



2
TMC TO JOIN I.N.D.I.A BLOC'S STRATEGY MEETING TODAY; AAP OPTS OUT



11
WHY TRUMP THREATENS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST MURDOCH



16
BUMRAH SHOULD FEATURE IN BOTH REMAINING TESTS, SAYS KUMBLE

Era of East: PM Modi launches Rs 7,000 cr projects in Bihar, Rs 5,400 cr projects in West Bengal

SOUNDS POLL BUGLE IN BIHAR, CALLS FOR POLITICAL CONTINUITY

ABHINANDAN MISHRA
NEW DELHI

Less than 100 days before Bihar heads into Assembly elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Motihari and launched, inaugurated, and dedicated development projects worth over Rs 7,000 crore, making a strong pitch for infrastructure growth, welfare delivery, and political continuity in the state. Addressing a packed crowd, Modi began his 35-minute speech by greeting the audience in Bhojpuri, evoking a sense of local pride and cultural rootedness.

PM Modi started by offering salutations to Baba Someshwarnath and invoked the historic legacy of Champaran in India's freedom struggle. He said that the same land that once gave a new direction to Mahatma Gandhi will now shape the future of Bihar. He also drew a parallel between the rising power of Eastern countries in the global order and the emergence of East-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in conversation with Bihar CM Nitish Kumar during a public meeting, in Motihari on Friday. ANI

ern India as a new growth engine within the country, stating, "Just as the East is rising globally, this is also the time of the East in India."

PM Modi accused the previous regimes of exploiting the poor, Dalits, OBCs, and tribals for votes while denying them dignity and opportunity.

PM Modi reminded the crowd of a statement he had made on 24 April in Madhubani following the Pahalgam terror attack. "I had promised from the soil of Madhubani that the per-

petrators would be taught a lesson. Today, the world has seen the result of Operation Sindoor," he said, reaffirming his government's firm

stance on terrorism and national security. In a personal and spontaneous moment, a man from the audience presented Modi with a miniature rep-

AGENCIES
DURGAPUR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday tore into the TMC, accusing it of risking Bengali 'ashmita' and national security by promoting infiltration for vote-bank politics and alleged that the Mamata Banerjee government has "crossed all limits" of appeasement politics.

Modi, who launched projects worth Rs 5,400 crore in the state, across the oil and gas, power, rail, and road sectors, also positioned the BJP as the harbinger of a new Bengal, promising a clean break from the past, saying "the BJP has big dreams for West Bengal. We want to build a prosperous, developed Bengal. All the projects being launched here are a step towards that dream."

In a stinging critique of Bengal's economic environment under TMC, PM Modi said the state has become inhospitable for industry and investors.

"TMC's 'Gunda Tax' is deterring investment in Ben-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves to the gathering during a public meeting, in Durgapur on Friday. ANI

gal. The state's resources have fallen into the hands of the mafia, and government policies are deliberately designed to enable ministers

In a fiery address at a packed ground in Durgapur, PM Modi positioned the BJP as the only party that truly respects and protects Bengali 'ashmita' (pride),

to engage in blatant corruption," he alleged.

In a fiery address at a packed ground in Durgapur, PM Modi positioned the BJP as the only party that truly respects and protects

Bengali 'ashmita' (pride), calling for an end to what he termed a regime of "lies, lawlessness and loot."

"TMC, because of its vested

interests, has put the identity of West Bengal at stake. For the sake of vote-bank politics, infiltration is being encouraged here. An ecosystem has been created

Baghel's son arrested by ED in liquor 'scam'

AGENCIES
RAIPUR

The Enforcement Directorate on Friday arrested Chaitanya Baghel, son of senior Congress leader and former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel, in an alleged liquor scam-linked money laundering case, official sources said.

According to Bhupesh Baghel, the action came on Chaitanya's birthday. The junior Baghel was later sent to five-day ED remand by a court.

Chaitanya was taken into custody by the ED under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) following fresh early morning raids conducted at his residence in Bhilai town of Durg district. The father-son duo reside at the same house.

Bhupesh Baghel alleged that central agencies were being misused to target opposition leaders, but he trusted the judiciary and would cooperate with them.

Congress MLAs boycotted the proceedings of the state Assembly for the day as a mark of protest against the arrest and accused the agency of trying to harass the opposition.

A heavy posse of police



Chaitanya Baghel being produced by the ED at PMLA court, in Raipur on Friday. ANI

personnel was seen outside the house of the Baghels, even as some party supporters gathered and protested the ED action.

ED sources said Chaitanya was arrested under Section 19 of the anti-money laundering law as he was allegedly not cooperating during the searches that came about following receipt of fresh evidence in the case.

The alleged liquor scam in the central Indian state, according to the ED, was orchestrated between 2019 and 2022 when Chhattisgarh was governed by the Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress government. Assets worth about Rs 205 crore of various accused have been attached by the ED as part of this investigation so far, according to the agency.

Chaitanya was produced

Assailants snatch sarpanch's pistol, shoot him to death

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

Unidentified assailants have killed the Sarpanch of Chabri village in Jind district on late Thursday night, the police said.

The deceased has been identified as Rohtash Singh (46). The police claimed that the assailants even used victim's own licensed pistol to commit the murder. The attack took place around 12:30 am while he was returning home on his motorcycle after finishing some work in Jind city.

According to police sources, the accused intercepted

US designates TRF, proxy of LeT, a terror outfit over Pahalgam attack

Timely step, says New Delhi

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI

The US has designated The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba, as a "foreign terrorist organisation" over the Pahalgam terror attack, a move welcomed by India as a "timely and important" step reflecting strong counter-terror cooperation between the two countries.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, announcing the punitive measure, said it was part of Washington's commitment to countering terrorism and enforcing President Trump's call for



Security personnel inspect the site following the Pahalgam terrorist attack on April 22. File picture

justice for the Pahalgam attack.

Rubio said the US State Department is adding the TRF as a designated Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT).

The TRF, a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) "front and proxy",

claimed responsibility for the Pahalgam attack which killed 26 civilians, he said, adding it was "the deadliest attack on civilians in India since the 2008 Mumbai attack conducted by the LeT."

"TRF has also claimed responsibility for several attacks against Indian security forces, including most

recently in 2024," Rubio said.

"These actions taken by the Department of State demonstrates the Trump Administration's commitment to protecting our national security interests, countering terrorism, and enforcing President Trump's call for justice for the Pahalgam attack," he added.

In New Delhi, India welcomed the decision by the US with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar describing it as a "strong affirmation" of India-US counter-terror cooperation.

India said the designation of TRF is a "timely and important" step and that it has consistently emphasised the need for global cooperation

Basmati bonanza: UP farmers strike gold in Haryana

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

While paddy transplantation in Haryana is still under way, farmers from neighbouring western Uttar Pradesh (UP) are cashing in on an extraordinary surge in basmati prices in Haryana's mandis.

Riding on the back of early harvests and an open market system, these farmers are fetching between Rs 3,000 and Rs 3,500 per quintal for the early-maturing Pusa 1509 variety. Rates have not gone this high in



the past several years.

As per mandi officials, over 20 lakh quintals of paddy have already been traded in grain markets located on along Haryana and Uttar Pradesh borders in Karnal, Panipat, Yamunanagar and Kurukshetra

districts since June-end. What's striking is that over 95% of this stock has been brought in by UP farmers, particularly from districts like Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Shamli and Baghpat, who have long relied on Haryana's regulated mar-

kets to secure better prices. "Since the start of arrivals, we've received nearly 25,000 bags (50 kg each) from UP farmers," said Rishi Kumar, an accountant at Karnal's new grain market, adding that the tempo of arrivals has only increased with the rise in prices.

One key reason for UP farmers' advantage is the absence of a transplantation ban in their state, unlike Haryana where sowing before June 15 is prohibited to conserve groundwater. This freedom allows UP farmers to grow two paddy

crops in one kharif season, resulting in a potential of three harvests in a year.

Pankaj Kamboj, a farmer from Saharanpur district, explained the mathematics: "We harvested Pusa 1509 on 40 acres and sold it in Karnal at Rs 3,200 per quintal. That gave us a return of around Rs 70,000 per acre. We've already resown 10 acres for a second paddy crop, which we'll harvest by November and still have time for mustard or wheat."

Sohan Lal, who works



Kanwariyas (Shiva devotees) with an idol of Lord Shiva and a model of the BrahMos missile return after collecting Ganga water from Haridwar during the 'Kanwar Yatra', in Meerut on Friday. ANI

Justice Varma impeachment: Rijiju says all parties on board

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

All political parties are on board on the move to impeach Justice Yashwant Varma, from whose residence here burnt wads of currency notes were found, the government said on Friday, paving the way for a motion on this matter during the upcoming Monsoon session of Parliament.

A fire incident at Justice Varma's Delhi residence in March this year, when he was a judge of the Delhi High Court, had led to the discovery of sacks of half-burnt cash in the outhouse.

Justice Varma was subsequently repatriated to the



Justice Yashwant Varma

Allahabad High Court but no judicial work was assigned to him. An in-house probe ordered by then Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna has indicted the judge.

While Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said he was coordinating with leaders of different parties on the motion to ensure that a unified stand of the

'Sibal an average lawyer'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Dismissing Kapil Sibal as an "average lawyer", Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday said Parliament cannot be dictated by one MP's "personal agenda".

Rijiju's attack came after Sibal said the opposition must not support any move by the government to impeach Justice Yashwant Varma till an inquiry is set

TMC TO JOIN I.N.D.I.A BLOC'S STRATEGY MEETING TODAY; AAP OPTS OUT

Cong plans to raise issues like the Pahalgam terror attack, Opn. Sindoor, and voter roll revision in Bihar during the session.

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

With the Parliament's Monsoon Session all set to commence from July 21, the Congress has called the meeting of the INDIA bloc parties to prepare strategy for the session and has reached out to several partners and many tip leaders have confirmed for their presence, sources said on Friday.

A party source said that Congress has initiated major reach out to INDIA bloc partners and many of them have confirmed for their presence that will be held virtually on Saturday at 7 p.m.

The source said that earlier July 19 meeting of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc was all set to take place in offline mode at the residence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge at Rajaji Marg.

The source said that look-



ing at the short notice of the meeting for a physical meeting, many parties asked to shift it to online mode and thus decision was taken to hold it virtually for maximum participation.

The source said that Congress president Kharge would be joining the meeting from Bengaluru while from Delhi CPP chairperson Sonia Gandhi and LoP LS Rahul Gandhi will join. Similarly, Congress General Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal will join the

meeting from Kerala.

Besides the Congress leaders, Trinamool Congress' Abhishek Banerjee, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and some other leaders from his party will be joining the virtual meeting.

Even from NCP-SP Sharad Pawar and Supriya Sule will be joining the meeting while MK Stalin will lead the DMK at the meeting.

From Rashtriya Janata Dal, Tejashwi Yadav will

be joining the meeting, the sources said besides other leaders from the Left parties and other parties.

Meanwhile, Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP on Friday afternoon announced that it is no more part of the INDIA bloc and thus it will not join the meeting. However, Trinamool Congress joining the meeting comes as a big boost for the opposition bloc ahead of the crucial Monsoon Session.

The Congress had held the meeting of its Parliamanta-

ry Strategy Group just three days ago and decided to raise the issue of Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor in wake of US President Donald Trump repeatedly claiming for brokering ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

The Congress had also said that it will be raising the issue of the Special Intensive Revision of the voter rolls in Bihar during the Monsoon Session besides other issues.

Earlier in the month of June, the INDIA bloc partners had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding to convene the special session of the Parliament over the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor. The government had rejected the demand and announced to convene the Parliament's Monsoon Session from July 21.

The Monsoon Session is set to be a stormy session as opposition is preparing to corner the government over multiple issues.

Vadra hounded for 10 yrs by Centre, chargesheet part of witch hunt: Rahul

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday came out in support of his brother-in-law and businessman Robert Vadra after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) named him in the chargesheet in connection with a money laundering case, saying he has been hounded by the government for the past 10 years and the chargesheet is a continuation of that witch hunt.

Rahul Gandhi took to X to voice his opposition to the ED chargesheet against his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's husband in the Gurugram Shikohpur land deal case.

He said, "My brother-in-law has been hounded by this government for the last ten years. This latest chargesheet is a continuation of that witch hunt."

The former Congress chief said, "I stand with Robert, Priyanka and their children as they face yet another onslaught of malicious, politically motivated slander and harassment."

"I know that they are all brave enough to withstand any kind of persecution and they will continue to do so with dignity. The truth will eventually prevail," he added.

His remarks came a day after the ED filed a chargesheet against Vadra and his company M/s Sky Light Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.



BJP slams Rahul, says Cong doesn't care for legal process

New Delhi: The BJP slammed Rahul Gandhi on Friday for accusing the government of launching a witch-hunt against his brother-in-law, Robert Vadra, saying the Congress leader's remarks reflect that his party still believes in the "Emergency mindset" and does not care for the judicial process.

This came after Gandhi on Friday accused the government of launching a witch-hunt against Vadra as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed a chargesheet against the businessman in a money-

laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in a land deal in Haryana's Shikohpur.

BJP national spokesperson Tuhin Sinha alleged that Gandhi, with his remarks, has made it clear that he was "fully aware" of his brother-in-law's "dark deeds" and "might also have been" involved in it. Sinha also slammed Gandhi for his recent remarks against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, accusing him of "threatening" an incumbent chief minister of getting him arrested.

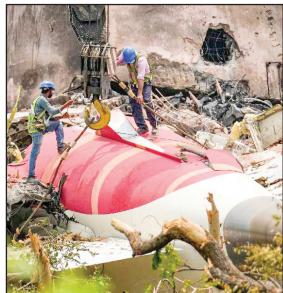
Tatas set up Rs 500-cr for welfare of AI-171 plane crash victims' kin

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Tata Group on Friday announced setting up a Rs 500-crore AI-171 Memorial and Welfare Trust for the kin of victims of the Air India plane crash that killed 260 people in Ahmedabad last month.

Tata Sons and Tata Trusts have committed Rs 250 crore each to the Trust, which has been registered as a public charitable trust in Mumbai.

"The Trust will provide both immediate and continuing support to the dependents/next-of-kin of the deceased, to those who were injured, and to all others who are directly or collaterally affected by the accident," Tata Sons said in a statement on Friday.



Besides, the Trust will provide aid and assistance for alleviation of any trauma or distress suffered by the first responders, medical and disaster relief professionals, social workers and governmental staff who provided invaluable institutional support and service in the aftermath of the accident.

A five-member board of trustees will manage and administer the Trust. S Padmanabhan, a former Tata vet-

eran, Sidharth Sharma, Tata Sons' General Counsel, have been appointed as trustees and the three other trustees will be appointed shortly.

The philanthropic objects of the Trust include ex-gratia payment of Rs 1 crore for those deceased, medical treatment of those who suffered serious injuries, and support for rebuilding the B J Medical College Hostel infrastructure in Ahmedabad, which was damaged in the accident.

According to the statement, the Trust will be funded and will commence its work in all earnestness after necessary registration with the tax authorities and other operational formalities, currently underway, are completed," the statement said.

Bihar Cabinet approves 125 units free electricity monthly for households

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

The Bihar Cabinet on Friday cleared a proposal for providing 125 units of electricity free of cost every month to domestic consumers across the state starting August 1.

The cabinet cleared the proposal of the energy department during a meeting here chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

"The state government will pay additional Rs 3,797 crore on electricity consumption to the Bihar State Power Holding Corporation Ltd for the purpose," a statement issued by the state's Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) said.

The Bihar government will also provide financial assis-

The cabinet cleared the proposal of the energy department during a meeting here chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

tance for installing 1.1-KW capacity solar power plants on rooftops to domestic consumers, it said.

Kumar had on July 17 announced that all domestic consumers across the state will receive up to 125 units of electricity free of cost every month starting August 1.

The decision is expected to benefit nearly 1.67 crore families in the state.

Obscene dance videos of foreign tourists spark outrage in Himachal

VIPIN PARMAR
KULLU

A series of videos showing foreign tourists allegedly engaging in obscene dance and substance use have gone viral on social media, sparking public outrage across Himachal Pradesh. The videos, reportedly from the Kullu district, are said to feature Israeli tourists dancing and drinking at private parties, although their authenticity and location have not been officially confirmed.

The viral footage has triggered widespread protests on social media platforms, with users condemning the rise of such activities in "Devbhoomi" Himachal — a term that refers to the state's sacred and cultural identity. Users have questioned the authorities for allegedly allowing "drug-induced rave parties" in spiritual and culturally significant regions like Kasol, Manikaran, Jibhi, Kalga, and Malana, all popular destinations for foreign tourists.

One user on X (formerly Twitter) wrote, "How are Israelis being allowed openly drug-induced rave parties in Devbhoomi? This is a sacred land, not a drug play-

ground."

In response to the rising concerns, the Himachal Pradesh High Court has taken cognizance of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by the Himachal Environment Protection Society. The PIL raises alarm over the increasing trend of drug abuse and rave parties in forested and hotel areas, especially in Kullu and Mandi districts. The court has directed the state government to respond and detail the actions taken against party organizers, including any steps to seize their properties. The next hearing is scheduled for August 28.

According to police officials, some of these parties are organized during the daytime in isolated hotels or forested areas with administrative permission. However, only "cultural events" are officially allowed, says a local administrative officer.

Kullu DSP Rajesh Kumar clarified that while day-time events are permitted, police take strict action against any party conducted without permission or involving drugs. "The administration grants permission for cultural gatherings.

Haryana launches scheme to turn jobless engineers into govt contractors

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

In a bid to tackle rising unemployment among educated youth and promote self-reliance, the Haryana government has launched the Haryana Contractor Saksham Yuva Yojana, a pioneering scheme aimed at transforming technically qualified but jobless youth into professional works contractors eligible for government projects.

Announced following a review meeting chaired by



Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, the scheme will empower ITI, diploma, and engineering degree holders by equipping them with practical skills and direct access to

state-funded infrastructure work. As part of this initiative, the state has also unveiled the Haryana Engineering Works Portal (HEWP)—a digital platform to facilitate registration, project bidding, and transparent allocation of government work to these young contractors.

Under the scheme, eligible candidates will undergo a 90-day intensive skill training program at Shri Vishwakarma Skill University in Palwal.

94% electors covered under SIR in Bihar, over 90% EFs received

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) Friday said that it has collected almost 94.68 per cent of the total voters have been covered while 90.12 per cent of enumeration forms for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls in Bihar have been received.

The Commission said that out of 7,89,69,844 voters, it has received EFs of 7,11,72,660 voters, that is 90.12 per cent of total voters in Bihar.

It also said that it has digitised 6,70,59,222 EFs that is

86.79 per cent of the total voters.

The poll panel also said that during the SIR process, it has found 36,86,971 electors not present at their address, while 12,71,414 voters have died.

It also stated that 18,16,306 have shifted to other places and 5,92,273 voters have been enrolled at other locations.

The Commission said that 41,10,213 voters are yet to provide their EFs.

It said that 7,48,59,631 voters have been covered under the SIR exercise in Bihar, which is 94.68 per cent of the total voters in the state.



The poll panel maintained that EROs will publish the draft Electoral Roll on August 1 and invite suggestions or inputs for correction of any entry in the draft Electoral Roll.

It added that in accordance

with the SIR order dated June 24 a full one month will be given to political parties and public to point out requirement of any correction, or propose inclusion of any left-out names.

It also said that printed

and digital copies of the draft Electoral Roll will be given to the recognised political parties free of cost and will be posted on the ECI website for the public.

"Therefore, the public may remain assured that no eligible elector will be left out," it said.

The Commission said that any elector can also check the status of their Enumeration Form either on ECINet App or its website and the same can also be filled online in Hindi on the same link. It also stated that in order to re-verify the electors who have not been found at their addresses even af-

ter three visits of BLOs, the information on electors who are probably deceased, permanently shifted or have enrolled at multiple places is being shared with District Presidents of political parties and 1.5 lakh Booth Level Agents appointed by them so that exact status of such electors can be confirmed by them before July 25.

It also stated: "This step is in line with the ECI's commitment that no eligible elector is left out."

After disposing claims and objections till September 25, the Final Electoral Roll will be published on September 30, 2025.

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON AMERICA STATEMENT ON PAKISTAN

82% believe that labeling TRF global terrorist organization will pressure Pakistan.

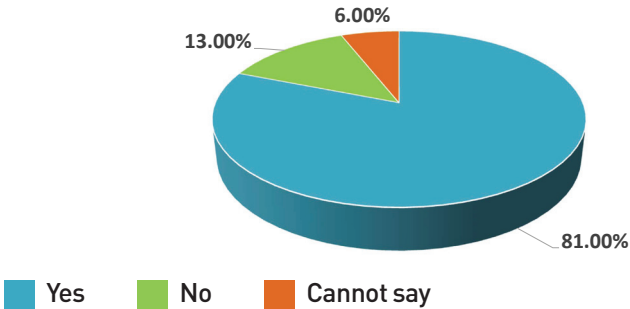
A recent survey reveals strong Indian public support for tougher action against Pakistan-backed terrorism.

81% believe the U.S. declaring TRF a terror group will help curb terrorism. 92% want India to push

globally to label Pakistan a terrorist state, while 64% support a direct attack if provoked by Pakistan.

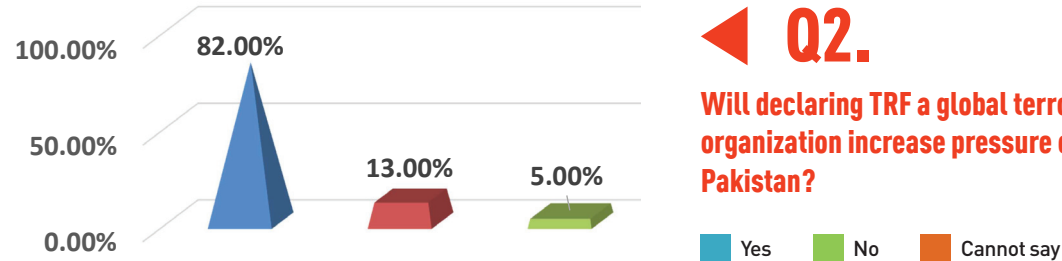
Q1.▶

America has designated TRF as a terrorist organization. Do you believe such steps will help eliminate terrorism?



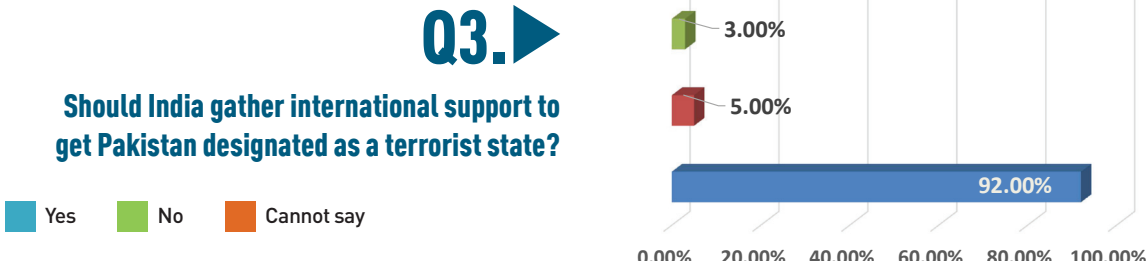
◀ Q2.

Will declaring TRF a global terrorist organization increase pressure on Pakistan?



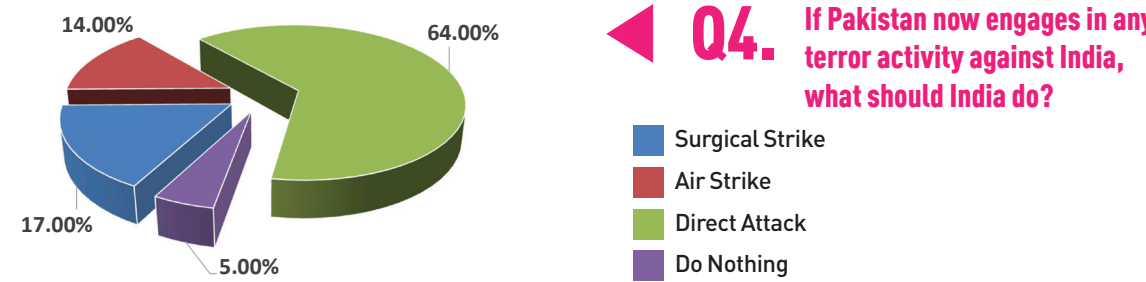
Q3.▶

Should India gather international support to get Pakistan designated as a terrorist state?



◀ Q4.

If Pakistan now engages in any terror activity against India, what should India do?



PM Modi sounds poll bugle in Bihar, calls for political continuity

CONTINUED FROM P1

lica of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. He paused mid-speech, instructed SPG personnel to collect the gift, and asked the man to write his name and address so he could reach out to him later. The moment drew widespread applause.

In what was his sixth visit to Bihar this year, the Prime Minister took a swipe at the previous governments, stating that in the ten years before 2014, Bihar received only Rs 2 lakh crore from the Centre, which he termed political vendetta against the Nitish Kumar-led administration of the time.

By contrast, he said, the current government has allocated Rs 9 lakh crore to Bihar over the past ten years — four times more. “This is not just in figures — this money is reaching the poor, being used to build homes, roads, rail lines, and for the direct welfare of the people,” he said.

Highlighting progress under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Modi said more than 4 crore houses have been built across the country over the past 11 years, of which 60 lakh are in Bihar. He added that this number exceeds the total population of countries like Norway, New Zealand, and Singapore.

In Motihari district alone, around 3 lakh families have received pucca houses. On Thursday, 12,000 families received keys to their new homes and Rs 160 crore was transferred to 40,000 additional

beneficiaries, most of them from Dalit, Mahadalit, and backward communities.

The Prime Minister placed special emphasis on women empowerment, calling it the real engine of Bihar’s rural transformation. He said that there was a time when women had to hide Rs 10 because they had no access to banks. Today, over 3.5 crore women in Bihar have Jan Dhan accounts, into which government welfare schemes are being directly credited.

He praised the Nitish Kumar government for increasing old age, widow, and disability pensions from Rs 400 to Rs 1,100 and said that in just six weeks, over Rs 1,000 crore has been transferred to 24,000 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in Bihar.

Celebrating the rise of financially empowered rural women, he said over 20 lakh women in Bihar have become ‘Lakshpati Didis’, with more than 80,000 in Champaran alone. He announced the release of Rs 400 crore as part of the Community Investment Fund to further strengthen SHGs and credited the “Jeevika Didi” initiative with laying the groundwork for self-reliant women in the state.

PM Modi also spoke about the new employment scheme for first-time private-sector job seekers which was announced by the union cabinet earlier. Starting 1 August, youth who receive their first appointment in a private company will be eligible for a Rs

15,000 incentive from the Central Government. The scheme, with a total outlay of Rs 1 lakh crore, aims to support millions of young job aspirants, especially in states like Bihar.

He also highlighted the rising disbursement of Mudra loans to support entrepreneurship, pointing out that in Champaran alone, 60,000 youth had received loans in the past two months.

In contrast, he accused leaders from previous regimes of giving false hope while “grabbing land in the name of jobs.” Referring to them as the “lantern-era politicians,” Modi said, “Today’s Bihar is illuminated by new hopes. The people have broken free of their past.” Modi stayed away from personally targeting and naming any leader.

He also claimed that decisive action against Naxalism has led to peace and opportunity returning to previously affected areas such as Champaran, Aurangabad, Gaya, and Jamui. “This is a new India that doesn’t hesitate to act against its enemies—on land and in the skies,” he said.

Modi also spoke about the Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhanya Krishi Yojana, recently cleared by the Union Cabinet, aimed at developing 100 agriculturally rich but low-productivity districts. Nearly 1.75 crore farmers will benefit, with a significant share in Bihar.

He cited products like Makhana, Katarni rice, Maghai paan, banana, li-

tchi, and Zardalu mango as examples of local crops being linked to larger domestic and global markets. A Makhana Board has been formed to institutionalize and support this integration. Modi said that makhana farmers are already seeing better returns because of these efforts.

He noted that over Rs 3.5 lakh crore has been transferred to farmers nationwide under PM-Kisan, with over 5 lakh farmers in Motihari alone receiving more than Rs 1,500 crore.

Several large-scale infrastructure initiatives were unveiled and launched at the event. These include the doubling of the Darbhanga-Narkatiaganj rail line (Rs 4,080 crore), automatic signalling and traction upgrades on multiple routes, and maintenance facilities for Vande Bharat trains at Patliputra. Four Amrit Bharat Express trains were flagged off, connecting Patna, Motihari, Darbhanga, and Malda to Delhi and Lucknow. Modi said the Motihari station is being redeveloped with modern amenities and that these upgrades will significantly improve mobility and economic activity in the region.

In the road sector, Modi inaugurated the 4-lane Parariya-Mohania section of NH-319 (worth Rs 820 crore), and laid the foundation stone for the Ara Bypass and a paved two-lane Sarwan-Chakai road under NH-333C, which will improve Bihar-Jharkhand connectivity.

US designates TRF a terror outfit

CONTINUED FROM P1

in the fight against terrorism.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said India remains committed to a “policy of zero tolerance” towards terrorism and will continue to work closely with its international partners to ensure that terrorist organisations and their proxies are held accountable.

“The government of India welcomes the decision of the

United States Department of State to designate TRF as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). We acknowledge and appreciate the leadership of Secretary of State Marco Rubio in this regard,” it said.

In a social media post, Jaishankar specially complimented US Secretary of State Marco Rubio for designating the LeT proxy.

“Appreciate @SecRubio and @StateDept for designating TRF—a Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) proxy—as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). It claimed responsibility for the April 22 Pahalgam attack,” he said.

The MEA said India welcomes the decision of the US State Department to designate TRF as an FTO and SDGT.

PM Modi slams ‘infiltration politics’, ‘gunda tax’ of TMC

CONTINUED FROM P1

support infiltrators. This is a threat to both national security and Bengal’s security and identity,” Modi alleged.

He also charged the ruling party with “openly challenging constitutional institutions” and “defending illegal immigrants.”

Amid a growing political row over the alleged harassment of Bengali-speaking migrant workers in BJP-ruled states, Modi turned the tables on the TMC.

“For the BJP, Bengali ‘ashmita’ is supreme. Wherever there is a BJP government, Bengalis are respected, Bengali language is respected,”

said Modi, who began his speech hailing “Maa Kali” and “Maa Durga” — two revered goddesses in Bengal. “The TMC is actively helping infiltrators. I want to say this very clearly that those who are not citizens of India and have entered illegally, the law will take its own course in accordance with the Constitution,” he said, sending a clear message on illegal immigration.

Modi said the TMC’s appeasement politics have “crossed all limits” and they are now on the streets to protect infiltrators. TMC’s corruption and appeasement are pushing the youth out of Bengal, he added.

Taking a swipe at non-BJP parties, the Prime Minister said, “For years, the TMC and Left ran the government in Delhi with Congress but never considered recognising Bangla, whereas it was the BJP government that granted it classical language status.”

Recalling the time when Bengal attracted job-seekers from across the country, he said the youth of Bengal are forced to migrate even for small jobs now.

This is the result of TMC’s misrule, he claimed. “Over the past decades, the situation in this region has become increasingly unfavourable for investment

and employment. Frequent incidents of violence, biased policing, and a lack of faith in the justice system create an environment where no one feels confident about investing,” he said.

Modi asked, “Where riots like Murshidabad take place and police act in a biased manner, why will investors come here? Where violence breaks out at the slightest incident, why will anyone invest? Promising a better tomorrow, he made a personal appeal to the youth.

“I want to assure the youth that Bengal’s current problems can be fixed. Once a new government is formed, the state can become a lead-

ing industrial hub in the country. Give BJP a chance once-choose a government that is hardworking, honest, and strong,” he urged with an eye on state elections early next year.

Taking up the issue of women’s safety, Modi expressed anguish and fury.

He said, “The party that speaks of ‘Maa, Mati, Manush’ is now causing anger and heartbreak by allowing injustice against daughters under its rule.

And before the state recovered, another atrocity was reported from a college, and once again, the accused were linked to the ruling party, he said.

Basmati bonanza

CONTINUED FROM P1

as an agent between UP farmers and private traders in Haryana mandis, said, “This year’s rates are exceptional. It’s a golden season for us—something we haven’t seen in the last couple of years as the prices normally remains around Rs 2,200 to Rs 2,500 per quintal.”

While UP farmers enjoy early profits, Haryana’s farmers are growing anxious. Their crop, transplanted after June 15 due to government regulations, won’t be ready before mid-September. Many fear a price crash when their

produce hits the markets in bulk.

Mahinder Singh a commission agent from Karnal’s Nilokheri grain market said for the past couple of years the prices of Basmati paddy remains unstable and there is a strong possibility that the prices may fall below Rs 3,000 when the harvesting in Haryana will start in first week of September.

Similarly, Ajay Kumar a paddy grower from Karnal’s Indri added that government needs to step in to stabilize prices. Traders are currently offering high rates, but if international demand slows or export re-

strictions are imposed, the rates will tumble.

Agri-traders, too, echoed concerns stating that the current rates are high because of low early-season arrivals and strong demand from exporters. But any policy change on exports or sudden glut post-Haryana harvest could crash the market.

The private traders attribute the rise in the Basmati prices to surge in demand in international and domestic market as the prices of Basmati rice in India have surged by about 20% over the past couple of months, rising to around Rs 70 per kilogram.

Assailants snatch sarpanch’s pistol

CONTINUED FROM P1

the Sarpanch on the road between Pindara and Radhana villages. They allegedly roughed him up and forcibly snatched his licensed revolver during the scuffle. The attackers then shot him in the head, killing him on the spot, and fled, abandoning the pistol at the crime scene.

Before succumbing to his injuries, Rohatash managed to dial the police helpline number 112. In the distress call, he reportedly informed police that some men were assaulting him and had

snatched his pistol. However, by the time the police reached the location, the Sarpanch was already dead.

Upon receiving information about the murder, police from Civil Lines police station arrived at the spot and sent the body for post-mortem examination. A case has been registered at the local police station based on the statement of the deceased’s son, and an investigation is underway. DSP Sanjay Kumar confirmed that three to four suspects have been detained for questioning. “They

are being interrogated, and we are verifying their involvement in the crime,” he said. According to the police, Rohatash originally hailed from Shamdi village in Sonapat district but had been residing in Chabri village for the past 30 years. He was a practicing rural doctor and served as the elected village head. He had all his documents updated to reflect his Chabri residency and was known for providing basic medical assistance to villagers along with his Sarpanch duties.

CONTINUED FROM P1

Parliament comes out, the Congress, the principal opposition party, has said all its MPs will support the motion against Justice Varma.

Rijiju also said there should not be any politics over the impeachment move. The Monsoon session of Parliament is scheduled to start from July 21.

“I have spoken to all the senior leaders of different political parties. I will also get in touch with some of the single-MP parties because I do not want to leave out any member. So it becomes a unified stand of the Parliament of India,” Rijiju told PTI Videos.

“Corruption in the judiciary is an extremely sensitive and serious matter, because the judiciary is where people get justice. If there is corruption in the judiciary, it is a serious concern for everybody. That is why the motion for the removal of Justice Yashwant Varma is to be signed by all the political parties,” he said.

Rijiju said when it comes to corruption in the judiciary,

“we have to stand together. There cannot be any partisan attitude and it should not be made a political issue.”

The minister asserted that it is not the government but members of Parliament cutting across party lines, including from the Congress, who are in favour of moving a motion to remove Justice Varma. He was happy that the Congress has understood the severity of the issue, as no party can be seen standing in support of a “corrupt” judge.

‘Sibal an average lawyer’

CONTINUED FROM P1

up under impeachment proceedings against Justice Shekhar Yadav for his “communal” remarks.

“I got information about Kapil Sibal’s effort to protect somebody and to move against somebody. What I have realised is that Kapil Sibal is a senior person, but he is only driven by his personal agenda,” he said.

Baghel’s son arrested by ED

CONTINUED FROM P1

in the court of Special Judge (Prevention of Money Laundering Act-PMLA) with the ED seeking his custody for five days, the Central agency’s counsel Saurabh Kumar Pande told reporters.

The court granted his custodial remand to the ED till July 22, he added.

According to evidence that surfaced during the investigation in the case by the ED, Chaitanya had allegedly layered (laundered) a huge amount of proceeds of crime, and prima facie he was also a beneficiary of Rs 13 crore, Pande claimed.

The ED also has businessman Laxmi Narayan Bansal alias Pappu Bansal’s statement, which disclosed the transaction between him and Chaitanya, he further claimed.

Chaitanya’s lawyer Faisal Rizvi said after the ED began investigating the alleged liquor scam in 2022, the agency has so far filed a main prosecution complaint and three supplementary prosecution complaints. Chaitanya’s name does not figure

in any of them, he claimed.

Even his (Chaitanya) statement was never recorded by the ED, Rizvi claimed. On March 10 this year, a first-time raid was conducted against Chaitanya in the case, and so far, he has not been summoned for recording his statement by the central agency, he said.

Pappu Bansal had recorded his statement (before the ED) after a Non Bailable Warrant was issued against him by the special court on May 16 this year.

Based on his statement, Chaitanya has been arrested, Rizvi said. “Chaitanya was never questioned by the ED whether the allegations levelled against him by Bansal are correct or not.”

ED sources claimed that companies allegedly linked to Chaitanya were the “recipient” of about Rs 17 crore “proceeds of crime” that were generated from the alleged liquor scam. Funds worth about Rs 1,070 crore are under the scanner of the agency vis-a-vis the role of junior Baghel, they claimed.

The ED has claimed that

the “scam” resulted in a “massive loss” to the state exchequer and filled the pockets of the beneficiaries of a liquor syndicate with over Rs 2,100 crore.

After his son was remanded to the ED custody, Bhupesh Baghel claimed that the action against his son clearly shows that if anyone opposes the Adani group in Chhattisgarh, they will meet the same fate as Chaitanya.

“From March 10 till today, not even a single notice was served to Chaitanya. Not even a single inquiry was conducted and today they directly brought a search warrant to the house and arrested him. Is there no rule of law?,” he told reporters.

The action was taken after the Congress raised the issue of tree felling in Tamnar area (of Raigarh district for a coal mine project), he said.

Today itself, the leader of opposition Charan Das Mahant moved an adjournment motion in the assembly seeking a discussion into it and to suppress this, such action has been taken, Baghel said.

'WE ARE STABLE', SAYS FADNAVIS IN DY CMS' PRESENCE AFTER UDDHAV MEET

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday sought to make light of his meeting with Shiv Sena (UBT) head and political rival Uddhav Thackeray a day ago and noted his government was stable with support from deputy CMs Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar.

Asked out his "offer" to Thackeray, a former BJP ally, to come over to treasury benches side, Fadnavis, talking to reporters after the end of the monsoon session of the state legislature, expressed dismay over light hearted communication making media headlines.

"We are stable," the CM asserted while pointing to his deputies Shinde and Pawar, both sitting next to him at the press conference.

Shinde heads the Shiv Sena, while Pawar is presi-



"We are stable," the CM asserted while pointing to his deputies Shinde and Pawar, both sitting next to him at the press conference.

dent of the NCP, and both parties are constituents of the BJP-led ruling coalition Mahayuti.

Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday met Fadnavis, the move coming a day after the latter's "come here" offer to his former ally set off political speculation in the state.

The Shiv Sena (UBT) president met Fadnavis in the chamber of legislative council chairperson Ram Shinde. During the meeting, which lasted for about half an hour, the former CM's son and Worli MLA Aaditya Thackeray was also present. Queried by reporters on

the Vidhan Bhavan premises, Aaditya Thackeray said the meeting was to discuss Marathi language-related issues.

On Wednesday, speaking at the farewell function of leader of opposition in the council Ambadas Danve, the CM, in a tongue-in-cheek remark, told Uddhav Thackeray that the BJP was not likely to join him in the opposition, but he can come over to the ruling side.

"Uddhav ji, there is no scope (for a change in government) till 2029 (when next assembly polls are due). We do not have the scope to come to the other (opposition's) side. You have the scope to come here, and it can be thought about. We can think about it differently," Fadnavis had said.

The undivided Shiv Sena parted ways with the long-time ally BJP after the 2019 assembly elections over a dispute on sharing the CM's post.

'He changed colours like chameleon' Shinde slams Uddhav over leaving BJP

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Maharashtra deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Friday hit out at Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, accusing him of betraying his ally Devendra Fadnavis in 2019.

Replying to the opposition's last week's motion in the legislative council, Shinde said, without naming Thackeray, that Fadnavis made "40-50 calls" after the alliance of the undivided Shiv Sena and BJP retained its majority in the 2019 assembly elections.

But there was no response (from Thackeray) to the BJP leader's calls, said Shinde.

"Maharashtra has never seen a chameleon changing colours so fast. He went



with those whom he once considered lowly," Shinde said in an apparent reference to Thackeray joining hands with the Congress after severing the alliance with the BJP.

It was because of his (Shinde's) request that Fadnavis had agreed to cede the post of Mumbai's mayor to the Shiv Sena in 2017 after the Sena won 84 seats and the BJP 82 in the

"Maharashtra has never seen a chameleon changing colours so fast. He went with those whom he once considered lowly," Shinde said in an apparent reference to Thackeray joining hands with the Congress after severing the alliance with the BJP.

civic polls, Shinde said.

"But he (Thackeray) betrayed Fadnavis in 2019 (by walking out of the alliance)," he added.

Shinde also claimed that while he and rebel Sena MLAs supporting him were camping in Guwahati in 2022 after rebelling against Thackeray, the latter approached him for reconciliation, and at the same time told the BJP

leadership in Delhi not to support the rebel group.

Notably, Shinde's reminder of Thackeray's 'betraying' Fadnavis and the BJP in 2019 came a day after the Shiv Sena (UBT) chief met the Maharashtra Chief Minister. A day earlier, Fadnavis, in a tongue-in-cheek remark in the House, had asked Thackeray to come over to the ruling side.

Raj warns of schools' shutdown if Hindi imposed from Class 1

TDG NETWORK
THANE

MNS chief Raj Thackeray on Friday warned Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis that if Hindi was made compulsory for Classes 1 to 5 in the state, "we will not hesitate to shut down schools".

Speaking at a rally at Mira Bhayandar in the district, he asked the people of Maharashtra to stay alert and foil any plan of the government to impose Hindi.

Earlier, workers of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) had roughed up a local shopkeeper after he allegedly refused to speak in Marathi.

The BJP-led government recently withdrew two orders making Hindi mandatory in primary schools following strong opposition.

Fadnavis, however, asserted on Thursday that the government will certainly introduce the three-language formula, but whether Hindi should be taught from Class 1 or Class 5 will be decided by the committee appointed to study the issue.

Raj Thackeray, in his speech, dared Fadnavis to impose Hindi. "When they tried it once, we had shut down shops, and now we will not hesitate to shut down schools if Hindi is imposed (from Class 1 to 5)," he said.



It was unfortunate that the chief minister of Maharashtra was striving to make Hindi compulsory, the MNS chief said.

By imposing Hindi, the government was testing the people's response as it eventually wanted to attach Mumbai to Gujarat, Thackeray alleged.

Hindi was just "200 years old" while Marathi has a history of 2,500-3,000 years, he said.

When migrants from Bihar were beaten up and driven away in Gujarat, it did not become an issue, but a minor incident in Maharashtra becomes a national issue, Raj Thackeray alleged. He also came down heavily on BJP MP Nishikant Dubey over his reported "patak patak ke mareng" remark, daring him to come to Mumbai.

Om Birla meets Korean Parliamentary delegation, briefs on Op Sindoor

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla today reiterated India's unwavering commitment to its Zero Tolerance policy against terrorism during a meeting with a Parliamentary delegation from the Republic of Korea, led by former Prime Minister Mr. Kim Boo Kyum, at Parliament House. Birla strongly condemned the recent terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir, in which 26 innocent civilians lost their



lives. He emphasized that such heinous acts shock the conscience of the international community.

The Speaker stated that, in light of Pakistan's continued inaction against terrorist infrastructure on its soil, India exercised its sovereign right to respond. He briefed the delegation on Operation Sindoor, under which India's response was measured, non-provocative, and aimed exclusively at dismantling terrorist infrastructure and neutralizing threats.

Odisha varsity issues advisory after professor's arrest for 'sexual exploitation'

TDG NETWORK
BHUBANESWAR

An Odisha government-run university in Sambalpur on Friday issued an advisory to all its teaching staff a day after the arrest of an assistant professor for "sexual exploitation" of a female student.

An assistant professor of GM University was arrested on Thursday for allegedly sexually exploiting a 20-year-old student of the varsity, police said. Following his arrest, the university suspended the assistant professor.

Susant Kumar Das, in-charge Vice Chancellor (VC) of GM university, said he has advised all teachers to treat the students as their

brothers and sisters.

The head of departments and faculty members have been asked to counsel the students at individual-level and directly report to him in case of any kind of harassment of any student, Das said.

"The teachers have been asked to maintain professional, ethical and moral values at the highest level," he said.

The students of the university staged a protest inside the campus in Sambalpur during the day and also submitted a memorandum to the VC demanding a proper inquiry to identify other faculty members who might have engaged in such unethical practice, a protesting student said.

IIT Kharagpur BTech student found dead in hostel, 4th incident since Jan

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

A fourth-year B Tech student was found hanging in his hostel room at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur campus on Friday, the fourth such unnatural death case at the campus since January this year.

Ritam Mondal (21), a student of mechanical engineering, was found hanging in his room at Rajendra Prasad (RP) Hall hostel building, an institute official told PTI.

The student, who hailed from Kolkata, had retired to his room after dinner on Thursday night, and there was no abnormality in his behaviour, one of his hostel mates said.

The IIT KGP official said



that, as repeated knocks on his door did not evoke any response, in the morning, police at the outpost on the campus, accompanied by institute security guards, broke open the door and found him hanging. An FIR has been lodged by the institute, and all cooperation is being extended to the investigators.

The student's family has been informed, the official said.

The student's death sent shockwaves through the campus.

IIT Kharagpur said in a statement, "With deep sorrow, we regret to inform of the untimely demise of Ritam Mondal (Roll No 22ME3FP60), a fourth-year undergraduate student of the Department of Mechanical Engineering."

Tracing the sequence of events, the statement said, "Mondal was found dead in his room at Rajendra Prasad Hall of Residence on the morning of July 18. Upon receiving the information, the institute's security response team acted swiftly and reached the hostel premises. Then, the institute's medical team, the Director, senior administrative officials, and local police authorities arrived. Immediate communication was also made with Mondal's family."

BJP asks Cong govt to clarify stand on Maha's merger bid of 14 T'gana villages

RAJ KIRAN BATHULA
HYDERABAD

The Telangana BJP has called on the Congress-led state government to take a clear and judicious stand on Maharashtra's controversial proposal to merge 14 border villages from Telangana into its territory.

BJP Telangana Chief Spokesperson N.V. Subash said, "The Maharashtra government's intent to merge these villages is a serious issue. It is imperative for the ruling Congress government under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to publicly clarify its position and protect the interests of Telangana's territorial integrity."

The statement comes in response to Maharashtra

Revenue Minister Chandrashekhara Bawankule's remarks on Wednesday, claiming that his government has initiated the process of merging 14 villages located along the Telangana-Maharashtra border. Bawankule further stated that Maharashtra possesses revenue records for these villages and asserted that the residents are voters of Maharashtra.

"The people of these 14 villages cast their votes in Maharashtra. Some of the land lies in Telangana, some in Maharashtra—but these villages are part of our state. We have the documentation and have begun the merger process," Bawankule was quoted as saying.

Reacting to these assertions, Subash said, "While

the claims made by Maharashtra may appear documented, it is still the duty of the Telangana government to examine the validity of these claims, initiate dialogue with the Maharashtra administration, and most importantly, take the local people's views into account."

Reports in a section of the media indicate that residents of the 14 villages have opposed the merger, expressing their desire to remain in Telangana. Many have urged the authorities to intervene and halt any such integration into Maharashtra.

Subash emphasized that such sensitive inter-state matters must be handled with diplomacy and consensus.

'If Modiji is not our leader, BJP won't even win 150 seats': Nishikant Dubey

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey emphasised the crucial role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the party's electoral success, stating that the several sections which did not vote for BJP earlier now support the party and it has broken new ground in many states.

Dubey, who is one of the most articulate faces of BJP

in Parliament, told ANI in an interview that the BJP requires PM Modi for its success and PM Modi's leadership is essential for the party's victory.

Dubey highlighted that the BJP's success is heavily dependent on PM Modi's leadership.

"Today, Modiji has become the Prime Minister for the third time...if Modiji is not our leader, the BJP may not win even 150 seats (in LS



polls)," Nishikant Dubey said.

PM Modi has been in Prime Minister since 2014

and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance recorded its third successive victory in last year's Lok Sabha polls. The BJP got absolute majority on its own in 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

"When Modiji came, the vote bank that never belonged to the BJP, especially among the poor, shifted towards the party due to their faith in him. Some may like it or not, but it's a reality," Dubey said.

Dubey, who is parliamentarian from Godda and is four-time MP, attributed party's success to the faith that people have in PM Modi.

"2029 ka chunav bhi BJP ki mazboori hai ki Modiji ke natritav mein ladna padega...[it is BJP's compulsion to fight the 2029 (Lok Sabha polls) under leadership of PM Modi]. The BJP needs Modiji...As a party worker, I believe that we need Modiji's

leadership," Dubey added. "My remarks were not meant to be controversial, but rather a reflection of the reality on the ground. The fact that Modi's name alone can secure votes for the party is a testament to his leadership and the faith that people have in him. As long as his body permits, we will need his leadership to achieve our goal of a developed India by 2047," he added.

Answering a query on RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat's remarks about stepping down at the age of 75, Dubey said there is no need for Modiji to do so.

"BJP needs him. One may agree or not, political party runs on cult...," he said.

Answering another query, Dubey said that for the next 15-20 years, PM Modi would be the leader. "15-20 saal tak Modiji nazar aa rahen hain (he is visible (as

a leader) for the next 15-20 years)."

"It's natural for people to wonder about the future. However, when you're working at the grassroots level, you understand the reality. I contested elections in 2009 and won, but my victory margin was slim - just 6,000 votes. In fact, I lost in almost all six assembly segments, which is a testament to the challenges of winning," Dubey noted.

BOMB THREATS RATTLE DELHI'S SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Over 20 institutions were targeted via e-mails, threat letters trigger massive scare, police deploy bomb squads across city as it probes matter



Police Personnel conduct a mock drill in which they receive information about an unclaimed bag, at NH-9, Kalyanpuri PS on Friday. (ANI Photo)

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In a chilling rerun of last week's security scare, over 20 schools and three Delhi University colleges received bomb threats via email on Friday, triggering large-scale evacuations, sweeping checks by bomb disposal squads, and rising anxiety among parents and students.

Personnel from the Delhi

Police, Bomb Disposal Squad, Dog Squad, and Fire Department were immediately dispatched to campuses across the city, including Richmond Global School in Paschim Vihar, Sovereign School in Rohini, Modern International School in Dwarka, and The Heritage School in Rohini, among others.

Though no explosives were found during sanitisation drives, the content of



Delhi Legislative Assembly LoP and AAP leader Atishi addresses a press conference, at party office, in New Delhi on Friday. (ANI Photo)

the threat email has raised serious concerns among authorities and mental health professionals. "The school is absolutely safe," said Richmond Global School Principal Moupali Mitra, who confirmed they received the threat at 10:52 AM and alerted police within minutes. "We're taking all necessary measures. These are acts of anti-social elements spreading fear." According to the Delhi

Police, the email warned of explosives hidden in school classrooms in black plastic bags. The sender wrote: "I will erase every last one of you from this world... I will laugh when I watch the news and see the cold, dismembered bodies of children."

The email also contained a disturbing personal narrative, blaming psychiatrists and medications for their suffering and threatening

INSTITUTIONS THAT RECEIVED BOMB THREATS (PAST 5 DAYS)

- **Schools:** Richmond Global, St. Thomas, Vasant Valley, The Mother's International, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, Sovereign School, Modern International, The Heritage School, St. Xavier's School, schools in Chanakyapuri & Dwarka
- **Colleges:** Hindu College, SRCC, IP College for Women, St. Stephen's College

suicide after watching the chaos unfold.

COLLEGES ALSO ON TARGET: HINDU, SRCC, IP COLLEGE THREATENED

Friday's scare extended beyond schools. Three major colleges — Hindu College, SRCC, and IP College for Women — also received bomb threats. This follows a similar threat to St. Stephen's College earlier in the week.

Standard operating pro-

cedures were followed: evacuations, perimeter cordons, and detailed searches. No suspicious object has been found at any location so far, police confirmed. This week alone, nearly 10 schools and one college had already received similar threats. Earlier, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, St. Thomas School in Dwarka, Vasant Valley School in Vasant Kunj, and The Mother's International School in Hauz Khas were among the affected.

Court reserves order on MCOCA accused's police custody

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi's Patiala House court on Friday reserved its order on the police custody of Anwar Khan alias Chacha, Hasim Baba alias Asim, Sameer alias Baba, and Zoya Khan in a Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) case. Delhi police sought a 10-day remand of these accused persons.

Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Chander Jit Singh reserved order after hearing submissions by Delhi Police and counsel for accused persons.

The court has listed the matter for order on the custody of the accused on July 21 in view of the submissions that an SLP is listed in the Supreme Court against the re-arrest of the accused. Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Akhand Pratap Singh for the special cell submitted that these accused have been arrested

in a MCOCA case linked with the murder of a businessman, Sunil Jain, in the Farsh Bazar area. The murder is the outcome of the organised crime syndicate.

During the investigation, the names of these four accused individuals surfaced, as submitted by the SPP. It was also submitted that the Remand was required to unearth the modus operandi of the syndicate.

Some of the members of the syndicate had already fled the country. On the other hand, advocate Tarun Rana appeared on behalf of the accused, Zoya. He submitted that a Special Leave Petition (SLP) has been filed before the SC against the order of the High Court. It was further submitted that the SLP number has been generated.

The matter is likely to be listed before the SC on Monday.

NHRC takes suo motu action on reports alleging custodial abuse

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken suo motu cognizance on media reports concerning the death by suicide of a man who was allegedly subjected to physical torture in police custody at Dwarka North Police Station in the national capital.

In light of the serious allegations, the NHRC has issued a notice to the Delhi Police Commissioner, demanding a detailed report within two weeks. According to reports, the victim--an IP University contract employee residing in Nangli Vihar--was taken into custody on July 10 for questioning regarding a

theft complaint filed by a woman supervisor. Tragically, he died by "suicide" on July 11. A note purportedly written by the victim has been recovered.

The Commission emphasised that if the claims reported in the media are accurate, they reflect a grave violation of human rights. Media coverage dated July 12 further states that the victim bore visible injury marks and had reportedly been subjected to electric shocks, causing swelling in his ear.

His family took him to a local hospital, which referred him to Indira Gandhi Hospital for specialised treatment. He was later found dead, hanging in his room.

Delhi CM leads tree plantation drive at Rashtrapati Bhavan

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In an effort towards making the national capital greener, more sustainable, and pollution-free, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta-led Delhi government launched a 'Van Mahotsav 2025' tree plantation drive at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday.

Multiple dignitaries from across the country public awareness drives are what will truly make Delhi a capital to be proud of, according to an official statement from the Chief Minister's Office.

The Delhi government plans to plant over 70 lakh saplings under this initiative across the national capital, according to the Chief Minister. The plantation drive, con-



ducted at 11 Willingdon Crescent, embraced the spirit of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam', launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. CM Rekha Gupta along with all distinguished guests planted saplings.

Among those present were Chief Justice of Delhi High Court DK Upadhyaya, Chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Justice Prakash Shrivastava, Justice Naveen Chawla, Justice

Jyoti Singh, Justice Anup Bhambhani, Justice Arun Tyagi, NGT Expert Committee members Senthil Vel, Afroz Ahmed, Delhi's Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, senior justices, forest department officials, and others. On the occasion, CM Gupta urged residents of Delhi to take part in the movement by planting more trees in their homes, neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and community spaces.

HC seeks Delhi Police reply on 2020 riots accused's discharge plea

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has recently issued notice on the plea of an accused seeking discharge in a case of murder of Delhi police Head Constable Ratan Lal. He was allegedly murdered by a mob in the North East Delhi riots in February 2020.

Petitioner Mohammad Khalid has challenged the order of framing of charges passed by Karkardooma Court on November 22, 2024. Justice Shalinder Kaur issued a notice to the Delhi Police on July 14 and sought a response. Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Ashish Datta appeared for the Delhi Police and sought time to file a reply. Advocate



In 2023, Delhi Police Special Cell arrested one of the main conspirators involved in the murder of Delhi Police Head Constable Ratan Lal during the 2020 Delhi riots. Credit: X

Sikander, Mohd. Hasan and Heena appeared for Mohammad Khalid. The matter has been listed for hearing on October 14, 2025. A petition seeking discharge has been moved through advocate Mehmood Pracha. Petitioner has challenged the Order of 22/11/2024 passed by the Karkar-

dooma Court whereby the Charge for offences punishable under Sections 120B read with Sections 148, 186, 188, 302, 323, 325, 332, 333, 353, 427, 435 of the Indian Penal code (IPC) and Section 4 of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984 read with Section 120B/149 of the IPC and further under Section 188 of the IPC has been framed against the petitioner. Petitioner Mohd Khalid was arrested in June 2023. Thereafter, he was named in the fifth supplementary charge sheet.

He was granted bail in September 2023. It is contended by the petitioner that there is no prima facie case against the petitioner, nor is there any cogent evidence against the petitioner.

Probe launched into suspected electrocution death of 36-year-old

TDG NETWORK
UTTAM NAGAR

Delhi Police have launched an investigation into the death of a 36-year-old man who allegedly died of electrocution in Uttam Nagar's Mata Rooprani Maggo Hospital, officials said on Friday. According to police, a PCR call was received on July 13 from the Hospital, reporting the death of Karan Dev, a resident of Om Vihar, Phase 1A.

He was brought to the hospital following an alleged electrocution incident and was declared dead on arrival. Initially, the family did not

Due to the relatively young age of the deceased and to rule out any unnatural circumstances, authorities proceeded with a post-mortem at Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, the police said.

raise any objections and even requested that the post-mortem be waived, the Delhi police claimed.

However, due to the relatively young age of the deceased and to rule out any unnatural circumstances, authorities proceeded with a post-mortem at Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, the police said. Three days later, on July 16, the deceased's brother, Ku-

nal, approached the police with suspicion regarding his brother's death. Following this, a preliminary inquiry was conducted.

Based on the enquiry and the material available during the inquest proceedings, a case has been registered under the appropriate sections, and an investigation has been initiated, police said. More details are awaited.

325 rolls of 'Chinese Manjha' seized, 2 held

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A team of Nand Nagri Police Station launched a special drive against individuals involved in the sale of banned 'Chinese Manjha', amid rising incidents of injuries and nabbed two siblings with 325 rolls on Friday. With Independence Day (15th August) and Raksha Bandhan approaching, the Delhi Police has launched a special drive to curb the sale and use of hazardous Chinese Manjha -- a nylon-based kite string that has caused numerous injuries and fatalities involving people, birds, and animals.

'374 camps being organised for Kanwar pilgrims this year,' says Delhi Minister

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra visited the Gauri Shankar Temple, situated in Chandni Chowk, this morning. During this visit, BJP MLA Poonam Bhardwaj also accompanied him. After visiting the temple, Mishra shared information on the Kanwar Yatra preparations in Delhi during an interaction with the media.

He said that Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has taken many significant decisions for this year's Kanwar Yatra. Mishra also lauded and congratulated BJP MLA Poonam Bhardwaj, who had participated



in the Kanwar Yatra herself. Mishra said, "This time, a unique arrangement has been made in Delhi.

Last time, 170 camps were organised for devotees taking part in the Kanwar Yatra; this time, 374 camps are being organised. The Chief Minister has taken

many significant decisions, such as providing direct assistance to the Kanwar camps, freeing electricity, and providing single-window clearance. We are seeing her influence, but what Poonam Bhardwaj has done today is truly worthy of salutation, and I con-

gratulate her very much." BJP MLA Poonam Bhardwaj said, "This was my first Kanwar Yatra, and I saw thousands of people carrying Kanwar, walking with the echoes of Mahadev... The UP government has implemented excellent programs, and our Delhi government has also made very good arrangements.

Camps are organised everywhere, with food, water, and electricity arrangements in place. Additionally, they also provided medical treatment." On Wednesday, Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra inspected entry gates at 17 places in the city set up for the welcome of Kanwariyas.

'Invited innovative fixes for EOL vehicle pollution'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Friday announced that the BJP government has launched an innovation challenge to invite innovative solutions to tackle pollution from End-of-Life (EOL) vehicles.

Speaking to the media, Delhi Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said, "We have launched an innovation challenge to invite innovative solutions to tackle pollution from End of Life



(EOL) vehicles. We want to explore ideas to tackle pollution from End of Life

(EOL) vehicles and provide relief to the public of Delhi." The initiative was issued

as a standing order by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and focused on curbing emissions of particulate matter (PM) 2.5 and PM 10, which are known to be major contributors to the city's deteriorating air quality. Earlier on July 3, the Delhi NCT government requested the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to place on hold the enforcement that mandates the denial of fuel to end-of-life vehicles in Delhi. In a letter to the Commis-

sion, Delhi Minister for Environment, Forests, and Wildlife, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, wrote that soon after the implementation of the direction, which came into effect on July 1, 2025, it was revealed that "certain issues" needed to be addressed before they could be fully implemented. Under the new Delhi government's policy, petrol vehicles older than 15 years and diesel vehicles older than 10 years are now denied refuelling at fuel stations in the city.

Massive fire erupts in chemical factory; no casualty

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A major fire broke out at a chemical factory in the Sabhapur area under the jurisdiction of Sonia Vihar Police Station in Delhi on Friday evening. Fire tenders from both Delhi and Uttar Pradesh have been deployed and are actively engaged in firefighting operations to control the blaze.



Dark smoke and flames billow out as fire breaks out in a chemical factory in Sabhapur area under Sonia Vihar Police Station on Friday. (ANI Video Grab)

The cause of the fire is yet to be determined, and no

casualties have been reported so far.

POLICE WILL ACT IF KHARGE, RAHUL INCITED ENCROACHERS: ASSAM CM

Sarma accused Cong leaders of encouraging encroachers during their recent visit

TDG NETWORK
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has said police will “not hesitate” to take action against Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi if it finds that their speeches had instigated encroachers to attack security forces in Paikan Reserve Forest on Thursday.

Sarma also maintained that the opposition party was preparing to fight next year’s state polls with a single-point agenda of putting him behind bars.

Talking to reporters after attending a party meeting late on Thursday evening, Sarma said, “Kharge and Gandhi visiting Assam is not the question. But in their meeting, they openly encouraged the encroachers and land jihadis to encroach



government land.” Congress president Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Gandhi had visited the state on Wednesday, during which they had held a closed-door discussion with top state party functionaries here and later addressed party workers at Chaygaon, 40 km from Guwahati.

The chief minister claimed that the speeches by the two leaders had “encouraged and emboldened” encroachers, who allegedly attacked security forces in Paikan Reserve Forest in Goalpara on Thurs-

day morning and in clashes that followed, one civilian was killed and 20 others, including policemen, injured.

Referring to Kharge’s statement that Congress will rehabilitate the evicted people in the state, Sarma said, “Because of these kinds of speeches, people get encouraged and those evicted people started throwing stones and beating police with sticks and various other weapons (at Paikan).” He said police have registered a case already, and they will see whether these statements

were directly or indirectly responsible for the incident.

“Police will go through the speeches made by Gandhi and Kharge. And if we see that there are elements which invite penal action, police will not hesitate to take action against them,” Sarma, who also holds the Home department, asserted.

On Gandhi claiming that Sarma will be put in jail for corruption by the people, the BJP leader said, “The big question is whether Rahul Gandhi will be in jail and when. ED has seized many property of Robert Vadra today (Thursday). There are many jails in India waiting for the Gandhis.” “You see, he is just an MP today. How can he arrest a chief minister?” Sarma said, adding that even Congress members do not give importance to what Gandhi says.

“Congress will contest the

2026 Assam election on only one agenda that Himanta Biswa Sarma will be put behind bars. Who will vote for a party whose manifesto will be of only that one line?” Sarma claimed.

“But we have bigger tasks. There are two cases against Gandhi in Assam, I can bring him in. But my election cannot be Gandhi-centric, it will be on our work for the state. I am not allowing my mind to be diverted, else I would have retorted in ample measure to the threats given to me,” he said.

Sarma, who had been an influential Congress minister before joining the BJP in 2015, claimed that he had people within the opposition party who constantly updated him on whatever transpired in the closed-door discussion the top central leaders had with state functionaries.

6 Naxalites killed in Narayanpur gunfight

TDG NETWORK
NARAYANPUR

Six Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Narayanpur district of Chhattisgarh on Friday, police said.

A gunfight broke out in the afternoon in the forest of Abujhmad region when joint teams of security forces were out on an anti-Naxal operation following inputs about the presence of ultras, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P told PTI.

“Multiple exchanges of fire between the security forces and Maoists occurred since the afternoon. So far, the bodies of six Maoists have been recovered from the encounter site along with AK-47/SLR rifles, other weapons, explosive material and daily use items,” he said.

The operation is still underway, the IG added.

Hailing security forces, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said, under the leadership



of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the guidance of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, his government has been marching ahead firmly towards fulfilling the resolve of making the country completely Naxal-free by March 31, 2026.

“In a major operation by security forces, six Naxalites have been neutralised so far in Abujhmad of Narayanpur district. I congratulate all the brave jawans of the security forces involved in the operation and salute their indomitable courage,” he said in a statement.

“The valour of the jawans has further strengthened

our resolve of ‘Naxal Mukta Chhattisgarh’. Under the leadership of PM Modi ji and the guidance of Union Home Minister Amit Shah ji, we are moving forward firmly towards the accomplishment of the resolve of making the country completely Maoist-free by March 31, 2026,” the CM added.

With the latest action, 221 Naxalites have been killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh so far this year.

Of them, 204 were eliminated in the Bastar division, which includes districts of Bijapur, Bastar, Kanker, Konadagaon, Narayanpur, Sukma, and Dantewada, as per police.

Execution of Indian nurse in Yemen stayed, efforts on to save her: Centre to SC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday informed the Supreme Court that efforts were on and the government was trying everything possible to ensure Indian nurse Nimisha Priya, on death row for murder in Yemen, came out safely.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was informed that Priya’s execution, scheduled on July had been stayed.

The counsel appearing for petitioner organisation “Save Nimisha Priya – International Action Council”, which is extending legal support to assist Priya, sought a Centre-appointed delegation to go to Yemen to meet the murder victim’s family for negotiation.

The bench said the petitioner could make a representation to the government.



“It has been stated at the Bar that as of now, the execution has been stayed. The petitioner wish to make some representation to the government, which they are free to move,” the bench said.

After Attorney General R Venkataramani said Centre’s efforts were on, the petitioner’s counsel said the execution had been stayed.

“The first step is, they have postponed it (execution) as of now. We need to first

get the pardon. Blood money comes in the second stage. First the family has to forgive us,” the counsel said.

He said discussion on “blood money” could take place after this.

The counsel said Yemen was not a country where anybody could travel to as there was a ban unless allowed by the government.

“You approach the government. The government will consider it. The government is already doing so much for you, taking good care of whatever is possible at their end,” the bench observed.

The petitioner’s counsel urged that a delegation of two or three people from the petitioner organisation and representatives of a religious scholar from Kerala, who is also involved in the matter, could be allowed the travel to Yemen for negotiating with the victim’s family.

Himachal Govt to move SC against tree felling in apple belt

TDG NETWORK
SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh’s Revenue, Horticulture and Tribal Development Minister, Jagat Singh Negi, on Friday said that the state government will approach the Supreme Court against the High Court’s directive that has led to mass felling of fruit-bearing and green trees on encroached forest lands.

Calling the green felling “environmentally disastrous” and contrary to the principles of ecological conservation. Negi told ANI, “Nowhere in the country is green felling permitted. Eviction of illegal encroachments is being carried out,



but cutting decades-old fruit-bearing trees is not justified.”

He added that the state will file a petition in the Supreme Court to prevent unnecessary destruction of green cover.

While the government is complying with the High Court’s order to remove illegal encroachments, Negi

warned that the large-scale removal of apple orchards and other full-grown trees could have serious environmental consequences, especially amid the threat of heavy monsoons, cloudbursts, and floods.

“There are trees over 50 to 60 years old being cut down. Be it fruit-bearing or otherwise, a tree is a tree. We are

following the court’s eviction orders, but mass tree felling is a first-of-its-kind action and a matter of grave concern,” he said.

Negi warned that tree removal on such a large scale could lead to soil erosion, flooding, and broader destruction in downstream areas. He urged the judiciary to differentiate between illegal possession and green asset preservation, and asked the Centre to frame a balanced policy that allows the removal of encroachments without harming the environment.

Following the restoration work after monsoon damage, Negi said that things are returning to normal.

UP achieves historic rise in Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 rankings

VARSHA
LUCKNOW

Realizing the spirit of Swachh Bharat Mission, Uttar Pradesh has performed brilliantly in the Swachh Survekshan 2024-25. There has been a historic bounce in the rankings of many urban areas including the major cities of the state Lucknow, Agra, Noida, Prayagraj, Gorakhpur and Varanasi. Not only the big metropolis but also the recent rural panchayats and municipalities, which have transformed into urban bodies, have also recorded remarkable progress towards cleanliness. This achievement is a proof of rapid changes in the urban scenario of the state and public participation based good governance.

Municipal Development and Energy Minister Shri A.K. Sharma On this occasion, Sharma congratulated all the cleanliness workers of the state, the leadership of the municipal bodies, the officers, the public representatives and the common citizens and said that -

It is not just a ranking, but the



success of a social movement obtained from public participation, honesty and commitment. At the core of this historical achievement, our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji has a vision of ‘Swachh Bharat’ and a strong implementation of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath ji. Under his efficient guidance, the Urban Development Department has given the form of a mass movement by implementing schemes on the ground.

Mr. Sharma also said that smart monitoring, ward-wise assessment, solid waste management, door to door collection, sewerage reform, public hearing, and ‘public participation model’ have played a decisive role in bringing

the cleanliness rankings of cities to heights.

Under the Swachh Survekshan 2024, a total of 08 cities of UP made a place in Million Plus cities, in the third place Lucknow (Seven Star, Water +), Agra (Five Star, Water +), Ghaziabad (Five Star, Water +), Prayagraj (Five Star, Water +), in the twelfth place in the eleventh place, Ghaziabad (Five Star, Water +), in the twelfth place, the three-year-olds, Water + (Five Star +) (Five Star, Water, Water, Water, Water, Water, Water, Water, Water, Water + Varanasi (Three Star, Water+), Meerut (One Star, Water+) in twenty-fifth in seventeenth place, Aligarh (One Star, ODF ++) in twenty-sixth place has been ranked.

Land-for-jobs scam: SC refuses to stay trial court proceedings against Lalu

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to stay trial court proceedings against former Bihar chief minister and RJD supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav in the CBI’s land-for-jobs case.

A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh asked the Delhi High Court to expedite hearing on his plea for quashing of the CBI FIR.

The top court also granted exemption from appearance to Yadav before trial court in the case.

On May 29, the Delhi High Court said there were no compelling reason to stay the proceedings.

The high court issued notice to the CBI on Yadav’s plea for quashing of the agency FIR and posted the hearing on

The high court issued notice to the CBI on Yadav’s plea for quashing of the agency FIR and posted the hearing on August 12.

August 12.

The case is related to Group D appointments made in the West Central Zone of the Indian Railways based in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, during Lalu Prasad’s tenure as the railway minister between 2004 and 2009, allegedly in return for land parcels gifted or transferred by the recruits in the name of the RJD supremo’s family or associates.

Ramesh demands 2-day debates on Pahalgam, Op Sindoor, Trump claims

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Friday said the opposition’s demand for at least two days of parliamentary debate on issues like the Pahalgam attack, Operation Sindoor, US President Donald Trump’s claims and China is “non-negotiable”.

He also asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi must respond to all these issues on the floor of the House.

The Congress general secretary in-charge communications said the INDIA bloc is united and its prominent leaders will hold deliberations online on Saturday and going forward meet in Delhi later on.

Ramesh said the INDIA bloc’s demand for a discussion in Parliament on Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar is also “non-negotiable”.

“We must have at least two full days of debate and dis-



cussion on the Pahalgam terror attack. The terrorists have still not been brought to justice. There have been very significant revelations about Operation Sindoor, first by (CDS) General Chauhan, then by Group Captain Shivkumar, and thirdly by Lt Gen Rahul Singh.

“Three very senior, respected, experienced defence personnel have made very significant statements on Operation Sindoor. So, that is the reason why we want a discussion,” Ramesh said.

He said it is the government’s job to find a middle path and create a consensus in Parliament.

“I have never seen in the last 11 years that a middle path has been found. Here it

is either my way or the high-way approach that reflects the mindset of the PM,” Ramesh said.

He pointed out that three days after the Kargil war ended, the Kargil Review Committee, chaired by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar’s father K Subrahmanyam, was set up which later submitted its report to Parliament with reactions.

“This is the history of previous governments. Now five years have passed since we had a discussion on China and the PM gave clean chit to that country after what happened in Galwan when China disturbed the status quo which had prevailed for almost 30 years.

“So, Pahalgam, Operation Sindoor, the role of China in Pakistan Air Force operation, the 23 times same claims being made in 66 days that President Trump stopped Operation Sindoor and used trade as a carrot and stick for India and Pakistan, all this must be discussed,” he said.

Efforts made to defame Kanwar pilgrims, term them rioters and terrorists: Yogi

TDG NETWORK
VARANASI

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said efforts are being made to defame kanwar pilgrims who are subjected to a media trial and termed terrorists and rioters. This, he asserted, stems from a mentality that wants to insult India’s heritage.

Speaking in support of

Shiva devotees at a seminar on tribal icon Birsu Munda, he said those who seek to defame the kanwar ‘yatri’ are the same people who tried to separate the tribal community from India.

“They conspired at every level to make them fight against India. This is the same community that always insults the faith of India and these are the same people who today want to

create a situation of caste conflict by creating fake accounts on social media platforms,” Adityanath said.

The chief minister said everyone from society, from the working classes to the upper classes, is associated with the yatra.

“There is a wonderful confluence of unity. No discrimination. There is no distinction of caste, no distinction of region, no distinction of



class, no difference of opinion, no difference of sect; they go chanting ‘Har Har

Bam Bam.’ They walk 300-400 kilometres, then take water from there, put the kanwar on their shoulders and walk back in the same way with the same devotion,” Adityanath said.

Sounding a word of caution, he said, “But, there is a media trial, they are defamed. A lot is written about them, they have the audacity to even call them (Kanwar pilgrims) rioters

and terrorists. This is the mentality to insult the heritage of India in every way.”

Adityanath also said that fake social media accounts were being run to spark caste tensions and alleged that those “always insulting the faith of India” were behind it.

“These are the same people who tried to separate the tribal community from India and worked to pro-

voke them, conspiring at every level to make them fight against India. They are ones that always insult the faith of India, and they are the same people who today want to create caste conflict by creating fake accounts on social media platforms,” he said.

Recalling a specific incident, Adityanath said, “A few years ago there was a case of arson. I had said

then that such an act didn’t seem to be that of a particular community,” he said, recalling that after ordering cops to immediately control the situation, he directed that the “footage of the arson be examined.”

He said subsequent investigations established that a person involved in the arson was wearing a saffron scarf but shouting ‘Ya Allah’.

SEBI MULLS REVIEW OF MUTUAL FUND SCHEMES CATEGORISATION

The proposal came after Sebi noted a significant overlap of portfolios in some schemes and felt the necessity to introduce clear limits to the industry to avoid schemes with similar portfolios.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Friday proposed to review the categorisation of mutual fund schemes in a bid to improve clarity and address the issue of overlap in portfolios of schemes.

The proposal came after Sebi noted a significant overlap of portfolios in some schemes and felt the necessity to introduce clear limits to the industry to avoid schemes with similar portfolios.

In its consultation paper, Sebi suggested that mutual funds should be permitted to offer both Value and Contra funds, subject to the condition that no more than 50 per cent of the schemes' portfolios would overlap at any point in time.

The overlap condition should be monitored at the time of New Fund Offer (NFO) deployment and subsequently on a semi-annual basis using month-end portfolios.

In case of a higher-than-permitted overlap, the Asset Management Company (AMC) should rebalance the portfolios within 30 business days.



An extension of up to an additional 30 business days may be obtained from the Investment Committee (IC) of the AMC, with the reasons for granting the additional days properly recorded and maintained.

"If the deviation persists beyond this period, investors of both the schemes shall be given an exit option without any exit load," Sebi proposed.

The regulator proposed that mutual funds should be permitted to invest the residual portions of their

portfolios in equity, debt (including money market instruments), gold and silver, Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) under the equity category schemes.

Sebi also recommended changes in the nomenclature of debt schemes to enhance investor understanding. It proposed that the term 'Duration' be replaced with 'Term' for better clarity. Additionally, the 'Low Duration Fund' should be renamed as 'Ultra Short to

Short Term Fund' to better reflect the investment objective, and the name of each debt scheme should indicate the fund's duration, such as Overnight Fund (1 Day) or Medium Term Fund (3 to 4 years).

The regulator further proposed that mutual funds should be allowed to launch sectoral debt funds, provided that no more than 60 per cent of the portfolio in a sectoral debt scheme overlaps with any other sectoral debt or debt category scheme.

This move should also en-

sure sufficient availability of investment-grade papers within the chosen sectors.

Moreover, mutual funds should be permitted to invest the residual portion of their debt category schemes in REITs and InvITs, except for those with shorter durations, such as Overnight Fund, Liquid Fund, Ultra-Short Duration Fund, Low Duration Fund, and Money Market Fund, subject to regulatory limits applicable to this asset class.

In terms of arbitrage funds, Sebi suggested that such schemes should be allowed to take exposure in debt instruments only through government securities with a maturity of less than one year and in repos backed by government bonds. For equity savings schemes, the regulator proposed that net equity exposure and arbitrage exposure should be mandated between 15 per cent and 40 per cent.

With respect to hybrid category schemes, mutual funds should be allowed to invest the residual portion in REITs and InvITs, except in Dynamic Asset Allocation and Arbitrage Funds.

Sensex, Nifty end in negative post weak IT, finance Q1 results

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

Indian equity benchmarks on Friday ended in the negative zone after trading lower as market participants reacted to the first quarter (Q1FY26) earnings of the finance and IT sectors, despite positive global cues.

At the end of the trading session, BSE Sensex was down 501.51 points or 0.61 per cent at 81,757.73, and the Nifty 50 at National Stock Exchange (NSE) was down 143.05 points or 0.57 per cent at 24,968.40.

Axis Bank, Shriram Finance, Bharat Electronics, HDFC Life, and SBI Life Insurance are among the major losers on NSE, while Wipro, Tata Steel, ONGC, IndusInd Bank, and Infosys were the major gainers.

On the sectoral front, except for metal and media, all other indices traded in the red with pharma, PSU bank, FMCG, capital goods, consumer durables, and telecom down 0.5-1 per cent.

"A broad-based sell-off was observed in the national market amidst a disappointing initial set of earnings from the finance and IT sectors," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited.

Nair said that elevated valuations in large-cap stocks, coupled with significant net short positions held by For-



On the sectoral front, except for metal and media, all other indices traded in the red with pharma, PSU bank, FMCG, capital goods, consumer durables, and telecom down 0.5-1 per cent.

eign Institutional Investors (FIIs), have contributed to a cautious sentiment among investors.

"Moreover, additional tariff threats are also casting a shadow on India over its trade relationship with Russia. Despite these pressures, the medium- to long-term outlook for India remains optimistic, supported by low inflation levels and proactive monetary authority committed to sustaining economic growth," Nair added.

Shrikant Chouhan, Head Equity Research, Kotak Securities attributed the sentiment to financials of the IT firms adding, "While macro data remained supportive, most large-cap IT services

companies disappointed estimates."

The Indian equity markets had a mixed week, with the Nifty-50 Index and Sensex falling 1 per cent each, while small-caps gained 1.4 per cent and mid-caps gained 1 per cent over the past week.

Sector-wise, indices were mixed during the week. Health care (1.9 %), Auto (1.8%), FMCG (1.2%), Realty (3.4%) and Consumer Durable (0.7%) gained the most. While IT (-1.3%) and Bank Nifty (-0.9%) lost the most. Within the Nifty, Hero Moto (+4.5%), M&M (+3.5%) and Bajaj Auto (+3.4%) gained the most, while Axis Bank (-5.9%), HCL Tech (-5.6%) and Tech Mahindra (-3.2%) lost the most.

SBI named 'World's Best Consumer Bank' for 2025 by Global Finance magazine

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

State Bank of India has been adjudged as the World's Best Consumer Bank for 2025 by Global Finance magazine.

The evaluation was based on the publication's comprehensive research and analysis, enriched by insights from corporate finance executives, analysts, and bankers across the globe.

Global Finance magazine will present the award to SBI Chairman, CS Setty at the annual event titled World's Best Bank in Washington, DC, on October 18, 2025 during the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings.

SBI Chairman, CS Setty

expressed his appreciation.

"A heartfelt thanks to all our esteemed customers, dedicated employees and all other stakeholders for their unwavering trust," Setty said. He further added, "Customer experience remains central to our growth strategy. By simplifying onboarding, enabling vernacular voice banking, and ensuring 24/7 digital support, we aim to deliver a seamless and inclusive experience across geographies, particularly for emerging segments in rural and semi-urban areas. Further, we are building omni-channel engagement models, supported by hyper-personalised offerings powered by AI."

Rs 27,000 crore worth govt securities fully subscribed

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

The central government on Friday auctioned securities worth total Rs 27,000 crore (Rs 15,000 crore maturing in 2030 and Rs 12,000 crore maturing in 2054).

According to Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the government securities was subscribed to in entirety. The 2030 maturing bond will yield 6.01 per cent annualized returns, and 7.09 per cent for the 2054 maturing bond.

The underwriting auction was conducted through multiple price-based method today. Primary Dealers have submitted their bids for auction electronically through Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber) System between 09:00 A.M. and 09:30 A.M. on the day of underwriting auction (today).

The underwriting commission will be credited to the current account of the respective primary dealers with RBI today itself. Primary dealers are registered entities with the RBI who have the license to purchase and sell government securities.

Recently, as many as



Recently, as many as twelve Indian states raised a total of Rs 26,900 crore in the latest auction of State Government Securities (SGS), RBI data showed.

twelve Indian states raised a total of Rs 26,900 crore in the latest auction of State Government Securities (SGS), RBI data showed. All participating states accepted the full amount they had notified for the auction.

Maharashtra led the fund-raising drive, mobilising Rs 6,000 crore through four securities. The state offered yields of 7.12 per cent for a 22-year security, 7.13 per cent for a 23-year security, 7.15 per

cent for a 24-year security and 7.16 per cent for a 25-year security.

Following Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh raised Rs 3,600 crore through two securities of Rs 1,500 crore and Rs 2,100 crore against a lower yield of 6.87 per cent and 6.88 per cent for tenures of 8 and 9 years, respectively.

Uttar Pradesh raised Rs 3,000 crore through one security at a yield of 6.86 per cent for a tenure of 8 years.

Uttar Pradesh is followed by Telangana and Punjab, both of which raised Rs 2,500 crore each. Punjab also gave the highest yield on its security of 7.19 per cent for a tenure of 24 years.

Telangana's Rs 2,500 crore was through three securities, two of Rs 1,000 crore each, the first at a yield of 7.10 per cent for 32 years and the second at a yield of 7.09 per cent for a tenure of 35 years. The third security of Rs 500 crore was raised by the state for 38 years at a yield of 7.09 per cent.

West Bengal, Gujarat and Bihar raised securities worth Rs 2,000 crore each. West Bengal at a yield of 7.07 per cent for a tenure of 12 years, Gujarat with a yield of 6.80 per cent for a tenure of nine years and Bihar with a yield of 6.90 per cent for a tenure of 10 years.

Other participants in the auction included Odisha, which raised Rs 1,500 crore through two securities of Rs 1,000 crore and Rs 500 crore. First at a yield of 6.98 per cent for a tenure of 12 years and second at 6.13 per cent for a tenure of three years, respectively.

'India needs to be careful, clever while finalising US trade pact'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India needs to be 'very careful and clever' while negotiating trade agreements with the US, especially with regard to the agriculture sector, which is heavily subsidised by developed countries, former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan said on Friday. In an interview with PTI Videos, Rajan said India's economic growth has sort of settled in the range of 6-7 per cent, and a fraction of percentage point may be affected by the global trade uncertainties.

"I think where it is much more sort of difficult (trade negotiations) is in areas such as agriculture, where every country subsidises its producers, and our producers may be relatively smaller, may have somewhat lower subsidies...unconstrained



flow of agricultural products into the country may create problems for them," he said.

Earlier this week, the Indian team was in Washington for the fifth round of negotiations for the proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA).

"For example, can we encourage more foreign direct investments from those countries (developed countries) to enhance the value added in some of those sectors, the

milk for example, sort of improving the value added in our milk products, milk powder, cheese, etc. could be beneficial to our milk producers," the eminent economist noted.

US President Donald Trump has said that the proposed trade deal with India would be on the lines of what America has finalised with Indonesia. Giving access in the agriculture sector is prov-

US President Donald Trump has said that the proposed trade deal with India would be on the lines of what America has finalised with Indonesia. Giving access in the agriculture sector is proving to be a political issue for the government.

ing to be a political issue for the government.

"Are there things we can do, rather than necessarily saying we welcome sort of more milk into the country from other countries.

"So all this requires very careful, clever negotiation, and I hope that is what our government officials are engaged in," Rajan, currently a professor of finance at Chicago Booth, said.

India has hardened its position on the US demand for duty concessions on agri-

and dairy products. New Delhi has, so far, not given any duty concessions to any of its trading partners in a free trade agreement in the dairy sector.

Noting that the trade tensions are negative for both in terms of exports as well as investment, Rajan said, "But you must remember that there are opportunities also in what is happening to the extent that India is perceived as an alternative route to some of the other regions like the United States."

Wipro shares climb nearly 3 pc post Q1 numbers

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Shares of IT services firm Wipro ended nearly 3 per cent higher on Friday after it posted a 9.8 per cent increase in consolidated net profit during the April-June quarter.

Cheering the results, the stock rallied 4.43 per cent to Rs 271.80 in intra-day trade on the BSE. The stock finally ended at Rs 266.90, up 2.56 per cent.

At the NSE, shares of the firm ended at Rs 266.35, up 2.20 per cent. Intra-day, it jumped 4.33 per cent to Rs 271.90.

The company's market valuation climbed Rs 6,980.42 crore to Rs 2,79,782.74 crore.

India's fourth-largest



IT services firm Wipro on Thursday posted a 9.8 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 3,336.5 crore during the April-June period, buoyed by strong deal wins.

The Bengaluru-headquartered firm had logged a net profit of Rs 3,036.6 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing.

Revenue from operations

in the first quarter of FY26 was marginally higher at Rs 22,134.6 crore compared to Rs 21,963.8 crore in Q1 FY25. Sequentially, profit and revenue declined 7 per cent and 1.6 per cent, respectively.

Total bookings during the quarter under review stood at USD 4,971 million, up 50.7 per cent year-on-year in constant currency.

BRICS SUMMIT 2025: ISSUES & CONCERNS FOR WORLD PEACE AND SECURITY

OPINION

DR SYED MOHAMMAD
RAGHIB

The growing desire of the Global South to challenge Western supremacy, advance multipolarity, and change international governance was reflected in the 17th BRICS Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on July 6-7, 2025. The summit brought together leaders from the expanded BRICS grouping, which now consists of 11 countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Argentina. The event's overall subject was "Inclusive and Sustainable Global South". The summit, which was hosted by Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, sought to address important global issues such as trade protectionism, economic inequality, artificial intelligence, climate finance, and institutional reforms. However, the lack of in-person meetings between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping—Putin participated digitally, while Xi was represented by Premier Li Qiang—cast doubt on the bloc's internal cohesion in the face of global disintegration.

Tension between the Global North and South, economic nationalism, and growing global polarisation were all factors that influenced the 2025 summit. The need for reform of global governance institutions, particularly

the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), was one of the summit's main themes. Both President Lula and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi vehemently argued that the current arrangements do not adequately reflect the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century and called for more representation of emerging nations in these institutions. Both leaders emphasised the need to democratise international decision-making while restating the longstanding calls for permanent participation in the UNSC made by nations like South Africa, Brazil, and India. By advocating for a more inclusive global order that preserves international law, sovereignty, and respect for one another, the BRICS joint declaration reaffirmed this view.

The growing weaponisation of trade policy by major powers, especially the United States, was another main topic of discussion. All BRICS nations who support "anti-American policies" were condemned when former US President Donald Trump threatened to levy a 10% tariff on them. Such unilateral and protectionist actions were denounced by BRICS leaders, who said they were against WTO regulations and harmful to

the world trading system. In response, the bloc promised to step up efforts to lessen reliance on the US dollar and reaffirmed its commitment to free and fair trade. The necessity of bolstering local currency trade and investigating options like a new BRICS payment system or single currency mechanism was stressed by a number of officials, including Fernando Haddad, the finance minister of Brazil. The meeting saw agreement on strengthening inter-bank cooperation, expanding the role of the New Development Bank (NDB) in funding cross-border projects, and creating regional clearing systems, even though no final agreement on a single currency was reached.

At the summit, security and geopolitical concerns were also major topics. In his speech, Prime Minister Modi called on the BRICS nations to embrace a zero-tolerance stance against terrorism and vehemently denounced the recent terrorist incident in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir. He emphasised the significance of preserving sovereignty and internal stability in the face of transnational challenges and advocated for increased collaboration in intelligence sharing and counterterrorism initiatives. At the same time, member countries were deeply divided by the current Israel-Gaza conflict and recent bombings on Iranian nuclear sites. India, Brazil, and South Africa demanded moderation and a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue, while Iran used the platform to accuse Israel and its Western supporters of destabilising the area. Although there were clear differences among BRICS members



Prime Minister Narendra Modi hand in hand with the leaders of the BRICS members countries during a group picture at the 17th BRICS Summit, in Rio de Janeiro

over the Middle East, the final statement reaffirmed support for peace talks, denounced civilian losses, and voiced serious concern about the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

The summit focused a lot of attention on exploiting new technology and promoting innovation in the field of economic development so that the Global South might benefit. The main topics of conversation included scientific research, digital infrastructure, and artificial intelligence (AI). With the proposal of a BRICS framework for responsible AI development and data sharing, India took the lead in promoting moral and inclusive AI governance. Modi recommended investment in educating young people about digital technologies and asked for the establishment of open scientific repositories that are available to all BRICS members. In order to improve readiness for upcoming health emergencies, the WHO Director-

General, who was called to a special session, emphasised the need for inclusive public health systems and urged BRICS countries to back the Pandemic Treaty negotiations. The members agreed that multilateralism, equity, and transparency must be the guiding principles of technology and health cooperation.

During the conference, climate change and sustainable development also took centre stage. Brazil took advantage of its 2026 hosting of the COP30 in Belém to rally support for a more robust Global South stance on biodiversity, adaptation, and climate finance. President Lula da Silva demanded a fair energy transition backed by steady funding and denounced the rich nations' reversal of their climate finance pledges. With an emphasis on resilient infrastructure, renewable energy, and forest protection, the BRICS members concurred that it is critical to increase green investments through the New Develop-

ment Bank. In an effort to lessen reliance on clean tech markets controlled by the West, an agreement was also reached to strengthen collaboration in clean energy technologies, such as carbon capture, green hydrogen, and battery storage.

However, in spite of these lofty goals, the summit also revealed a number of internal divisions inside the organisation. Concerns regarding the BRICS's ability to function as a cohesive entity and the widening gap in priorities were raised by the absence of two founding members, Xi Jinping and Putin. Countries like India, Brazil, and South Africa continue to take a more balanced stance, pursuing reforms without open hostility, while China and Russia have demonstrated a stronger propensity towards strategic confrontation with the West. Furthermore, the coalition's internal dynamics have become more complex due to the addition of new members like Ethiopia and Iran,

each of whom has their own distinct political issues and geopolitical alignments. According to analysts, BRICS currently has to balance preserving internal agreement and ideological coherence with increasing its influence on a global scale. The risk of fragmentation remains considerable in the absence of well-defined institutional structures for coordination and dispute resolution.

The "Rio de Janeiro Declaration", a 126-point declaration that summed up the bloc's vision for a more just, peaceful, and multipolar world, was adopted at the summit's conclusion in spite of these obstacles. Multilateralism, economic cooperation, sustainable development, counterterrorism, and digital innovation were among the commitments mentioned in the declaration. Additionally, it reiterated the bloc's goal to strengthen collaboration in space research, logistics, infrastructure funding, and educational exchanges. A

special portion addressed enhancing the New Development Bank's role, particularly in assisting women-led firms, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and green infrastructure initiatives. The declaration also advocated for the expansion of BRICS-plus discussions, asking other developing countries to engage in the development of policies on topics such as technical sovereignty, food security, and climate justice.

To sum up, the July 2025 BRICS Summit demonstrated the potential and dangers of multilateralism led by the global South. On the one hand, the summit demonstrated the bloc's increasing aggressiveness in calling for alternative financial infrastructures, demanding structural reforms to the global order, and addressing the developmental goals of billions of people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. However, it also revealed the geopolitical, economic, and strategic inconsistencies within the coalition that may potentially obstruct its objectives. The survival of BRICS will hinge on its capacity to strike a balance between ambition and pragmatism, unity and diversity, as the globe continues to enter an era characterised by competition between established and developing countries. The upcoming year will be critical in deciding whether BRICS can go from a symbolic alliance to a major force in forming the global order of the twenty-first century, as the 2026 summit has now been handed over to Russia.

Dr Syed Mohammad Raghieb did his PhD from JNU, and currently working as a Research Officer at Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi. The views are personal

Divine vibes at Anjanadri Parvat

OPINION

PRIYA S. TANDON



Bharat is home to a rich cultural heritage, devotion, pulsating divinity and much more. My husband and I recently visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site, of the Hampi ruins in Karnataka. Hampi is mentioned in the Ramayana, as Kishkindha, the kingdom of Bali and Sugreeva. In the 15th-16th century, this was called the Vijayanagar empire. King Krishna Devaraya's empire spanned from the Krishna River in the North to the Indian Ocean in the South.

My husband dearly wanted to visit the birthplace of Lord Hanumanji at the Anjanadri Parvat in Hanuman

Halli, Karnataka. Amazingly the opportunity came, just before Guru Purnima. We reached Hampi at 11AM and went straight to the Anjanadri Parvat base. It was a divine brainwave that had prodded us to get a pair of kneecaps each. At the risk of being branded overcautious, both of us wore kneecaps as we embarked on our divine adventure. Our guide said that there were 575 steps uphill, but the steps at the rear, were a 100 less. He said that the views from the rear, would be less picturesque compared to the front, but the stairs would be less steep. Considering that both of us have completed 60 revolutions around the Sun, I was hugely sceptical, if we could do it. At the advice of a friend I tied a cotton cloth around the hips, called Kamarbandh in Ayurveda. Slowly and steadily, we were able to make it to the temple, at the top of the hill! Divinity was pulsating and palpable all around; and we were completely immersed in it!

When we reached the Garbha-Griha, the curtain was drawn. The Lord was partaking of the lunch Bhog. As the curtain opened, we had the most beautiful darshan of Hanuman ji. Hanumanji here, looks towards the South direction. The idol is more like a mural on the wall. Being in the side-pose, only one eye is visible. The bhog thali was handed to the panditji in waiting and we quietly prayed to partake a few morsels of it. The will of the Lord is truly unfathomable. The head Panditji said to my husband, "Bhog prasad grahan kar ke jaana." We were overwhelmed and mesmerised as he gave both of us, a flower garland each, from the Hanumanji idol. He also draped an orange cloth around my husband's shoulders. As we ate the prasad, we were overwhelmingly cognisant of the fact that it was truly the divine energy of Hanumanji, that made it possible to climb those 475 steps.

Our guide advised us to take the front route of 575 steps, for the descent. The views of the valley and the Tungabhadra River were breathtaking. The weather was perfect, it was neither hot nor cold. There was a little shower of rain. It was as if the Lord was making sure that we were comfortable. Amidst chants of, "Jai



Shri Ram! Jai Hanuman! Jai Bajrangbali!", we made it downhill. I could not believe that I had done it! The experience was surreal; nothing short of it.

Next we went to the Virupaksa Mandir. This is a Shiva Temple being the only ancient temple in Hampi, where Pooja-Archana is done. In all other temples the deity idols were disfigured or broken, so they are not worshipped anymore. But the Shivlingam in the Virupaksa Mandir stands unscathed. There is a Nandi statue outside the Mandir. I had read that when Sri Sathya Sai Baba was four-teen years old, he had visited Hampi with his family. Baba had refused to enter the Virupaksa Mandir and

said that he would rather wait outside with Nandi. His brother, Seshama Raju, was annoyed at Baba's attitude. Later Seshama Raju, saw Baba standing in place of the Shivlingam in the sanctum sanctorum! This enraged him, for he thought that his brother Sathya had entered into the Garbha-Griha from the back door. When he came outside, he saw his brother sitting calmly with Nandi! Shocked, he went back into the Garbha-Griha to find Sathya standing there. He went outside to check again. This zigzagging happened a couple of times, and this is when Sathya's brother realised that Sathya Sai was Divinity incarnate. Ever since I had read this story,

I had a deep desire to visit the Virupaksa Mandir, and here I was, in the immediate presence of the Lord! I was deeply overwhelmed.

Virupaksa means, Vi-Rupa-Akshi. Vi-Rupa means the opposite of Rupa; i.e. not beautiful. Akshi means eyes. This Shivlingam is symbolic of Lord Shiva with angry eyes, so his form is not beautiful, it is supposedly scary.

Shiva had sat in meditation here, after Sati had immolated herself. Parvati incarnated as Pampadevi and tried hard to awaken Shiva from his meditative state. She took help from Kama, the God of love, in her endeavour to woo Shiva. When Shiva's meditation was disrupted, he opened

his third eye in anger. His mere gaze, burnt Kama to ashes. Later Pampadevi (Parvati) was able to convince Shiva to marry her. Another divine experience here, was to be blessed by an elephant called Lakshmi, who lives in the Virupaksa temple and comes out only sometimes.

On the banks of the Pampa-sarovar is the temple of Pampadevi. Lord Shiva is resident here as Pampapati. Just a few yards away was the cave of Mata Shabari. The roof of the cave was barely three feet high. It was overwhelming to imagine that Mata Shabari sat and meditated here, and also that Bhagwan Ram and Lakshman had sat in this cave with her, as she fed them, wild berries. The cave was just an abstract arrangement of stones with some space in between, where perhaps even a five year old, couldn't stand straight.

We also visited the Vitthala temple complex. There is a beautiful stone chariot of Garuda here. It is inscribed on our 50 currency note. There is a structure called Ranga-Mandapa or Nriya Shala, having 56 musical pillars or the Saptswara Stambhas, here. The pillars are made in clusters having varying thickness and density. When struck gently

with a wooden stick, they emit sounds of different musical instruments, like Jal Tarang, Tabla, Dholak etc. The central portion of the Ranga-Mandapa had been left clear, for dancers to perform. Skilled musicians played music on those musical pillars. Presently, since the area was under restoration, QR code cards had been placed with each pillar. I scanned one of them and it said Jal-Tarang and also played for us the sound of a Jaltarang! It was amazing! These pillars are proof the super-advanced blending of the scientific, artistic and engineering skills in the Vijayanagar Empire in the 16th century.

Nearby is the Yantro-Dharak Hanumanji Temple where Hanumanji first met Ramji and Lakshman. Hanumanji's image here, is placed inside a Yantra.

The following day we went to Puttapparthi for Guru Purnima. We try to be in Puttapparthi for Guru Purnima, every year. The yearlong celebrations for the upcoming 100th birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba are happening ... there are talks, musical renditions of devotional songs, value-based skits etc. Our trip was suffused with divinity ... Bharat has so much to offer, the divine vibes are soul-stirring.



Rare earth elements.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

TDG
EXPLAINER

India, a rapidly developing nation with ambitious goals for economic growth, technological self-reliance, and environmental sustainability, currently faces a significant crisis involving rare earth magnets, which are critical components used in electric vehicles, renewable energy technologies, consumer electronics, and defense systems; this crisis arises largely because despite possessing abundant rare earth mineral reserves within its geological boundaries, the country remains highly dependent on imports—especially from China—for processed rare earth magnets, a situation that has been exacerbated by recent geopolitical tensions and supply chain disruptions, thereby raising alarms across Indian industry and prompting urgent government attention.

Recently, the electronics industry has written to the government, flagging off 'informal sanctions' by China on rare earth supplies and equipment, which the players believe could put the export-linked smartphone manufacturing under 'serious risk'.

During May and June, few automakers had flagged off risks of production, if the restricted supplies of rare earth magnet from China were not quickly restored. Magnets formed out of rare earth elements (REEs) are crucial for the automotive sector, especially electric vehicles (EVs), as well as for in the renewable energy space.



Rare earth mine

To address automakers' concerns, the Centre is considering a possible relaxation of localisation norms, allowing the import of fully-built motors. Acknowledging this, Heavy Industries Minister HD Kumaraswamy had recently said that the Centre is working on addressing the rare earth supply issue. "We are working on it," the minister had said last month.

ITS VITAL ROLE

Rare earth magnets, predominantly those containing neodymium, praseodymium, dysprosium, and terbium, are prized for their exceptional magnetic strength and stability under high temperatures, which make them indispensable for manufacturing powerful and compact electric motors used in electric vehicles, as well as for wind turbine generators that contribute to renewable energy production, with these materials also being essential in advanced electronics such as smartphones and laptops, and critical military hardware where performance and reliability cannot be compromised; as a result, these magnets have become foundational to India's plans for transitioning to cleaner energy sources and enhancing its strategic defense capabilities, placing the ongoing shortage in rare earth magnet supply in the spotlight as a major industrial bottleneck.

HEAVY RELIANCE ON CHINA

India's predicament is intensified by its overwhelming reliance on China, which currently dominates around 70 percent of the world's rare earth mining and over 80 percent of rare earth processing capacity, thereby controlling much of the supply chain from raw ore extraction to the final magnet products; this dependence is particularly problematic in the context of escalating geopolitical tensions, as China has recently imposed export restrictions on rare earth elements and magnets, actions perceived as strategic moves to exert leverage amid global disputes, which have consequently led to supply shortages, price hikes, and increased competition for these critical inputs—factors that jeopardize India's industrial ambitions and highlight the vulnerability of relying on a single dominant supplier for such a crucial resource.

IMPACT ON THE INDUSTRY

The automotive sector, which is rapidly pivoting towards electric vehicles as part of India's commitment to reduce pollution and dependence on imported fossil fuels, is among the hardest hit by the rare earth magnet shortage, since these magnets are essential for building efficient and reliable electric motors; the inability to procure sufficient quantities threatens to disrupt production schedules, delay the rollout of affordable EV models, and undermine the government's 'Make in India' campaign, which aims to develop a robust domestic manufacturing ecosystem capable of meeting both national and global demand; at the same time, the renewable energy sector, particularly wind power generation, relies on rare earth magnets for high-performance turbine generators, and the scarcity of these materials risks slowing the addition of new clean energy capacity, complicating India's ambitious target of installing 500 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030 and thus impeding its climate change commitments.

CHALLENGES IN DOMESTIC EXTRACTION AND PROCESSING

While India is endowed with substantial reserves of rare earth minerals in states such as Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, the country struggles with underdeveloped and fragmented mining and processing infrastructure, which prevents it from converting these raw materials into finished magnets and components at scale; the extraction and beneficiation of rare earth ores are complex and environmentally sensitive processes involving the handling of toxic and radioactive byproducts, requiring significant technological expertise, capital investment, and strict environmental regulations, all of which contribute to delays and increased costs; furthermore, the lack of a fully integrated supply chain and skilled workforce in rare earth processing means that India is unable to meet the immediate demand from critical industries and must continue importing processed magnets, thereby perpetuating the supply vulnerability and increasing exposure to external shocks.



Renewable energy industry also works on the rare earth elements.

a resilient supply chain for critical minerals.

INDUSTRY CONCERNS

Industry leaders from the automotive, renewable energy, and electronics sectors have expressed deep concern over the intensifying scarcity of rare earth magnets, warning that continued supply disruptions could severely impact production volumes, increase manufacturing costs, and delay the achievement of both environmental and economic objectives; automakers in particular have flagged the risk of halted or slowed EV production lines, which would not only stall India's green mobility transition but also affect jobs and investment in the sector; similarly, renewable energy companies highlight that limited access to rare earth magnets threatens project timelines and financial viability, undermining efforts to increase clean energy capacity; in response to these challenges, the private sector has urged the government to expedite policy reforms, provide greater financial incentives, facilitate technological innovation, and improve the regulatory environment to encourage faster domestic development of rare earth processing and magnet manufacturing.

ENVIRONMENTAL HURDLES

The extraction and processing of rare earth minerals pose significant environmental challenges that complicate efforts to scale up domestic production in India, as these processes generate toxic waste products, including radioactive materials, which require careful management and disposal to avoid environmental contamination and health risks to local communities; stringent environmental regulations, while necessary to protect

ecological balance, often result in delays in obtaining mining permits and approvals, creating bottlenecks that hamper timely project execution; balancing the need for rapid development of rare earth supply chains with environmental sustainability demands careful policy calibration, investments in cleaner and safer extraction technologies, and active engagement with local stakeholders to ensure that mining activities do not lead to social conflicts or ecological degradation.

GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

India's rare earth magnet crisis cannot be fully understood without situating it within the broader global geopolitical landscape, where control over critical minerals has become a focal point of strategic competition among major powers; as countries worldwide transition to green technologies and advanced defense systems, the demand for rare earth elements and magnets has surged, making supply security a national priority; China's near-monopoly over rare earth processing and its recent export restrictions have alarmed countries across Asia, Europe, and North America, spurring efforts to diversify supply chains, develop alternative sources, and form international partnerships aimed at reducing dependency on any single supplier; in this context, India's push to develop its rare earth capabilities aligns with similar moves by allies and partners, enhancing its geopolitical leverage and supporting its ambitions to emerge as a regional and global strategic player.

FUTURE PROSPECTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Although India currently

faces a challenging scenario in the rare earth magnet sector, the crisis also presents an unprecedented opportunity to build a comprehensive and integrated supply chain that spans mining, refining, processing, manufacturing, and end-use applications; by leveraging its mineral wealth, investing in cutting-edge technology, and fostering international collaborations, India can position itself as a reliable and competitive supplier in the global critical minerals market; this transformation would not only reduce economic vulnerabilities and strengthen industrial competitiveness but also generate substantial employment, promote technological innovation, and contribute to India's climate and defense goals; achieving this vision, however, requires sustained government commitment, active industry participation, adequate funding, and a balanced approach to environmental sustainability.

TO SUM UP

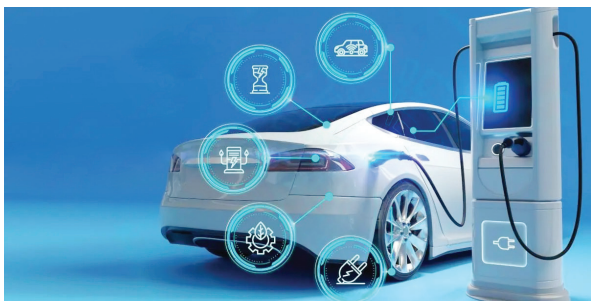
India's rare earth magnet crisis is a complex and multifaceted challenge that highlights the critical importance of securing reliable and sustainable access to strategic minerals in an era defined by technological innovation, environmental urgency, and geopolitical rivalry; as the country strives to expand electric vehicle production, ramp up renewable energy generation, modernize its defense capabilities, and grow its manufacturing base, ensuring a stable supply of rare earth magnets becomes indispensable for realizing these aspirations; the ongoing crisis underscores the urgent need for a coordinated and comprehensive strategy that addresses the entire value chain—from mining and processing to manufacturing and end-use—while navigating environmental concerns and geopolitical realities; by rising to this challenge, India can not only overcome the immediate supply disruptions but also chart a path towards long-term self-reliance, technological leadership, and strategic autonomy in the global economy.



52 India-based companies depend on Chinese magnets for supplying to automobile.

INDIA'S RARE EARTH MAGNET CRISIS AMID SUPPLY DISRUPTION

India faces a rare earth magnet crisis as China's export restrictions disrupt supplies essential for electric vehicles, renewable energy, and electronics. Domestic production struggles with technical and environmental challenges, prompting government incentives and calls for supply diversification to secure India's green transition and industrial growth.



Rare earth magnets are used in the Electric Vehicles Industry

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE	
Critical Role of Rare Earths:	Rare earth elements (REEs) are essential for manufacturing permanent magnets used in electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy technologies, smartphones, and defense equipment, making them strategically vital for India's industrial growth.
China's Dominance:	China controls about 80% of the global rare earth supply and processing capacity, creating a significant vulnerability for India, which heavily depends on Chinese imports for these critical minerals.
Supply Disruptions:	Recent informal sanctions and export restrictions by China on rare earth materials and associated equipment have raised alarm across Indian industries, threatening production schedules, especially in the electric vehicle and electronics sectors.
Economic Implications:	Any disruption in rare earth supply could delay India's ambitious green energy transition, manufacturing output, and technology sector growth, risking economic setbacks and loss of global competitiveness.
Government Intervention:	The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is actively addressing the crisis by convening stakeholder meetings and formulating policies to reduce dependence on imports and boost domestic rare earth production.
Public Sector Initiatives:	Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC) is stepping up efforts to enter the rare earth mineral space with significant capital allocations, aiming to become a key domestic supplier.
Incentives and Subsidies:	The government is considering financial incentives and subsidies to encourage domestic manufacturing of rare earth magnets, reducing costs and improving self-reliance.
Geopolitical Concerns:	India's strategic autonomy is at stake as geopolitical tensions with China heighten, making diversified and secure rare earth supply chains critical for national security.
Industry Challenges:	Structural challenges such as low domestic exploration, limited processing infrastructure, and environmental concerns hinder India's rare earth production capacity.
Future Outlook:	Addressing these issues requires coordinated policy action, increased investment in mining and processing, technological innovation, and international partnerships to ensure sustainable rare earth supply for India's future growth.

SPEAKER DEVNANI REVAMPS AND STRENGTHENS COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN THE ASSEMBLY



DR. LOKESH CHANDRA SHARMA

Speaker of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly Vasudev Devnani is known for innovation in parliamentary traditions. In this episode, he has worked to strengthen parliamentary committees. Actually, parliamentary committees are a miniature form of the House. In a democratic system, the proceedings of parliamentary committees are as important as the proceedings of the House. The proceed-

ings of parliamentary committees are very important for the transparency, accountability and good governance of democracy. According to traditions, the participation of public representatives, accountability of administration and the quality of democracy are actually tested by the committees of the Legislative Assemblies of different states of the country. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has constituted a committee of seven Legislative Assembly Speakers to review the strength of the committees of the Legislative Assemblies of the country. Rajasthan Legislative Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani is a member of this committee. This committee is preparing a report for the strengthening of the Legislative Assembly Committees by doing a comparative study of the committees

formed in the Legislative Assemblies of different states of the country. This committee includes the Speakers of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly as well as Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Odisha Legislative Assemblies. The report prepared by the committee will be submitted to the Lok Sabha Speaker. The first meeting of the committee was held at the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly, where Rajasthan Speaker Vasudev Devnani made key suggestions to strengthen legislative committees. He emphasized selecting members not only by party but also based on merit and expertise. To boost attendance, he proposed allowing members to join meetings virtually. Devnani noted that committees of-



ten review outdated cases from four to five years ago. He recommended focusing on recent matters so their suggestions could be included in the same year's budget for better implementation. While virtual participation may raise attendance, he stressed the need to maintain confidentiality. Another important proposal was to hold discussions on committee reports in the House. This,

it was suggested, would improve MLA engagement, ensure accountability, and increase interest in committee work. Devnani's inputs aim to make legislative committees more effective, timely, and inclusive in their functioning.

CONCERN RAISED OVER DELAY IN RECEIVING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MLAs often face delays in

receiving answers to their questions, sometimes waiting months or even until the end of a session without a response. This issue was raised during a meeting of Assembly Speakers, where all expressed concern. It was unanimously agreed that if the administration is not held accountable, the effectiveness of legislative committees is compromised. To address this in Rajasthan, Speaker Vasudev Devnani held a meeting with the Chief Secretary and all Principal Secretaries. As a result, answers to questions from the last session were received on time. Currently, 17 committees are active in the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly. To enhance efficiency, some less active committees have been reorganized. For example, the Library Committee was merged with the Government As-

surance Committee, and the Ethics Committee was combined with the Petition Committee. These changes aim to ensure better integration and more effective functioning of legislative committees in the state.

COMMITTEES ARE A MINATURE FORM OF THE HOUSE

Committees are like smaller versions of the House. Their meetings help save House time, allowing more focus on important issues. The formation, duration, roles, and procedures of committees are guided by Assembly rules and directions from the Speaker. There are three types of rules for committees: general rules that apply to all, specific rules for particular committees, and internal working rules. The internal rules are created by each committee, approved by

the Speaker, and cover the detailed steps of how the committee functions.

TWO TYPES OF COMMITTEES IN RAJASTHAN

In the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly, there are permanent and ad hoc committees. Permanent committees are divided based on their functions—some oversee government finances and administration, some investigate or review matters, others handle daily Assembly work or member facilities. Only MLAs can be members of permanent committees; ministers are not included. However, ministers can chair select committees formed for specific bills. The writer is Deputy Director, Public Relations, Rajasthan Legislative Assembly.

Law meets algorithm: The rise of smart contracts



RITIKA GOSWAMI

As the world grows more digital, the notion that “code is law” has become more popular, and especially with blockchain technology and smart contracts gaining prominence. These are self-executing contracts coded to enforce terms upon the meeting of pre-defined conditions. No middlemen, no red tape—merely code and faith in the system. But the real question is: Can code ever supplant law, or does it rely on law to exist? **WHAT ARE SMART CONTRACTS?**

A smart contract is a piece of software running on a blockchain that executes automatically when some specified conditions are met. It's an “if-then” situation: If Party A transfers X, then Party B will pay Y. From property transactions to insurance payouts and decentralized finance (DeFi), smart contracts hold out the promise of transpar-

ency, speed, and lower costs. But here is the paradox: What if the code breaks, or the parties disagree about its result? **THE LEGAL GREY AREA** As opposed to regular contracts, smart contracts exist in a regulatory void in the majority of jurisdictions. India, for example, has not yet evolved a strong legal regime to regulate blockchain-based transactions. Although the Indian Contract Act, 1872 focuses on “free consent” and “intention to create legal relations,” smart contracts do not always neatly find a place under such doctrines. Besides, force majeure, human mistakes, and unexpected events are hard to code. A smart contract can't simply adjust, interpret doubt, or factor in fair results—something courts continually accomplish. Therefore, even though a smart contract can run perfectly, it may not always deliver justice. **ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES** One of the biggest challenge is “jurisdiction”. If we have two individuals from different nations entering into a smart contract on an international blockchain, in case of a dispute, which court has jurisdiction? And how

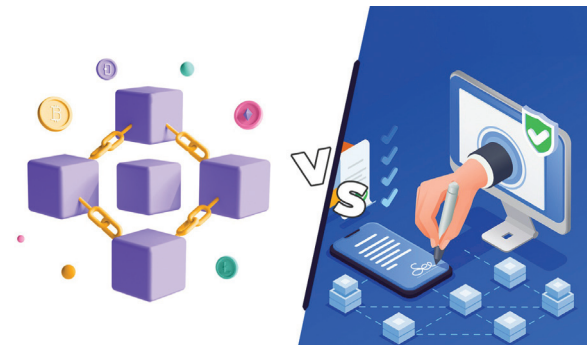
do we hold a Decentralized Autonomous Organization (DAO) responsible if there's no visible legal entity? And then there's the case of buggy code or malicious coding. If a loophole is exploited (as with The DAO hack in 2016, where more than \$60 million was drained), courts may not be willing to enforce the contract as valid—despite the fact that it worked precisely as coded.

formation Technology Act, 2000 includes recognition of digital contracts and electronic records, but not yet the autonomous, decentralized aspect of smart contracts. The lack of clear regulation leaves uncertainty—both for consumers and innovators. There is a delicate balance to be maintained: regulating without stifling innovation. Overregulation could choke a promising technology;

a substitute for law, but a complement to it. Human discretion, juridical control, and statutory rules continue to play a vital part. Legal thinkers propose the concept of “Ricardian Contracts”—a hybrid of smart contracts and traditional text-based agreements—which can be machine-readable as well as legally enforceable. Furthermore, the future of conflict resolution could be in Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) with blockchain, providing quicker arbitration without sacrificing fairness. **FINAL THOUGHTS** Smart contracts have revolutionary potential, but law is more than lines of code. Law is a reflection of human values, context, and justice—all the things that cannot be programmed in their entirety. Code can enforce but not interpret. Eventually, we need to transition from “Code is Law” to “Code and Law,” combining the efficiency of automation with the justice of legal thinking.

As India weighs its stance on blockchain and digital contracts, it will need to be on its toes to create legislation that acknowledges the power of code—nevertheless, never forgetting human justice's place at the top.

Smart Contract Advantages



REGULATION VS INNOVATION

Countries such as the UK and Singapore have moved towards recognizing smart contracts in current legal systems. In India, the In-

formation Technology Act, 2000 includes recognition of digital contracts and electronic records, but not yet the autonomous, decentralized aspect of smart contracts. The lack of clear regulation leaves uncertainty—both for consumers and innovators. There is a delicate balance to be maintained: regulating without stifling innovation. Overregulation could choke a promising technology;

Dr. Bhupat Dudi: A strong voice of folk and experiment in contemporary art



DR. KAMLESH SHARMA

Bhupat Dudi, a resident of Jodhpur, Rajasthan, is one of those representative artists of contemporary Indian art, who has linked his creative journey with folk consciousness, environmental awareness and global art dialogue. His art-culture is not limited to color and brush, but it also deeply explores society, environment and human sensibilities.

Educational and artistic background

Bhupat Dudi completed his B.A. (Fine Art) from JNV University, Jodhpur in the year 2000 and M.A. (Fine Art) from MLSU, Udaipur in 2002. In the year 2024, he is pursuing his Ph.D. from JNV University, Jodhpur. As a dedicated artist, he has constantly connected academic studies and practical art-experiment.

Wide canvas of exhibitions and art tours

His art journey has been enriched with major exhibitions and symposiums in the country and abroad. Participation in the Biennale “Geumgang Nature Art” in Korea in 2021 and the “Miniature Art Exhibition” in Bangladesh in 2020 underlines his global art dialogue. Participation in international art events in countries like Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Israel, France, Uzbekistan, Czech Republic etc. has given new heights to his creative vision.

He has participated in many group and solo exhibitions in cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Chennai, Hyderabad. His “Floral Reverie” series has been particularly popular, in which he reuses the fibers and pieces of discarded clothes and turns them into artistic structures. This process not only reflects environmental consciousness, but also pays artistic tribute to the invisible labor of women.

Awards and Honors

Bhupat Dudi has received

Senior Fellowship in 2025 and Junior Fellowship (2013/14) previously from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. He has also been awarded prestigious awards like All India Art Fair Award, Bombay Art Society Award, State Art Award, Bansilal Husain Scholarship etc. This is a proof of the diversity and quality of his art.

Residencies and Workshops

International residencies and workshops have played an important role in giving a strong base to

Artistic Statement: “Floral Reverie”

The core idea of Bhupat Doodi's art is to revive the possibility of beauty in discarded objects. He assimilates those pieces of cloth which were once associated with the labour of workers or housewives, in his paintings and creates a new story. This process creates a dialogue between memory, craftsmanship and imagination. In his words - “My aim is to revive these clothes, so that they can tell their silent history.” Bhupat Dudi is an artist

The core idea of Bhupat Doodi's art is to revive the possibility of beauty in discarded objects.



Dr. Bhupat Dudi

his art journey. The experience of living and working in Germany, Netherlands, Ahmedabad gives him a global perspective. He has conducted many workshops with youth and art students including institutions like WZWCC, NLKA, TAD, MLSU.

who not only paints on canvas but also brings to life social, ecological and cultural discourses through art. His work is not only inspiring for art lovers but is also a valuable legacy for generations to come.

The writer is Additional Director, Publicity Police Headquarters, Jaipur

“Minjar”: A powerful Rajasthani film released online

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

The much-anticipated Rajasthani film Minjar, directed by Neeraj Khandelwal, was released on the OTT Stage Rajasthani app on Friday. Khandelwal, who is known for his work on the film Mukawalo, has once again proven his creative prowess by handling the story, screenplay, editing, and direction of Minjar.

The film, which beautifully captures the essence of Rajasthan's culture and landscape, draws its name from the Khejri flower, symbolic of good weather and prosperity in the region. The story follows a retired soldier who returns to his village after many years, only to face unforeseen challenges that lead



him and his family into a deadly encounter. In the pursuit of revenge, the soldier becomes entangled in a series of tragic events, ultimately losing all his companions. However, the story concludes on a hopeful note, with a woman gaining free-

dom from the oppression she faced.

The music of Minjar was composed by Anil Dudi, with lyrics penned by Hanuman Singh Ratnu and Kami Rajput. The film also incorporates a traditional song, reimagined in a con-



temporary style, adding to its cultural depth. Rajasthani superstar Deepak Meena (Pannya Saipat) plays the lead role, with support from P.M. Dudi, Priya Rajput, Altaf Khan, Palak Saxena, Harshit Mathur, Rajesh Khanna, Rocky

Rashi Sharma, and Pintu Ranawat. The soundtrack features melodious vocals by Dilbar Hussain, Deepti Chittoria, Danish Sihol, Jaspreet Kaur, and Anil Dudi.

Despite facing multiple hurdles during its production, including limited resources and challenges in finding a platform for release, Minjar eventually found a home on Stage Rajasthani. After three years of waiting, Stage Rajasthani recognized the film's potential and agreed to showcase it as an original offering on its app, making it available to audiences across India. The release of Minjar marks a significant moment for regional cinema, reflecting both the rich culture of Rajasthan and the resilience of independent filmmakers like Neeraj Khandelwal.



WHY TRUMP THREATENS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST MURDOCH

Trump threatens to sue Rupert Murdoch, NewsCorp, and The Wall Street Journal over a false report linking him to Epstein.

In a significant escalation of tensions between former U.S. President Donald Trump and one of the most influential media empires in the world, Trump has threatened to sue media mogul Rupert Murdoch, his corporation NewsCorp, and the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) following a controversial report linking Trump to the disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein.

The dispute centers on a WSJ story published recently, which detailed an alleged leather-bound album compiled by investigators ahead of Epstein's first arrest in 2006. Among the materials was reportedly a birthday letter from Epstein's 50th birthday in 2003, said to be signed by several of Epstein's friends, including

Donald Trump. The letter was no ordinary birthday card—it allegedly featured a typewritten text of an imaginary, suggestive conversation between Trump and Epstein, inserted inside a crude drawing of a naked woman, with Trump's signature positioned in a provocative manner on the figure's pubic area.

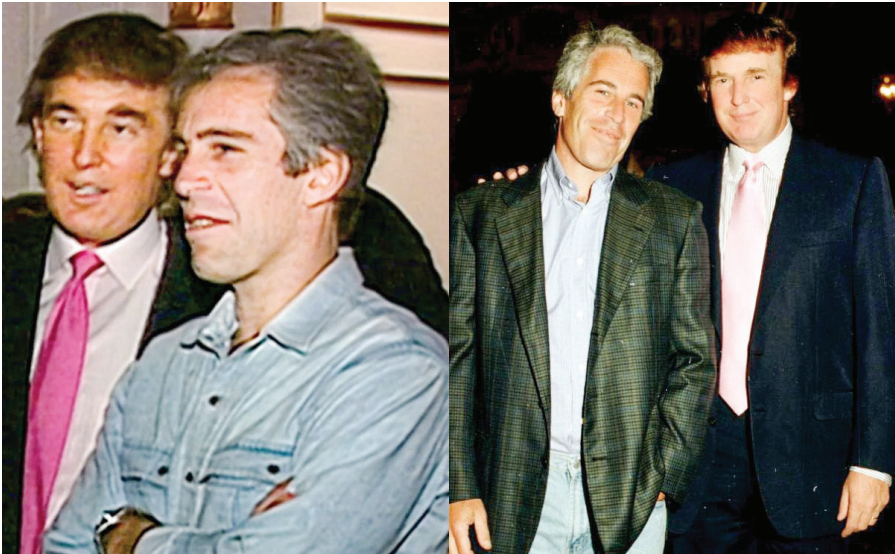
FAKE NEWS AND LEGAL THREATS

Donald Trump has publicly denounced the Wall Street Journal's reporting as "fake news" and accused the Murdoch-owned outlets of running a false and defamatory story. Trump took to his social media platform, Truth Social, where he wrote a direct warning that he had personally alerted Rupert Murdoch and the WSJ not to publish the story.

"The Wall Street Journal, and Rupert Murdoch, personally, were warned directly by President Donald J. Trump that the supposed letter they printed by President Trump to Epstein was a FAKE and, if they print it, they will be sued," Trump said.

Trump claimed that he had warned Murdoch himself, and that Murdoch had promised to "take care of it" but failed to prevent publication.

Further, Trump alleged that both he and his spokesperson, Karoline Leavitt, informed Emma Tucker, the WSJ Editor-in-Chief, that the letter and drawing were fake. Despite these warnings, the story went live, prompting Trump to



Donald Trump orders release of Epstein grand jury records, denies WSJ report on Epstein letter, calls case a Democrat scam. File Photo

say that the Journal was deliberately pursuing a "false, malicious, and defamatory story."

"I never wrote a picture in my life," Trump told the WSJ in an interview. "I don't draw pictures of women. It's not my language. It's not my word."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL REPORT

The Wall Street Journal report, published on a Thursday, revealed that the album was part of the extensive investigation into Epstein's conduct prior to his first arrest on sex trafficking charges in 2006. The album, compiled by investigators, was said to include various documents, photos, and letters relating to Epstein's social circle.

One notable item was the letter allegedly given to Epstein on his 50th birthday, reportedly signed by several acquaintances. The let-

ter contained a fabricated, typewritten dialogue between Trump and Epstein, inscribed within the outline of a naked woman drawn crudely in marker. The Journal's report implied that the signature was positioned on the woman's pubic hair, an insinuation that drew immediate outrage from Trump and his allies.

Trump firmly denied any authorship of the letter or the drawing. He challenged the authenticity of the piece and questioned the Journal's motives in publishing what he labeled a fabricated smear.

COMPLICATED AND SHIFTING RELATIONSHIP

The conflict between Trump and Murdoch is not new but rather the latest episode in a complicated, long-standing relationship between the former president and the media titan.

Rupert Murdoch, the 93-year-old chairman emeritus of NewsCorp, owns a sprawling global media empire that includes the Wall Street Journal, Fox News, The Times (UK), and many others. His son Lachlan Murdoch runs daily operations.

Murdoch's outlets played a key role in Trump's rise to the presidency in 2016. Fox News, in particular, was instrumental in boosting Trump's profile among conservative audiences. Murdoch and Trump initially enjoyed a cordial and mutually beneficial relationship.

However, over time, the relationship frayed, especially after the contentious 2020 U.S. presidential election. Following the January 6 Capitol attack, Murdoch's media companies began to distance themselves from Trump. Internal emails later revealed in court cases showed Murdoch allegedly

directing Fox News to "make Trump a non-person," signaling a strategic shift in editorial tone away from the former president.

Despite these tensions, as Trump regained influence within the Republican Party, Murdoch's media outlets appeared to cautiously re-engage with him. For example, Lachlan Murdoch was recently seen alongside Trump at the FIFA Club World Cup final at MetLife Stadium, sparking speculation about the nature of their ongoing relationship.

Trump himself has alternated between praise and criticism of Murdoch. In a February visit to the Oval Office, Trump publicly described Murdoch as "an amazing guy" and "in a class by himself." Yet, at other times, Trump has expressed frustration with what he perceives as unfavorable coverage by Murdoch-owned media.

WHAT THIS LEGAL THREAT COULD MEAN

Trump's threat to sue Murdoch, NewsCorp, and the Wall Street Journal is likely to set off a legal and media firestorm. Defamation lawsuits against major media companies are noto-

To win a defamation case, Trump would need to prove that the WSJ knowingly published false information with "actual malice"—meaning they were aware the information was false or recklessly disregarded the truth.

Given that the WSJ's story was based on allegedly authentic investigation materials and included Trump's own statements denying the letter's authenticity, the legal battle will likely hinge on whether the Journal adequately vetted the documents or knowingly published falsehoods.

Rupert Murdoch's media companies have historically faced lawsuits and challenges but often stand firm on their editorial decisions, backed by thorough legal review teams.

BROADER IMPLICATIONS

This controversy taps into a larger narrative surrounding Jeffrey Epstein, whose extensive network and criminal activities have implicated many powerful figures. Reports linking Trump to Epstein inevitably stir public interest and political implications.

The case also highlights

It also exposes tensions within Murdoch's media empire, balancing journalistic integrity and political influence with commercial interests. Murdoch's empire straddles partisan lines, with Fox News appealing to Trump's base, while the Wall Street Journal editorial and news departments sometimes offer more critical coverage.

From Allies to Adversaries
The relationship between Trump and Rupert Murdoch has been described as "complicated" and "at times contradictory." Initially, Murdoch and his media outlets embraced Trump's candidacy, seeing an opportunity to capitalize on a new political phenomenon.

Fox News was a key platform for Trump's messaging, and Murdoch himself was viewed as an influential backer.

However, as Trump's presidency progressed, Murdoch's outlets began to critique Trump's policies and conduct more openly. By 2020, with the election and its aftermath, the divide deepened. The January 6 Capitol riot marked a critical turning point, with Murdoch signaling through internal communications that distancing from Trump was necessary.

Yet, the Murdoch empire's commercial interests remain entangled with Trump's political influence. Murdoch's media companies continue to court Trump's base, balancing critical reporting with favorable coverage.

● TDG NETWORK



riously difficult, as U.S. law provides robust protections for the press, especially regarding public figures like Trump.

the fraught relationship between Trump and the media—especially conservative outlets once loyal to him, but now increasingly critical.

From invasion to exposure: Britain's costly Afghan misadventure

As Britain grapples with the fallout from the leak of 19,000 Afghan collaborators' names—exposing them to deadly risk—the finger-pointing has begun in earnest. Yet, the real fiasco did not begin with this leak. It began with a far graver mistake: the invasion of Afghanistan itself.

Calls for a public inquiry into the leaked list are likely to emerge, probably a grand, judge-led spectacle stretching over years, a familiar political ritual that ultimately kicks embarrassing questions into the long grass. But such inquiries rarely assign blame to those truly responsible, and one can bet that former Prime Minister Tony Blair—the architect of Britain's Afghan adventure—will emerge unscathed.

The Unnecessary War
In hindsight, the British invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was avoidable. After the September 11 attacks, the U.S. sought retribution against the Kabul regime for harboring al-Qaida. But America could have responded with a swift, devastating strike on the regime's leaders—a blow like the one Donald Trump recently delivered to Iran—without the decades-long military occupation that followed.

The invocation of Article 5 of the NATO treaty, which considers an attack on one member an attack on all, was stretched to justify Britain's entry into a conflict that posed no direct threat to either the U.S. or the UK. Most NATO allies begrudgingly offered minimal non-com-



British troops board the last helicopter to leave Camp Bastion, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, as UK forces withdraw, 27 October 2014. File photo

bat support.

Once the Taliban fled Kabul, military prudence dictated a rapid withdrawal. Indeed, the U.S. military command itself opposed the invasion. Yet, Tony Blair pushed aggressively for "nation-building," ignoring widespread skepticism within the U.S. government. He was eager for Britain to assert its influence on the global stage.

Blair had long championed a doctrine of "altruistic intervention"—a call for more wars justified by lofty ideals. His 1999 Chicago speech and subsequent actions—including ordering British submarines to launch the first missiles at Kabul in 2001—underscored his determination to not "walk away from Afghanistan." Blair proclaimed at the Labour conference, "There is only one outcome: our victory not theirs."

OCCUPATION AND ITS AFTERMATH

The full-scale British occupation, culminating in a failed 2006 effort to crush the Taliban in Helmand Province, cemented a costly and protracted conflict. Tens of thousands of Afghans ended up working for British forces or allied powers, believing that Britain would protect them against Taliban reprisals.

When the names of nearly 19,000 collaborators were leaked, the threat to these individuals was immediate and grave. The Ministry of Defence, alerted to an anonymous Facebook user threatening to release the database, tried to contain the fallout. Defence Secretary Ben Wallace sought secrecy to protect lives, and a judge initially agreed, but public pressure made secrecy untenable.

The financial cost of safeguarding those named is staggering—not millions, but billions of pounds—yet this pales beside the broader cost of the war itself.

POLITICAL AVOIDANCE AND PARTISAN GAMES

Blaming the leak alone misses the point. The primary fault lies in the decision to invade and then withdraw so disastrously. Parliamentary efforts to make the leak a partisan issue are "pitiful," as Jenkins puts it.

Neither the cabinet nor Parliament challenged Blair's invasion decision in 2001; in fact, nine years into the conflict, Parliament overwhelmingly supported Britain's continued presence. Likewise, it sanctioned the 2003 invasion of Iraq, another catastrophic intervention.

● TDG NETWORK

Has China beaten US's tariffs threat amid trade war and its GDP growth?

On July 15, China's National Bureau of Statistics released its latest GDP growth figures for the first half of 2025, including the April-June quarter. China's economy grew 5.4% year-on-year in the first quarter and 5.2% in the second, surpassing most analysts' expectations. These figures cover a period marked by significant upheaval in global trade due to the tariffs imposed by former U.S. President Donald Trump.

To understand what these numbers mean for China's economy, The Indian Express spoke with Lizzi C. Lee, Fellow at the Center for China Analysis, Asia Society Policy Institute in Washington D.C., who offers valuable context and insight.

CHINA'S ECONOMY AND TRUMP'S TARIFFS

Not completely, but China has proven more resilient than many had anticipated. The reported 5.2% GDP growth and strong trade numbers reflect a combination of factors: front-loading exports before tariffs kicked in, adaptive supply chains, and targeted policy support by the Chinese government. However, this growth does not equate to a clean bill of health.

Many of the tariff impacts have been delayed. Businesses stockpiled goods, renegotiated supplier contracts, and benefited from a temporary truce reached between U.S. and Chinese officials in Geneva in May 2025. This 90-day tariff pause, set to expire on August 12, provided breathing room but is more of a temporary reprieve than a final victory for China.

The real test will come once these inventories run out and trade tensions potentially resume.

CHINESE DOMESTIC DEMAND

Domestic demand remains the Achilles' heel of the Chinese economy. While external demand remains strong, internal consumption and momentum are sluggish.

Imports grew modestly, and retail sales softened, revealing consumer caution amid deflationary pressures—a decline in the overall price level. Property values have declined following a housing crisis, and widespread job insecurity continues to dampen household confidence.

These issues long predate

consumer confidence failed to keep pace with economic expansion.

Even before the pandemic, China's growth was slowing, entering what economists call a "growth recession"—continued expansion but at a weaker, less healthy rate with low prices and tentative hiring.

Moreover, uncertainty about the future and inadequate social safety nets led households to save even more, intensifying deflationary pressures and job worries. The pandemic and trade tensions exposed and worsened these underlying imbalances.

Chinese policymakers themselves acknowledge this problem: their recent GDP press release noted



A passenger airliner flies past the clouds near a residential building in Beijing China, on July 13, 2025. File Photo

China's strict Covid-19 lockdowns or the tariffs. They are rooted in structural economic choices made decades ago.

For years, China's economic model prioritized growth through high investment, particularly in infrastructure, over household consumption. To sustain this, wages and household incomes were kept relatively low, resulting in high savings but limited consumer spending power.

While initially effective, this strategy eventually led to overcapacity and thinning business margins. Household incomes and

that "effective demand is insufficient." Without stronger consumer confidence and rising incomes, the recovery risks becoming overly dependent on exports, leaving the economy fragile domestically.

SHIFTING CHINA'S ECONOMIC MODEL

China's export-driven growth strategy has powered its economy for decades but has also created vulnerabilities.

The renewed round of U.S. tariffs and growing threats against other trading partners highlight the geopolitical risks of heavy reliance on

exports.

Domestically, Chinese firms face intense competition, leading to "involution"—a cycle of relentless price-cutting that erodes profits, stifles investment, suppresses wages, and limits domestic demand.

At the same time, China has diversified its trade relationships. The European Union and ASEAN have become more significant trading partners, partially offsetting the U.S. impact. Exports to these regions have grown rapidly in some sectors, but neither matches the scale or strategic importance of the U.S. market.

Moreover, the EU is increasingly wary of Chinese industrial overcapacity and unfair competition linked to state subsidies, especially in green technology and electric vehicles. ASEAN's demand is growing but remains uneven and price-sensitive.

Many countries are also pushing back against what they perceive as cheap Chinese exports flooding their markets, raising the risk of more trade barriers and reputational damage.

In response, China aims to move up the value chain—focusing on higher-quality goods and innovation rather than competing solely on low prices.

However, this shift is difficult and painful. Reducing excess capacity and ending price wars will slow growth in some sectors, raise prices for certain products, and force weaker firms out of the market, causing job losses.

While necessary for long-term sustainability, these reforms carry significant short-term costs.

● TDG NETWORK

EU, UK SANCTION RUSSIA: MOSCOW'S ENERGY REVENUE, SPIES TARGETED

The sanctions target Russia’s energy sector, spies, and military intelligence amid Ukraine conflict.

AGENCIES
BRUSSELS

The European Union and Britain on Friday ramped up pressure on Russia over its war on Ukraine, targeting Moscow's energy sector, shadow fleet of aging oil tankers and military intelligence service with new sanctions.

“The message is clear: Europe will not back down in its support for Ukraine. The EU will keep raising the pressure until Russia ends its war,” EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said after the bloc agreed its new measures, including a new oil price cap.

Kallas said it’s “one of its strongest sanctions packages against Russia to date” linked to the war, now in its fourth year. It comes as European countries start to buy US weapons for Ukraine to help the country better defend itself.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcomed the new measures, describing them as a “timely and necessary” step amid in-

WAR PRESSURE

- EU sets oil price cap below \$48 to cut Russia’s energy revenue.
- New import ban closes loopholes in Russian crude exports.
- Nord Stream pipelines and Rosneft refinery targeted to block Russian income.
- UK sanctions Russian military intelligence (GRU) and officers linked to attacks.
- NATO condemns Russian cyber-attacks, pledges coordinated response.
- Ukraine supports sanctions and plans aligned countermeasures.

tensified Russian attacks. “All infrastructure of Russia’s war must be blocked,” Zelenskyy said, adding that Ukraine will synchronize its sanctions with the EU and introduce its own additional measures soon.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov brushed off the EU move, saying that “we consider such unilateral restrictions unlawful”.

“At the same time, we have acquired certain immunity from sanctions. We have adapted to living under sanc-

tions,” Peskov said in a conference call with reporters. “We will need to analyse the new package in order to minimise negative consequences from it.”

THE UK HAS RUSSIA'S SPIES IN ITS SIGHTS

The UK, meanwhile, imposed sanctions on units of Russia's military intelligence service, GRU. Also added to the list were 18 officers the UK said helped to plan a bomb attack on a theatre in southern Ukraine in 2022 and to target

the family of a former Russian spy who was later poisoned with a nerve agent.

Hundreds of civilians sheltering in the theatre in Mariupol were killed in March 2022, shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine. “GRU spies are running a campaign to destabilise Europe, undermine Ukraine's sovereignty and threaten the safety of British citizens,” UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy said.

NATO also condemned Russia's cyberattacks, saying in a statement that “we will

respond to these at a time and in a manner of our choosing, in accordance with international law, and in coordination with our international partners including the EU”.

TARGETING RUSSIAN ENERGY INTERESTS

The European Commission, the EU's executive branch, had proposed to lower the oil price cap from \$60 to \$45, which is lower than the market price, to target Russia's vast energy revenues. The 27 member countries decided to set the price per barrel at just under \$48. The EU had hoped to get major international powers in the Group of Seven countries involved in the price cap to broaden the impact, but the Trump administration could not be brought onboard. Oil income is the linchpin of Russia's economy, allowing President Vladimir Putin to pour money into the armed forces without worsening inflation for everyday people and avoiding a currency collapse.

SpaceX lauds B'desh for Starlink launch support

AGENCIES
DHAKA

The Vice President of SpaceX, Lauren Dreyer, commended the coordinated efforts of government officials in Bangladesh for supporting the effective launching of Starlink in the country.

She made the remarks during a meeting with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna on Friday.

“We operate in 150 countries and territories. We have never seen such efficiency and decisiveness. On behalf of all my colleagues at SpaceX, I extend our appreciation to you. We look forward to working closely with your team,” she said.

The Chief Adviser thanked the Vice President for visiting Bangladesh. “It's a lovely time of year here, the monsoon season. Greenery and water everywhere. At the same time, we face challenges of flooding and waterlogging, which highlight the need for dependable technology to maintain connectivity.”

“There is also a pressing need for improved connectivity in the remote areas of our hill tracts. These re-



gions lack proper schools, teachers, and doctors. We have set a target to introduce online education in 100 schools, which will benefit students in isolated areas,” he said.

Emphasizing inclusive healthcare, the Chief Adviser said, “We are prioritizing digital healthcare so that people in remote areas can consult doctors online. Their medical histories will be stored digitally, making future consultations easier.”

“This is particularly important during pregnancy, a time when women often need male assistance to visit a doctor. With digital services, they can consult doctors from home,” he said.

“Bangladeshi expatriates will also benefit from digital health services. Many hesitate to consult doctors abroad due to language barriers. With this system, they

will be able to consult Bangladeshi doctors from overseas. We are implementing small initiatives here, but you can take these projects global,” he said.

Lauren Dreyer expressed her appreciation for Professor Yunus's insights. “The example you are setting here can be shared with other leaders. If Professor Yunus can do it in his country, then others can as well,” she said. She also commended Professor Yunus's efforts in combating corruption. “Your initiatives to ensure that public services reach the people are highly commendable. A significant part of my work involves traveling around the world. I understand how serious an issue corruption can be. Using technology to decentralize services and improve governance is a meaningful vision,” she said.

‘Will visit India at appropriate time’, says Nepal PM Oli

AGENCIES
KATHMANDU

Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has said that he will be visiting India and that ground work is underway on both sides for the visit. He, however, did not specify any time.

Oli's comment about his visit to India comes amid speculations by some sections of local media that he didn't receive any invitation from India for an official visit, indicating that his relations with India became sour.

“I will probably embark on a visit to India. My visit to India will take place after the two sides do necessary ground works,” Oli said in an interview to a Nepalese Youtube channel Dishanirdesh TV late on Thursday.

It was in July last year that Oli, the chairperson of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) - popular as the CPN-UML - assumed the office of Prime Minister for the fourth time.

He had chosen to visit China for his maiden foreign



visit, breaking the tradition of visiting India as the first destination after assuming the post of prime minister.

Oli also revealed that he had extended an invitation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Nepal. “Prime Minister Modi will probably visit Nepal towards November,” he said adding, “I have already sent the invitation to him.”

“My India visit will take place at an appropriate time,” he added.

Modi and Oli met on the sidelines of the 6th BIM-STECS Summit in Bangkok on April 4.

Oli also dismissed rumours that India doesn't like him. “India did nothing bad when I became the Prime

Minister,” he said.

In a different context, Oli pointed out, “We have very good relations with both India and China.”

“India and China both are rising economic powers and it is good that our neighbours are moving in the path of development,” he said, adding, Nepal may benefit from the spill over effect of their development.

“They (India and China) should focus attention on their development, but it is not good to be involved in cut-throat competition,” Oli advised.

“There should be healthy competition between them. They should choose the path of cordial relations, but not a path that bears tension.”

Netanyahu regrets Gaza Church hit

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had admitted that Tel Aviv had made a “mistake” by striking the sole Catholic Church in Gaza during a call with US President Donald Trump, the White House stated.

During a press briefing on Friday (local time), White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt stated that Trump held a phone call with Netanyahu to address the strike, noting that there was “not a positive reaction” from the US President.

“It was not a positive reaction. He called Prime Minister Netanyahu this morning to address the strikes on that church in Gaza. And I understand that the Prime Minister agreed to issue a statement. It was a mistake by the Israelis to hit that Catholic church. That's what the Prime Minister relayed to the President. You should look at the Prime Minister's statement,” Leavitt stated during the briefing.

Following the attack and, in some way, pressure from Trump, Israel expressed



3 Hamas commanders eliminated by IDF

Tel Aviv : The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) attacked and killed on July 10, 2025 the terrorist Iyad Netzer, who served as deputy commander of the Jabalia Battalion in the Hamas terrorist organization in Gaza.

The terrorist raided Israel in the murderous massacre on October 7, was wounded during the war and then returned to his post in the Jabalia Battalion, said the IDF. Throughout the war, he took part in terrorist activities against IDF forces operating in the area, including in recent weeks when he

directed various terrorist attacks against the IDF's 162nd “Steel” Division's forces operating in the area. Along with Netzer, two other terrorists who invaded the country and took part in the massacre on October 7 were eliminated:

Hassan Mahmoud Muhammad Marri - Commander of the Central Jabalia Company in the Hamas terrorist organization. Muhammad Zaki Shamada Hamad - Deputy Company Commander in the Beit Hanoun Battalion of the Hamas terrorist organization.

deep “regret” about the attack, blaming it on a “stray”

ammunition that hit the Holy Family Church in the

conflict-ridden Gaza, which was already under severe Israeli military operations.

“Israel deeply regrets that a stray ammunition hit Gaza's Holy Family Church. Every innocent life lost is a tragedy. We share the grief of the families and the faithful,” the statement from the Israeli Prime Minister's Office read.

“We are grateful to Pope Leo for his words of comfort. Israel is investigating the incident and remains committed to protecting civilians and holy sites,” it added.

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) also addressed the issue, noting that early findings showed fragments from a shell fired during military operations in the area may have hit the church by “mistake”.

“An initial inquiry into reports regarding injured individuals in the Holy Family Church in Gaza City suggests that fragments from a shell fired during operational activity in the area hit the church mistakenly. The cause of the incident is under review,” the IDF stated in a statement posted on X.

Epstein case: Trump asks for release of grand jury documents

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration will ask a court to allow the release of grand jury testimony in the case of deceased convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, after some of his supporters reacted in fury to a report concluding there was no evidence to support long-running theories about his case.

“Based on the ridiculous amount of publicity given to Jeffrey Epstein, I have asked Attorney General Pam Bondi to produce any and all pertinent Grand Jury testimony, subject to Court approval. This SCAM, perpetuated by the Democrats, should end, right now!” Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

Shortly after Trump's statement, Bondi said on X that the Justice Department was ready to ask the court on Friday to unseal the grand jury transcripts.

INDIA'S EAM VISITS CHINA; ISRAEL ALLEGES UN'S GAZA WAR COMMISSION DISCRIMINATORY

In line with India's commitment to enhancing both bilateral and multilateral relations, Dr. S. Jaishankar, the Indian Minister of External Affairs, made his first visit to China in six years this week, aiming to strengthen the relationship between the two neighbouring countries. This visit marks the first time the EAM has travelled to China since the deterioration of relations following the tragic military confrontation in Galwan in 2020. Jaishankar's official trip to China is primarily to participate in the SCO Foreign Ministers Meeting. This week, he engaged in discussions with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, emphasizing the importance of adopting a visionary approach to bilateral relations and fostering a stable and constructive partnership to ensure

regional and global peace and security.

He also met with Chinese Vice President Han Zheng in Beijing, where he acknowledged the enhancement of bilateral relations between the two nations who are involved in territorial dispute since years. Jaishankar conveyed his optimism that the discussions held during his visit will help both the nations to maintain a positive trend in their bilateral relationship. He reiterated India's backing for China's presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). While having discussions with Wang Yi, he clearly mentioned that there should not be any involvement of a third party (referring to Pakistan) and that there should be no emphasis on the interests of this third party in the devel-

WORLD RECAP

ANSHU JOSHI

oping bilateral relationship between India and China, particularly following the PLA's transgression across the line of actual control in East Ladakh in 2020.

Jaishankar's visit follows the trips undertaken by Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, who travelled to China in June for the SCO meetings. It is important to remember that the Indian Defence Minister refused to sign the biased joint document issued after the meeting, citing very valid reasons. His action clearly demonstrates India's commitment to a zero-tolerance

policy towards terrorism and states that sponsor it. Before the SCO meeting, Jaishankar also brought up the issue of terrorism, reminding Wang that the primary mandate of the grouping is to combat terrorism, separatism, and extremism. He mentioned this is a shared concern, and India hopes that a firm stance of zero tolerance for terrorism will be upheld.

He also conveyed his apprehension regarding the trade relations between the two nations. Referring to China's export limitations, Jaishankar remarked that such trade obstacles could affect India's domestic

manufacturing. “As neighbouring nations and significant economies in the world today, there are numerous aspects and dimensions of our relationship. Initiatives aimed at normalizing our people-to-people interactions can undoubtedly promote mutually advantageous cooperation. In this context, it is also crucial to avoid restrictive trade measures and barriers,” he stated.

Jaishankar emphasized the importance of enhanced connectivity and exchanges, with both parties agreeing to recommence direct air services and the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, as well as to collaborate on trans-border rivers by sharing pertinent data. This visit occurs against the backdrop of the resolution of the protracted military standoff in eastern Ladakh, which

was concluded in October 2023 with disengagement at Depsang and Demchok. The thaw in relations facilitated the Modi-Xi meeting in Kazan and the revival of high-level dialogue, with Indian PM anticipated to visit China once more in September for the SCO Summit. Although there remain contentious aspects concerning the China-Pakistan partnership, Taiwan, Tibet, and other issues, this visit appears to be creating an opportunity for dialogue, if not for concrete solutions.

The meeting reflects India's approach of engaging in cooperation amid the turf of competition with China. It has long been understood that both the nations need not have to reach consensus or collaborate on every matter. However, as the Indian EAM highlighted during

this visit, both countries can and ought to focus on addressing the territorial disputes and fostering initiatives to uphold peace and security.

While India is striving to maintain peace and security at both the regional and global levels, the Israel-Hamas conflict has witnessed another escalation this week.

This week, Israel has urged the UN to dissolve the Gaza War Commission, citing claims of “institutional discrimination.” Since the onset of the war, which was triggered by Hamas's lethal assaults on southern Israel on October 7, 2023, the commission has consistently condemned Israel's military operations in Gaza. Established in May 2021 during a prior wave of hostilities between Israel and Hamas, the commis-

sion is authorized to gather and preserve evidence that may be utilized in international legal proceedings, including those at the International Criminal Court. Israel has consistently claimed the Commission being bias and double standard.

This week, Israel has officially called upon the UN Human Rights Council to dissolve the commission.

As the world observes the war unfolding new episodes of violence daily, the nations involved must recognize that they alone will endure the consequences of the conflict. Wars can be resolved through dialogue rather than through further escalations. When the leaders will come to this understanding remains a critical question!

The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU

THE 'DESI GIRL' TURNS 43

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

'Desi Girl' Priyanka Chopra Jonas just turned 43, and she marked the day in the most adorable way, surrounded by her loved ones. The 'Barfi' actress took to Instagram to share a glimpse into her birthday celebration, which included a relaxing beachside vacation with her husband, Nick Jonas, their daughter, Malti Marie, and close family and friends.

Her birthday post included a video montage of the special moments from her getaway. The clip features Priyanka smiling in a bright yellow bikini, enjoying cuddles with Nick, and creating memories with baby Malti. From playing in the sea to petting animals, the video



captures happy and peaceful family moments.

Along with the beautiful

visuals, Priyanka shared a heartfelt message for her fans that read, "As I

prepare to go into another year around the sun, on my birthday eve, all I can be is grateful. I feel so protected by the universe and so thankful for all the gifts that have been provided to me. My family is my greatest gift, and all of my incredible well-wishers around the world. Thank you. So, with immense gratitude, I go into 43, baby!"

Take a look at her post Soon after she dropped the post, fans and friends flooded the comments with love, sending birthday wishes and admiring the family moments she shared.

Preity Zinta wrote, "Happy Birthday, my darling PC... Loads of love and happiness to you guys always."

"Happy birthday, Queen Priyanka @priyankachopra. There is no one like you. We all love you forever."

Ravie Dubey shares 'Ramayana' BTS photo

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Ravie Dubey, who will be seen in Nitesh Tiwari's upcoming magnum opus 'Ramayana,' has shared a Behind-The-Scenes photograph with co-star Ranbir Kapoor.

The actor took to his Instagram handle and shared a shoot day of himself with Ranbir and Tiwari.

"In the company of legends," Dubey wrote in the caption, further dedicating a Sanskrit quote to Lord Ram.

In the photograph, Ravie could be seen dressed casually in white T-shirt, denim jacket, and black trousers, while Ranbir Kapoor ap-



pears in a simple black outfit. The actor's clean-shaven look has garnered attention from fans.

The post quickly went viral, drawing reactions

from many, including Ravie's friends who appeared excited to watch him on the big screen. Nitesh Tiwari also reacted with heart emojis.

Earlier this month, the introduction video of the film 'Ramayana' was unveiled, giving an insight into the "immortal story of Rama vs Ravana."



Bollywood actors Ajay Devgn and Mrunal Thakur pose for a picture during the promotion of their upcoming Hindi-language film 'Son of Sardaar 2', in Mumbai on Wednesday. (ANI Photo)

Sidharth, Kiara exit hospital with daughter

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Bollywood power couple Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani, who earlier this week announced the birth of their baby girl stepped out with their daughter for the first time on Friday.

After Kiara got discharged from hospital, the couple headed to the actress's mother's residence to seek blessings for the little one.

Visuals showed Kiara and Sidharth's car entering the building where her mother lives in Mumbai. The couple have however, managed to keep things out of media attention.

Earlier on Thursday, the couple issued a joint statement, urging the media to respect their privacy.

"We're so grateful for all the love and wishes; our hearts are truly full. As we take our first steps into this new journey of parenthood, we hope to enjoy it intimately as a family. It would

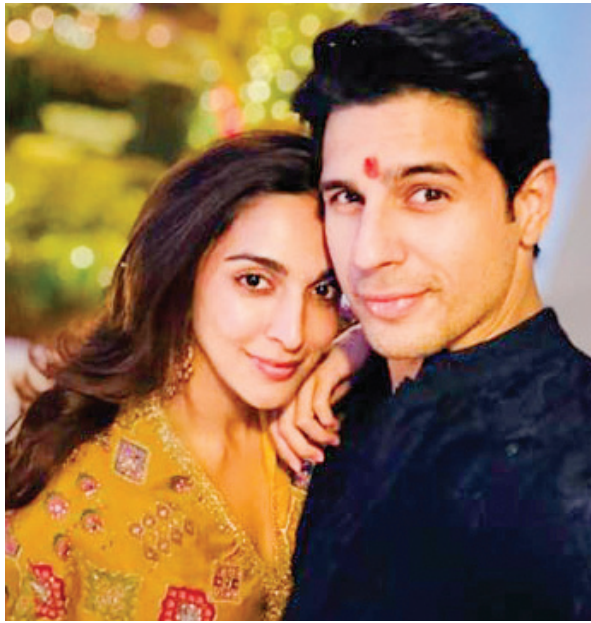
mean a lot to us if this special time could stay private," the statement read.

Kiara and Sidharth specifically highlighted a "No Photos, Only Blessings" request. The couple even distributed sweets among the media personnel assembled outside the hospital.

On Wednesday, the couple announced the news of

their daughter's arrival. The newbie parents wrote, "Our hearts are full and our world forever changed. We are blessed with a Baby Girl." The news sparked a wave of joy among their fans and friends alike.

Several industry people extended their heartfelt wishes for the couple and their daughter.



BRAIN PICKING



I like to be talked about for the films I am doing rather than the clothes I wear, and it's okay to be different, it's okay to show your authenticity.

—SONAKSHI SINHA

(Indian Actress)

'Metro...In Dino' team celebrate film success

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The success party of 'Metro...In Dino,' which stars actors Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan, was held in Mumbai on Thursday evening.

The event, hosted by director Anurag Basu's production house along with T-Series, celebrated the film's box office performance.

The evening saw many cast and crew members come together to mark the film's success.

Actors including Aditya Roy Kapur, Ali Fazal, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Konkona Sen Sharma, and Pankaj Tripathi attended the celebration.

Filmmakers and producers Bhushan Kumar, Shiv Chanana, music composer Pritam, director Anurag Basu, and distributor Anil Thadani were also present.



Netflix announces new dating reality shows

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

The streaming giant Netflix announced a set of new reality TV series on Thursday starring big names in an unscripted world, reported Variety.

Among the new series is "Age of Attraction," which will follow a group of singles ages 22 to 59 as they date each other.

Hosted by 44-year-old 'Bachelor' alum Nick Viall and his wife, 25-year-old



Natalie Joy, the series aims to "see if age is just a number. Or will the years come between them?" as quoted by Variety.

Harry Jowsey, who previously appeared in Netflix's 'Too Hot to Handle' and 'Perfect Match,' is looking

for a wife via 'Let's Marry Harry.'

Over the course of the series, his friends will help him narrow down a large pool of potential matches in hopes of finding someone to marry, reported Variety.

Among those friends will be 'Call Her Daddy' host Alex Cooper, who produces his podcast 'Boyfriend Material.'

An open casting call for 'Let's Marry Harry' is underway.

REVIEW: SMURFS *****

SMURFS



PRAVEEN NAGDA

Kids won't forget the little blue creatures living in the mushroom village and dealing with evil forces in this American fantasy franchise. 'Smurfs', the 2025 movie, builds on the legacy of earlier editions with

a touch of contemporary technological terms, lifestyle, and jargon, aiming to connect with young ones and young adults equally well.

Smurfs are taking head on the Intergalactic Evil Wizard Alliance, which wants to take control of the Universe by destroying goodness. In the film, the Smurfs are primarily fighting with the evil brothers Razamel and Gargamel (voice of JP Karliak), who capture Papa Smurf (v/o John Goodman), and Smurfette (v/o Rihanna) is on a rescue mission with No Name (v/o James Corden).

The rescue mission is as adventurous as it is comical and musical, full of songs and dance sequences of the Smurfs. Little blue humanoids not just entertain via music, dance, and a unique style of running around, but also deliver insights into the good, bad, pure, evil, community, individuality, and cooperation with each other. They don't mind forging temporary alliances with one evil force to take on the other larger evil.

Animation is vivid and immersive, with beautiful imaginary worlds of the Smurfs and the human beings. Colours are good, surroundings are super, effects are engaging, visuals are vibrant in this musical comedy, taking you through a journey into multiple dimensions.

No Name and Smurfette, being the main characters driving the rescue missions, also end up teaching you to believe in yourself. No Name is trying to find the thing in him, and he experiences the bubbles of light in his hands that are capable of opening the portals of the Universe. These are powerful blasts of energy that are capable of moving things and transporting the Smurfs in the realms beyond their little mushroom village. While demonstrating this power to the Papa Smurf, No Name alerts Razamel, who captures Papa Smurf.

While being captured, Papa Smurf leaves a clue to find Ken (v/o Nick Offerman), and the Smurfs, including No Name and Smurfette, are on the

job to storm Razamel's fort. However, Razamel's defence system directs them all to the intergalactic transfer station to get lost, but they end up finding new friends, only to make their fight stronger.

Eventually, Razamel is packed back into oblivion by Smurfs – the Guardians of Goodness, but in the process, they give you a lot of thrill. You have roller coasters – floral and wooden spread across the universe, fast car rides where the car runs on the fuel of fear – it runs faster if you fear more, along with the visual depictions of the universe and travel across dimensions to keep you immersed.

One of the most beautiful parts of the film is its songs – Ri-

hanna's 'friend of mine' and Ty-la's 'everything goes with blue', along with the DESI TRILL feat by DJ Khaled, Cardi B, Natania & Subhi - Higher Love will keep you in a musical mood through the film.

Rihanna has produced this film along with Jay Brown, Ryan Harris, and Tyran Smith, which is written by Pam Brady and is based on the Belgian comic series by Peyo. For children, Smurfs will be a good weekend watch, and for the adults, having a child in them, it will be a musical melody.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals



UNSEEN, UNHEARD, UNCHEERED BUT UNSTOPPABLE: THE STORY OF INDIA'S SPORTSWOMEN

She wins medals. She breaks records. She lifts a nation's pride. And yet, she barely earns the headlines—or the money.



NAMRATA KOHLI

WOMAN WISE

For the first time in the history of sports, the Indian Women's National Football Team—affectionately known as the Blue Tigresses—have qualified for the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Women's Asian Cup 2026, marking a momentous first-time qualification via merit (not as hosts). Sangita Basore, the midfielder in the Indian Women's Football Team led India to a historic AFC Asian Cup 2026 qualification. But unless you follow obscure hashtags, you probably missed it. What should have been hailed as a tipping point in Indian sports history is barely known. For the first time, India's women's football team has a real shot at the global stage—aiming to finish among the top six in Asia to secure a place in the FIFA Women's World Cup qualifiers or playoff contention. The AFC Women's

Asian Cup 2026, set to be held in Australia from March 1–21, 2026, doubles as a gateway to the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup and the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. In short, this is not just another tournament—it's India's golden ticket to elite international football. India's sports women have carried the nation on their shoulders in global arenas—from Mary Kom's punches to PV Sindhu's smashes, from Mirabai Chanu's Olympic lifts to the Blue Tigresses' historic AFC Asian Cup qualification. But even as they bring home the glory, the spotlight continues to shine mostly on their male counterparts—win or lose. How many of us even know that Annu Rani, India's javelin queen, is a national record holder who has been quietly rewriting the women's circuit while all the spotlight falls on Neeraj Chopra? Or that Savita Punia, the goalkeeper of India's women's hockey team—nicknamed the Wall of India—was instrumental in our Olympic semi-final run in Tokyo? And then there's Manasi Joshi, a para-badminton world champion and techie-turned-athlete, who is a fierce voice for inclusivity in sports—yet is overshadowed by more famous names. So why are Indian Sports-



women not celebrated like the men. Despite consistent medal wins, record-breaking feats, and international glory, Indian sportswomen often remain footnotes, not front-page headlines. Why does India still celebrate its sportsmen but sideline its sportswomen? In Shabaash Mithu, one of the most gut-punching scenes unfolds at the airport: the Indian women's cricket team returns after a valiant World Cup run—bruised, battered, yet proud. But there's no media frenzy, no garlands, no applause. Just silence. Moments later, the men's team arrives—having lost their match—and the same airport erupts in cheers, flashbulbs, and flower showers.

The contrast is jarring. The women, who've achieved history, are ghosted. The men, who've faced defeat, are still feted. It's not just a scene—it's a mirror to society's deep-rooted bias. That single frame says everything about the gender gap in sports: talent doesn't always bring recognition. Sometimes, it's just the jersey you wear. The film scene spotlights how society often values male failure over female success. And this is not the movie scene. It resonates with reality. The corporate sponsorship is Male-Heavy. According to a KPMG report, over 85% of sports marketing budgets in India go to men's cricket.



Women athletes struggle to get endorsements—even Olympic medallists like Lovlina Borgohain or Mirabai Chanu aren't brand ambassadors for major national campaigns the way cricketers are. "I had to win an Olympic silver to be noticed. A male cricketer gets 100x visibility without winning anything," said a female Olympic medallist privately. Yes even corporate India is complicit in this bias. While male cricketers sign multi-crore brand endorsements, women athletes—even Olympic medallists—struggle to land a single major campaign. PV Sindhu, India's most marketable female athlete, still earns less than a benchwarmer in IPL.

That's not just unfair—it's irrational. "Brands want 'reach', not reality," says a former sports agent. They still believe men sell better. That belief needs an audit. Plus the cricket monopoly drowns all else. Cricket is a religion, yes—but only for men. The Women's Premier League (WPL) was a breakthrough, but still gets a fraction of the airtime and budget of the men's IPL. Our social conditioning still screams: "Sport is not for girls." In countless Indian homes, daughters are told to "sit properly," not run too much, and stay away from "rough games." Boys get bats; girls get dolls. "My brother played district matches," recalls a

young sprinter from Haryana. "I had to fight just to get shoes." The bias runs so deep that in the recent tennis player Radhika's case, her father faced social humiliation—not because she failed, but because her success was deemed unacceptable. From facilities and access to safety and late training hours, everything is skewed in favour of boys. At its core, Indian sport is still trapped in a masculinity myth—where strength, aggression, and competitiveness are considered male-only traits. So when a woman dares to be both feminine and fierce, society struggles to reconcile it. The result? Absurdities like Sania Mirza's attire making bigger headlines than her backhand, or Mithali Raj, fresh off a match-winning century, being asked about her "favorite male cricketer." A senior sports editor admitted: "We're pushed harder to cover IPL afterparties than a world championship won by a female wrestler." When the men's cricket team sneezes, it's breaking news. But when the Indian women's football team qualifies—on merit—for the AFC Asian Cup 2026, it's reduced to a fleeting ticker. "We're not asking for fame. Just fairness," says Harmanpreet Kaur, Captain of the Indian Women's Cricket

Team. However, change is coming—slowly, but surely. Social media is now the parallel arena where female athletes tell their stories, bypassing the filters of legacy media. Take the case of Yuwa, the grassroots revolution from rural Jharkhand, founded by US-based Franz Gastler. What started with one girl's request to learn football has grown into eastern India's largest girls' football movement. Yuwa is more than a sports program—it's a fight against child marriage, illiteracy, and trafficking, while nurturing education, confidence, and leadership in young girls. Today, over 250 girls play regularly—150+ every single day—on village teams, most coached by women who once wore the jersey themselves. The Women's Premier League (WPL), initiatives like Khelo India, and increasing medal visibility have helped. Today, PV Sindhu, Mary Kom, Saina Nehwal, Hima Das, Dipa Karmakar, Rani Rampal, and Mithali Raj are finally becoming household names. But true change will come only when we celebrate consistency—not just the medal moments. When women's sport stops being treated as charity content and becomes truly prime-time worthy.

Why smart women still self-abandon

TDG NETWORK

She knows better. She reads the signs. She teaches boundaries, speaks of self-worth, and encourages others to choose themselves. Yet, when it comes to her own life, the same clarity blurs. She stays too long in draining relationships, says yes when she means no, and over-gives while quietly shrinking inside. This is the paradox of many smart, emotionally intelligent women: they know what's healthy, yet they repeatedly self-abandon. It's not a matter of weakness or ignorance. It's a deeper, more complex pattern that intellect alone cannot override. Self-abandonment isn't always loud or obvious. Sometimes, it's disguised as compassion, compromise, or even independence. But at its core, it's the quiet habit of putting one's own needs, voice, or values aside to keep peace, avoid guilt, or meet unspoken expectations. Here's why even the smartest women fall into this cycle. Dr Chandni Tugnait, MD (A.M) Psychotherapist, Life Alchemist, Coach & Healer, Founder & Director, Gateway of Healing shares few reasons why smart women still self-abandon-



Dr Chandni Tugnait

dim their needs and emotions, believing it would earn approval. Empathy turns into over-identification: Smart women are often deeply empathetic; they sense

what others feel, sometimes before those people do. But without boundaries, empathy becomes over-identification. They begin to absorb others' discomfort, guilt, or needs as their own, abandoning their voice just to maintain emotional balance in the room. Their identity is rooted in being "capable": Being the dependable one becomes part of their self-worth. They take pride in holding things together, in being emotionally self-sufficient. But this hyper-capability

often comes at a cost; they silence their struggles to protect their image of strength. Admitting a need feels like admitting weakness, so they disconnect from it altogether. They fear being "too much": Smart women are often emotionally aware, and with that comes a fear of being overwhelming, intense, or difficult. They begin editing their truth, softening their opinions, or holding back desires to avoid being labelled. This slow, quiet shrinking is one of the most common forms of self-abandonment. Early environments normalized emotional neglect: Even the smartest women aren't immune to childhood conditioning. If they grew up in homes where their emotional needs weren't met, or where love was conditional, they learned early that abandoning themselves was the price of connection. That wiring doesn't disappear just because they've read the right books or gone to therapy. Self-abandonment isn't a lack of intelligence; it's often the result of deep emotional patterning masked by competence and emotional awareness. The smartest women are not weak for falling into it; they're human. True healing begins when they stop confusing love with silence, peace with pleasing, and strength with invisibility. Choosing yourself, consistently, unapologetically, isn't selfish. It's how smart women finally begin to live from a place of wholeness, not just wisdom.

They were praised for being low-maintenance: Many women grew up being applauded for not needing much, for being easygoing, flexible, and "not like other girls." Over time, this praise became internalized as a blueprint: needing less made them lovable.



Silent struggles: Women battling infertility in a fast-paced world



DR. SHOBHA GUPTA

In a world that constantly demands more — professionally, personally, and emotionally — many women find themselves silently grappling with one of the most emotionally draining journeys of their lives: infertility. With the ticking of the biological clock and rising pressures of modern lifestyle, infertility is no longer a rare condition — it is a rising public health concern, especially for women. According to Dr. Shobha Gupta, a leading fertility expert and Medical Director at Mother's Lap IVF Centre and Mumma's Blessing IVF and Birthing Paradise, "Infertility is not just a physical issue. It is a deeply emotional and psychological journey, especially for women who often internalize the blame and carry the burden alone."

THE GROWING CHALLENGE

Urban lifestyles — late nights, poor diets, sedentary habits, and increasing stress — are significantly impacting women's reproductive health. A combination of environmental pollutants, hormonal imbalances like PCOS, thyroid dysfunction, and delayed motherhood has led to a rise in female infertility cases.

"We are seeing more women in their early 30s facing issues like poor ovarian reserve or anovulation. These were conditions we used to see mainly in the 40s earlier," Dr. Gupta shares. She emphasizes that today's women are multitasking more than ever, but often neglect their own health.

EMOTIONAL TOLL OF INFERTILITY

The emotional toll infertility takes on women is profound — from anxiety, guilt, social pressure, to even depression. Family expectations, isolation, and the stigma associated with "not being able to conceive" can often make a woman feel less

their fertility:

1. Regular gynecological check-ups: Early detection of issues like fibroids, endometriosis, or infections can make a big difference.
2. Healthy weight management: Both obesity and being underweight can affect ovulation.
3. Stress control: Chronic stress interferes with hormonal balance. Yoga, meditation, and therapy help.
4. Avoiding smoking, alcohol, and excess caffeine: These directly impact fertility and egg quality.
5. Timely planning: Women should be aware of the decline in fertility with age and consider planning pregnancy earlier, if possible.



complete, though nothing could be further from the truth.

"There needs to be a shift in how society views infertility. It is a medical condition like any other — not a personal failure," says Dr. Gupta.

TAKING THE RIGHT PRECAUTIONS

Dr. Gupta outlines the following precautions women should take to safeguard

TREATMENT OPTIONS: HOPE THROUGH SCIENCE

Fortunately, modern science offers many advanced fertility treatments that provide hope to women facing these challenges. These include:

- Ovulation induction for irregular cycles
- IUI (Intrauterine Insemination) for mild cases
- IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) – the most commonly used

treatment with high success rates

- Egg freezing – ideal for women who want to delay motherhood
- Donor programs – egg or embryo donation for women with poor ovarian reserve

"The biggest change in the last decade is that fertility is no longer a taboo. Women are opening up, asking questions, and seeking help early — and that's the key," adds Dr. Gupta. She also stresses the importance of choosing the right fertility center, one that not only provides treatment but also emotional support and counseling throughout the journey.

A WORD TO EVERY WOMAN

Infertility may be a part of your story, but it does not define your womanhood. Dr. Shobha Gupta advises, "Be kind to yourself. Your worth is not measured by your ability to conceive. Seek help early, and know that there are solutions, support systems, and success stories that begin with the first step you take toward understanding your body and your options." In today's fast-paced world, where everything seems to be about deadlines and results, women must pause to listen to their bodies, care for their minds, and prioritize their health. Fertility is not a race — it's a journey. And with the right awareness, support, and medical care, it can lead to hope, healing, and happiness. The author is Medical Director, Mother's Lap IVF Centre New Delhi and Founder Mumma's Blessing IVF and Birthing Paradise in Vrindavan

SECRETS OF THE SOUL – WE REALLY ARE IMMORTAL



NEVILLE HODGKINSON

It might seem odd for an English science reporter to write about the soul, addressing a mainly Indian audience. My Indian teachers, however, have taught me secrets that are hidden not only from much of the rest of the world but also from many of those who live in Bharat.

I began practising Rajyoga meditation more than 40 years ago, and life immediately became better. Stress, worry, and restlessness were reduced. It was as if some inner battery was becoming charged, and the limited sense of self we call the ego became less demanding. Physical stamina as well as mental stability increased.

The teachings centre on the idea that our true identity is spirit, distinct from the body, and that all hu-

man souls come from one Supreme Soul. Mixing with people who practised this way of thinking proved uplifting, but my outlook was materialistic, and atheistic, and I did not want to believe in something just because it felt good. So the ideas created an internal conflict, and it took time for my intellect to accept them.

Today, however, I live easily and naturally with the knowledge that I really am an eternal soul, and that God is my Father. Here are some of the secrets, shared with me by Brahma Kumari sisters, which brought about this transformation:

My body will grow old and eventually prove uninhabitable. But when I leave it, that will not be the end of the inner being. I will reincarnate, entering another human body as it develops in a mother's womb.

It is the soul that moves on, not the personality. I will be a different person, with different parents, background, education, and role in the world. But the core of my being will be the same, carrying predispositions developed as a result of actions performed in my previous birth or births. These incarnations take



Mind is the ground of being, not matter.

place within a cycle of time that has characteristics of the quantum realm. Through the interaction of mind and matter, possibilities – as described by the equations of quantum physics – manifest as reality. As my karma changes, so do the omens over me.

Souls originate in a dimension beyond space and

time. We come from that home to play our parts, like actors on a stage, and as we do so, those parts become fixed for eternity.

The play lasts for 5,000 years and at the end of it we all go off stage again, to the home. But we retain our individuality. Time itself repeats, and the play unfolds again identically. Our

Mixing with people who practised this way of thinking proved uplifting, but my outlook was materialistic, and atheistic, and I did not want to believe in something just because it felt good. So the ideas created an internal conflict, and it took time for my intellect to accept them.

coming and going is itself eternal. This is the wonder of life!

Heaven and hell are real, but they exist here on the stage of space-time, not in some other dimension. When we first incarnate, at the beginning of the play, we are in a state of perfection, loving and peaceful, completely free of any

selfishness. Over time, we gradually lose that purity, and become gripped by vices such as lust and anger that lead to suffering and sorrow.

At the end of the 5,000 years, this suffering becomes extreme and the Supreme Soul intervenes, shining the light of truth into the world, so that we can recover our own original purity of consciousness.

This is the beauty of creation – the wonder of life. The materialistic philosophy, which argues that we got here through billions of years of chance developments, is no longer credible for me. Not just because it drains life of meaning, but because it is unscientific. Post-materialist science has given rise to what is called the consciousness-based paradigm, which tells us that mind is the ground of being, not matter.

Armed with such an understanding, and supported by the Supreme, we once more regain the power and glory of our human potential.

Neville Hodgkinson is a UK-based author and journalist, and a long-time student of Rajyoga.

How do affirmations and meditation work?



B.K. SURYA

An old English proverb says: "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride". It means wishing alone does not make things happen. If simply wishing for something, such as a horse, were enough to get it, even the poorest people, including beggars, would have what they want.

If wishing does not make things happen, how do affirmations and meditation work?

There is a key difference between simply wishing for something, and trying to realise it through affirmations or meditation. Wishing is passive – it is merely wanting something without necessarily doing anything about it. Affirmations and meditation are tools

that support action by shaping our mindset, focus, and emotional state.

Affirmations are positive, present-tense statements. For example, "I am confident and capable." They do not magically create results, but they can reprogram our thought patterns, boost self-belief and motivation, help us visualise success, which drives our actions, and orient the mind to look for opportunities.

If I say, "I am worthy of success" daily, I am likely to start acting more confidently, which could lead to better job interviews, or bold decisions.

Meditation is about awareness. Again, it does not conjure things out of thin air, but it helps by reducing stress and anxiety, improving focus, enhancing emotional stability, and deepening our insights. This empowers and clears our mind, allowing for better decision-making.

It also boosts productivity, helps us stay calm, and keeps us connected to our values and goals. Regular practice of meditation and positive affirmations leads to meaningful and lasting changes in our way of thinking

and behaviour. This is supported by scientific evidence.

The brain has the ability to reorganise itself by forming new neural connections. This is called neuroplasticity. Regular

meditation and affirmations reinforce certain neural pathways, making related thoughts, emotions, and behaviours more automatic. In other words, our thought pat-



Regular practice of meditation brings meaningful and lasting changes in our way of thinking and behaviour.

terns, behaviour, and the way we feel about certain things can be changed with practice.

For example, repeatedly affirming, "I am peaceful", can gradually weaken pathways of anger and strengthen those associated with calmness.

Positive affirmations replace

sible, can condition our emotional responses.

Meditation trains the part of the brain associated with decision-making and attention control to better regulate our emotional reactivity.

As a result, we become less reactive, more reflective, and

on the present and is less ego-driven, which reduces negative self-judgment and reinforces healthier thought patterns.

However, the brain does not change overnight. Regular practice is needed to override old neural patterns and establish new defaults. Initially, we may feel like we are just thinking or saying things we do not believe. Over time, repetition and emotional engagement help the positive thoughts take root.

Whether we want to achieve a career goal, find peace, or connect with God, if we think of wishing as dreaming of a destination, then affirmations and meditation are the mental and emotional devices that aid our journey towards it.

Affirmations act as our GPS, keeping us on the right track, while meditation helps us remain clear-headed, energised, and alert, making for smooth and safe progress. But we still have to drive – in other words, make efforts – to reach the destination.

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limiting beliefs with empowering ones. When we repeatedly affirm something, we challenge negative self-talk and eventually align our beliefs with the new affirmations. Repetition of affirmations in a relaxed or meditative state, when the subconscious mind is more acces-

more capable of noticing negative thought patterns without automatically engaging them.

Meditation has also been shown to reduce activity in the brain network associated with rumination and worry. This enables us to have a perspective that is more focused

The art of managing priorities



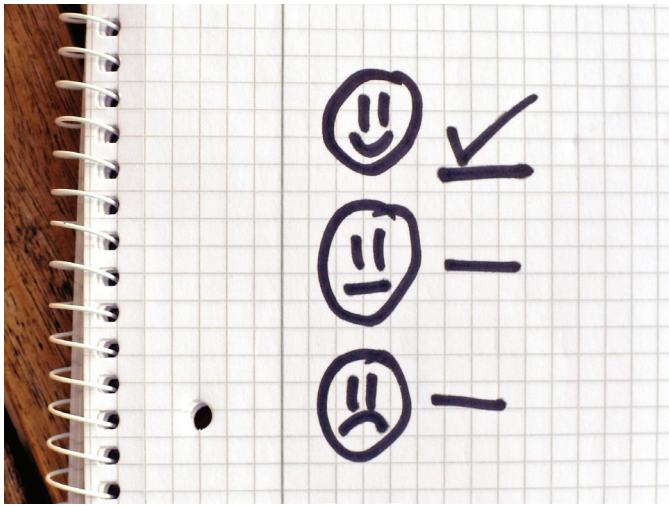
MATHIAS STEFFAN

We all prioritise in one way or another, every day. There are many theories about how to do that, especially those that help people to prioritise tasks that are urgent or important. A few years ago, life was at a slower pace; communication was by handwritten or typewritten letters, phones stayed where they were installed and did not accompany us wherever we went. Information came to us slowly; advertisements were in the cities on hoardings, and we had time to weigh things up. Not today.

We are bombarded with information, deadlines are mostly urgent and keep changing, so what to do? If we do not learn how to prioritise, we run the risk of ruining relationships, or living life robotically and, at worst, we develop stress to such an extent that our physical and mental well-being are at risk.

When we consciously set priorities rather than simply responding to the urgent, we feel more alive, especially because in the process we are deciding what is the right thing to give our attention to and we have the power and focus to see it through. The key is clarity, and there are important factors to take into consideration. These can be simplified into an ABCD of prioritising what really matters; that of living a life of staying peaceful, no matter what, and doing what I need to do, in happiness.

A – Attention to the self. Reiterating to the self that the goal is to be peaceful and happy. Keep doing this throughout the day



When prioritising, remind yourself that the goal is to remain peaceful and happy while doing everything.

to remind the self that this is the most important thing of all.

B – Behold. When things get really tough and prioritising seems too difficult, we feel how nice it would be to have someone who has a wide overreaching view of the situation, who has a crystal ball, and can simply tell us what to do. However, we all

have a crystal ball within. Our crystal ball is our conscience. We all have a sixth sense, that tells us clearly what to do. We do not always heed that, but it is there, and it is possible to enhance it. The key is to practise listening to that sixth sense and make sure that the four saboteurs do not enter; Fear, (of negative feedback),

Pressure (from others) Doubts (am I capable, can I do it?) and being out of our Comfort Zone. Any of these can derail the decision we have taken. The most powerful way to wake up the conscience is through meditation, practised daily. The more we do this, the more easily we can access that inner voice at speed. Once we have made the decision then we need the next step.

C – Challenge and Concentration. Let me lighten the task(s) ahead by looking on them as an interesting challenge rather than something formidable. Keep the focus on staying peaceful and carrying out the task in happiness, even if it is not something I find naturally easy. To do this we need trust and patience. We need to trust that life will continue to unfold and everything will be alright. We must have patience in that while we know there are many other things waiting for our attention once this task is over, we focus and stay focussed

throughout. There is a useful exercise we can practise to enhance concentration. Just as with physical exercise, we can build strength quite quickly. We can take one minute to focus on one thought, for example, 'I am peaceful', ten times a day. Our power of concentration will increase.

THE FINAL STEP, IF NEEDED, IS:

D – Delegate. We cannot delegate everything, but there will be opportunities to give others a chance to shine, if we let go of the idea that it is only I who can do this.

These are the spiritual tools for prioritising the tasks involved in complex situations.

"The key is not to prioritise what is on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities." - Stephen Covey
Mathias Steffan is a headmaster, a stress and resilience coach, and a Brahma Kumaris Rajyoga teacher based in Zurich, Switzerland.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

When I encounter ego in myself I can dissolve it with acceptance, kindness, and respect. If I react to ego with force, aggression or impatience, it grows. Today let me dissolve ego with kindness.

BUMRAH SHOULD FEATURE IN BOTH REMAINING TESTS, SAYS KUMBLE

**AGENCIES
NEW DELHI**

Following India's loss against England at Lord's in the third Test, former cricketer Anil Kumble weighed in on the importance of Jasprit Bumrah's availability for the remainder of the Test series as the visitors are trailing 1-2 in the ongoing five-match Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy.

Speaking on 'Follow The Blues', JioHotstar expert Anil Kumble said, "I would certainly push for Bumrah to play the next game because that's crucial. If he doesn't play and India end up losing the Test, that's it, the series would be done and dusted. Bumrah should feature in both the remaining Tests. Yes, he mentioned earlier that he would only play three matches, but there is a long break after this. He does not need to be part of the home series if he wants rest. But right now, Bumrah should



be playing the next two."

During the announcement of India's squad for the Test tour of England, chief selector Ajit Agarkar confirmed that Bumrah was advised not to contest consecutive Tests as part of his workload management. The precaution around Bumrah's usage stems from a stress reaction in his back during the fifth Test against Australia in Sydney in January.

Bumrah featured in the first and the third Tests, enchanted the spectators with his threatening spells, but India lost both fixtures. With two Tests left, India trailing in the five-match series by 1-2 and Bumrah available for one of those, Panesar feels India needs to go all out in Manchester next week.

In the series opener at Headingley, Bumrah served as the driving force in India's seemingly toothless attack, with sizzling figures of 5/83 in the first innings. During India's 371-run defence, Bumrah lost his magic and went wicketless as the visitors surrendered a five-wicket defeat.

In the third Test at Lord's, the 31-year-old rattled England's batting unit and

blazed his way to a record-shattering five-wicket haul. In the second turn, he scythed two scalps and finished with match figures of 7/112 as India endured a 22-run heartbreak.

India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate dropped a hint about Bumrah's involvement in Manchester after the training session on Thursday and said, "No, we'll make that call (on Bumrah) in Manchester still. We know we have got him for one of the last two Tests. It's pretty obvious that the series is on the line now in Manchester, so there will be a leaning towards playing him."

"But again, we have got to look at all the factors: how many days of cricket are we going to get up there, what do we feel is our best chance of winning that game, and then how that fits in together with The Oval. And looking at the last two games holistically as part of the series," he added.



Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker T.J. Watt (90) celebrates his sack during the first half of an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles, Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024, in Philadelphia. (AP Photo/Terrance Williams, File)

It's about process, not hype: Smriti stays grounded ahead of 2025 ICC Women's World Cup

**TDG NETWORK
DUBAI**

With over 9,000 international runs, 1,000+ boundaries, and a reputation built on grace under pressure, Smriti Mandhana is entering a crucial phase of her career. But as the excitement around the 2025 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup builds, she remains refreshingly grounded.



In an exclusive conversation with cricket scholar Sunil Yash Kalra on the Cricket Predicta Show, Smriti Mandhana said, "I've always been a big believer in not thinking too far ahead. We have to focus on the process, do every day right—and that's the aim."

Further, she said, "Even as a team, everyone's calm. We've got a long road ahead over the next five to six months. I wouldn't like to speak a lot about it. Cricket is such a game—you do your things right, things fall in place. Let's just try and do that well."

While she keeps her eyes on the pitch, Mandhana is also nurturing the future of the game. She recently launched the City Cricket

Academy by Smriti Mandhana in Dubai, a project powered by her deep-rooted relationship with UK-based coach Don Bhagawati, who will lead the coaching responsibilities.

"This is a great partnership for me," Mandhana said. "Right now, I'm focusing more on my cricket, and Don will handle the coaching. I've known Don for many years, and when I first heard his name, I was scared. I wondered, who is this 'Don'? But over time, Don and his family have become like family to me in England."

Don Bhagawati, a respected figure in grassroots cricket in the UK, shares Smriti's passion for

simplicity, discipline, and long-term development. Their vision for the academy is clear: create a space where young cricketers can develop their skills with joy, purpose, and the right values.

With her feet firmly on the ground, Mandhana's dual commitment—toward excellence on the field and empowerment off it—is a quiet but powerful statement of leadership ahead of one of the biggest tournaments of her career.

Smriti Mandhana has been a consistent performer for India across all formats. In 7 Tests, she has scored 629 runs in 12 innings at an average of 57.18, including 2 centuries and 3 fifties, with a top score of 149. In 103 ODIs, she has amassed 4,501 runs at an impressive average of 46.4 and a strike rate of 87.93, hitting 11 hundreds and 31 fifties. In 153 T20Is, she has scored 3,982 runs at an average of 29.94 and a strike rate of 123.98, including 1 century and 31 fifties. With over 1,000 boundaries across formats, Mandhana remains a vital force in India's batting unit.

KL Rahul could join elite list of Sachin, Dravid, Gavaskar

**AGENCIES
MANCHESTER**

India batter KL Rahul will be aiming to join an elite list of Indian players with 1,000 or more Test runs in England as the fourth Test against the Three Lions in Manchester draws closer.

The fourth Test match will kick off in Manchester from July 23 onwards. England leads the series 2-1.

Ending up on the losing side at Lord's during the third Test despite his second century at the iconic venue, the dependable opener will be all fired up to continue his fine run in England and deliver a match-winning contribution.

Currently, KL has 989 runs in 12 Tests and 24 innings in England, at an average of 41.20, with four centuries and two fifties. His best score is 149.

Only Sachin Tendulkar (1,575 runs in 17 Tests and 30 innings at an average of



54.31, with four centuries and eight fifties), Rahul Dravid (1,376 runs in 13 Tests and 23 innings at an average of 68.80, with six centuries and four fifties), and Sunil Gavaskar (1,152 runs in 16 Tests and 28 innings at an average of 41.14, with two centuries and eight fifties) have scored 1,000 or more Test runs by an Indian in England and KL would be raring to become the fourth one.

In three Tests and six innings so far, KL has scored 375 runs at an average of 62.50, with two centuries and a fifty, with a best score of 137. He is the fourth-highest run-getter in the series so far.

India's Test squad for England series: Shubman Gill (C), Rishabh Pant (VC), Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Sai Sudharsan, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Karun Nair, Nitish Reddy, Ravindra Jadeja, Dhruv Jurel, Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Akash Deep, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav.

England squad for fourth Test against India: Ben Stokes (capt), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jacob Bethell,

India wrestler Sujet Kalka strikes gold in men's 65kg freestyle

**AGENCIES
BUDAPEST**

Indian wrestler Sujet Kalka clinched the gold medal in the 65kg men's freestyle category at the Polyak Imre & Varga Janos Memorial 2025 wrestling tournament in Budapest, Hungary.

In the final of the 65kg men's freestyle category, Sujet delivered a clinical performance to overwhelm four-time European medalist Ali Rahimzade of Azerbaijan 5-1. Sujet's success on Thursday marked India's first gold medal in wrestling at any of the Ranking Series events this year. Earlier, India grapplers drew blanks in Amman and Mongolia, according to Olympics.com.

In the first period, Sujet conceded an activity point and then raised the tempo in the second to complete two takedowns. He claimed another activity point en route to a commanding victory in the gold medal bout.

Sujet's journey to the final was remarkable, considering he sealed a thumping 11-0 win over Paris 2024 Olympics bronze medallist Islam Dudaev of Albania in the round of 16. Sujet marched on to overwhelm European silver medallist Khamzat Arsamerzouev of France in the quarter-finals before stamping his authority with a 6-1 win over Vazgen Tevanyan of Armenia in the last four.



ter struck India as they lost Rawal, Deol and skipper Harmanpreet (17) in quick succession, reduced to 124/4 in 27.1 overs.

Jemimah Rodrigues (48 in 54 balls, with five fours) struck an 87-run stand for the fifth wicket with Deepti Sharma, taking the team past 200 runs. While Richa Ghosh was removed early after Jemimah's dismissal, Deepti (62* in 64 balls, with three fours and a six) and Amanjot Kaur (20* in 14 balls with three fours) stuck around to give India a four-wicket win with 10 balls left. Charlie Dean (2/52) was England's top bowler, while Kate Cross, Ecclestone and Lauren Filer got one each.

India's Pratika penalised for two separate events during first ODI

**AGENCIES
SOUTHAMPTON**

India's opening batter Pratika Rawal has been penalised for two events while England have been fined for maintaining a slow over rate during the first ODI at Rose Bowl in Southampton.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Friday confirmed that Rawal breached the ICC Code of Conduct and has been fined 10 per cent match fees. She was penalised for two separate events that took place within a short space of time.

In the 18th over, she made an avoidable physical contact with England quick Lauren Filer while taking a single. After being dismissed in the



next over, she made similar avoidable contact with spinner Sophie Ecclestone on her way back to the dressing room. Apart from being fined match fees, one demerit point has been added to Rawal's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period.

Meanwhile, England were fined five per cent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate. The hosts were found one over short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration. There was no

need for a formal hearing as Rawal and England captain Nat Sciver-Brunt accepted their respective sanctions imposed by match referee Sarah Bartlett.

In the series opener, a fiery half-century from Deepti Sharma and a dazzling performance from all-rounder Sneha Rana propelled India to a four-wicket win. During India's pursuit of 259 runs, openers Rawal and Smriti Mandhana (28 in 24 balls, with five fours) delivered a solid start with a 48-run stand.

Rawal (36 in 51 balls with three fours) had another 46-run stand with Harleen Deol (27 in 44 balls, with four boundaries), but disaster struck India as they lost Rawal, Deol and skipper Harmanpreet (17) in quick succession, reduced to 124/4 in 27.1 overs.

Neha Tripathi, one of the most experienced stars on the Indian women's circuit, produced a stunning 7-under 65 that catapulted her into a 3-shot lead after the second round of the Rs.15 lakh ninth Leg of the Women's Pro Golf Tour (WPGT) at the Clover Greens.

Even as the 33-year-old Neha made a move to the top, overnight leader Amandeep Drall suffered a big drop with a round of 4-over 76, seven shots worse than her first round. Amandeep has now slipped from sole first to tied ninth at the Clover Greens par-72 layout, as per a press release from WPGT.

Neha, who has not won since 2023, a year during



which she lifted the Trophy three times, followed up her first round of 1-under 71 with a 65 that included six birdies and an eagle against one bogey. Neha, who battled injuries last season and is trying to find her proper form and rhythm, had four birdies on the front nine of the course against one bogey, which was her sole blemish. On the back nine, she landed an eagle on the 12th and followed it up with birdies on the 13th and 16th for a 65.

Neha's last win was at the 15th Leg of the 2023 season at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club. Neha was three shots clear of Jasmine Shekar (72-67), who had a bogey-free second round. Jasmine had three birdies on the front nine and added two more on the back nine.

Third-placed Kriti Chowhan, looking for her first win as a pro, made a good move up with a 69 after a first-round 73, and amateur Saanvi Somu (73-70) was sole fourth. Four-time winner this season, Vani Kapoor improved on her first round 75 by six shots as she carded 3-under 69 with six birdies and three bogeys. Vani was tied for fifth place alongside amateur Keya Badugu (75-69), Sneha Singh (72-72), and Seher Atwal (71-73), all at even par 144.

India opens 'Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team' campaign with win over Sri Lanka

**AGENCIES
SOLO**

India kicked off their Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team championships campaign in style as they thrashed Sri Lanka 110-69 in their Group D clash in Indonesia on Friday.

The mixed doubles combination of Vishnu Kode and Reshika U began India's march with an 11-5 win over Keneth Aruggoda and

Isuri Attanayake in the relay point system, where a team had to bag 110 points to win the match, as per a press release from the Badminton Association of India (BAI) Media.

Gayatri and Mansa Rawat then extended India's lead to 22-14 against Attanayake and Sithumi De Silva before junior world number one Tanvi Sharma stamped her class against Sithuli Ranasinghe to make it 33-21 for

India.

Not one Indian singles player or pair lost any 11-point relay, and by the time the match reached the halfway mark, the winners had taken a 55-31 lead.

India will now face the United Arab Emirates in their second group game on Saturday before taking on Hong Kong China on Sunday, which could decide who tops the group standings.



The competition is being held from July 18 to 27, and Tanvi Sharma, along with junior world number one men's pair of Bhargava Ram Arigela and Viswa Tej Gibburu, are leading the team. The competition consists of two parts: a team event scheduled from July 18 to 22, and individual events from July 23 to 27. India will be competing in both categories.

The continental badminton championships serve as a significant stepping stone towards the BWF Junior World Championships, which will be held at the National Centre of Excellence in Guwahati later this year.

India's squad for the Badminton Asia Junior Championships 2025

Men's Singles: Ansh Negi, Hmar Lalthazuala, Rounak Chouhan, Pranav Ram Nagalingam

Women's Singles: Rujula

Ramu, Tanvi Sharma, Tanvi Reddy Andluri, Vennala Kalagotla

Men's Doubles: Bhavya Chhabra/Param Choudhary, Bhargav Ram Arigela/Viswa Tej Gibburu

Women's Doubles: Vennala Kalagotla/Reshika Uthayasooryan, Gayatri Rawat/Mansa Rawat

Mixed Doubles: Vishnu Kedhar Kode/Keerthy Manchala, C Lalramsanga/Taarini Suri. (