicles passing through the bridge to plunge into the river, the officials said.

Temple priests strengthen Sanatan: Ramdas Malik

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Ramdas Malik, the co-convenor of Delhi State BJP Business Cell, welcomed Pandit Pawan Shastri, the chief priest of Hare Krishna Temple located in Rajendra Nagar, Delhi, by presenting him a shawl and garland. BJP leader Ramdas Malik said that temple priests are preachers of Sanatan Dharma and play an important role in the functioning of religion. He emphasized that it should be the duty of every Sanatani to honor and respect them.

SC agrees to hear plea to save Kerala nurse on death row

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear a plea seeking a direction to the Centre to use diplomatic channels to save an Indian nurse facing execution for murder in Yemen on July 16.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joy-malya Bagchi posted the hearing on July 14 before a regular bench after advocate Subhash Chandran KR said diplomatic channels need to be explored at the earliest.

Senior advocate Ragenth Basant and Chandran



submitted that payment of blood money to the family of the deceased permissible under Sharia law can be explored.

The family of the deceased may pardon the Kerala nurse if blood money is paid, Basant submitted.

The bench asked Chandran, who is the advocate on record in the case, to serve the copy of the petition to the Attorney General and sought his assistance.

Flt Lt Rishi of ill-fated fighter jet dreamt of becoming fighter pilot

TDG NETWORK
JODHPUR/ JAIPUR

Flight Lieutenant Rishi Raj Singh, who died in a crash of a Jaguar fighter plane during a routine sortie near Churu in Rajasthan on Wednesday, was fascinated by fighter planes from childhood and dreamt of becoming a fighter pilot, his family member said.

Singh was one of the two Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots who were killed in the crash on Wednesday. He was flying with Squadron Leader Lokender, who hailed from Kheri Sadh village in Haryana’s Rohtak.

“He (Rishi Raj Singh) was brilliant in studies and after completing his schooling from Jodhpur, he appeared in the entrance examination for NDA. After selection, he went on to join NDA in Pune and chose the Air Force to realise his dream to become a flyer,” Pratap Singh, a family member told reporters on Thursday.

Rishi Raj Singh, who was 23, is survived by his father Jaswant Singh, a hotelier; his mother Bhanwar Kanwar, a homemaker; and his younger brother Yuvraj Singh, who is pursuing his senior secondary education in Jodhpur.

IAF jet in Churu had tech fault: Kin

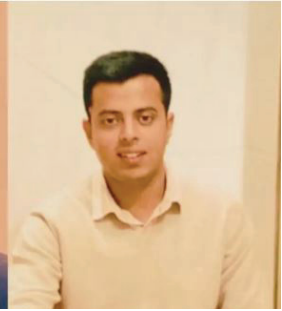
TDG NETWORK
ROHTAK

A day after the Indian Air Force’s Jaguar trainer aircraft crashed in Rajasthan’s Churu claiming two pilots, Gyanendra, elder brother of deceased Squadron Leader Lokender Singh Sindhu said that as per the information, there was a technical fault with the craft as a result of which, it started crashing over a densely populated area.

The elder brother of the deceased pilot said, “He made the highest sacrifice that a soldier can make for his country. He died while serving his country. He died while saving civilians. My



family and I are very proud of him. He is survived by his wife, a one-month-old son, his sister, mother, father, and (paternal) grandparents. His last leave was on 30 June. We had a family function that day to celebrate the birth of his son. He rejoined work on 1 July. We talked on text three hours before the accident and on a video call



the night before.”

“As per the information we got, there was a technical fault with the aircraft because of which it started crashing over a densely populated area. They managed to fly away from that area, but in the process, their aircraft got very close to the ground. In a Jaguar Trainer, if you go below 500 feet,

then you cannot eject. That’s why the copilots could not eject from the plane,” he further said.

Cousin of the second deceased, Flight Lt Rishi Raj Singh, said, “The news was very shocking for our family. We had never seen his father cry before. Rishi was very young. His career had just begun. He was selected in the NDA in his first attempt. He was very bright. He had a good nature and was a great brother.”

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday expressed sorrow over the death of two pilots who were onboard the Indian Air Force Jaguar fighter aircraft that crashed near Churu.

'IAF pilot became father a month ago'

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

Squadron Leader Lokendra Singh Sindhu, one of the two Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots who were killed in a crash of a Jaguar fighter jet near Churu in Rajasthan on Wednesday, had become father a month ago and the family in Haryana had been in celebration mode before the tragedy struck.

Sindhu, hailing from Kheri Sadh village in Haryana’s Rohtak, spoke with his family through a video call on Tuesday evening and just hours before the incident took place, he exchanged messages with his family, enquiring about general welfare.



Some of Sindhu’s family members, who spoke to reporters in Rohtak on Thursday, said the family was celebrating the birth of the pilot’s son who was born exactly a month ago on June 10, but no one knew what fate had in store.

Flight Lieutenant Rishiraj Singh (23) was the other IAF pilot who was killed in the crash on Wednesday morning.

SEVERAL AREAS FLOODED AS HEAVY RAIN LASHES DELHI-NCR

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi and the parts of the National Capital Region (NCR) have been receiving incessant rainfall since last night.

The rainfall, which began on Wednesday evening, brought much-needed relief from the intense humidity and high temperatures, with overcast skies persisting across the region.

However, the incessant rainfall has caused waterlogging in several parts of Gurugram, due to which vehicles were seen wading through the waterlogged roads.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted “generally cloudy sky with moderate rain” for the national capital. The weather agency has predicted “thunderstorm with rain” for the next three days for Delhi.

As per the Regional Met Centre of Chandigarh, the weather of Gurugram is likely to remain with “generally cloudy sky with a few spells of rain or thunder-



showers” for over next two days. Meanwhile, a fresh spell of rain also showered on Ambala city of Haryana. The weather agency has forecasted ‘generally cloudy sky with a few spells of rain or thundershowers’ conditions to persist in the Ambala district till tomorrow.

Rajasthan’s Ajmer also witnessed waterlogging in many parts of the city after heavy rainfall. The premier weather agency has forecasted ‘thunderstorm with rain’ conditions to persist in the district till July 13.

Earlier, the IMD stated that the active monsoon conditions are likely to continue over central parts of the country during the next 4-5 days.

On Wednesday, AAP

leader Saurabh Bhargava shared a video on X, in which he claimed that waterlogging had occurred at Shalimar Bagh.

“See the condition of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta’s own assembly, Shalimar Bagh,” Saurabh Bhargava posted on X.

In another post on X, the AAP leader shared footage where he claimed that waterlogging has occurred in Delhi’s Patparganj area.

Meanwhile, the devastating monsoon season in Himachal Pradesh has claimed 85 lives so far, with 54 deaths directly linked to rain-related disasters and 31 others lost to road accidents, according to the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA).

While, Delhi experienced incessant rainfall since Wednesday, causing waterlogging in several areas, including Bindapur in Uttam Nagar, where roads are submerged under water.

No waterlogging, solving backlog of 27 years: CM

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday claimed that there was no waterlogging in the national capital following heavy rain in Delhi-NCR from Wednesday night.

CM Rekha Gupta said, “We are solving the backlog of the last 27 years of Delhi one by one. Even after such heavy rains, there was no waterlogging in Delhi.”

She added that there was no waterlogging at Minto Bridge, which made headlines in the media every monsoon.

“It was a trend for a picture of a waterlogged Minto Bridge to be published in the newspapers. But this time it did not happen,” the Chief Minister told reporters.

She added, “Delhi will be in an even better condition by the next monsoon.”

Meanwhile, Delhi experienced



rienced incessant rainfall since Wednesday, causing waterlogging in several areas, including Bindapur in Uttam Nagar, where roads are submerged under water.

Traffic also came to a standstill in many parts of the national capital following the heavy rainfall.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Delhi President Saurabh Bhargava took to X, shared images of waterlogged streets and slammed the BJP for its repeated failure to tackle flooding, even with all four ‘engines’ in

power. Sharing photos of waterlogging in Lutyens’ Delhi, Saurabh Bhargava said, “This is Lutyens’ Delhi. Just an hour of rain, and this is the state of the road near the official residence of PWD, Irrigation and Flood Control Minister Parvash Verma.” Calling out the BJP’s failed promises, Bhargava stated, “BJP’s Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, PWD Minister Parvash Verma, and other ministers and leaders made tall claims that Delhi won’t drown this year.

Zero complaint in area under NDMC: Chahal

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) has been working to prevent waterlogging in various areas of Delhi. On Wednesday, NDMC Vice Chairman Kuljeet Singh Chahal inspected the pumping of drains on Africa Avenue road under the railway bridge.

While speaking to the media, Chahal stated that waterlogging was almost nil in Delhi today, with zero complaints received in the area under NDMC. He attributed this success to a team effort and reiterated the NDMC’s promise to the people of Delhi to provide a waterlogging-free city.

Chahal said, “... Waterlogging was almost nil in Delhi today. We received zero complaints of waterlogging in the area under NDMC today... This is a team effort and our promise to the people of Delhi...”

The NDMC Vice Chairman



also inspected the rainwater harvesting system in Bharti Nagar, an area that experienced waterlogging in the past. Chahal highlighted that Bharti Nagar is a live example of controlling waterlogging with rainwater harvesting. He added that the NDMC has arranged pumps for low-lying areas to remove stagnant pools of water and transfer the water to the Lodhi Road drain. Chahal emphasised that the NDMC has taken multiple initiatives to control waterlogging in Bharti Nagar, where water had previously entered houses.

“Many areas of Bharti Nagar experienced waterlogging last time. The water had entered the houses, too.

Delhi-NCR residents shaken by morning tremors

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Residents in the Delhi-NCR region were left frightened as an earthquake of magnitude 4.4 struck the Jhajjar district in Haryana on Thursday morning. The locals called it a “scary” experience.

A resident of Jhajjar told ANI, “I was working in my office when suddenly the computer systems and fans started shaking. So, it was quite scary. We rushed out. The epicentre is in Jhajjar. So, we are anticipating an aftershock. I had never felt such an earthquake before.”

Rajbala, who experienced the tremors in Jhajjar, said, “I was sitting on my terrace and cleaning something. When everything started shaking vigorously. I had never felt such an earthquake before.”

A Ghaziabad resident noted that the Delhi-NCR region often experiences earthquakes, so people should be mindful and take



precautions.

“I had woken up just at the time when there was a jolt. I was scared. There was another earthquake just a few days ago. Delhi-NCR experiences earthquakes quite often.

So, we should be mindful of safety and precautions,” he told ANI.

Another local from Ghaziabad said, “The tremors felt quite strong. I was at a shop when it hit, it felt as if someone was shaking the shop.”

A man in Delhi told ANI, “I felt the tremors... It was a little scary. We should be mindful of safety when this happens.”

Another Delhi resident said, “We felt the tremors. It was really scary, my vehicle shook. It was really strong.”

A resident of Gurugram said that he had asked everyone to rush out of the building as they felt the jolt. “We were sitting here and having tea when I suddenly felt strong earthquakes. I told everyone to rush out of the building. Everyone rushed out,” he said.

Another Gurugram resident told ANI, “For a few seconds, it felt like the ground shook vigorously. All of us rushed out.”

Delhi Metro trains were stopped for two to three minutes as a precautionary measure during the earthquake, as per standard operating procedure (SOP).

Arshad, a passenger travelling in the metro, said, “The train stopped around 9:04-9:05 am. We didn’t feel (the tremor).”

According to NCS, the earthquake struck Jhajjar at 9:04 am at a depth of 10 km. Strong tremors were felt in Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad and adjoining areas.

Delhi Metro trains stop for 2-3 minutes as precautionary measure

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In the aftermath of the earthquake, Delhi Metro trains were stopped for 2-3 minutes as a precautionary measure, in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Speaking to ANI, a passenger, Arshad, said, “The train stopped around 9:04-9:05 am. We didn’t feel (the tremor).”

Meanwhile, people across the Delhi-NCR shared their experience, saying that they felt like someone was shaking the floor vigorously.

A man in Gurugram, Haryana, said, “We were sitting here and having tea when I suddenly felt strong earthquakes. I told everyone to rush out of the building. Everyone rushed out...”

Another person in Gurugram said, “...For a few seconds, it felt that the ground shook vigorously. All of us rushed out...”

Similar reactions also surfaced from the locals of Ghaziabad.

A shopkeeper in Ghaziabad said, “The tremors felt quite strong... I was at a shop when it hit, it felt as if someone was shaking the shop...”

Another local said, “...I had woken up just at the time when there was a jolt. I was scared. There was another earthquake just a few days ago. Delhi-NCR experiences earthquakes quite often. So, we should be mindful of safety and precautions...”

A resident of Delhi said,



“I felt the tremors... It was a little scary. We should be mindful of safety when this happens...”

Earlier in the morning, an earthquake of magnitude 4.4 struck Jhajjar district in Haryana, according to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS).

Strong tremors were felt in Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad and adjoining areas.

According to NCS, the earthquake struck Jhajjar at 9:04 am at a depth of 10 km.

“EQ of M: 4.4, On: 10/07/2025 09:04:50 IST, Lat: 28.63 N, Long: 76.68 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Jhajjar, Haryana,” NCS wrote on X.

On February 17, a similar earthquake measuring 4.0 on the Richter scale hit Delhi-NCR at a depth of 5 km, according to the National Center for Seismology (NCS). The strong tremors were felt at 5:36 AM. The sudden jolts prompted residents to rush out of their homes in panic.

“Earthquake of Magnitude: 4.0, Occurred on 17-02-24, 5:36 AM IST, Lat: 28.59°N & Long: 77.16°E, Depth: 5 Km, Location: 9 km E of New Delhi,” NCS posted on X.

Kejriwal expresses concern after 4.4 magnitude quake jolts Delhi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Former Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal expressed concern for the safety of residents after strong tremors from a 4.4 magnitude earthquake, with its epicentre in Haryana’s Jhajjar district, were felt across Delhi-NCR on Thursday morning.

“Hope everyone is safe after the earthquake. Praying for the well-being of all,” Kejriwal posted on X.

According to the Na-



tional Centre for Seismology (NCS), the earthquake struck Haryana’s Jhajjar district at around 9:04 am at a depth of 10 km. Strong tremors were reported in Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad, and nearby ar-

reas, prompting people to step out of buildings in several locations.

“EQ of M: 4.4, On: 10/07/2025 09:04:50 IST, Lat: 28.63 N, Long: 76.68 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Jhajjar, Haryana,” the NCS wrote in a post on X.

Delhi is classified as Seismic Zone IV, according to the Delhi Disaster Management Authority. This zone is categorised as a “High Damage Risk Zone” and indicates a high potential for earthquakes of moderate to high intensity.

South Delhi colony marks 8 years of zero landfill waste

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

At a time when Delhi grapples with mountains of garbage and choking pollution, one residential colony in South Delhi has achieved something extraordinary: for the past eight years, not a single bag of waste generated by its 280 households has gone to a landfill.

From plastic wrappers, kitchen scraps, sanitary waste, expired medicines, electronic waste and old furniture to broken toys,



clothes and footwear, everything in Navjiwan Vihar is either composted, recycled, repurposed or responsibly disposed of.

The residents named it

a ‘zero waste to landfill’ model. Even benches for public spaces have been created using almost 900 kg of plastic waste.

Behind this change

is 52-year-old Dr Ruby Makhija, an eye surgeon who took over as Navjiwan Vihar Resident Welfare Association (RWA) secretary eight years ago and decided to fix one of the most common yet most overlooked urban problems of waste management.

“I was a doctor, and I knew how health is connected to our environment. I had read about the solid waste management rules and realised how badly we needed to implement them,” Makhija said.

Describing her journey, “We began small. We studied, experimented, and got support from the MCD. Initially, we used compost pits, but those had issues of space and smell.

Over time, we switched to machines and more effective solutions,” Makhija added.

Today, around 125 kg of kitchen waste is composted daily, which nourishes the colony’s gardens. Dry waste like paper, metal, plastic and glass is sent to certified recyclers.

Wanted teen gang member held after exchange of fire

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A 19-year-old alleged gang member, wanted in a recent case of stabbing and firing, was apprehended following a brief exchange of fire in northwest Delhi’s Majlis Park area in the early hours of Thursday, police said.

The accused, identified as Nitin alias Chor, sustained a bullet injury on his left leg during the encounter and is currently undergoing treatment, they said.

“The encounter took place around 3.50 am near Shah Alam Band Marg close to Majlis Park Metro Station after police received specific input regarding the absconding



accused’s movement in the area,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (Northwest) Bhisam Singh said. Nitin was allegedly involved in a violent assault and firing incident on July 4 in Jahangirpuri, where a man named Azharuddin was attacked with a knife and shot at.



LOT OF FAKE VOTERS AND INFILTRATORS LISTED IN BENGAL: STATE LoP ADHIKARI

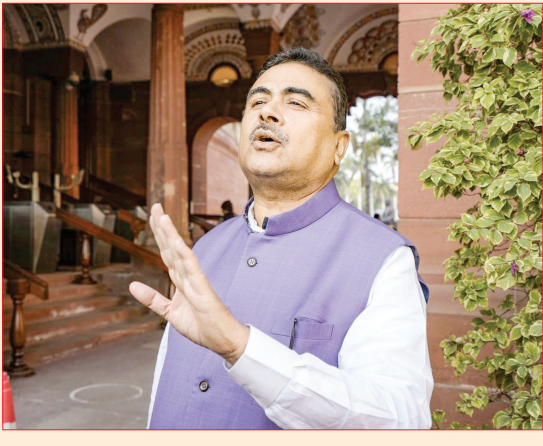
Suwendu Adhikari alleges fake voters, misuse of EWS quota in West Bengal

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suwendu Adhikari, has alleged that a large number of fake voters exist in Bengal, including infiltrators who have been registered as voters. Adhikari emphasised the need to “cleanse” the voter list, citing a significant increase in population in districts such as Cooch-Bihar, South 24 Parganas, and North 24 Parganas. Adhikari suggested that measures similar to that in

ADHIKARI TARGETS VOTER LIST

- Claims large number of fake voters and infiltrators on Bengal rolls.
- Cites population surge in border districts; urges Bihar-style verification.
- Accuses TMC of shielding Rohingya Muslims, calling them infiltrators.
- Slams state's EWS policy as bypassing court ruling, demands Governor's intervention.



Bihar should be taken in West Bengal to address the issue of infiltrators.

On June 24, the Election Commission directed that large sections of voters in Bihar are required to submit proof of citizenship to remain on the electoral rolls.

While speaking to reporters on Thursday, Adhikari said, “There are a lot of fake voters in Bengal. Infiltrators are also listed as voters. This has to be cleansed... They way population has increased especially in Cooch-Bihar, South 24 Paragana, North 24 Para-

gana..it should happen..like What is happening in Bihar should also happen in West Bengal...”

On the deportation of Bengali-speaking migrant workers in other states, Adhikari claimed that action is being taken against infiltrators, and that the Trinamool Congress (TMC) is protecting Rohingya Muslims, who he described as infiltrators rather than refugees.

Adhikari said that, “They (investigating agencies) are investigating, going through documents.. and are taking actions against the infiltra-

tors. They should take action against infiltrators.. TMC is protecting the Rohingya Muslims... they are not refugees, they are infiltrators.”

Earlier in the day, Adhikari raised an alarm over the Mamata Banerjee government's alleged misuse of the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) framework. According to Adhikari, despite the Calcutta High Court striking down 75 Muslim OBC communities from the state's OBC list in 2024 for their inclusion based solely on religious

criteria, the state government is now allowing these same communities to apply for EWS benefits.

Adhikari stated that this move was a direct affront to judicial authority and a shameful attempt to bypass the law. He argues that this decision not only violates constitutional norms but also constitutes a fraud on the people of West Bengal, sidelining deserving general category economically weaker sections who are entitled to EWS benefits.

In a post on his official account X, Adhikari said, “As the Leader of the Opposition, I am compelled to raise a serious alarm regarding the Mamata Banerjee Government's blatant misuse of the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) framework. Despite the Hon'ble Calcutta High Court striking down 75 Muslim OBC communities from the state's OBC list in 2024 for their inclusion based solely on religious criteria, the state government is now allowing these same communities to apply for EWS benefits.

Court imposes Rs 1 cr fine in coal block case

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A special CBI court has imposed Rs 1 crore fine on a company and sentenced its managing director to three years in jail over alleged irregularities in the allocation of a coal block in Jharkhand. Special judge Sanjay Bansal handed out the jail term to JAS Infrastructure & Capital Pvt Ltd then managing director Manoj Kumar Jayaswal while imposing Rs 1 crore fine on the company over irregularities in the allocation of Mahuagarhi coal block in Jharkhand.

In an order on July 8, the court said, “The present case relates to the allocation of a coal block. The convicts (company and its director) had obtained the said block by committing cheating with the government of India.”

The court agreed with the CBI's deputy legal advisor who said the “loss to the nation was huge”.

“Manoj Kumar Jayaswal is sentenced to rigorous imprisonment (RI) for three years and to pay a fine of



The court agreed with the CBI's deputy legal advisor who said the “loss to the nation was huge”.

Rs five lakh for the offence punishable under Sections 120-B/420 of the IPC. He is further sentenced to RI for three years and to pay a fine of Rs five lakh for the substantive offence punishable under Section 420 of the IPC,” the court said adding that the sentences would run concurrently.

It also imposed a fine of Rs 50 lakh each on the company for the offence of criminal conspiracy to commit cheating and for the offence of cheating.

Following the sentence,

Jayaswal moved an application for suspension of his sentence to enable him to file an appeal in the Delhi High Court.

“Sentence of imprisonment awarded to convict shall remain suspended for 60 days and he is admitted to bail upon his furnishing a personal bond and a surety bond of Rs one lakh each,” the court held.

The convict could not travel abroad unless specific permission was granted by the high court, the court added.

Chandrababu Naidu government flayed for 'repressive governance'

TDG NETWORK
TADEPALLI

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) President YS Jagan Mohan Reddy tore into the Chandrababu Naidu-led government for its repressive approach in detaining, beating up, and harassing farmers during his Banagarupalem visit.

In a post on X, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy said, the propaganda machinery of Chandrababu Naidu has tried to show the farmers' issue in a poor light, and the world has seen the overwhelming response despite harsh restrictions and blatant distortions in its friendly media.

He highlighted the plight of 76,000 farmers who produced 6.5 tonnes of mangoes from over 2.2 lakh acres, but failed to get the minimum price in the



last two months. Many, he said, had to throw away their produce on the roadside in despair.

Reddy questioned the Naidu government's sincerity, asking, “If mango farmers are not in distress, why did the government announce to give Rs 4 per kg, and why were false orders given to factories to buy at Rs 8 per kg and why JDS leader Kumaraswamy got an assurance from the Centre for buying at Rs 16 per kg?”

He pressed further, “How many farmers did you give the Rs 4 you

promised to give and how many farmers the factories paid Rs 8 each?” He said that during his tenure, mangoes sold for Rs 25 to Rs 29 per kg, and questioned why prices slumped immediately after the coalition government took over.

He alleged that the government deliberately delayed the opening of pulp factories, which typically begin operations between May 10 and 15, thereby causing a glut in the market and a collapse in prices.

“Such an artificial situation was created only to benefit your close associates, like Galla factory and Srini Foods,” Reddy said.

He also claimed that this year, farmers were denied minimum support price (MSP) not just for mango, but for paddy, chilli, cotton, jowar, sorghum, millets, peas, maize, banana, onion, sugarcane, cocoa, and tobacco.

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

Within four days of a single Bench order disallowing a move by the Mamata Banerjee Government to allow “tainted” candidates to appear for fresh recruitment tests, a Division Bench of Calcutta High Court upheld the Single-Bench order which was challenged by the Government.

The Bengal Government had tried to allow “tainted” candidates - those accused of wrongdoing in 2016 during recruitment of teachers for State-run schools - from taking part in fresh applications ordered by the Supreme Court.

Justice Soumen Sen and Justice Smita Das De on Thursday upheld Justice Saugata Bhattacharya's Monday order, and made it clear that those who used unfair means to secure jobs in Government schools in 2016 must be excluded from the fresh recruitment process.

The Bengal Government had argued in favour of the “tainted” candidates, pointing out they had already been punished and could not be stopped from earning a livelihood.

In April, the Supreme Court confirmed an order passed by the Calcutta High Court almost exactly one year earlier. The High Court had cancelled the 2016 se-

lection process; this meant 25,753 men and women were fired and told to return their salaries with 12 per cent interest.

They had submitted blank OMR sheets and were recruited illegally, the court ruled.



The bench - set up after a directive from the Supreme Court - also ordered a fed-

eral investigation into the recruitment process and directed the hiring to begin anew.

A year later, the Supreme Court upheld the High Court order; the top court said the entire selection process had been “vitiated by manipulation and fraud”.

The bench - of then-Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice PV Sanjay Kumar - said it saw no reason to interfere with the order and that the appointments resulted from cheating.

The cancellation of the jobs led to a massive political row in Bengal, between Banerjee's Trinamool Congress and the Opposition, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Maharashtra Assembly passes Special Public Security Bill

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Assembly passed the Special Public Security Bill on Thursday, aiming to counter radical left ideologies and organisations allegedly promoting unlawful activities across the state.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis tabled the Bill in the Legislative Assembly.

The bill, which was first introduced during the Winter Session in Nagpur in December 2024, returned to the House after a Joint Committee, led by BJP leader Chandrashekhar Bawankule, reviewed over 12,000 suggestions for amendments.

Fadnavis stated that the revised draft was prepared following detailed deliberations and concerns raised by



the opposition.

While quoting the Constitution and referencing Maoist literature, Fadnavis said, “To dismantle the Indian constitutional framework and create an institution like the one Marx and Lenin established in China is the intention of these organisations.”

He listed cities including Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Nashik, Gadchiroli, Konkarn, Amravati and Beed as locations targeted in Maoist plans, with documents

allegedly seized confirming their presence.

CM Fadnavis highlighted that over 64 underground organisations were operating freely in Maharashtra, many of which had already been banned in states like Kerala, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand.

He pointed out that these front groups were responsible for logistical and material support to Maoist insurgents, such as providing shelter, supplies, and recruitment.

“Overground front organisations facilitate procurement, supplies to Maoists, help with hideouts,” he stated.

He warned of the growing influence of so-called Urban Maoist networks, who he claimed were brainwashing youth, professionals, and even civil servants.

Police continue action on Chhangur Baba's properties for 3rd day

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh administration on Wednesday continued its crackdown on the properties of Chhangur Baba in the Balrampur district for the third consecutive day. He is the alleged mastermind of a religious conversion gang and was arrested by the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS).

Additional Director General of Police (ADG) Law and Order Amitabh Yash on Thursday informed that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has asked the ATS for the FIR in this case, which also has the name of Mohamed Ahmed.

However, when ANI reached the person named in the FIR, he claimed that

he had been harassed by Chhangur Baba and his gang since 2023. He had met Chhangur Baba during a court case in Balrampur court.

“I came in contact with Chhangur during a court case in Balrampur court in 2023. Neither before nor after did I come into contact with him...In 2023, after our dispute, Chhangur and his people continued to harass me. In the same year, I even went to the police and told them that Chhangur had framed me. The Rabani family, Azam Mustafa, Aiman Rizvi, Chhangur, and others associated with him approached various authorities against me. Later, he filed a case against me and my father, alleging we had attacked them.

Calcutta HC seeks report on Bengali workers' detention

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Thursday directed the West Bengal Chief Secretary to appoint a nodal officer to get in touch with the authorities in Odisha and take necessary steps to ensure release of Bengali-speaking migrant workers from the State who were detained there. Citing news reports, State senior counsel Kalyan Banerjee said 200 Bengali speakers from West Bengal and some in Assam were arrested solely for their mother tongue.

On Thursday, a Division Bench of Justice Tapabrata Chakraborty and Justice Reetobroto Mitra of the Calcutta High Court also directed the West Bengal Government to act immediately and submit a report to the court in this regard on Monday.

According to reports, Odisha's Jharsuguda district police have detained 444 Bengali-speaking individuals for “verification” under suspicion of being undocumented Bangladeshi and Rohingya nationals. The individuals detained are primarily engaged in construction, mining, and industrial labour, and have been residing in various parts of western Odisha. The crackdown was initiated on the advice received from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Calcutta High Court has sought answers to several questions in this case.

The bench asked: “Why were Bengali migrant workers detained? On what basis were they detained? Has any FIR been filed? What action has been taken against those migrants after their detention? Where are they now?”

The High Court directed the West Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Pant to send these questions of the court to the Chief Secretary of Odisha. The bench will take its next decision after seeing his reply.

Counsel for petitioner Razak Sheikh from Hariharpara in Murshidabad district submitted to the bench that his son Samiur Islam went to Odisha in search of a job. His counsel submitted that the Bengali-speaker was held up by the Odisha Police during a special identification drive and arrested on June 30, 2025.

“The arrested person has not been produced in court since then. There was no arrest memo issued, and the family of the person in custody was not informed about the arrest. This is nothing but illegal detention,” the counsel submitted.

Sustainable travel: Gurugram drivers to get eco-friendly route option on Google maps

VIPIN PARMAR
GURUGRAM

In a significant move to ease traffic congestion and promote sustainable travel, drivers in Gurugram will soon have access to eco-friendly route options on Google Maps. These routes are designed to save time, reduce fuel consumption, and lower carbon emis-

sions. Additionally, they aim to discourage overspeeding, thereby helping reduce road accidents.

The initiative is a joint effort by the Gurugram Traffic Police and Google. On Wednesday evening, DCP Traffic Dr. Rajesh Mohan met with members of the Google team—including Ravi Bhaskar and Tushar—to plan strategies for



managing traffic jams and enforcing speed limits more effectively.

In the coming weeks, Google Maps will begin displaying eco-friendly routes that consider fuel efficiency, traffic congestion, and estimated travel time. These updates will help drivers choose the most efficient paths during heavy traffic.

Traffic Police will also

share the officially designated speed limits for various roads within Gurugram with Google, enabling accurate speed data to be reflected in the app. This will help enforce speed regulations and improve road safety.

The meeting also included discussions about integrating essential roadside services into Google Maps,

such as:

- Nearby hospitals
- Available parking spaces
- Speed limit zones

These additions will enable drivers to better plan their journeys and make informed decisions while on the road.

Additionally, instructions have been issued to install speed limit signboards across all major roads in

the city. These physical signs will be synchronized with the digital information on Google Maps to provide consistent guidance to drivers.

DCP Dr. Rajesh Mohan said the collaboration with Google will not only reduce traffic congestion but also minimize the economic and physical toll of road accidents.

LOAN RECOVERY NORMS OF NBFCS MUST BE FAIR, RESPECTFUL: FM

I know for you it's important and it's part of your duty, but it's not part of your duty to be heartless, says Sitharaman

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasized that the loan recovery practices of Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) must be fair, respectful, and empathetic, and must strictly align with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Fair Practices Code.

Speaking at the NBFC Symposium 2025 held in New Delhi on Wednesday, the minister urged NBFCs to avoid harsh recovery measures, especially in cases involving small loan amounts, and reminded them of the importance of customer dignity.

"Recovery practices of NBFCs must be fair, em-

FM ON NBFCS: ETHICS, EMPATHY, LENDING ROLE

- Recovery practices must follow RBI's Fair Practices Code with empathy.
- Warned against harsh actions for small loans like Rs500.
- Suggested NBFCs aid in priority sector lending at last mile.
- Criticized delays in fund dis-



pathetic and respectful, in strict accordance with the RBI's Fair Practices Code," Sitharaman said.

She noted that sometimes media reports highlight harsh recovery actions taken for very small loan amounts like Rs 500.

"Sensationalized report-

ing in the media, which they are right in reporting. I don't fault the media at all on this. Where harsh measures are taken for recovery of a 500 rupee, heartbreaking stories come out," she said.

The minister added, "I know for you it's important

and it's part of your duty, but it's not part of your duty to be heartless. You need to have better Fair Practices Code, aligning with RBI's Fair Practices Code. So the same message, the push for growth should not come at the expense of customer well-being."

Centre grants tax exemption benefits to IREDA bonds

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The central government has granted tax-saving status to PSU renewable projects financing company IREDA Ltd's bonds under Section 54EC of the Income Tax Act.

This will facilitate low-cost fundraising for renewable energy and offer capital gains tax exemption to investors.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) under the Ministry of Finance has notified bonds issued by the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) as 'long-term specified asset' under section 54EC of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

The notification came into effect from July 9, 2025, as per a statement from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy on Thursday.

As per the notification, bonds redeemable after five years and issued by



IREDA on or after the notification date will qualify for tax exemption benefits under section 54EC of the Income Tax Act, 1961, which allows capital gains tax exemption on investments in specified bonds.

"The proceeds from these bonds will be utilised exclusively for renewable energy projects capable of servicing debt through their project revenues, without dependence on State Governments for debt servicing," said the MNRE statement.

Eligible investors can save tax on Long Term Capital Gain (LTCG) up

to Rs 50 lakhs by investing in these Bonds in a financial year.

IREDA will benefit from lower costs of funds, a significant development for the renewable energy sector, which in turn supports the expeditious development of the renewable energy sector.

Welcoming the move, Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman and Managing Director, IREDA, said, "We are deeply grateful to the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy and Central Board of Direct Taxes for this valuable policy initiative."

"This recognition by the Government reinforces IREDA's pivotal role in accelerating renewable energy financing in the country. The tax-exempt status for our bonds will offer an attractive investment avenue while ensuring increased capital availability for green energy projects, contributing to India's 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity target by 2030," said Das in the statement.

She also raised an important issue regarding the role NBFCs can play in supporting the banking sector's priority sector lending goals.

The minister pointed out that every year, a substantial amount of funds allocated for priority sector lending by banks remains unutilized. These unutilized funds are then transferred to institutions like NABARD and SIDBI.

"In the last few years, I have been closely monitoring how public priority sector lending activities of the banks are going on. Every year you have substantial amount left behind, which then gets refilled to NABARDs of the world and SIDBIs of the world," Sitharaman said.

Sensex, Nifty end lower amid IT stock slump

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Indian equity benchmarks concluded the day in the red territory, weighed down by weakness in IT stocks. The stock markets on Thursday witnessed selling pressure at higher levels.

At the end of the trading, BSE Sensex was down 345.80 points or 0.41 per cent at 83,190.28, and the Nifty 50 on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) slipped 120.85 points or 0.47 per cent to 25,355.25.

From a sectoral standpoint, Nifty Realty and Nifty Metal indices outperformed, supported by selective buying interest. However, defensives like Nifty FMCG, along with Nifty PSU Bank, witnessed profit-booking and ended in the red.

The broader market also mirrored the benchmark's lacklustre tone, with both Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty



Smallcap 100 closing lower. The advance-decline ratio stayed largely unchanged for the second straight session, underlining the ongoing consolidation phase across the board.

Within the Nifty 50 basket, IndusInd Bank and Maruti Suzuki emerged as the top gainers, offering some resilience amid the muted broader trend. On the flip side, Bharti Airtel and Asian Paints were the major drags on the index.

The market participants were watchful of the first quarter results of the tech major Tata

Consultancy Services Ltd, a 4 per cent rise in net profit.

As per the market experts, volatility is expected to persist through the day amid rising anticipation of a possible trade deal with the US and the commencement of the June-quarter earnings season.

Observing the investors sentiment, Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said, "Investor sentiment remains cautious ahead of the Q1 results in anticipation of a muted start to the season from the IT and finance sectors."

US may offer India lower tariffs: Report

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India could emerge as a major beneficiary of the United States' latest tariff policy as Washington may impose lower tariffs on India compared to several other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, according to a report by Arianth Capital.

The report highlighted that India is in a favourable position to attract more foreign investment and strengthen its manufacturing capabilities as global trade flows begin to shift.

The report stated, "US may impose lower tariffs on India compared to many other APAC countries, positioning India to attract

Indian trade team to visit Washington for final-stage talks

India and the United States have stepped up their trade talks, with both sides actively engaging in virtual discussions. The government sources told ANI that an Indian trade delegation will revisit Washington DC soon for in-person negotiations aimed at finalising a trade deal.

Sources familiar with the matter also said that besides in person meetings, Indian officials have also been engaged in several virtual meetings with their US counterparts in recent weeks.

These meetings have helped set the stage for more detailed and comprehensive face-to-face talks. The upcoming visit by the Indian delegation is seen as a major step forward in advancing discussions on a possible trade agreement.



more investment."

While countries like Cambodia and Vietnam faced higher tariffs, India could benefit from trade and investment redirection, sup-

ported by ongoing bilateral agreements.

The report also pointed out that recent trade developments, such as the signing of the UK-India

Free Trade Agreement in May and the ongoing negotiations with the European Union, are expected to boost India's position as a global manufacturing hub.

Consumption demand recovery may take two quarters: Axis Securities

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

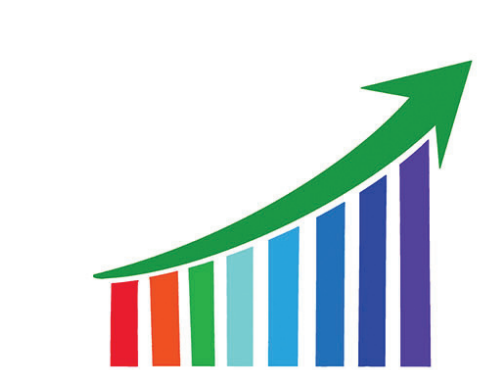
The broader consumption demand in the country may take one or two more quarters to recover fully, according to a recent report by Axis Securities.

The report provides an overview of the Q1FY26 earnings season and highlights key factors influencing the market.

It stated that the first quarter of FY26 was marked by several important developments. These included geopolitical tensions, volatility in crude oil prices, interest rate cuts, unseasonal rainfall, supply chain disruptions, and improving liquidity.

These events have created a mixed trend in earnings performance, similar to what was observed in previous quarters.

Some improvement is expected in the first quarter of FY26 due to better per-



formance in certain high-frequency indicators.

However, the report noted that overall consumption demand across sectors will still take some time to return to normal levels, possibly in the next one or two quarters.

It stated "the broader consumption demand could still take one or two quarters to get back on track".

The report also mentioned that most of the concerns related to earnings have already been priced in, and the intensity of earnings downgrades is likely to slow

down from now on.

However, the market is still a quarter or two away from seeing potential upgrades. The report believed that most of the meaningful improvements in the market and corporate performance are expected in the second half of the current financial year, driven by a possible uptick in economic activity.

In terms of sector performance, the report said that improvement is likely in areas such as Telecom, Financials, Materials, Oil & Gas, and Industrials. On

These events have created a mixed trend in earnings performance, similar to what was observed in previous quarters.

the other hand, sectors like Auto OEMs, Utilities, and Metals may continue to face pressure.

At present, macroeconomic risks are expected to influence market direction for the next few months.

The report adds that while most of the uncertainties related to trade are now behind us, the upcoming earnings season will be crucial.

According to the report, management commentaries and forward guidance from companies during the results will play an important role in shaping market sentiment going forward.

Trade pacts to boost India's global value chain role, says commerce special secy

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Rajesh Agrawal, Special Secretary, Department of Commerce, emphasised the significance of India's ongoing and past Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations in enhancing India's participation in global value chains (GVCs).

Speaking at a conference on export logistics organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry in the national capital on Thursday, the special secretary asserted that identifying gaps in multimodal transportation and bringing all stakeholders together will reduce logistics costs, driving exports and growth in India's economy.

In another suggestion, Agrawal mentioned that there is a need for more air cargo space, port space, rail and road space, in addition to enhancing cold chain logistics in India's agriculture sector.

He also highlighted that to achieve net zero by 2027, there is a need to ensure that logistics are sustainable, with a minimum carbon footprint.

For India to become the third-largest economic power, the country needs to increase its exports, and shipping and waterways will play a crucial role in enhancing these exports, said Shantanu



Thakur, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways.

The minister emphasised that equal and balanced focus on the development of each sector is crucial; priority must be given to enhancing the value of India's products to the world.

Minister Thakur emphasised that reducing the turnaround time for transporting goods from one state to another is of paramount importance.

The use of artificial intelligence is an imperative for the deeper development of the shipping and logistics sector. As 70 per cent of trade happens through shipping, there is a need for vast development of the shipping industry, the minister suggested.

He also mentioned the need for improved communication to establish a robust connectivity infrastructure, spanning from the northeast region to the northwest part of India, encompassing both first-mile and last-mile connections.

During the logistics-focused event, Vijay Kumar, Chairman, Inland Waterways Authority, deliberated on India's transformative journey and the role of Inland Waterways in actualising India's ambitious goal of achieving USD 2 trillion in exports by 2030, and net zero emission target by 2070.

"If the cost of logistics has to be brought down to single digits, we have to meet the twin goals of economy and sustainability, then inland waterways transport is the solution," Vijay Kumar further added.

Vijay Kumar also highlighted crucial steps taken by the government to address major industry issues, including water availability and draft variability, emphasising the importance of multimodal connectivity and cargo aggregation hubs in reducing first-mile and last-mile costs.

B Thiagarajan, Chairman, CII Trade Fairs Council and CII National Committee on CSR and Managing Director, Blue Star Limited outlined that to boost exports, industry must embrace technology and automation and encourage shift from road to rail and waterways.

GAIL signs 15-year gas sale and purchase agreement with Oil India

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

GAIL (India) signed a Gas Sale and Purchase Agreement with Oil India Limited (OIL) for extending the existing Gas Sale and Purchase Agreement for another 15 years, starting from 1st July, 2025, according to an official statement by the company.

GAIL on Thursday stated

that the agreement is to supply up to 900,000 Standard Cubic Meters per Day (SCMD) of natural gas from OIL's Bakhri Tibba Block of Rajasthan, covering Dandewala, Tanot and Bagi Tibba fields.

The agreement was executed by Sumit Kishore, ED (Marketing-Gas), GAIL, and Ranjan Goswami, ED (BD), OIL, in New Delhi.

GAIL also noted that this agreement highlights the dedication of both Maharatna CPSEs in the production, transportation, and distribution of natural gas available from domestic gas fields, demonstrating their collaborative approach to enhancing energy security and accessibility.

The sourced gas will be supplied to the state-run



power plant of M/s Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (RRVUNL).

GAIL owns and operates a 16,421 km network

of natural gas pipelines spread across the length and breadth of the country, transmitting more than 127 MMSCMD of natural gas in

The sourced gas will be supplied to the state-run power plant of M/s Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (RRVUNL).

the financial year 2024-25.

It is also working concurrently on the execution of multiple pipeline projects to further enhance the spread.

The company also owns

and operates a gas-based Petrochemical Complex at Pata and has a capacity of 810 KTA at Pata and 280 KTA at BCPL.

In addition, GAIL's LNG

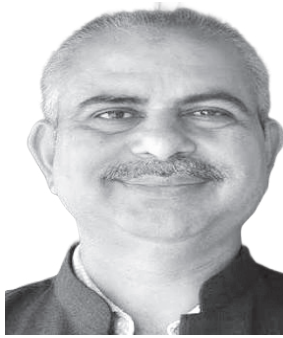
portfolio stands at 16.56 MMTPA (approximately 60 MMSCMD), accounting for 61 per cent of India's total LNG imports. GAIL and its Subsidiaries / JVs also have a formidable market share in City Gas Distribution.

According to the company statement, it is also expanding its presence in renewable energy like solar, wind, and biofuel.

RECLAIMING GORAKNATH: LALU PRASAD YADAV’S CULTURAL COUNTERSPIN

BOOK REVIEW

RASHEED KIDWAI



When Lalu Prasad Yadav decided to turn storyteller, it wasn’t just nostalgia or literary curiosity that drove him. It was a strategy. In his latest collaboration with journalist and folklorist Nalin Verma, *Lores of Love and Saint Gorakhnath*, [Penguin Random House] the former Bihar Chief Minister steps into the terrain of cultural politics — a domain long dominated by his political rival, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Aditya-

nath. But instead of wielding rhetoric or reforms, Yadav chooses lores. And instead of temple takeovers, he chooses storytelling. The target: Gorakhpur’s Gorakhnath Mutt, an institution now synonymous with “militant Hindutva”. The goal: to return Gorakhnath to the people who once danced to his ballads — Hindus and Muslims alike.

At first glance, the book reads like a collection of folklore and romance — tales of Sorthi and Brijbhar, Heer and Ranjha, Saranga and Sadabrij. But its true subtext is much more ambitious. Yadav and Verma are trying to dismantle a stranglehold — Yogi Adityanath’s singular grip on the legacy of Saint Gorakhnath. They do this not through polemic, but through poetry; not through manifestos, but through mythology. In the process, they transform the spiritual core

of a region where the personal is always political.

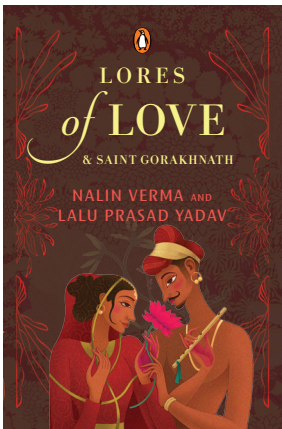
BREAKING THE MAHANT MONOPOLY

For decades now, the Gorakhnath Mutt has been seen less as a spiritual institution and more as a power base — one that has produced not just mahants but MPs, MLAs, and a sitting Chief Minister. The transformation began in the 1930s, when Mahant Digvijaynath aligned the Mutt with the Hindu Mahasabha. Avidyanath followed suit. And finally, Yogi Adityanath turned it into a launchpad for majoritarian politics.

Adityanath’s tenure as both mahant and Chief Minister underscores this metamorphosis. Once a centre of composite culture — where, for instance, Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah donated land to a Muslim fakir devoted to Gorakhnath — the temple now stands as a symbol of exclusionary politics.

But in the introduction to *Lores of Love*, Yadav and Verma chart a different trajectory — one where Gorakhnath emerges not as a sectarian icon, but as a subcontinental mystic. The authors write:

“Gorakhnath lived in a



time when the liberal Sufi and Bhakti traditions were taking root in India. He had a following among both Hindus and Muslims.”

That one sentence unseats decades of exclusive political branding.

YOGI VS YOGI

Yogi Adityanath may wear saffron and head the Mutt, but the “original” Yogis — the Kanphattas, the Rawals, the Darwes, the Gosawis — belonged to weavers, potters, shepherds, and dyers. They were singers, palm readers, and magicians. Some were Hindu. Many were Muslim. And they found common spiritual ground in Gorakhnath.

According to the book, in places like eastern UP and Bihar, entire villages

of Hindu and Muslim Yogis once thrived. In Punjab, they were called Rawals. In Bengal, jugis. In Hyderabad, Darwes. And they didn’t just meditate — they sang ballads, performed rituals, and shared verses of Kabir, Raidas, Nanak, Dadu, and Meera.

By shining a light on these forgotten followers, Yadav is reclaiming Gorakhnath from the narrow confines of temple politics and restoring him to the pluralistic soil that first gave him life.

FOLKLORE AS RESISTANCE

Why do this through folklore? Because folklore travels. It slips past censors and cynics, outlives regimes, and lodges itself in memory. Ballads like Sorthi-Brijbhar or Bhartrihari-Pingla carry within them not just the morality of saints, but the defiance of the marginalised.

Take the tale of Brijbhar — a lower-caste lover who, under the guidance of Gorakhnath, wins back his beloved from a powerful oppressor. Or Heer-Ranjha, where Gorakhnath’s wisdom becomes the bridge between a society’s traditions and a couple’s longing. In every story, Gorakhnath is less

a punisher and more a liberator. He stands with the wronged, not the righteous. He blesses love, not just lineage. This, then, is not merely mythology. It’s a political counternarrative — one that positions Gorakhnath as a saint of syncretism, not supremacy.

This re-imagining threatens the current narrative hegemony. If Gorakhnath belongs to all, then no one can claim him for politics alone. The symbol is too wide, too old, too layered to be contained within saffron hues.

THE YADAV-VERMA EQUATION

Lalu Prasad Yadav has long been seen as the jester-king of Indian politics — underestimated, mocked, and occasionally jailed. But he has also been a master of political theatrics and a pioneer of Mandal-era social justice.

By co-authoring this book, he has now positioned himself as a cultural claimant — someone who not only understands electoral coalitions but also mythological ones.

Nalin Verma, a former journalist with *The Telegraph* and *The Statesman*, lends the project not just

literary heft but folkloric depth. He curates the lores, traces their lineage, and — crucially — refuses to bow to the sanitised versions now favoured by official narratives. Together, the two men have created a text that is part memory, part resistance, part reclamation.

At a time when syncretism is often cast as dilution, *Lores of Love and Saint Gorakhnath* dares to romanticise it. It draws on George Weston Briggs’ research, Hazari Prasad Dwivedi’s seminal *Nath Sampraday*, and even Osho’s spiritual lists — to show that Gorakhnath’s influence was not just wide, but foundational.

Indeed, as Osho once said when asked to pick only three saints from India’s spiritual history, he refused to eliminate Gorakhnath — because without him, there would be “no Kabir, no Nanak, no Farid, no Mira.”

This is the axis Yadav and Verma are restoring — one where Gorakhnath is not the patron saint of a power-hungry Mutt, but the beating heart of a syncretic Indian soul.

POLITICS IN PROSE

In many ways, *Lores of Love* is a stealth political manifes-

to — one that subtly undermines Adityanath’s narrative at every turn. Where the Mutt has become a symbol of caste consolidation, Yadav offers Gorakhnath as the champion of subaltern voices. Where the temple is now projected as a citadel of Hindutva, he reimagines it as a crossroads for fakirs, farmers, and love-struck poets.

It’s political ingenuity of a rare kind — not a clash of rallies, but a clash of retellings. And in this game of storytelling, Yadav knows that memory is a powerful ally.

In a political climate where symbols matter more than ever, Yadav has found a way to challenge his rivals without raising slogans or summoning mobs. He’s done it by unearthing a shared past — one where Gorakhnath sang of love and liberation, and blessed lovers as much as leaders.

Lores of Love and Saint Gorakhnath is not just a book. It is a cultural detour to reclaim an idea that was never meant to be singular. And in telling these tales with Nalin Verma, Lalu Prasad Yadav isn’t just reviving old stories. He’s writing new scripts. For politics. For culture. For India.

PM Modi’s algorithm of artificial intelligence for India



SHWETA MAHENDRA

“Intelligence and intentions define the future of AI: intelligence by machines, intentions by humans.” — A reflection shaped by Gandhian values and Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ethical vision for technology

As we shape the future of artificial intelligence, let us remember that actual progress is not defined solely by how intelligent our machines become, but by how ethically and purposefully they act.

When we speak of “human-like” AI, we often romanticise humans as inherently moral, gentle, and just. However, this view is incomplete. Humanity embodies both good and evil, as well as com-

passion and cruelty, reason and impulse. Designing AI to merely mimic human actions risks replicating both its virtues and its flaws.

In contrast, nature, shaped by divine order, exists in a state of equilibrium. It operates with neutrality, balance, and systemic logic. When this balance is disturbed, it is often not nature itself, but human interference that causes catastrophe. As AI evolves, nature will inevitably confront it with challenges that are unpredictable and profound. Therefore, our goal should not be to build AI that imitates human behaviour. We must design AI to act wisely, reflecting the best of what humanity aspires to be. Intelligence is only part of the equation—intention is what gives it meaning. And that intention must be guided by human ethics.

This becomes particularly significant in the age of transformative AI architectures—Large Language Models (LLMs) and the emerging class of Large Reasoning

Models (LRMs). While LLMs excel at generating contextually rich and syntactically precise content, LRMs are designed to embed ethical cognition, cultural literacy, and normative reasoning into complex decisions. If LLMs represent the cognitive capacity of machines, LRMs serve as the conscience that grounds them. India must now pioneer the next frontier: Ethical Responsibility Models (ERMs)—AI frameworks rooted in a civilisational ethos, ensuring that technological advancements align with our moral fabric and pluralistic values.

This philosophy echoes the Delphic maxim popularised by Thales of Miletus: “Everything in moderation.” In the context of AI, this is a call for restraint—to avoid both technological overreach and underutilisation. Moderation ensures that AI neither develops as a tool of unchecked dominance nor as a missed opportunity for collective uplift.

This is further supported

by another ancient Delphic insight: “*Make a pledge, and ruin is near.*” Far from pessimism, it offers a necessary caution. It reminds us: “Act, but with foresight. Build, but with grounding. Promise, but with conscience.”

India’s AI strategy, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and guided by NITI Aayog, exemplifies these classical virtues. It is deliberate, ethical, and rooted in India’s civilisational values. As artificial intelligence reshapes economies, societies and their subjects, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent remarks offer a vital ethical compass. “AI must be judged not only by its technical brilliance but by its ethical consequences.”

Modi’s emphasis on the ethical use of AI strongly resonates with Mahatma Gandhi’s ideal of Ahimsa, or nonviolence. India’s National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence is rooted in the trinity of responsibility, safety, and human dignity. On global stages, Prime Minister Modi

has been unequivocal: the future of AI must be anchored in a universal code of ethics. His call is not just for regulation but for reconciliation—a peaceful coexistence where technology elevates, not erases, the human spirit. In this vision, AI is not a disruptor but a dharmic enabler of progress.

The spirit of Satyagraha, or truth, is evident in the Digital India mission, which promotes transparency and accountability. The Modi government ensures that resistance to misinformation and data manipulation is built into the technological architecture. Ethical AI, in this context, becomes a modern-day Satyagraha.

The principle of Swadeshi—building from within—is reflected in Modi’s initiative, “Make AI in India, Make AI Work for India.” With over 34,000 GPUs deployed, indigenous foundational models developed, and national data platforms established, India is asserting digital self-reliance. Atmanirbhar

Bharat is no longer limited to manufacturing; it now encompasses sovereign digital infrastructure. In a world dominated by Western and Chinese AI, India sends a clear message: technological colonialism has no place in the new India.

Modi’s “AI for All” is not just a slogan—it represents a structural commitment to democratise intelligence. Platforms like eSanjeevani bring specialised care to rural households, AgriStack empowers farmers with data-driven insights, and Bhashini ensures linguistic inclusivity across India’s polyphonic landscape. Gandhi’s vision of lifting the last person is being realised—not in theory, but through code and connectivity. These digital public goods reflect the principle of *Sarvodaya*, not as a utopia but as an operational reality. From Jan Dhan to Ayushman Bharat, from DBT to UPI, India is demonstrating that AI can be both modern and moral. As Modi rightly said, “AI should not remain the domain of the

privileged. It must become the voice of every Indian, in every language.” In this vision, artificial intelligence does not just scale—it serves.

The Digital India vision echoes Gandhian *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness) and simplicity. Government AI platforms are designed for functionality, not spectacle—lightweight, scalable tools that work even in low-data environments. Aadhaar-linked services and one-click consultations reflect minimalist AI that prioritizes the many without overwhelming.

Under Prime Minister Modi’s leadership and personal attention, India’s AI skill development programs, through the National Strategy and Startup India, extend beyond technical training. Fostering ethical awareness, encouraging developers to view themselves as stewards of a transformative force. Coding fellowships and responsible AI modules are today’s form of Gandhian *tapasya*—rigorous self-discipline in pursuit of the greater good.

In the 21st century, Gandhi’s spinning wheel may have given way to GPUs and transformers, but his principles remain timeless: ethics over exploitation, community over commerce, simplicity over spectacle. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s AI vision, rooted in technological progress, draws unmistakably from the spiritual DNA of Gandhi’s India.

If the 20th century saw India fight for its soul with Satyagraha, the 21st may see it shape the future with code rooted in conscience. India’s AI future must not only be intelligent—it must be just. This is not a technical choice, but a civilizational one. *Shweta Mahendra is a technocrat, columnist, and author. Working at Reliance Jio, an alumna of IIT Roorkee. She has authored “Many Visions Many Worlds” & “3 STATES: ISAW BHARAT IN INDIA. She holds a Guinness World Record for her recognition in the Thickest Book in the World for her chapter “23 Positive Change Makers in the World 2023”*

Perspective of gender roles and empowerment



INDIRA VASHISHTA CARENA

In boardrooms and classrooms, in startups and social movements, on busy streets and vibrant screens — the independent woman of India today is not just rewriting her own story; she is actively rewriting the story of an entire society. In India, and in many other countries across the globe, independent women are becoming influential agents of change, fearlessly challenging traditional societal norms, and inspiring a world that previously sought to restrict their potential and limit their op-

portunities.

The emergence and eventual proliferation of independent women in India can perhaps be best described as nothing less than an inspiring revolution. What was once viewed as a frustrating and agonizing struggle against well-settled traditions that have persisted for several generations now seems to have developed into a living and active movement committed to empowerment and self-realization. As education came into being, as more economic opportunities arose, and as unprecedented exposure to international information became available, women have been gifted with the very tools and instruments necessary to chart their own life course confidently.

This freedom is not merely individual — it is tremendously social. Women are no longer bound by marriage or domesticity expectations.

They are CEOs, Doctors, scientists, entrepreneurs, athletes, artists, Pilots and leaders. They are deciding if, when, and with whom to marry. They are pushing innovation, challenging assumptions, and taking their rightful place.

An independent woman is not a disturbance in the natural order of things; rather, she is a valuable gift that enriches our world. Her liberty and independence significantly enrich the overall economy, as well as promote liberal values that increase innovative thinking and promote social equality among all citizens. Different studies have established that countries with higher gender equality have increased economic prosperity, peace, and democracies overall. In India, as women become increasingly active in the workforce and take up significant decision-making positions, we observe more

inclusive policies being promoted, more empathetic leadership styles being practiced, and more resilient communities overall.

The motivating success stories of these extraordinary individuals are great role models for the future generation of dreamers and achievers. When a young girl sees a woman pilot expertly flying an airplane high up in the air, or sees a female entrepreneur fearlessly launching her new innovative startup, it instils within her a strong and empowering belief: I can do that too.

The deep impact of independent women goes far and wide, far beyond the realm of personal achievement alone. They have an impact that is so strong because they are working to fundamentally alter the way the world perceives and thinks about gender roles and contributions. Women are no

longer passive recipients of change but are now the very embodiment of change. In this forceful change, they are working hard to redefine relationships, redefine what success is all about, and boldly reclaim and rewrite histories that have systematically omitted their voices and their experiences.

This shift can be observed in cities and towns. From street activists to social media influencers, women are rewriting cultural scripts. Marriage is no longer a necessity; it is a personal choice. Motherhood is no longer an identity-defining term; it is one of many. Society is learning to respect agency, listen to women’s voices, and endorse their ambitions. What makes independent women today different from yesterday’s women is not necessarily their incredible ability, but so much more their exceptional clarity — clar-

ity regarding what they are about, what they believe in, and what their conception of life is. These women are proving, through their work and accomplishments, that if given the proper support and blessed with the courage of having big dreams, there is nothing that they cannot do or achieve in their endeavours.

Women are operating and managing various businesses successfully and managing their homes and fulfilling their home duties. They are actively engaged in the struggles for the rights and well-being of others while simultaneously striving for their individual career and personal goals. They are resisting vigorously the imposition of gender-based social limitations on themselves. And they are doing so with great poise, immense resolve, and a resolve that is unbreakable in character and inspiring

to those around them. Of course, there remain barriers — cultural resistance, safety, and public pressure are all legitimate and authentic issues that cannot be ignored. But it also holds that independent women are not defined simply by the many barriers that they must navigate throughout their lives. Instead, they are defined by the remarkable means by which they navigate through and overcome them.

As we move towards a more innovative and inclusive future, the active engagement and participation of independent women becomes not only crucial — it is essential. They are not only part of the process of change; they are leading the change from the front. She Can. She Will. She Already Is.

Independent women are changing not just their own personal destinies but the very conscience of an entire

nation — and indeed this change resounds throughout the entire world. Their way is one of unimagined strength, tremendous change, and an unfettered potential with no limitations. Let us not just recognise their magnificent success, but take the time to learn from their great strength, stand with them in their ongoing struggles, and walk with them to a world where equality is not the exception to the rule but is rather embraced as the norm in all of society.

In the rich and unfolding narrative of contemporary India, the emergence and triumph of the independent woman is perhaps the most intriguing and remarkable chapter yet written — and intriguingly, this phenomenal journey is only halfway through.

Indira Vashishta Carena is an Ex Airline Pilot, Columnist and Motivational speaker.

Amid Israel-Iran tensions, Iran's fast uranium enrichment and the unraveling 2015 nuclear deal raise fears of a nuclear crisis as October 2025 nears, deepening global geopolitical divides.

SHRUTI DASGUPTA
NEW DELHI

"Movers and Shakers" across the globe hiccup as the volatile ceasefire between Israel and Iran continues to hold. The world is simmering in the heat of unresolved wars - while two powerful leaders of Iran and USA trade barbs, ultimatum, and fatwas across the internet in the aftermath of the Israel-Iran's 12-day war. However, there's a darker, silent crisis unfolding in the shadows of peace in the light of the uranium enrichment in the Middle East.

October 2025 looms large in the minds of the UN Veto Power Owners and the EU. Though the date was meant to be a countdown to peace, it is now a ticking clock for Iran's nuclear uncertainty. The 2015 JCPOA was once hailed as a diplomatic victory. However, since the US unilaterally walked out of this iconic deal that was brokered by the Obama Administration between the P5+1 and Iran 2018, its sunset clauses now function like a nuclear red line.

Iran is back in the headlines after the intense exchange of hostilities with Israel and USA. However, the fact remains that while the Ayatollah regime swears it has no nuclear power ambitions, it was stockpiling 60% enriched Uranium at a breakneck pace. It seems with China and Russia backing the regime against the USA and its allies - Iran is waiting to postpone talks to force its way into the power circles. While world powers scramble, Tehran calculates. And the stakes? Atomic.

THE 60% ALARM: WHY IRAN'S URANIUM CACHE HAS THE WORLD SWEATING

As reported by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran seems to be in possession of 400 kilograms of Uranium enriched to 60% purity. There is no justification for the weight - which is 40% over the limit permissible within Iran's deals with the West. Moreover, the enrichment percentage is not for medical isotopes or energy production - it's nuclear



Iran's nuclear gambit is far from over

brinkmanship. There is no peaceful or civilian utility for such enrichment levels. The cutoff for nuclear weapons-grade uranium is 90%, but the technological leap from 60% to 90% can be accomplished within a matter of weeks, if not years. The IAEA confirms that this material can potentially yield up to 9 nuclear warheads for Iran.

Why does this matter? Because the IAEA inspectors have not had full access to Iran's nuclear facilities



IAEA unable to access Iran's uranium or nuclear sites

since early 2023. Iran's facilities at Fordow, Natanz, Isfahan, and Arak operate under opaque protocols. Thus, shielding the entire nuclear program from international scrutiny. Intelligence analysts believe Tehran has already mastered the enrichment infrastructure. What's missing is time and the political trigger to assemble a device.

This has rattled the P5+1 - China, France, Russia, the UK, and US, plus Germany - into resuscitating the broken corpse of nuclear diplomacy with Iran. Not for trade or profits' sake, but to delay the inevitable - a nuclear-armed Islamic theocracy in the Middle East that funds and arms the terrorists groups.

OCTOBER 2025 TRIGGER: A SANCTIONS EXPIRY NO ONE CAN AFFORD

There are two sets of sunset clauses under the 2015 JCPOA. The first set of these clauses expires in October 2025. This particular clause legally allows Iran access to its more modern nuclear enrichment sites. Many believe that Iran was already using these sites clandestinely since 2018 to fulfil its dangerous nuclear arms



Iran signed 2015's JCPOA with the west

ambitions. Additionally, the expiry of the sunset clause increases the legal capacity for stockpiling of enriched Uranium in Iran. However,

the IAEA report of early 2025 suggests that Iran was already breaking the preset regulation and had violated the JCPOA of 2015. Thus, Iran seems to have already walked beyond the limits set by the P5+1. And the expiry of the sunset clause only legalises some of the steps



The West wants to contain Iran's nuclear threat before Sunset Sanctions Expire

Iran was allegedly using to walk a dangerous path to nuclear armament.

If P5+1 are unable to force a new deal with Iran in the wake of the 12-day war before October 2025, Iran can legally walk away from limits on advanced centrifuge development and enriched uranium stockpiles. Moreover, it shall have some of its US and UN sanctions lifted.

Additionally, it can abandon transparency protocols and restrict IAEA visits to certain sites. Iran shall also gain access to some of its money frozen by sanctions in 2003. Thus, by delaying talks and withstanding Trump's pressure, come October Iran shall be armed with knowledge of nuclear weapons, access to Uranium, legal powers to enrich and stockpile the nuclear fuel, as well as billions frozen in foreign accounts. And the global community? It will be left with nothing more than a press conference sans any



A Nuclear Weapon in Iran shall change the balance of power in the world



Trump and Khamenei engage In war of words after 12-day Iran-Israel war

TICKING TEHRAN: WHY THE P5+1 ARE DESPERATE TO TAME IRAN'S NUCLEAR AMBITIONS



Irans economy Remains in state of sharp decline

form of leverage.

This is why the world powers are scrambling. Any form of strong-arming or enticement comes not from a position of strength, but from fear. Although the war with Israel delivered a crippling blow to the military and political regime, Iran is far from defeated. With more than 1000 dead, including its top nuclear scientists, military leaders, and direct attacks by bunker-busters on its nuclear facilities - the Ayatollah regime is hanging on to its power a mere thread. Thus, it has resorted to making tall promises to its people to give the impression of undeclared nuclear power posturing. It hopes to get access to world

ing snapback sanctions via IAEA and UN. The West, despite posturing, has little political currency and public appetite for a new Iran deal. Under economic decline, Europe is fractured - with Germany cautious, France alarmed, and Russia supporting Iran's perspective while being disregarded on diplomatic tables due to the Ukraine War.

TEHRAN'S STRATEGY: BROKEN ECONOMY, UNBROKEN RESOLVE

Despite being hammered by sanctions, cyberattacks, and the assassination of its top military leaders and scientists, Iran's resolve is not shattered - it has crystallised. Its economic pain

nuclear dreams are within reach and it holds all the cards on the diplomatic table. The more it enriches, the more desperate the West becomes to rein it in. This creates a vicious cycle: Iran



A nuclear Iran shall trigger an arms race in the Arab world

escalates to negotiate, then negotiates to escalate. And while it plays this game, the IAEA continues to issue warnings that Tehran simply brushes off as Western propaganda.

THE P5+1'S LAST GAMBIT: STARING DOWN THE ATOMIC ABYSS

The P5+1 aren't returning to the 2015's JCPOA because of hope - they're doing it because they're out of options. Iran's 60% enriched Uranium, no longer visible to the IAEA inspectors, is a ticking time bomb. With IAEA accused of leaking Iran's security assets to the US and Israel, the Iranian regime denies

USA is solely reliant on its EU partners to support a new deal.

Even Israel, the nation that bore the brunt of Iran's, is left to deal with public dissent on talks of peace regarding Gaza or Iran. The impact of USA's strikes on Iran's hardened underground nuclear facilities cannot be verified. The mere possibility of a revival may send other Gulf nations, like Saudi Arabia and UAE, to quietly begin pursuing their own nuclear capabilities to ensure that Iran does not gain an upper hand in the Arab world. Thus, ushering in a Middle Eastern into a nuclear arms race.

backed Iraqi militias will become Tehran's nuclear-backed proxies. Deterrence will die. And every Middle Eastern capital will consider going nuclear - just in case.

The most chilling truth? The world shall never truly know when Iran will have crossed the line until it's too late. Because when uranium turns to weapons, the shadow cast won't be on paper - it'll be a mushroom cloud over diplomacy. If October 2025 comes without a deal with Iran, the world might wake up to either a new war or a new nuclear power - both of which shall be a new nightmare.



The West needs Iran to ink the deal



Iran's Nuclear dreams far from over

FOLKLORES OF RAJASTHAN: WORDS OF A TIMELESS HERITAGE

TDG NETWORK

In an age of digital media and rapid urbanization, the folklores from the land of kings queens and dynasties continue to inspire modern storytellers, filmmakers, and writers. Many tales have found new life in theatre, literature, and cinema, preserving their charm for newer generations.

Beneath Rajasthan's grand architecture and royal past lies a living tradition of oral storytelling—folklores—that forms the soul of its heritage. Passed down through generations, these tales of valor, love, sacrifice, and wisdom continue to shape the identity of Rajasthan and its people.

Additionally, schools and cultural organizations across Rajasthan are incorporating folk storytelling into educational programs and heritage walks, recognizing its power to instill pride, identity, and moral grounding in young minds.

Folklores in Rajasthan are more than just stories. They are the collective memory of communities, echoing their beliefs, struggles, moral values, and imagination. Often narrated through music, dance, puppetry, and storytelling performances, these tales bind villages and generations, offering both entertainment and education.

LEGEND OF DHOLA-MARU: ETERNAL LOVE ON CAMELBACK

One of the most cherished love stories from Rajasthan is that of Dhola and Maru. A tale rooted in the Thar Desert, it recounts the romance between Prince Dhola of



Narwar and Princess Maru of Poogal. Betrothed in childhood, they are separated by circumstances and years. Maru, determined to reunite with her love, sends a series of messages to Dhola through song and poetry. Eventually, he learns of her wait and braves numerous dangers to reach her.

Though rooted in love, the story reflects themes of loyalty, perseverance, and feminine strength. Often sung by balladeers and performed in puppet shows, Dhola-Maru remains a symbol of Rajasthan's desert romance and enduring devotion.

PABUJI: THE CAMEL GOD OF THE DESERT

In the remote deserts of western Rajasthan, Pabuji Rathore is revered as both a folk hero and a deity. Born in the 14th century, Pabuji is believed to have defended the honor of women and saved cattle from invaders. His legend is most famously told through Phad painting performances, where itinerant priests known as Bhopas narrate his story using



large painted scrolls and musical instruments.

Pabuji's tale combines history with divine elements, portraying him as a savior of the poor and protector of dharma. In rural areas, especially among camel herders, he is worshipped as a god, reflecting how folk heroes become deities in Rajasthan's cultural fabric.

THE TRAGIC BALLAD OF RANI HADI AND MAHARANA RATAN SINGH

The folklore of Rani Hadi,

a brave queen of Bundi, is a poignant tale of honor and sacrifice. When her husband, Maharana Ratan Singh, was defeated and killed in battle, the invading enemy tried to humiliate the royal women. Rani Hadi, instead of surrendering, led the women in performing Jauhar, a mass self-immolation to protect their dignity.

This heartbreaking story speaks volumes about the Rajput code of honor and valor, especially among women. It continues to be narrated in local songs and



Folklores in Rajasthan are more than just stories. They are the collective memory of communities, echoing their beliefs, struggles, moral values, and imagination. Often narrated through music, dance, puppetry, and storytelling performances, these tales bind villages and generations, offering both entertainment and education.

performances, reminding audiences of female courage and resistance in the face of adversity.

VEER TEJAJI: THE SNAKE GOD OF FARMERS

Another legendary figure deeply embedded in Rajasthan folklore is Veer Tejaji, a warrior saint born in the 12th century. Tejaji is especially popular among farming communities. Known for his truthfulness and compassion, he is believed to have sacrificed his life

to save others from snake bites. According to legend, even after being fatally bitten by a snake, he fulfilled a promise made to a snake deity, earning him divine status.

Today, Veer Tejaji is worshipped across rural Rajasthan, with temples in his name and fairs (melas) held annually. His tale symbolizes integrity, sacrifice, and the sacred relationship between humans and nature.

THE CLEVERNESS OF TENALI RAMA AND

HIS RAJASTHANI COUNTERPARTS

While Tenali Rama is well-known across India, Rajasthan has its own tradition of witty folk heroes—such as Mullah Do-Piyaza and Bhoja Bhagat—who appear in folk tales as wise fools or sharp-tongued commoners outwitting the rich and powerful. These stories often carry satirical lessons and are used to mock hypocrisy, greed, or injustice.

BALLA AND NAGNI: A TALE OF FAITH AND HEALING

This lesser-known but deeply spiritual folklore centers around a young boy named Balla, who was cured of a fatal illness by the divine intervention of Nagni Mata, the serpent goddess.

According to the tale, his mother's prayers and pure devotion moved the goddess to bless the child.

This folklore is still enacted in devotional songs during Nag Panchami and other village festivals. It speaks of faith, maternal love, and the mystical bond between humans and deities.

FOLK MUSIC AND DANCE: CARRIERS OF ORAL TRADITION

Rajasthan's folklores are inseparable from its vibrant folk music and dance forms. Performances like Manganiyar ballads, Kalbeliya dance, and Terah Taali are not merely artistic expressions but living narratives of centuries-old legends. Each performance is a community event, where stories of heroes, lovers, saints, and rebels are passed down.

Musical instruments like the Rawanhatta, Kamaicha, and Morchang accompany these tales, making them unforgettable experiences. Performers, often from hereditary musician communities, ensure that oral history survives even without written records.

The folklores of Rajasthan are not just old stories—they are living heritage. They bring color to the desert, voice to history, and depth to tradition. As much as the forts and palaces, it is these tales—sung by nomadic musicians, performed by puppeteers, whispered by grandmothers—that make Rajasthan what it truly is: a land of undying spirit and timeless culture.

Preserving these folklores is not just about conserving the past; it's about nurturing the cultural soul of Rajasthan for the future.

Chitra-Darshan: The Metaphysics of the Abstract Eye Not just a painting - but a mirror of mind

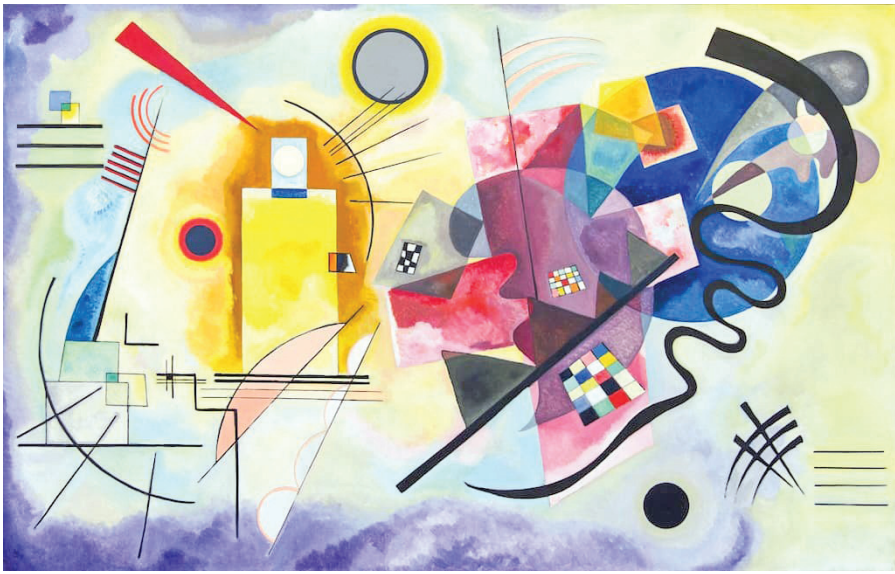


AMIT KALLA

"I have taken a step outward only after unlocking all the doors—this, truly, is the beginning of the inward journey."

These resounding words of Jain Muni Kshamasagar Maharaj are not just devotional musings; they summon us to a sacred form of attentiveness. When we stand before a work of art, are we truly beholding it? Or merely gliding across its surface, unaware of the silence that breathes beyond form?

In the Indian tradition of aesthetics, to see is more than to look—it is an invocation. Darshan is a sacred gaze, not an act of sight but an act of being seen, a simultaneous revelation. It is the eye of the self, the antardrishti that opens. What appears to be a simple act of looking is, in truth, a layered meditation, sacred encounters that stretch inward. The space between the seer and the seen is not just physical but profoundly metaphysical, a crossing from surface into essence. The Nyaya philosophical system gives us the idea of anumiti, knowledge that ripens through a blend of perception (pratyaksha), inference (anumana), comparison (upamana), and testimony (shabda). This layered knowing reminds us that true vision does



not stop at appearances. It seeps beneath the veil, touches the soul of the form, and resonates with meaning that can't be spoken. The word darshan itself is a whisper of the sacred a moment when seeing becomes illumination.

Ancient texts such as the Chitrasutra do not view painting as decoration but as an extension of consciousness, a gesture of the soul. The Chitrasutra speaks of rupa-bheda (distinction of form), bhava (emotive essence), lavanyayojana (graceful arrangement), sad ishya (semblance), and varnik-abhanga (the cadence of pigment). These aren't just aesthetic terms; they shape a vision in which painting becomes scripture a field of awareness rendered in color and line. We approach a painting not as viewers, but as seekers. In the Drig-Drishya Viveka, endorsed to Bharati Tirtha, we find a deep Vedantic clarity that the division between seer and seen is illusory. What

is beheld is not separate from the self; it is a mirror reflecting awareness back to itself. Thus, the painting becomes more than material, it is a spiritual echo, a still pool in which consciousness glimpses itself.

Dharana, from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, speaks of unwavering focus, where subject and object dissolve into unity. Before a painting, such attention softens all boundaries. Gradually, the painting ceases to be a distant object. It enters us. This attentiveness is avadhan, a sacred stillness. In this state, seeing is no longer visual, it is existential. The poetic lineages of Bhakti have long sung of the eye not just as a physical organ, but as a portal to the divine. Whether in Kabir's "Nayan niharo, bheetar jhanko" or Meera's ecstatic vision, seeing is always an inward blooming. The eye gazes, but the soul beholds. This is the spirit of chitra-darshan, a unity with the unseen pulse within the visible.

In today's world, where seeing has become increasingly mediated and interpreted through layers of ideology and distraction, it becomes even more urgent to return to this deeper, sacred seeing. Long before the critical eye of western art critic John Berger expressed the split between vision and meaning in Ways of Seeing, Indian epistemology had already known: drishti go before shabda. Vision is the primal gesture of consciousness where it comes before the word.

This call to presence becomes all the more significant when we turn to abstract painting. For abstraction, unlike realism, refuses to hand us meaning. It asks us to arrive. Shridhar Ayer, a modern Indian abstractionist, considers the act of seeing a painting a solitary act of penance - a kind of sadhana. The painting is not passive; it tests and transforms us.

Mumbai based painter



& art educator Prabhakar Kolte echoes this: a painting, he says, begins to speak only when we renounce our need to grasp it intellectually. The moment we relinquish meaning, the painting begins to see us. It is darshan, not of deity in form, but of form imbued with sacred presence. The painting is not looking at the world; it is looking through us.

Such gestures are not confined to Indian soil. Across time and geography, the American abstractionist Mark Rothko opened a parallel window into silence. Rothko's colour fields which soaked in the deep tones of crimson, violet, and ochre do

not narrate. They emanate. Rothko wished his viewers to stand close, to become immersed, and even consumed. His works are not explanations; they are thresholds. "Tragedy, ecstasy, doom" his themes are states of being, not scenes. The painting does not ask to be understood. It asks to be entered, to be felt as a vibration in the chest. This is a spiritual architecture of image. Rothko's panels invite a reverent devotion similar to standing before an idol not to behold its form, but to feel the weight of its gaze. In this gaze, one is undone and born again.

Kandinsky, Great Russian mystic painter of form, deepened this connection

between sight and sound. To him, color was not just visible—it was audible, resonant. In his theory, yellow yelled like announce, blue whispered like a cello, and red vibrated with the clarity of a violin. His canvases were symphonies. He saw painting not as static composition, but as choreography of inner movement. For Kandinsky, to see was to hear—to witness a painting as one would a raga unfolding in time. Like a raga that brings morning into being, a painting too opens an emotional climate, a psychic resonance. The brushstroke becomes a breath, a pulse. Architecture, literature, sculptures—all hum behind its silence. And

when we stand before such a work, we are not standing before mere colour we are standing before time made still.

Importantly, there is no final rule for how to see a painting. Every act of beholding arises from the ripeness of our own inner climate—our memory, intuition, and vulnerability. The painting is not limited to its frame. It breathes in the air between itself and the viewer, in the hush of breath, in the pause of thought. In that pause, it becomes a presence.

A painting, then, is not only an object. It is a field of mind, a terrain of awareness. When we enter it with reverence, it walks with us. It haunts our dreams, shapes our silences, and reconfigures our seeing. And in that moment of wordless immersion, the painting speaks not in language, but in light, rhythm, and resonance. Its silence pulses through our nerves. Its colours awaken forgotten memories. Its emptiness clears a space within us. We are no longer simply onlookers; we become initiates, witnesses of a sacred rite.

So the next time you stand before a painting wait. Allow the act of seeing to become stillness. Let the gaze dissolve into presence. For too truly see a painting is not just to witness it, but to be transformed by it.

This is the sadhana of the gaze.

This is darshan.

This is the art of becoming. *The writer is a Poet, Painter & Art Historian*

NIMISHA PRIYA ON DEATH ROW: CAUGHT IN DIPLOMATIC MIRE

Supreme Court steps in, offers final hope before execution deadline.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

With less than a week left before her scheduled execution, the fate of Nimisha Priya—a nurse from Kerala convicted of murder in Yemen—hangs in the balance. On July 10, the Supreme Court of India agreed to urgently hear a petition seeking diplomatic intervention to save her life. The hearing is scheduled for July 14, just two days before her execution, which is set for July 16.

The petition, filed by the Save Nimisha Priya International Action Council, has urged the court to direct the Indian government to intervene either through diplomatic channels or by facilitating the payment of diya—“blood money” under Islamic law—to the victim’s family.

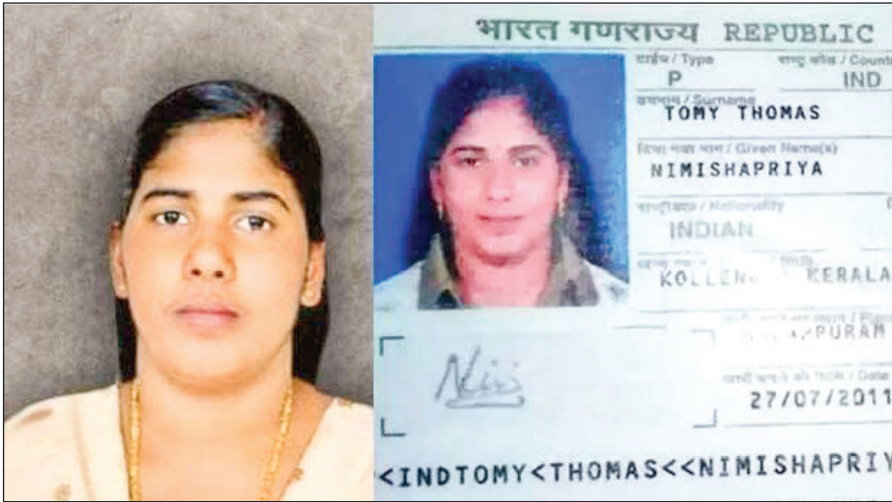
A bench led by Justices Sandeep Mehta and Dipankar Datta has asked the Centre to respond.

THE CASE: ABUSE, DEATH, AND A CONTESTED TRIAL

Nimisha Priya, 38, moved to Yemen in 2008 as a nurse and later opened a clinic with her Yemeni business partner, Talal Abdo Mahdi. Her family and supporters claim she faced sustained abuse from Mahdi, including physical violence and confiscation of her passport. In 2017, she reportedly attempted to retrieve the document by sedating him with the help of an accomplice.

Mahdi died from an overdose, and his dismembered body was later found in a water tank.

Convicted in 2018, Nimisha’s appeals were exhausted by late 2023. Human rights activists argue that the trial was conducted in Arabic without proper legal representation or translation services, raising serious questions about due process.



Kerala nurse Nimisha Priya, jailed in Yemen for allegedly killing a Yemeni national, is set to be hanged on July 16. Credit X post

TDG EXPLAINER

MEA Spokesperson Randbir Jaiswal says, “On Nimisha Priya case, we are closely following the developments...govt is extending all possible help in the matter. We will see how this goes forward from here”.

FINAL HOPE: BLOOD MONEY OR A DIPLOMATIC BREAK-THROUGH

India’s legal team and Nimisha’s family have offered around \$1 million (Rs 8.5 crore) as blood money in exchange for a pardon. Under Yemen’s Sharia law, such compensation can lead to clemency if accepted by the victim’s family. However, there has been no confirmation that the family will accept the offer.

Meanwhile, politicians across parties have weighed in. CPM MP K.



Convicted of murdering her former Yemeni business partner, Talal Abdo Mahdi. Credit X post

Radhakrishnan has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti has appealed to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. Public campaigns and crowdfunding efforts are also underway. The biggest obstacle re-

mains Yemen’s political complexity. Sana’a is controlled by the Houthi faction, with whom India has no official diplomatic ties, making intervention difficult. As July 16 approaches, all eyes are now on the Supreme Court hearing

set for July 14. It may be the last viable window for legal or diplomatic intervention. Unless there’s a breakthrough, Nimisha Priya could face execution in a country where she has already endured abuse, imprisonment, and an opaque justice system.

Job cuts at NASA: A strategic shift or intellectual capital loss?

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Trump administration is orchestrating a major overhaul of NASA’s workforce, with plans to eliminate at least 2,145 senior-level employees—mostly in GS-13 to GS-15 ranks—through early retirements, buyouts, and deferred resignations. These employees hold key technical and managerial roles, critical to the core missions of space exploration, science, and human spaceflight.

According to internal documents obtained by Politico, of the 2,145 positions targeted, 1,818 belong to mission-critical areas such as science, engineering, and crewed mission planning. The remaining 327 are in support functions like IT, finance, and facilities. This shake-up affects all ten NASA regional centers, with the most significant cuts at the Goddard Space Flight Center (607 positions), Johnson Space Center (366), and Kennedy Space Center (311).

WHY NOW

The layoffs align with the Trump Administration’s



At least 2,145 senior NASA employees are leaving the agency due to offers of early retirement and compensation.

prioritizes human spaceflight, particularly the Artemis lunar missions, at the expense of longstanding science programs like planetary probes, Earth-observation satellites, Hubble and Webb telescopes.

Policy insiders point to an administration drive—bolstered by the Department of Government Efficiency initiative led by Elon Musk—to streamline federal personnel and end perceived “bureaucratic bloat,” sometimes removing employees involved with DEI roles.

Consequences: Talent Exodus, Mission Gaps, and Con-

EXTENSIVE LOSS OF INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE:

These cuts threaten to derail key human spaceflight operations—like the Moon-to-Mars pipeline—as well as robust scientific exploration. Critics, including seven former Science Mission Directorate chiefs, argue the reductions will cede ground to competitors, notably China.

Meanwhile, Congress responded earlier this month by passing the so-called “Big, Beautiful Bill”, injecting nearly \$10 billion into NASA. The package preserves funding for Artemis, ISS support,

“You’re losing the managerial and core technical expertise of the agency.”
- Casey Dreier, Planetary Society

permanent administrator following Trump’s withdrawal of nominee Jared Isaacman in May. Instead, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy has been assigned as interim administrator, signaling a top-down push to advance budget priorities despite internal dissent. The agency faces a pivotal moment: without a stable leadership team and with mass departures underway, its capability to manage complex missions—Artemis, Mars probes, Earth monitoring—may soon be compromised.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Congressional oversight: Lawmakers could push back during FY2026 budget approvals—especially over science funding and staffing levels. Workforce decisions: The voluntary departure window closes on July 25; further cuts could follow if targets aren’t met. Mission sustainability: As expertise leaves, NASA must adapt strategy and training to maintain mission integrity.

The Trump administration’s sweeping layoff plan represents a historic realignment of NASA’s priorities, placing crewed lunar missions above decades of scientific infrastructure. But in the process, it risks eroding NASA’s intellectual capital, threatening mission continuity, and weakening U.S. leadership in the global space race. The coming weeks—amid Congressional scrutiny and a fragile workforce—will determine whether NASA emerges leaner and more agile, or weakened by its own efficiency drive.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

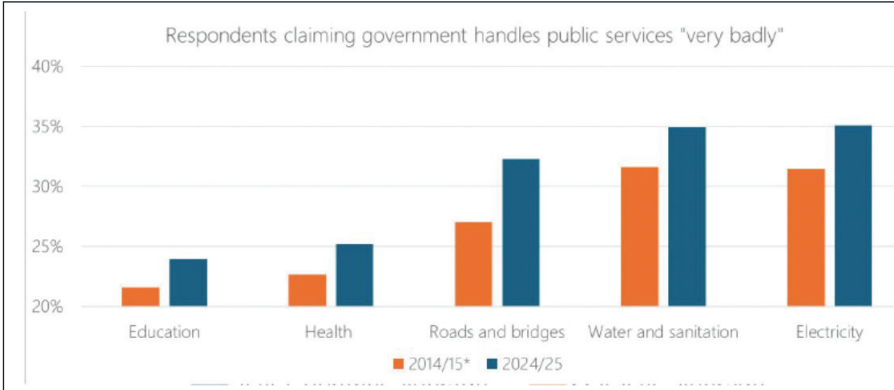
The World Bank’s 2025 Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) report offers a crucial diagnostic of Sub-Saharan African countries’ governance, economic management, social policy, and public-sector institutions. Designed to guide the allocation of International Development Association (IDA) resources, the CPIA scores countries on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 6 (highest) across 16 criteria. This year’s report, captured through six data-rich charts, highlights both progress and persistent challenges in delivering effective public services across the continent.

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT IMPROVES, BUT GOVERNANCE STILL LAGS

According to the CPIA 2025, Sub-Saharan Africa’s average score remained stable at 3.1, though this masks disparities between countries. Economic management, particularly monetary and fiscal policy, showed resilience amid global headwinds such as inflation and conflict. Countries like Kenya and Senegal improved their economic management scores, bolstered by prudent budgeting and anti-inflationary measures.

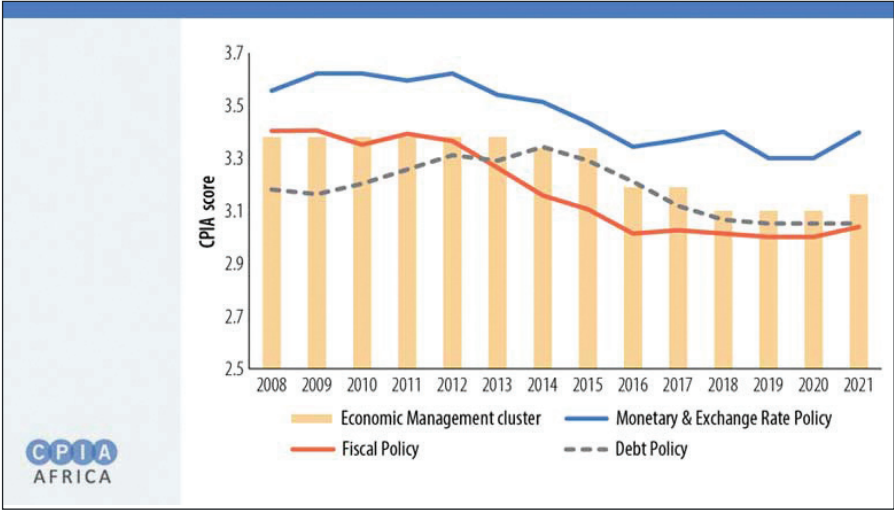
However, governance indicators—such as transparency, accountability, and control of corruption—remain weak. Only six countries scored 4 or higher in the governance cluster. This persistent weakness hampers both investor confidence and efficient service delivery, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states like South Sudan and Chad.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND INFRASTRUCTURE FACE SETBACKS
Social inclusion, a key



Source: Afrobarometer

Note: The figure shows the proportion of respondents claiming that the government handle public services “very badly.” The sample only includes countries with data available for both sets of surveys for each category. The baseline year for electricity is 2016/17, as data are not available for 2014/15.



Source: CPIA database, 2022

determinant of equitable development, saw mixed results. While a few countries advanced in policies supporting gender equity and environmental sustainability, overall regional performance in social inclusion slightly declined. The report notes a drop in scores related to the “equity of public resource use” and “building human capital,” suggesting setbacks in healthcare access, education equity, and pro-poor service delivery. Moreover, public sector management and institutions—a cornerstone of effective governance—suffered from inefficiencies, particularly in public procurement and civil service reform. Only 10 countries improved their institutional scores, with most fragile

states recording stagnation or decline.

FRAGILE STATES STILL AT THE BOTTOM

Perhaps the report’s starkest finding is the ongoing underperformance of fragile and conflict-affected states. The average CPIA score among these nations stood at just 2.7, well below the regional average. These countries often lack capacity, face weak rule of law, and struggle with donor coordination. Without focused attention on peacebuilding and institutional strengthening, their ability to absorb aid and deliver services remains limited.

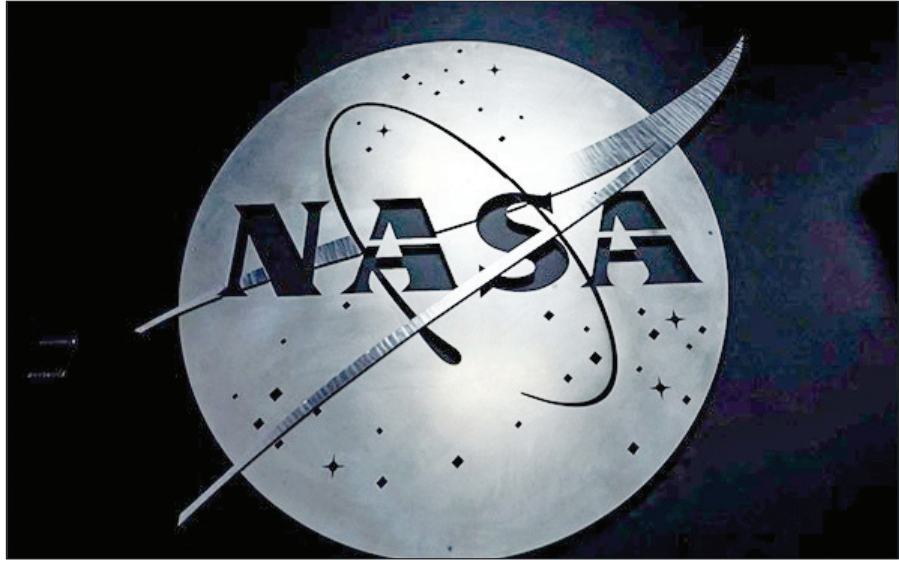
WHY THIS MATTERS

The CPIA is more than a

scorecard—it directly influences how IDA funds are allocated. Countries with higher CPIA scores receive more concessional financing, meaning stronger policy performance translates into greater development support.

The report thus serves as both an accountability mechanism and a policy roadmap.

In conclusion, while the 2025 CPIA shows that several African countries are strengthening their macroeconomic frameworks, many still fall short in institutional reform and equitable service delivery. Sustained efforts in governance, transparency, and inclusion will be key to unlocking transformative growth across the continent.



broader FY 2026 budget blueprint, which proposes a 25% reduction to NASA’s overall funding—from \$24.8 billion to \$18.8 billion—while halving the science directorate’s budget from \$7.3 billion to roughly \$3.9 billion. This budget shift

gressional Pushback
The fallout is significant: NASA has already lost around 900 staff in February, with another 1,500 opting in by late June.

SPACE POLICY EXPERTS WARN OF AN

infrastructure, and deorbit planning—but it does not fully restore science cuts.

LEADERSHIP VACUUM AND UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Further complicating matters, NASA currently lacks a

40 KILLED IN GAZA WITH NO SIGN OF BREAKTHROUGH IN CEASEFIRE TALKS

AGENCIES
DEIR AL-BALAH

Israeli airstrikes killed at least 40 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including 10 members of a family sheltering in a tent, hospital officials said Wednesday. The strikes came as U.S. President Donald Trump pushed for a ceasefire that might end the war and free dozens of Israeli hostages.

Trump met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the second time in two days at the White House on Tuesday evening, but there was no sign of a breakthrough.

Netanyahu has vowed to continue the 21-month war until Hamas is destroyed, while the militant group has said it will only release the remaining hostages in return for a lasting ceasefire and an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Nasser Hospital in the southern Gaza city of Khan



Younis said the dead included 17 women and 10 children. The war has gutted Gaza's health system, with several hospitals taken out of service and leading physicians killed in Israeli strikes.

The Israeli military said it had struck more than 100 targets across Gaza over the past day, including militants, booby-trapped structures, weapons storage facilities, missile launchers and tunnels. Israel accuses Hamas of hiding weapons and fighters among civil-

ians.

On Wednesday, crowds of people bid farewell to the 10 members of the Shaaban family killed in an Israeli strike while they were inside their tent in Khan Younis.

"I found all my children dead, and my daughters' three children dead," said Um Mohammad Shaaban, a nickname that means Mohammad Shaaban's mother. "It's supposed to be a safe area where we were."

She said that strikes have intensified even as hope for

a ceasefire has risen. "The hospital last night was jam-packed," she said.

As she wept over the bodies of her three grandchildren, others holding the bodies struggled to let go before they were sent to burial.

Palestinians are desperate for an end to the war that has killed tens of thousands, destroyed vast areas and displaced around 90% of the territory's population.

Aid groups say Israeli restrictions and the breakdown of law and order have made it extremely difficult to deliver humanitarian assistance, leading to widespread hunger and fears of famine.

In the sprawling coastal Muwasi area, where hundreds of thousands of people live in tents after being displaced from their homes, Abeer al-Najjar said she had struggled during the constant bombardments to

get food and water for her family.

"I pray to God that there would be a pause, and not just a pause where they would lie to us," she said, referring to an earlier ceasefire that Israel ended in March. "We want a full ceasefire."

Her husband, Ali al-Najjar, said life has been especially tough in the summer, with little access to drinking water. "We hope this would be the end of our suffering and we can rebuild our country again," he said, before running through a crowd with two buckets to fill them from a water truck.

People chased the vehicle as it drove away to another location.

Amani Abu-Omar said the water truck comes every four days, not enough for her dehydrated children. She said the summer heat and harsh conditions have caused skin rashes.

Gaza: US issues sanctions against UN investigator

AGENCIES
UNITED NATIONS

The Trump administration announced Wednesday that it is issuing sanctions against an independent investigator tasked with probing human rights abuses in the Palestinian territories, the latest effort by the United States to punish critics of Israel's 21-month war in Gaza.

The State Department's decision to impose sanctions on Francesca Albanese, the U.N. special rapporteur for the West Bank and Gaza, follows an unsuccessful U.S. pressure campaign to force the international body to remove her from her post. It also comes as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is visiting Washington this week to meet with President Donald Trump and other officials about the war in Gaza and more. It's unclear what the prac-



tical impact the sanctions will have and whether the independent investigator will be able to travel to the U.S. with diplomatic paperwork.

Albanese, an Italian human rights lawyer, has been vocal about what she has described as the "genocide" by Israel against Palestinians in Gaza. Both Israel and the U.S., which provides military support to its close ally, have strongly denied that accusation.

The U.S. had not previously addressed concerns with Albanese head-on because it has not participated in either of the two Human Rights Council sessions this year, including the summer session that ended Tuesday. This is because the Trump administration withdrew the U.S. earlier this year.

In recent weeks, Albanese has issued a series of letters urging other countries to pressure Israel, including through sanctions, to end its deadly bombardment of the Gaza Strip.

She has also been a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants against Israeli officials, including Netanyahu, for allegations of war crimes. She most recently issued a report naming several large U.S. companies as among those aiding what she described as Israel's occupation and war on Gaza.

Russia blasts Kyiv with another missile, killing at least 2

AGENCIES
KYIV

Russia pounded Ukraine's capital with another major missile and drone attack overnight into Thursday, killing at least two people and causing fires across Kyiv a day after the heaviest drone attack so far in the more than three-year war, Ukrainian officials said.

In another tense and sleepless night for Kyiv residents, with many of them dashing in the dark with children, pets and blankets to the protection of subway stations, at least 22 people were wounded, according to Tymur Tkachenko, head of the Kyiv Regional Administration.

The night was punctuated with the chilling whine of approaching drones that slammed into residential areas,



exploded and sent balls of orange flames into the dark during the 10-hour barrage. Russia fired 397 Shahed and decoy drones as well as cruise and ballistic missiles at Kyiv and five other regions, authorities said.

"This is a clear escalation of Russian terror: hundreds of Shahed drones every night, constant missile strikes, massive attacks on Ukrainian cities,"

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a Telegram post. June brought the highest monthly civilian casualties of the war, with 232 people killed and 1,343 wounded, the U.N. human rights mission in Ukraine said Thursday, as Russia launched 10 times more drones and missiles than the same month last year.

At least 13,580 civilians, including 716 children, have been killed and more than 34,000 wounded since Russia's full-scale invasion of its neighbor began on Feb. 24, 2022, the U.N. said.

Two rounds of direct peace talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegations have yielded no progress on stopping the fighting. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said Thursday there is no date for a possible third round of negotiations.

What ex-South Korean leader Yoon faces following his new arrest

AGENCIES
SEOUL

Four months after his release, South Korea's disgraced former President Yoon Suk Yeol was sent back to a detention centre after a Seoul court issued a warrant for his arrest Thursday.

Yoon's brief, ill-fated imposition of martial law on December 3 led to his indictment on charges that he directed a rebellion, which is punishable by life imprisonment or death.

Prompted by concerns he might destroy evidence, Yoon's arrest could mark the start of a prolonged period in custody as investigators pursue additional charges.

Yoon defended his martial



law decree as a necessary step to quash "anti-state" liberal opponents, accusing them of abusing their legislative majority to obstruct his agenda. But the order lasted only hours, until a quorum of lawmakers broke through a blockade of heavily armed soldiers at the National Assembly and voted to overturn the order.

Here is what Yoon faces in one of the most explosive criminal cases in South Korea's history.

How he ended up back in a cell. Yoon's self-inflicted downfall extended a decadeslong run of South Korean presidencies ending badly. But the outspoken conservative, who was removed from office in April, is the first South Korean president to be arrested, released and then arrested again within months.

Yoon became the country's first sitting president to be detained following a January 15 raid on his official residence in Seoul by hundreds of anti-corruption investigators and police,

which came 12 days after presidential security forces blocked an attempt to take him into custody.

Seoul Western District Court later granted a formal arrest warrant, citing concerns by investigators that he could destroy evidence. The decision triggered a riot by his supporters.

Anti-corruption investigators then transferred the case to public prosecutors, who indicted him January 26 on rebellion charges in the Seoul Central District Court, describing Yoon's hourslong power grab as an illegal attempt to seize the legislature and election offices and arrest political opponents.

President Trump announces tariffs on imports from Sri Lanka, Iraq

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday announced a fresh round of tariffs on imports from seven nations - Sri Lanka, Algeria, Iraq, Libya, the Philippines, Moldova and Brunei. These tariffs will come into effect on August 1. The White House has shared letters sent by Trump to leaders of these seven nations, which mentioned the tariffs they will face while exporting goods to the US.

According to the letters, the US will impose a 30 per cent tariff on goods imported from Sri Lanka, Iraq, Algeria and Libya. In the letters, Trump mentioned that Moldova will face a tariff of 25 per cent when exporting goods to the US. According to the letter, imports from Brunei will face a 25 per cent tariff while the Philippines will be facing 20 per cent.

In the letters, Trump



threatened to increase the tariff rate by the same amount if the countries decided to raise their tariffs on importing American products. However, the US President indicated his willingness to reduce these tariffs if these countries revised their trade policies.

Trump concluded the letters written to all seven nations with the same message that reads, "We look forward to working with you as your Trading Partner for many years to come. If you wish to open your heretofore closed

Trading Markets to the United States, and eliminate your Tariff, and Non-Tariff, Policies and Trade Barriers, we will, perhaps, consider an adjustment to this letter. These Tariffs may be modified, upward or downward, depending on our relationship with your Country. You will never be disappointed with The United States of America."

On July 8, Trump announced that tariffs would come into effect on August 1, 2025, and must be paid without any extensions. In a post shared on Truth Social, Trump stated, "As per letters sent to various countries yesterday, in addition to letters that will be sent today, tomorrow, and for the next short period of time, TARIFFS WILL START BEING PAID ON AUGUST 1, 2025. There has been no change to this date, and there will be no change. In other words, all money will be due and payable starting AUGUST 1,

2025 - No extensions will be granted. Thank you for your attention to this matter!" Trump on Monday (local time) said the proposed tariff arrangements aim to ensure fairness and remain open to negotiation if other countries are willing to make a fair deal. "We're always subject to negotiations when something is fair, but we've talked to most of the countries. Pretty much they have had their way for many, many decades. It was time that we just wanted fairness. This is not really equitable from our standpoint because this is a small token by comparison to damages been done over the years but we had no other president that was willing to do this, but I did it," he said. He added that his second term would outperform his first in terms of tariff collection and economic impact. "Even in my first term with China and others.

AGENCIES
DHAKA

A special tribunal indicted Bangladesh's ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday by accepting charges of crimes against humanity filed against her in connection with a mass uprising in which hundreds of students were killed last year.

A three-member panel, headed by Justice Golam Mortuza Mozumder, indicted Hasina, former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun on five charges. Hasina and Khan are being tried in absentia.

Responding to the panel's decision, Hasina's Awami League party condemned the trial process and said the tribunal was a "kangaroo" court.

The tribunal opened the trial on June 5. Authorities published newspaper advertisements asking Hasina, who has been in exile in India, and Khan to appear before the tribunal. Hasina has been in exile since Aug. 5.

Bangladesh's interim government, headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus, sent a formal request to India for Hasina's extradition, but India has not responded. Khan is possibly also in India.

Al-Mamun, who was arrested and ap-



peared before the panel on Thursday, pleaded guilty and told the tribunal that he would make a statement in favor of the prosecution at a later stage.

Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam later told reporters that Al-Mamun appealed to the judges to be an "approver." It refers to a person who pleads guilty and who, in exchange for potential leniency or a reduced sentence, agrees to testify against their accomplices as a state witness.

"The tribunal accepted his plea to be an approver," Islam said.

The prosecution offered a leaked audio of Hasina and other documents as evidence to the tribunal.

A petition by Amir Hossain, a lawyer ap-

pointed by the state for Hasina and Khan, for their names to be dropped from the case was rejected by the tribunal.

The tribunal fixed Aug. 3 for the opening statement by the prosecution and Aug. 4 for recording witness statements. In a post on X, the Awami League accused the Yunus-led administration of manipulating the judiciary.

"People have lost their faith over the judicial system as Yunus regime has reduced this key state organ into a means to prosecute dissenters," it said. "We condemn in strongest term the indictment against our party president and other leaders as we assert that this step marks another testament to the ongoing witch hunt against our party and weaponization of judiciary by Yunus regime."

Hasina and the Awami League have previously criticized the tribunal and its prosecution team for connections to political parties, especially the Jamaat-e-Islami party.

Filing five charges, the prosecution argued Hasina was directly responsible for ordering all state forces, her Awami League party and its associates to carry out actions leading to mass killings, injuries, targeted violence against women and children, the incineration of bodies and denial of medical treatment to the wounded.

Rubio meets Russian FM Lavrov amid Ukraine tensions

AGENCIES
KUALA LUMPUR

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Thursday on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit, CNN reported. The meeting occurred just days after President Donald Trump expressed frustration with Russian President

Vladimir Putin for not engaging in peace talks regarding the Ukraine conflict. Neither Rubio nor Lavrov made any remarks before the meeting, and when asked about his message to his Russian counterpart, Rubio responded with a wink, CNN reported. The meeting comes amid confusion following a Pentagon-directed pause on weapons shipments to



Ukraine, which President Trump publicly criticized. According to CNN, Secre-

tary of Defense Pete Hegseth had not informed the White House prior to approving

the halt, catching Rubio off guard. Following the pause, Trump stated, "Putin is not -- he's not treating human beings right. He's killing too many people," and added, "So we're sending some defensive weapons to Ukraine, and I've approved that." Trump also criticized Putin sharply, saying he has offered a lot of "bullshit" which has proved to be "meaningless," CNN reported.

Following these comments, Russia launched its largest drone assault to date on Ukraine, deploying more than 700 drones, according to Ukraine's Air Force, CNN reported. This marked Rubio's second meeting with Lavrov, the first having taken place earlier this year in Saudi Arabia. The two have also spoken multiple times over recent months as the US

pushed unsuccessfully for a ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia, CNN reported. Rubio's visit to Kuala Lumpur also included meetings with ASEAN counterparts, occurring shortly after Trump declared that many ASEAN countries will face US tariffs starting August 1 unless trade agreements are reached. Eight ASEAN nations, along with South Korea and Ja-

pan, will be subject to these tariffs, adding complexity to Rubio's diplomatic efforts, CNN reported. The Trump administration has made clear that trade and economics are a central focus of its foreign policy. Though Rubio is not the lead trade negotiator, he is expected to face questions and frustrations about the tariffs during his meetings, a senior administration official told CNN.

SUNIEL RETURNS FOR 'HUNTER' SEASON 2, JACKIE JOINS THE CAST

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Actor Suniel Shetty is all set to return as ACP Vikram Sinha in the second season of Amazon MX Player series "Hunter", which just released a teaser.

The show revolves around Shetty's Sinha going against the crime world to save his daughter. In season two, Sinha "gets pulled into a new maze that is far more twisted faced against a villain who is charming, unflinching, and impossible to read," according to a press release.

"Season 1 was special. It had the thrill of discovery - of this world and of Vikram's journey. The audience saw him running from



his past while trying to uphold justice. But in Season 2, that past catches up in the most unimaginable way. Vikram is pushed to his breaking point. He's a father on a mission, with nothing left to lose. This chapter took

a lot out of me, and I think that truth will hit hard on screen," Shetty said in a statement.

Shroff and Shetty are friends in real life and have worked together on movies such as "Border", "Hul-

chul", "Apna Sapna Money Money", "Aan" and many others.

Shroff, who plays the negative character of the Salesman, said he was hooked when the role was offered to him.

SS Rajamouli announces 'Baahubali' re-release

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Filmmaker S S Rajamouli has announced that his mega hit "Baahubali: The Beginning" and "Baahubali: The Conclusion" are set for a re-release.

The first part of the movie, starring Prabhas, Rana Daggubati, Anushka Shetty, Tamannaah Bhatia, Ramya Krishnan, Sathyaraj, and Nassar, released in theatres on July 10, 2015.

Fans will now get to see both the parts in a combined format in theatres on October 31, 2025, the makers said announcing the special celebration for the 10 year anniversary of



the movie.

The announcement can be found on the film's official social media handles too, with the caption: "10 years ago, a question

united the nation... Now the question and the answer return together in ONE grand epic. #BaahubaliTheEpic releases worldwide on October

31st, 2025."

An epic spanning multiple generations, the Baahubali films were born out of Rajamouli's love for classic mythological and comicbook stories. He created the screenplays based on a story by V. Vijayendra Prasad. MM Keeravani produced the chart-busting original music and background score.

Starring Prabhas, Rana Daggubati, Anushka Shetty, Tamannaah Bhatia, Ramya Krishnan, Nassar, and Sathyaraj among others, the big-scale fantasy epic was made on a budget of Rs 180 cr and grossed Rs 650 cr worldwide.

Brad 's legal clash with Angelina heats up

AGENCIES
LOS ANGELES

Hollywood Actor Brad Pitt has demanded private communications from ex-wife Angelina Jolie in their ongoing legal fight over Chateau Miraval, the French winery the former couple once owned.

According to court documents filed on June 30 and obtained by PEOPLE, the 61-year-old actor requested records and a deposition from Alexey Olyinik, an employee of the Stoli Group. Pitt believes Olyinik has key information about Jolie's 2021 sale of her stake in the winery to Stoli's wine division, Tenute del Mondo.

The Once Upon a Time in Hollywood star claims that Jolie made the sale without his consent, violating a past agreement that neither of them would sell their share without the other's approval. In February 2022, he sued Jolie, while Jolie responded in September 2022 with a countersuit, accusing Pitt of "waging a vindictive war" against her since their separation in 2016.

As per PEOPLE, in Pitt's



As per PEOPLE, in Pitt's new document filed in the Superior Court of California, Olyinik has refused to provide documents or sit for questioning, stating that he cannot be forced to do so since he resides in Switzerland.

new document filed in the Superior Court of California, Olyinik has refused to provide documents or sit for questioning, stating that he cannot be forced to do so since he resides in Switzerland. Pitt's team argues these records are important to prove that Jolie "acted with malice" by selling her share to a buyer Pitt had long opposed.

Jolie's legal team has pre-

viously claimed Pitt would only buy her out if she signed a non-disclosure agreement meant to keep her from speaking about alleged abuse. That includes an incident on a private jet in 2016, where Pitt was reportedly verbally and physically abusive. Authorities investigated but did not press charges, and Jolie did not pursue legal action at the time, PEOPLE reported.

Raghav Juyal roped in for Nani starrer 'The Paradise'

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Raghav Juyal has joined the cast of director Srikanth Odela's upcoming action thriller "The Paradise", starring Nani in the lead role.

The announcement was made on Thursday, coinciding with Juyal's birthday. Production house SLV Cinemas welcomed him with a special post on social media.

"Team #TheParadise wishes the talented @TheRaghav_Juyal a very Happy



Birthday. We are welcoming him in a role that will be unique and will take everyone by surprise," the post read.

Take a look

The Paradise tells the story of a marginalised tribal community that has long been denied basic rights. Their struggle for justice begins when a new leader rises to challenge the system that has kept them oppressed for generations.

Director Srikanth Odela said that Juyal was cast after the team saw his intense performance in the action

film Kill.

"We initially imagined a lean guy with a thick mustache for this ruthless role. But after watching Kill and witnessing Raghav's menacing performance, we were convinced he was the perfect fit. He brought a raw intensity that completely won us over. We're truly excited about what he brings to this character," said Odela, as per Variety.

Juyal has recently gained praise for his serious roles. He was appreciated for his performance in 'Kill', which also premiered at the Toron-

PICTURE PERFECT

SONAM KAPOOR
A MODERN ICON OF
Elegance, Authenticity, and Heritage

Sonam Kapoor poses for her social media. (Instagram)

BRAIN PICKING



I take my work very seriously, but I don't take myself seriously.

— RAJKUMMAR RAO
(India Actor)

'KD - The Devil' teaser out

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The makers of Sanjay Dutt and Shilpa Shetty's highly anticipated film 'KD - The Devil' unveiled the teaser of the movie today, July 10, in a star-studded event in Mumbai.

The teaser offers a glimpse of the characters in the film, including Sanjay Dutt's Dhak Deva and Dhruva Sarja's Kaali Dasa 'KD'. Shilpa Shetty as Satyavati, Reeshma Nanaiah as Machhlakshmi, and others.

It features visuals of intense action and stunts. Sanjay Dutt's fierce look and Dhruva Sarja's fight sequences grab the attention. Nora Fatehi adds a glam

quotient, and Reeshma Nanaiah brings a desi vibe as Machhlakshmi.

Directed by Prem, 'KD-The Devil', the Pan-India multilingual is set to release in Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Hindi. It is a period action entertainer based on true events from the 1970s Bengaluru.

Check out the teaser.

The teaser launch event was attended by acclaimed filmmaker Priyadarshan. Apart from him, Dhruva Sarja, Sanjay Dutt, Shilpa Shetty Kundra, and Reeshma Nanaiah also arrived in style.

For the event, Sanjay opted for a black kurta, while Shilpa looked gorgeous in a pink sari.



Kher thanks Prez for accepting invitation to watch 'Tanvi The Great'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Legendary actor Anupam Kher feels honoured as President Droupadi Murmu has accepted his invitation to watch his upcoming directorial 'Tanvi The Great' ahead of the release.

Speaking with the media, Kher expressed his gratitude to the President, calling her



a "true inspiration".

"We are very honoured that President Droupadi Murmu has accepted our invitation to watch our film. She is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. It is a great honour for us that before the release our film will be watched by the President of our country. She is a perfect example of different but no less...Look at

her journey...where she has come from and where she has reached today. There can be no greater source of inspiration than her," Kher said.

"Before the release, many people go to the temple of God, perform puja, or pray...I wanted in a different manner. I feel that if our President watches our film, then this film can receive a lot of blessings..." he added.

Justin Bieber drops pic with wife Hailey

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

Justin Bieber and his wife, model Hailey Baldwin Bieber, are enjoying some quiet time together on a summer 'bae-vacation.'

The couple, who often share glimpses of their personal life with fans, recently posted photos from their latest trip.

The 31-year-old singer took to his Instagram account to post an adorable picture showing him and Hailey, 27, cuddling by a body of water.



Hailey also posted a series of photos with a yellow theme from the same trip, though Justin didn't appear in her pictures. She captioned it, "Summer club lemontini girlie." Justin later

reshared her post on his Instagram Stories.

The couple, who welcomed their first child, Jack Blues, in August 2024, also seem to be enjoying their new chapter as parents.

From Ayushmann Khurrana to Akshay Kumar: Bollywood Actors Who Wore a Nose Ring and Rocked It Like a Boss



TDG NETWORK

In the ever-evolving world of fashion, Bollywood has often been a torchbearer for bold, unconventional style choices. While nose rings have long been associated with femininity and traditional Indian attire, several Bollywood actors have broken stereotypes by donning this accessory with confidence and flair. From red carpet appearances to on-screen avatars, these stars have made the nose ring a powerful symbol of gender-fluid fashion and self-expression.

AYUSHMANN KHURRANA: THE TRENDSETTER OF ANDROGYNOUS STYLE

Ayushmann Khurrana, known for challenging societal norms both on and off-screen, made headlines when he appeared on a magazine cover wearing a nose ring. Styled with kajal-lined eyes and a blazer-skirt combo, his look wasn't just a fashion statement—it was a



social one. Ayushmann has consistently used his image to question toxic masculinity, and this daring accessory added another layer to his narrative of inclusivity and fluid fashion.

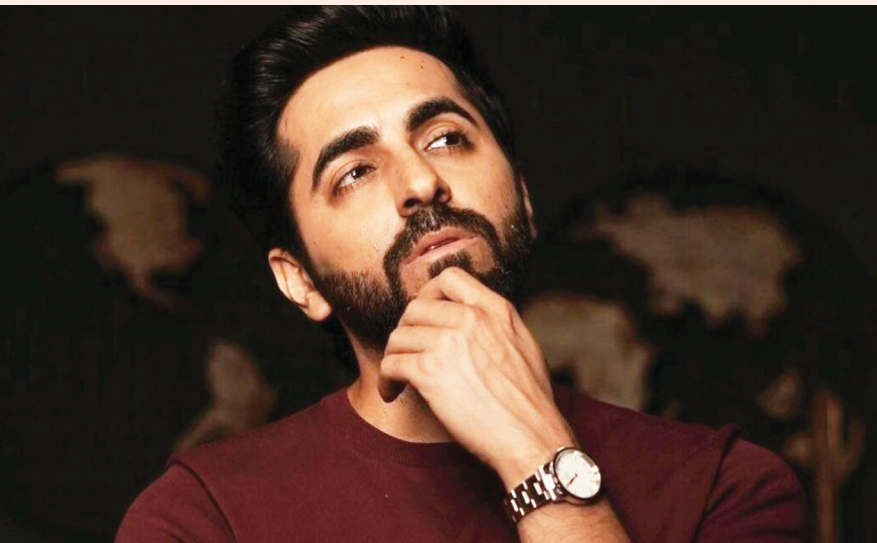
RANVEER SINGH: THE KING OF QUIRKY FASHION

If there's one actor who lives unapologetically through his fashion choices, it's Ranveer Singh. Known for his eccentric wardrobe and fearless attitude, Ranveer has been spotted sporting a nose ring, adding to his collection of bold accessories. Be it floral suits or skirts, his use of the

nose ring complements his larger-than-life persona. For Ranveer, it's less about trends and more about self-expression without inhibition.

AKSHAY KUMAR: BREAKING NORMS ON-SCREEN

In the film *Laxmi*, Akshay Kumar's portrayal of a man possessed by a transgender spirit brought a unique look to the big screen, including him wearing a traditional nose ring. While the role received mixed reviews, the visuals sparked conversations about gender presentation in mainstream cinema. Akshay's commitment to the character and



willingness to step outside the conventional male wardrobe was a notable departure from his usual action-hero image.

APARSHAKTI KHURANA: UNDERSTATED YET

IMPACTFUL
Following in his brother Ayushmann's footsteps, Aparshakti Khurana has also flirted with gender-fluid fashion. He was seen donning a sleek nose pin in a photoshoot that played with vintage

aesthetics and minimal styling. Though not as flamboyant as some of his peers, Aparshakti's subtle approach showed that even minimal styling can carry strong messaging when done with intent.

FAWAD KHAN: A PAKISTANI STYLE ICON WITH GLOBAL APPEAL

Although not Indian, Fawad Khan's influence on South Asian fashion cannot be ignored. Known for his graceful masculinity, Fawad once walked the ramp wearing a delicate nose ring, paired with a sherwani. The look was regal, yet radical—a blend of heritage and rebellion. His poised demeanour and strong fashion sense made the nose ring appear as natural as a pocket square.



By embracing the nose ring—a traditionally feminine accessory—they have not only challenged rigid beauty standards but also encouraged a wider acceptance of individual expression. In a world that's becoming increasingly open to diversity and inclusion, these stars remind us that true style lies in the courage to be different.

THE NOSE RING REVOLUTION

These Bollywood actors have proven that fashion has no gender and style knows no boundaries.

Balancing Doshas for Healthy Skin – Shahnaz Husain's Insights

TDG NETWORK

Your skin health is dependent on what you eat, the way your internal health is, it highly impacts the way your skin is going to appear on the outside, if you have excessive heat in your body then you are most likely to go through breakouts. Similarly, when any of your doshas are out of balance, it shows on your skin. However, unless you are not aware of your doshas, hot it affects your skin health and how to fix it, you will not be able to fully restore your natural skin health. So, let me explain you all about it.

DOSHAS & SKIN HEALTH

- Vata- With elements of air and sky, the characteristic will be dry and delicate skin. Due to dryness your skin is most likely to show early signs of ageing and dehydration, even roughness.
- Pitta- Elements of fire and water, your skin is sensitive that makes it vulnerable

to inflammation. You may easily get acne rashes and even suffer with sunburns.

- Kapha- With elements of water and earth, their skin is thick and oily, it appears well hydrated, but can suffer with clogged pores and blackheads.

BALANCING DOSHAS FOR HEALTHY SKIN

Balancing Vata
Your skin requires ample nourishment and warmth regularly, for this reason I advise incorporating warm food that is light on the stomach for instance pulses and khichdi are your best meals. At the same time, you should avoid having anything raw. Your sleep routine should be supportive of your skin health therefore ample sleep is required along with good practices of yoga and oil massages with sesame seed oil that would help in lymphatic drainage and skin hydration.

Balancing Pitta
Due to the hot elements,



Your dosha comprises cold and sluggish attitude, that should be counteracted with warmth and physical activity. Incorporate dry foods and roasted vegetables, green gram and millet in your diet.

you should incorporate food that would soothe your tastebuds and your stomach too, I suggest as per Ayurveda you should incorporate sweet fruits, cucumber, coconut water and green leafy vegetables.

You might have a tendency of consuming fried and spicy food but it is harmful for your dosha, so avoid it. Practice meditation, mindfulness and make reading a habit to tame your prakrati or your basic nature. Neem, aloe vera and manjishtha are good for your skin.

Balancing Kapha
Your dosha comprises cold and sluggish attitude, that should be counteracted with warmth and physical activity. Incorporate dry foods and roasted vegetables, green gram and millet in your diet. Craving for sugary and fried food should be cut down as it aggravates imbalance in your dosha. Your digestive system requires black pepper, cinnamon and ginger, these can be included in your diet and food you cook. Power yoga

is good for you.

TIPS FOR MAINTAINING DOSHA BALANCE

- Focus on the right amount of food intake and the right time you have your food as it greatly impacts your gut health that is directly in relation to your skin health.
- Adjust your diet and lifestyle, including skincare products as per the changing seasons to balance your dosha.
- For vata people you may experience joint pain that should not be ignored, for pitta people you might be prone to acidity you should learn to manage it. If you keep feeling lethargy then you have kapha imbalance in your body.

Bring your awareness to your body, tune into nature and the natural elements that are present in your body, it is always advisable to be mindful, use Ayurveda products and plant-based ingredients when choosing your skincare. As I said before, you should balance your body, your mind and your lifestyle that will compliment your skin health.

VEC Queen of India Season 2 Begins with Glamorous Soirée in Gurgaon

TDG NETWORK

The VEC Queen of India platform, founded by entrepreneur Muskaan Gairola, continues to redefine modern Indian pageantry by placing purpose, poise, and personality at its core. The launch soirée exuded this spirit of elegance, aspiration, and empowerment. Molecule Air Bar, known for its electrifying ambience and urban aesthetic, created the perfect setting for the celebration. At the same time, Patrón Tequila added a luxe edge with signature cocktails served throughout the evening.

The event was co-hosted by Anshu Dhawan, a celebrated lifestyle influencer and official Influencer Partner for VEC Queen of India 2025 – Season 2. With her charisma and style, she added effortless energy to the evening. A key highlight of the evening was the announcement of Bollywood icon Neelam Kothari Soni as the celebrity jury member for the upcoming Grand Finale. Her specially recorded video message, played during the event, expressed her admiration for the VEC platform and excitement to be a part of the Jaipur finale. The announcement marked a defining moment, solidifying the pageant's rising profile in the world of fashion, media, and culture.

Also in attendance were members of the VEC Queen of India leadership team, including Sunayana Raina, Creative Head — known for her bold design sensibility and passion for empowering women



through fashion; Ravi Gairola, Director of Vesna Event Crafters, whose leadership has steered VEC into becoming one of India's most respected experiential travel & event brands; and Kirti Mishra Narang, international pageant coach, advisory, and mentor — instrumental in designing the developmental journey for participants with a focus on mindset, personality, and presence. Among the guests were several finalists of the 2025 season, attending their first official VEC gathering and getting a glimpse into the pageant's signature style and community. One of the evening's standout moments was the announcement of the "VEC Muse of the Evening" — a special honorary title conferred upon a guest whose presence perfectly encapsulated the brand's ethos of elegance and individuality. Addressing the gathering, Muskaan Gairola affirmed her vision for a platform that champions both aspiration and social responsibility. "This platform is my way of blending dreams with dignity. Every woman crowned by us becomes a symbol of beauty, courage, and contribution," she said. She also highlighted

the pageant's larger mission — championing girl child education, women-led enterprises, wellness, and social upliftment, supported by long-standing partnerships with NGOs such as The Earth Saviours Foundation. Guests were treated to beautifully curated

hampers by official gifting partners — Ikari Homes, Reet Saga, Dwija Bake Studio, Motifs Home, and Deevaz — whose elegant offerings added warmth and charm to the evening.

As VEC Queen of India 2025 – Season 2 prepares to unfold in the regal city of Jaipur in October, expectations are high for a season steeped in cultural richness, elevated styling, and meaningful competition. The pageant celebrates depth, diversity, and distinction with uniquely designed rounds like the Queen's Eloquence Test, Cultural Couture Walk, and Gravitas & Vision Test. Open to both Ms. and Mrs. categories, it remains one of the few platforms in India that honours womanhood in all its dimensions.

After a spectacular debut in Goa, featuring 16 dynamic contestants and a show-stopping finale with Bollywood actor Chitrangda Singh, VEC Queen of India is back — bolder, brighter, and more purpose-driven than ever. If the kickoff soirée at Molecule Air Bar was any indication, Season 2 is already rewriting the rules of modern pageantry, where every queen rises to shine and lead.



RESEARCH BEGINS WITH CURIOSITY: SARITA JAIN



PROF SHIV SETHI

Dr Sarita Jain is an acclaimed Indian author, academician, and educationist. For more than three decades she has illuminated classrooms and conferences with her scholarship in language and literature, mentoring generations of students. Her prolific oeuvre spanning criticism, pedagogy, and creative prose—guides emerging researchers toward compelling themes and encourages general readers to pause, reflect, and rediscover themselves amid life's trials and tribulations.

Through graceful, incisive writing, Dr Jain exemplifies the transformative power of words and continues to enrich India's vibrant literary and academic landscape. Here are the excerpts of her literary conversation with Prof Shiv Sethi from the Daily Guardian

1. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START WRITING?

From an early age I was captivated by the power of words to illuminate the human experience. Literature offered both refuge and revelation, and I felt compelled to join that ongoing dialogue. My inspiration

springs from observing life's subtle details, human emotions, and the timeless quest for meaning that unites us all.

2. WHAT, IN YOUR OPINION, ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF GOOD WRITING?

Good writing demands clarity, authenticity, and emotional resonance. Clarity ensures the reader to never lose their way; authenticity lends the work credibility and depth. Above all, writing must evoke emotion whether through vivid imagery, compelling characters, or profound truths. That emotional connection transforms words into lasting art.

3. HOW DO YOU HANDLE WRITER'S BLOCK?

I treat writer's block as a signal to pause and listen more carefully. Sometimes I step away from the page to read, observe nature, or engage in conversation anything that renews perspective. I also believe in writing through resistance, accepting imperfect drafts and trusting that clarity returns with patience and persistence.

4. WRITING CAN BE EMOTIONALLY DRAINING AND STRESSFUL. ANY TIPS FOR ASPIRING WRITERS?

Cultivate discipline while maintaining compassion for yourself. Take breaks, nurture other interests, and remember that writing is not measured solely by



"From an early age I was captivated by the power of words to illuminate the human experience. Literature offered both refuge and revelation, and I felt compelled to join that ongoing dialogue. My inspiration springs from observing life's subtle details, human emotions, and the timeless quest for meaning that unites us all."

output. Above all, stay curious; curiosity transforms obstacles into opportunities for growth.

5. HOW MUCH 'WORLD-BUILDING' TAKES PLACE

BEFORE YOU START WRITING?

It varies by project. Some works demand extensive research into histories, cultures, and landscapes before the first sentence; in others, the world emerges

organically during drafting. Effective world building balances preparation with discovery, allowing the story's needs to guide its development.

6. WHAT ARE THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE?

Beyond pen, paper, or a reliable computer, the essential tools are keen observation, empathy, and disciplined revision. I rely on dictionaries, thesauruses, and research materials, but the intangible tools patience, resilience, and the willingness to see through many eyes matter most.

7. HOW DO YOU CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR YOUR BOOKS?

Research begins with curiosity. I immerse myself in books, articles, and archival records to gain a thorough understanding of the subject. Whenever possible, I explore locations firsthand to capture authentic details. My aim is always to move beyond surface facts and grasp the culture, context, and atmosphere that bring a narrative to life.

8. WHAT DOES SUCCESS MEAN TO YOU?

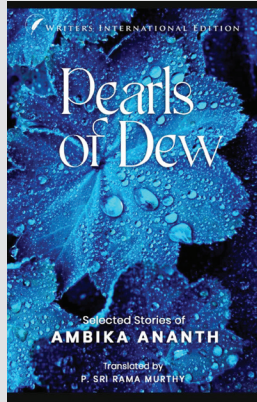
Success lies in creating something honest and meaningful. It is less about accolades and more about touching even a single reader's heart or mind. True success is the privilege of engaging in a life-long conversation with the world through one's work and leaving something of enduring value behind.

Stories of Poignancy and Practicality

RUPALI SETHI

Though the creative world of writing has a wide spectrum of many genres, fiction /short story writing has its own splendour and niche as it somehow seems to embrace the universal man in entirety in its dynamic expression. In this story collection titled 'Pearls of Dew' by Ambika Ananth, there are stories that revolve around life and living, socio-familial issues, pertaining to everyday aspects. The Pearls of Dew is the translation of the Telugu short-story collection, "Manchu Mutyalu" into English by Mr P.Sri Rama Murthy, who according to the bio is a seasoned translator with a much-acclaimed repertoire of translations.

The original Telugu story collection "Manchu Mutyalu" is a highly commended book for the humanitarian themes the stories deal with. The book is prescribed for M. Phil level study by Kakatiya University. The stories are varied in their theme and treatment, but all of them seem to be connected by the strong and threads of emotion and empathy. Good stories are supposed to offer the readers a sense of enjoyment as well as valuable insights into human conditions through memorable characters and situations.



"Modern lifestyles contribute to newer challenges and mental duress in the lives of people. In the stories narrated in "The Pearls of Dew" Ambika Ananth takes up several such existential situations with a profound insight into human nature and weaknesses. She closely observes how people react to adversities in life and often create more problems for themselves. Sometimes, these build up into mental health issues of varying degrees. Ambika delves into the complexities of the human psyche and dissects the thoughts and actions of her characters masterfully like a seasoned counsellor. She explores human emotions and relationships with dexterity".

The above lines from the Foreword by GSP Rao, Chief Editor of Muse India give a clear assessment of the content of the stories.

There is strong emphasis on the downside of com-

puter games addiction in children in the story - "Entertainment or Spoliation" - a gruesome murder of an elderly person comes to light and the concomitant suspenseful twists take the story to an open-ended conclusion. One can delve deep into the subliminal feelings of a couple who fail to become parents despite any intervention and how their situation can be taken as advantage by their own family and how they overcome the situation with a bold decision is the storyline of 'Selection'.

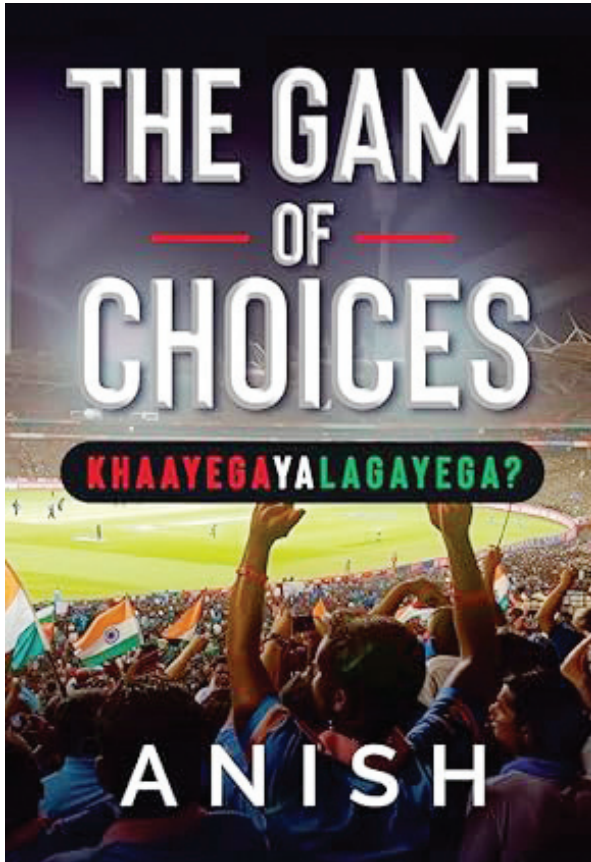
Frailty thy name is woman? is the story of strong-minded liberated woman who refused to succumb to the pressures by her boss for sexual favours. How she deals with it and boldly exposes him forms the story. Few stories like Equalism, Autumn is past, Fate, give a strong factor of readability with their narrative strength albeit a bit with a preachy tone. The emotional poignancy of stories in this collection has a seminal influence on the minds of the readers and probably also may remain in their memory for long. 'Pearls of Dew' - the quality of its production and presentation need a strong mention - aesthetically designed and published by Writers International Edition, Athens - printed at Manipal Technologies Limited of Karnataka.

Book Review: The Game of Choices by Anish

TDG NETWORK

Cricket, a game adored by millions, is full of thrilling matches, nail-biting finishes, and its share of mind-blowing controversies. For decades, this passion has fueled a massive, underground world of betting, growing from local shop bets to a multi-billion dollar industry. From the infamous India-South Africa match-fixing scandal of 1999-2000 to the Sri Lanka pitch tampering in 2018, the game's history is dotted with shocking revelations.

Story of one such controversy, "The Game of Choices" by Anish, dives deep into this vast and secretive world of betting with a captivating story. India is home to an estimated over 100,000 bookies, and this book tells the gripping story of one such individual. Set between the T20 World Cup in 2007 and the World Cup in 2011, the book introduces us to Sunny, a humble institute teacher who gradually transforms



into a bookie protégé. For any cricket fan, this will bring a wave of nostalgia, echoing Ravi Shastri's iconic roar, "Dhoni finishes it off in style, India lifts the World Cup after 28 years!"

That moment brought the entire nation to a standstill, and joy filled every home. Yet, amidst the celebration, a certain group in India could not fully enjoy that night, despite their meticu-

The book's simple writing style is genuinely one of its strongest points, making it a smooth read from start to finish. The gripping narrative keeps you on edge, making it impossible not to turn the page.

lous planning.

This group offered their customers unique "choices" that, when made, led to immense fortunes for them. When Sunny joins their ranks, he quickly learns the intricate tricks of this underground business. Each lesson, however, presents him with a new choice, and every choice propels him toward another challenge. His choices not only granted him access to one of the world's most confidential businesses, one that thrives purely on trust, but also brought him family-like friends and formidable enemies. He finds the love he never experienced before, the comfort he has

never had before, and risk like he has never faced before. But is he ready to pay the cost of his choices, whatever that may be?

The book's simple writing style is genuinely one of its strongest points, making it a smooth read from start to finish. The gripping narrative keeps you on edge, making it impossible not to turn the page. The conversational tone makes you feel truly immersed, as if listening to a friend share a fascinating story. This personal touch is what pulls you in. What really adds to its charm is the 'desi lingo' – the sprinkles of local Indian phrases, which make it genuinely funny at times. The characters and their

world feel incredibly real and relatable, especially if you live and breathe cricket and the thrill of its unpredictability. Bringing that same unpredictability to its pages, the book masterfully blends all these elements to create a truly gripping read. It keeps you hooked and entertained, turning complex situations into page-turning moments

For anyone curious about the lesser-known history of cricket, especially its controversies and the world of betting that often intertwines with it, "The Game of Choices" is a must-read. It's a compelling narrative that blends real-world events with a personal journey, offering a unique peek behind the curtain of the "gentleman's game." More than just a story about betting, it is about the difficult decisions that shape our life. It is a powerful reminder that every choice that we make has a consequence, good or bad. So it is up to you, "Khayega ya Lagayega?"

POEM

THE FIRE -EATER



ARBIND KUMAR CHOUDHARY

*The riter is the fire eater
Who runs after the emotional eater
For the best eater
Amidst many a toad eater?*

*The fruit eater is the lotus eater
Who calls back later
From the insect eater to the fruit eater
Amidst many a cheese eater?*

*The light eater is the formatter
Who scatters the matter
For the cater of the flower eater
Amidst many a man eater?*

*How can one flatter the smart eater
Amidst many a hamfatter?*

Disciplining words to a poetic purpose

Review of
Yellow: Poemlets
New & Earlier
by Sukrita,
published
by Sahitya
Akademi, 2024

ADITYA NAYAK

Coleridge described poetry as 'the best words in the best order'. The poet Sukrita's vividly evocative collection of short poems,

which appears under the title Yellow, is a testament to her dedication towards the form of precision poetry. The poetry collection under review gives a fresh lease of life to the genre of short poems or what has been labelled as 'poemlet' in the title. Several western poets have experimented with this genre giving it myriad shapes and forms. In this context, the names of EE Cummings and Ezra Pound-- and their memorably pithy lines—come to mind. Indian poets too have

dabbled in the genre too. Vikram Seth and Arun Kolkatkar are among the leading names. Sukrita's latest book has carved a niche for itself in the category where the above-mentioned poets belong.

The preface to the collection avows that the poems are self-consciously open-ended, and one may add, fragmented too. This, as the poet adds, is meant to invite the reader to participate in the never-ending process of meaning-making. In so doing, the poems reach out to

the reader, extend an invitation, and create a room for mutual interpretation.

The poems in Yellow are unified by their broad themes that revolve around the topics of death, human condition, state of displaced existence, and sense of self. For instance, a poem titled 'not so randomly' reminds us that 'my poems/ are the/ epitaphs/ of experiences/ that died with me' (26). The poem is a reflection upon the difficulty of giving words to experience, and therefore its fragmented form. Or consid-

er the poem 'dialogues with ganga', where the poet adds with unaffected bluntness - 'but death you confirm has no colour/ it is transparent like truth' (30). Similarly, in 'meaning', death again appears as an unfathomable phenomenon, 'my future lies planned in my elegy/ my death will/ expose it' (100). Another reference to the same in the poem titled 'passage' mentions, 'the garden blossomed/ in winter/ because/ I died in spring' (115). The tricky subject of grief which either eludes

literary expression or ends up being conveyed in a verbose manner is given the adequate space and attention here. The short poems with their pithy and exact words convey the right balance of saying enough and not much. The repeated invocation of death lend a sense of brooding atmosphere to the entire collection.

Several other poems map the history of the postcolonial state with references to partition, ensuing riots, displacements, babri masjid demolition and other

such momentous events that left an indelible mark on the people of the country. Another poem 'crows are our ancestors' is structured like a parable with a moody and ominous tone. The poem comments on the sly and untrustworthy nature of humans via the crows who make it a pact to 'not be like the human species' because 'tricksters themselves, crows detect/ tricks in others' (57). The poems in the collection touch upon human sensibility through various experiences born

out of loneliness, displacement, violence, loss and survival.

Overall, the poems in the collection demand slow and intentional readers who may imbibe the stillness of emotion and lingering thought via its stylized language. The individual poem titles are stripped of punctuation, capitalization and other rules of grammar to deliver a minimalistic effect. In doing so, language draws attention to itself, displaying its bare character and focusing on the precise bare words.

LORD’S TEST: ROOT, POPE STEADY ENGLAND AS HOSTS REACH 153/2

AGENCIES
LONDON

England batters Joe Root and Ollie Pope led a steady recovery for the hosts in the second session of the Test match at Lord’s on Thursday, guiding England to 153/2 at Tea. The duo stitched together an unbroken 109-run stand to help England bounce back after early setbacks in the morning.

Resuming at 83/2 after Lunch, Root and Pope navigated a disciplined Indian bowling attack with patience and control. Their fifty-run partnership came off 116 balls, laying the foundation for a solid middle-order resistance.

Former captain Joe Root brought up his half-century off 102 deliveries and remained unbeaten at Tea on 54 from 109 balls, decorated with seven elegant boundaries. Pope, on the other hand, showcased grit and composure to remain not out on 44, which included four boundaries.

England crossed the 100-run mark in 35.4 overs and



India’s Nitish Kumar Reddy celebrates a dismissal of England during the opening day of the 3rd Test, at Lord’s in London on Thursday. (©BCCI X/ANI Photo)

touched 150 in 47.3 overs, showing signs of momentum heading into the final session of the day.

The pair reached their 100-run stand in 193 balls.

In a moment of concern for India, wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant injured his finger after being struck by the ball, prompting a substitution. Dhruv Jurel took over the wicketkeeping duties for the remainder of the session.

With Root and Pope well

set, England will look to capitalise in the evening session, while India will aim for a breakthrough to regain control. After England won the toss and opted to bat first, the openers Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett were watchful against the fiery pace of Jasprit Bumrah and Akash Deep, who beat their bat several times, on a pitch which had a little grass, but not a lot of carry initially.

Having scored 15 runs in

the first seven overs, Zak Crawley broke the shackles in the eighth over by Akash, striking him for three boundaries, one through the covers, one edged over the slip cordon, and the last one being the best of the lot.

At the end of 13 overs, England was 35/0, with Duckett (19*) and Crawley (18*) unbeaten, having gone through the first hour safely despite some threatening bowling. All-rounder Nitish Kumar

BRIEF SCORE

England 153/2 (Joe Root 54*, Ollie Pope 44*; Nitish Kumar Reddy 2/35) vs India.

Reddy was introduced to the attack immediately after drinks break. The move paid off handsomely as he managed to make Duckett and Crawley give away their wickets, caught by wicket-keeper-batter Rishabh Pant. Duckett went back for a 40-ball 23 (three fours) while Crawley (18 in 43 balls with four boundaries). England was suddenly in soup, at 44/2. Duckett got dismissed while attempting a pull, while the delivery brushed past Crawley’s gloves into Pant’s hands.

Joe Root joined Ollie Pope, and with two boundaries in Mohammed Siraj’s 18th over, Root brought up England’s 50-run mark in 16.4 overs. With a flick through mid-wicket and a drive through covers, Root asserted his intent to score big and make amends for the last two disappointing matches.

Two teams to represent India in Gothia Cup football tournament

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Defending champions Special Olympics Bharat boys team and Haryana under-15 girls side will represent India in the Gothia Cup youth football tournament to be held in Gothenburg, Sweden from July 13-19.

The Gothia Cup is the world’s largest youth football tournament, which will be celebrating its 50th edition this year.

This iconic tournament will bring together over 1900 teams from more than 70 countries, making it the world’s largest and most inclusive youth football tournament.

Beyond the game, the Gothia Cup is a powerful platform for global unity, cultural exchange, and youth empowerment through



football. The Indian teams are supported Swedish company SKF’s ‘Meet the World’ initiative, which is transforming the football landscape across continents. The Embassy of Sweden in New Delhi hosted a vibrant send-off ceremony on Thursday for the two Indian teams.

The event was graced by Jan Thesleff, Ambassador of Sweden to India, Haryana sports minister Gaurav Gautam, president of Special Olympics Bharat Mal-

lika Nadda, All India Football Federation chief Kalyan Chubey among others.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Jan Thesleff said: “The Gothia Cup is more than just a football tournament, it’s a celebration of the unifying spirit of sports, building bridges between cultures. India’s participation highlights the growing role of sports in empowering youth, promoting inclusion, and connecting communities across borders.”

Indian recurve teams crash out in Stage 4 Archery World Cup

AGENCIES
MADRID

India made a dismal start to their Archery World Cup Stage 4 campaign, with both the recurve men’s and women’s teams crashing out in their respective opening-round matches here on Thursday.



Former Commonwealth Games champion Rahul Banerjee’s stint as the women’s recurve team coach got off to

a disappointing start as his wards showed little mental composure or fighting spirit, squandering a commanding 3-1 lead to lower-seeded France to lose 3-5 in their opening fixture.

The trio of Ankita Bhakat, Deepika Kumari and 15-year-old debutant Gatha Khadake, who earned an impressive

fourth seeding in the qualifications, began strongly by dropping just two points to take the first set 58-54.

New Delhi to host international shooting competitions

AGENCIES
MUNICH

The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) on Thursday awarded New Delhi two major competitions -- the combined World Cup in 2027 and the Junior World Championship in 2028 -- during its executive committee meeting here.

Announcing the calendar for the crucial 2026-27 season, the ISSF said that New Delhi, which will also organise the Junior World Cup (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun) in September-October this year, will host the prestigious World Cup leg in all three disciplines next year, the dates for which will be



announced in due course.

The 2026 Asian Cup (Rifle/Pistol) is also scheduled to be held in India in February 2026.

The Karni Singh Ranges

in New Delhi had also hosted the season-ending elite World Cup Final in October last year. India had hosted the ISSF World Cup in Pistol/Rifle and Shotgun

in 2021 ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.

The ISSF also confirmed the cities of Daegu and Cairo for hosting the prestigious World Championships in

2027, which will also serve as one of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics qualification event.

Daegu, in South Korea, will host the World Championship in Rifle and Pistol, nine years after Changwon organised the big event. It will be the third time Korea will host the World Championships, having first welcomed the global shooting fraternity to Seoul in 1978.

The ISSF World Cup Final will also be held in Daegu in 2027.

Cairo will play host to the 2027 World Championship for shotgun. The city had hosted World Cup events from 2022 to 2024 in rifle and pistol.

SACHIN TENDULKAR



Legendary Sachin Tendulkar poses for a picture with his portrait during its unveiling at the Lord’s Museum, at Lord’s in London on Thursday. (©BCCI X/ANI Photo)

Djokovic to face Jannik Sinner in semi-final at Wimbledon

AGENCIES
LONDON

Novak Djokovic began expressing a heartfelt thought about returning to the semi-finals at the All England Club — “It means the world to me,” he was saying, “that I’m still able, at 38, to play (in the) final stages of Wimbledon” — when the Centre Court crowd interrupted with yelling and applause.

“Thank you for cheering for my age. I really appreciate it. That’s beautiful. Makes me feel very young,” he said with a smile. “Another thing that makes me feel very young is competing with youngsters.”

Truth is, Djokovic should be used to this sort of thing by now. He is the last member of a golden era of men’s tennis still on tour, and after beating one 23-year-old in the quarterfinals, Flavio Cobolli, to reach his 52nd Grand Slam semifinal as he bids for a record 25th major singles championship, Djokovic will meet yet another 23-year-old, No. 1-ranked Jannik Sinner, on Friday for a berth in the final.

“That motivates me — to see how much can I still keep going with these guys, toe-to-toe,” the sixth-seeded Djokovic said.

Djokovic enters his Wimbledon semifinal with 4 losses in a row to Sinner

He’s lost his last four matches against Sinner, including in the semifinals of this year’s French Open.

And Djokovic lost each of



the past two title matches at Wimbledon to Carlos Alcaraz, who is almost exactly 16 years younger, meaning they’re the men with the second-largest age gap between major final opponents.

No. 2 Alcaraz, who is 22, will play No. 5 Taylor Fritz, 27, in the other semifinal.

Alcaraz and Sinner — a pair Djokovic identified as “the leaders of (men’s) tennis today” — have combined to win the last six Slam trophies in a row. Djokovic is more than a decade older than the other men left at Wimbledon

For Alcaraz, his career haul of five Slams includes the title last month at Roland-Garros, where he overcame a two-set deficit and a trio of championship points to sneak past Sinner in a five-set, 5 1/2-hour classic of a final. Sinner’s count is three. Both have been ranked No. 1. (Fritz’s best showing at a major was being the runner-up to Sinner at the U.S. Open last September.)

All noteworthy. But nothing compared to what’s on Djokovic’s resume, which

includes seven triumphs at Wimbledon alone — one shy of Roger Federer’s men’s mark — and 100 tournament titles, along with the most weeks spent at No. 1 in the rankings by any player.

“He’s a legend of our sport,” the 22nd-seeded Cobolli said Wednesday after being eliminated 6-7 (6), 6-2, 7-5, 6-4 by Djokovic.

Sinner’s playing style draws comparison’s to Djokovic’s, from the returning prowess to the court coverage to the power-plus-precision groundstrokes. Not much higher a compliment is possible. Djokovic took each of their first three head-to-head matchups, including at the All England Club in the 2022 quarterfinals and 2023 semifinals. But Sinner has gone 4-1 since. “Me and Novak, we know (each other) ... because we played quite a lot. So we understand what’s working and what’s not,” said Sinner, who out-served big-hitting Ben Shelton in a 7-6 (2), 6-4, 6-4 quarterfinal victory Wednesday.

Amanda reaches her first Grand Slam final at Wimbledon

AGENCIES
LONDON

Amanda Anisimova upset No. 1-ranked Aryna Sabalenka 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 at Wimbledon on Thursday to reach the first Grand Slam final of her career a little more than a year after taking a break from tennis because of burnout.

The 13th-seeded Anisimova, who was born in New Jersey and grew up in Florida, was playing in her second major semifinal after losing at that stage at the 2019 French Open at age 17.

In May 2023, she took



time off from the tour, saying she had been “struggling with my mental health” for nearly a year.

Anisimova will face either Iga Swiatek or Belinda Bencic on Saturday for the trophy.

For Sabalenka, who replaced Swiatek at No. 1 in October, this defeat prevented her from becoming the first woman to reach four consecutive Grand Slam finals since Serena Williams a decade ago.

Dortmund’s Julien Duranville needs shoulder surgery after Club World Cup

AGENCIES
DORTMUND

Borussia Dortmund’s young winger Julien Duranville needs surgery on a shoulder injury picked up against Real Madrid at the Club World Cup, the club said Thursday.

The 19-year-old from Belgium was hurt in the latter stages of Dortmund’s 3-2

loss to Madrid in the quarterfinals on Saturday.

Dortmund said the surgery decision was made following an examination on Thursday and it isn’t yet possible to predict how long he will be out.

Dortmund regards Duranville as one of its most promising young players but his progress has repeatedly hit injury set-

backs since he joined the club as a 16-year-old in 2023.

Sporting director Sebastian Kehl said the injury was “all the more bitter” because of the work Duranville and the club had done last season to improve his fitness. “Nevertheless, we remain positive and optimistic because Julien is an outstanding talent,”



Dortmund regards Duranville as one of its most promising young players but his progress has repeatedly hit injury setbacks since he joined the club as a 16-year-old in 2023.

he added.

Dortmund’s opening game of the new season is

just over a month away in the first round of the German Cup on Aug. 18.