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**WILL ENSURE NO VOTER LEFT OUT, SAYS CEC AMIDST BIHAR ROW**



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**IAEA CHIEF SAYS IRAN MAY RESTART URANIUM ENRICHMENT 'IN MONTHS'**



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**AYUSH SHETTY CLINCHES US OPEN TITLE**

## AT LEAST 12 KILLED IN T'GANA PHARMA PLANT EXPLOSION

■ A reactor malfunction suspected to have caused the blast.

**RAJ KIRAN BATHULA & AGENCIES**  
HYDERABAD

**T**welve people were died in massive explosion at Sigachi Chemical Industries located in Pashamylaram in Telangana's Sangareddy district. According to officials, 34 people injured and they were rushed to hospitals.

The blast occurred in the reactor unit, bursting out a massive fire. Flames spread rapidly, leading to partial structural collapse. Eleven fire tenders battled the blaze for hours, while ambulance and rescue teams evacuated injured workers.

The explosion is suspected to stem from a reactor malfunction during chemical processing. Authorities have launched an investigation, and safety audits are



Firefighters try to douse a fire following a reactor blast at Sigachi Chemical Industry, Pashamylaram, in Medak on Monday. (ANI Photo)

expected across similar facilities in the area.

In the afternoon, Satyanarayana, IG of Multi-Zone 1, reached the spot and while talking to media he said the incident occurred due to a reactor explosion. At the

time of the incident, there were reportedly around 90 people working in the shift. Experts are inspecting the site, and the entire district machinery is present on-site. All necessary steps are being taken to provide full

assistance to the victims.

Health Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha, who visited the accident site along with state Labour Minister G Vivek Venkatswamy, said the cause of the mishap would be known after

examination by the technical experts. The explosion was so powerful that some of the workers were thrown nearly 100 metres away, eyewitnesses said.

Venkatswamy said 12 of the 34 injured people were critical and put on ventilator support in the hospitals. The respiratory system of these victims is under stress due to the burn injuries, he said.

The government is hopeful that the remaining 22 people will recover soon, he added.

Expressing grief over the tragedy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed condolences to those who lost their loved ones in the incident. He wished an early recovery to the injured.

In a post on 'X', he announced an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh ■ P3

## Bad assets of banks fall to multi-decadal low of 2.3%

**AGENCIES**  
MUMBAI

The gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of the banking system declined to a multi-decadal low of 2.3 per cent in March 2025, the Reserve Bank said on Monday.

The level of the GNPAAs had stood at 2.6 per cent in September 2024. In the half-yearly, Financial Stability Report, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the GNPAAs for 46 banks accounting for 98 per cent of the total assets of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) may rise to 2.6 per cent by March 2027.

It can be noted that dud assets have been one of the most challenging part for the banking system for a large part of the latter part of the previous decade, especially due to stress among corporate



*Bad assets were a big challenge part for the banking system in the previous decade, but the system has been improving on the key ratio ever since.*

segment, but the system has been improving on the key ratios ever since.

Given the prevalent tendencies among banks to ever- ■ P3

## Non-AC fares in mail, express trains hiked by 1 paisa/Km

Fares of air-conditioned classes up by 2 paisa/Km

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI

The railway ministry issued an official circular on Monday, increasing the fares of the non-air-conditioned class in mail and express trains by 1 paisa and all air-conditioned classes by 2 paisa per kilometre from July 1.

Ministry officials had on June 24 hinted at the proposed fare revision.

However, the official circular with the fare table according to trains and class categories was released on Monday.

The fares of suburban trains and monthly season tickets have been left unchanged in the interest of daily commuters.

The ordinary second-class fare has not been increased for up to 500 km and for distances beyond that, there is

- COSTLIER JOURNEY**
- Fares of suburban trains and monthly season tickets left unchanged
  - No hike in ordinary second-class fare for up to 500 km
  - Beyond 500 km, fare is up by half a paisa per km
  - Passengers of ordinary sleeper class and first class will also have to pay half a paisa more per km.
  - Fare revision also applies Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Duronto, Vande Bharat, among others



an increase in the ticket prices by half a paisa per km. The passengers of ordinary sleeper class and first class will also have to pay half a paisa more per km more from July 1.

"The fare revision also applies to premier and special train services, such as Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Duronto,

Vande Bharat, Tejas, Hum-safar, Amrit Bharat, Mahamana, Gatimaan, Antyodaya, Jan Shatabdi, Yuva Express, AC Vistadome coaches, Anubhuti coaches and ordinary non-suburban services, in accordance with the revised class-wise fare structure," the ministry said in a press note.

## Guides must for outdoor activities in East Khasi Hills

**AGENCIES**  
SHILLONG

In a move aimed at enhancing the safety of tourists, the authorities in Meghalaya have made it compulsory for visitors to hire guides while participating in outdoor activities within the East Khasi Hills district, officials said on Monday.

The orders came a month after Indore businessman Raja Raghuvanshi's murder, planned by his wife during their honeymoon in the Sohra region of the state.

"In view of safety reasons, it is now mandatory for all tourists to take the services of a registered tourist guide while undertaking treks (and outdoor activities) in the area," East Khasi Hills Deputy Commissioner Rosetta M Kurbah said in an order.

Mandatory guide services will not only ensure better safety for visitors but also help prevent incidents such as getting lost, sustaining injuries, or being vulnerable to criminal activities in ■ DETAILS P3

## 'CM change' chorus grows in K'taka

Surjewala meets MLAs

**AGENCIES**  
BENGALURU

Congress president Mallikarjuna Kharge on Monday asserted matters like leadership change will be decided by party "high command", comments that came amid the "CM change" chorus from a section of party leaders in Karnataka, as it reached out to "disgruntled", MLAs in the southern state.

Amid signs of "disgrun-



tlement" and speculation about Chief Minister change within the ruling Congress, party General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka, Randeep Singh Surjewala on Monday began meetings with MLAs.

Separately, Kharge asserted that it is up to the party "high command" to



decide on matters such as change of guard.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that the Congress government in the state will remain "as solid as a rock" for five years and maintained that he and his deputy D K Shivakumar share good terms.

Terming the meetings

with MLAs as an organisational exercise undertaken by both AICC and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, Surjewala said, any news that is circulated in the media about leadership change is only a "figment of imagination".

This is a continuous exercise for introspection and development of the state. It is a long exercise. It will happen over a period of a month or month-and-a-half, during which he will be meeting party legislators, MPs, defeated candi- ■ P3

## Prez: Animals are 'jeevan dhan', word pashu 'inappropriate'

**AGENCIES**  
BAREILLY

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said she feels that using the word 'pashu' for animals was "inappropriate" and referred to them as 'jeevan dhan' or wealth of life.

Speaking at the 11th convocation ceremony of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Murmu said life without animals cannot be imagined.

ICAR-IVRI in Izatnagar is



President Droupadi Murmu during the convocation ceremony of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, in Bareilly on Monday.

dedicated to research and development in the field of veterinary and animal sciences.

"When you work as a (veterinary) doctor, you should always have the welfare of animals in mind. The environment that I come from is close to nature. Humans have a relationship with forests and wild animals," Murmu said.

"Today, we have technology, but in the past, they (animals) were ■ P3

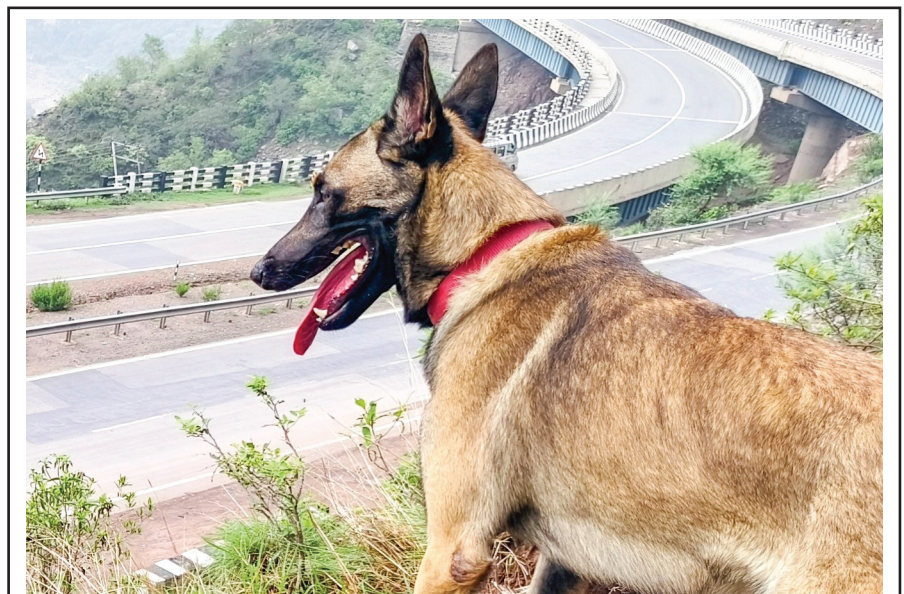
## 'Medicines on empty stomach may have proved fatal for Shefali'

**AGENCIES**  
MUMBAI



Actor Shefali Jariwala, who passed away on the night of June 27, was taking different types of medicines, including anti-ageing tablets, and her blood pressure had dropped possibly from consuming these on an empty stomach before she was rushed to hospital, police officials probing her death said on Monday.

Jariwala (42), who shot to fame with her breakout appearance in the remix track 'Kaanta Laga' and also appeared on several reality shows, was rushed to Bellevue Multispecialty Hospital in Andheri by her actor husband Parag Tyagi at 11:15pm on Friday, where doctors declared her dead on arrival.



A CRPF K9 Dog keeps vigil along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway ahead of the annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra, in Udhampur on Sunday. ANI

## India Gate is out of bounds if you carry a bag

Bags, pets not allowed; bicycles, two-wheelers not permitted either

**ARZU SETH**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi residents and tourists heading to India Gate need to accustom themselves with the new norms and guidelines in place now to avoid disappointment.

The new measures, enforced on the path leading



to the Amar Jawan Jyoti and India Gate area, do not allow bags and pets. Bicycles and two-wheelers are also not permitted.

A big and bold banner greets visitors at the Kartavya Path entry point announcing that bags not allowed, pets not allowed".

■ P3



# WILL ENSURE NO VOTER LEFT OUT, SAYS ECI AMID BIHAR ROLLS REVISION ROW

Over one lakh volunteers will assist the elderly, sick, PwDs, and marginalized groups in filling up forms, says Gyanesh Kumar

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Following the Election Commission of India's decision to conduct Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bihar ahead of the state assembly polls, Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar has affirmed that the main objective of the initiative is to avoid any "illegible" voter and ensure that no one is left out of the voter list.

In his statement, the Chief Election Commissioner stated that one lakh volunteers have also been deployed to assist the elderly, sick, persons with disabilities (PwD)



and marginalised groups in filling up their Enumeration Forms.

The objective of SIR is to ensure that no eligible voter is left out, and at the same

time, no ineligible voter is included in the Electoral Roll. More than one lakh volunteers have also been deployed to assist the elderly, sick, persons with

disabilities (PwD) and marginalised groups in filling up their Enumeration Forms", Gyanesh Kumar said in his statement.

Meanwhile ahead of the Bihar assembly elections, the Election Commission of India (ECI), under the Chairmanship of Chief Election Commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar along with Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, has started proceedings for the delisting of 345 Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs) which have failed to fulfil the essential condition of contesting even a single election for the last

six years since 2019 and the offices of these parties could not be physically located anywhere.

According to a release from the Election Commission, these 345 RUPPs are from different States and UTs across the country.

"It has come to the notice of the Commission that of the over 2,800 RUPPs currently registered with ECI, many RUPPs have failed to fulfil the essential conditions that are required to continue as an RUPP. Thus, a nationwide exercise was conducted by the ECI to identify such RUPPs, and 345 have already been identified to date," the EC said

## BJP speeds up state appointments ahead of national president poll

AJIT MAINDOLA  
NEW DELHI

The party is in a state of panic to conduct the election of the national president of the Bharatiya Janata Party soon. On the instructions of the high command, the election of the state presidents will be completed in a day or two. The first effort of the party is to complete the election of the president in most of the states as soon as possible, except one or two states. On Monday, the process of election of new presidents was completed in Uttarakhand, Manipur, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Puducherry, and Himachal Pradesh.

On Tuesday, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal will get new presidents. In

this way, elections will be completed in about 26 out of 37 states. Elections for the presidents of some states like Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana, Kerala, Punjab, and Odisha can be held in the coming week. However, according to the party constitution, for the election of the national president, the president must be elected in more than half of the states. The election should be completed.

According to this, BJP has completed the elections in more than half of the states on Monday. After this, the party can announce the election of the national president anytime. There are indications that in the coming week, the party can announce the program for the election of the national

president.

The election of the National President of BJP has been postponed for almost one and a half years. JP Nadda's tenure as National President ended last year. But due to the Lok Sabha elections, then assembly elections, and Operation Sindoor, the election kept getting postponed. Now the party has decided that the election of the National President should be held as soon as possible. Due to this, the process of conducting elections in the states has been started. The responsibility of the Madhya Pradesh elections has been given to Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. All the MPs and MLAs of the state were asked to reach Bhopal on Tuesday.

## British HC allows continued sale of F 35 fighter jet parts to Israel

ADITYA WADHAWAN  
NEW DELHI

British High Court has given a ruling that the UK Government can continue to export the parts of Lockheed Martin F-35 jet to Israel.

The United Kingdom contributes components for F-35s to an international defence programme that produces the bombers.

"Case is about a much more focused issue than just the jet parts. The actual issue remains whether it is possible for the court to rule that UK must withdraw from a specific multilateral defence collaboration because of the prospect that some UK manufactured components will or may ultimately be supplied to Israel, and may be

used in the commission of a serious violation of international humanitarian law in the midst of Gaza conflict," said Judges Stephen Males and Karen Steyn in a 72-page ruling.

The Palestinian human rights organisation, Al-Haq based in the West Bank took legal action against the UK's Department for Business and Trade (DBT) in January over its decision to exempt the parts when it suspended some export licences in September last year.

The F-35 jets are critical to the UK arms industry. About 16.2% of all sub-awards in the F-35 programme have gone to UK-based manufacturers as per some estimates.

## From insurgency to football: PM Modi hails Bodoland change in 'Mann Ki Baat'

NIBIR DEKA  
GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the latest episode of his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, painted a vivid picture of a new and emerging narrative from Bodoland, Assam. Once known for strife, the region is now scripting a new identity through the power of sports, especially football.

Describing a serene morning in the hills of Bodoland, PM Modi said, "Imagine a scene where morning sunlight kisses the hills and slowly brightens the plains," He highlighted the transformation of Bodoland from a conflict-ridden area to a vibrant hub of sports. "There was a time when

struggle defined Bodoland. Opportunities were limited for the youth. But today, they carry dreams in their eyes and the courage of self-reliance in their hearts," said the Prime Minister.

PM Modi noted that the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) now boasts nearly 70,000 football players, with a significant number of them being girls. This shift, he said, reflects the deep energy and confidence of the region's youth.

He also lauded young footballers from the region who have made a mark at higher levels — Halicharan Narzary, Durga Boro, Apurba Narzary, and Manbir Basumatary. "These aren't just names of football players.

## Sonipat leads India's geospatial revolution with 'Operation Dronagiri' initiative

NEERAJ MOHAN  
CHANDIGARH

Haryana has taken significant leap in the field of geospatial innovation by becoming one of the first five states in the country to implement Operation Dronagiri- a flagship initiative under the National Geospatial Policy 2022, Will help farmers

Launched by the Centre's Department of Science and Technology (DST) the programme aims to deploy advanced drone-based mapping and geospatial technologies to transform key sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, logistics, and livelihoods.

Haryana is among the first five states selected for the initial phase of this national initiative, alongside Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh.



The officials said that operation aims to facilitate access to high-quality geospatial data for service providers to address sector-specific challenges in areas such as agriculture, transportation, infrastructure, livelihood, and skill development.

Taking the initiative the government has established a state-level Committee, chaired by the Director of Land Records, Haryana and the Director of the Survey of

India, Haryana, will serve as the Member Secretary. Also the committee will include the Director of HARSAC, District Revenue Officer (HQ), Assistant Director (HQ), and General Manager (IT) from the Office of Revenue and Disaster Management. Whereas in Sonipat the Deputy Commissioner will chair the committee, with the Superintendent of Survey, Survey of India, Haryana, serving as the Member Secretary.

## With names shortlisted, Haryana Cong set to appoint district prez

NEERAJ MOHAN  
CHANDIGARH

In a major organizational overhaul the Haryana Congress is set to appoint district presidents after a long gap of 11 years, with panels of shortlisted candidates being finalized and sent to the party high command on Monday. According to party insiders, Haryana Congress in-charge BK Hariprasad will formally forward the panel list to the All India Congress Committee (AICC).

As per the internal Congress sources each district panel will include six



names, with caste and regional balance being key considerations. Notably, each panel will mandatorily include at least one woman to ensure gender representation. The list will be uploaded to the Congress domain, and within 15 days, central observers along with the in-charge

will hold a review meeting to finalize the district presidents. The final list will then be announced by the party, officially ending a prolonged organizational vacuum.

This critical move comes under the Congress's ongoing "Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan", initiated by senior

leader Rahul Gandhi to rejuvenate the party's grassroots leadership. During his recent visit to the Haryana Congress headquarters, Gandhi had tasked central observers with leading the appointment process, bypassing senior state leaders to minimize factional interference and ensure impartiality.

Sources confirmed that observers had already completed rigorous interviews of aspirants at the Congress headquarters, questioning them on their plans to counter the BJP-RSS combine, strategies to revive the party, and their take on

the 2024 Assembly election defeat. Aspirants were also asked about organizational models and alternative leadership options for their districts.

In many districts, the observers faced heated exchanges and infighting among local Congress leaders, further justifying the AICC's centralized approach. According to a senior Haryana Congress leader, this structured process is meant to dismantle old power houses and rebuild district-level leadership on merit and fresh ideas.

Political analysts suggest

## BJP slams Tejashwi's stand on Waqf Act, says his 'samajwaad' cover for 'namazwaad'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday accused opposition parties of seeking to turn the Constitution into a "sharia script" and using the garb of "samajwaad" (socialism) to hide its "namazwaad", as it slammed RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav for asserting that his bloc, if elected to power in Bihar, will throw the amended Waqf Act in dustbin.

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the INDIA bloc of the RJD-Congress-Left in Bihar has shown its disrespect for the Constitution, as the Act was passed by Parliament and is being adjudicated in the Supreme Court. They respect neither Parliament nor the judiciary, he said.

Addressing a press conference, he rejected opposition parties' criticism of the Election Commission's special intensive review of electoral rolls, which has started from the poll-bound Bihar, to weed



out ineligible voters, as born out of their "defeatist mindset" in the face of their inevitable loss.

These parties want fake voters, while it is imperative to ensure that only eligible Indian citizens get to elect the government of their choice, he said. The EC has said the exercise, a regular mechanism, is aimed at including only eligible voters in the electoral rolls.

Opposition parties have claimed that it can exclude eligible voters willfully, an allegation that is an extension of their attack on the poll watchdog for working to benefit the ruling alliance. Assembly

polls in Bihar are expected to be held in October-November.

Targeting opposition leaders for their strident criticism of the Waqf (Amendment) Act at the Patna rally, Trivedi said their alliance is driven by vote bank politics, a euphemism for its outreach to Muslim voters over the opposition to the Act from a large number of them. He alleged that the INDIA bloc wants to enforce Sharia provisions through the back door. States like Telangana and Karnataka are giving reservations to Muslims at the cost of quotas for Hindu OBCs, SCs and STs, and West Bengal is also trying to do it, he said.

## India must strengthen democratic institutions: Birla

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI/DHARAMSHALA

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday stressed the need to manage resources, protect democracy, and adopt innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI) to make parliamentary work more effective. Inaugurating the Annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region, Zone - 2 at Tapovan, Dharamshala, he called upon state legislatures to share best practices, innovations, and technology to empower democratic institutions, enhance the efficiency and transparency of legislative work, and better address the challenges and aspirations of their constitu-



encies.

He said the Parliament of India is widely using technological innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance the efficiency of parliamentary work. He further said the Parliament of India is ready to share these latest technological advancements with state legislatures, which will promote transparency, accountability, and good governance.

On this occasion, Shri Birla, while referring to the 'One Nation, One Legislative

Platform' initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressed confidence that by the year 2026, the Parliament of India will establish a common platform for all the State Legislatures, which will enable smooth exchange of information on legislative debate, budget, and other legislative initiatives. He said that this initiative will encourage healthy competition and innovation among the State Legislatures, which will ultimately benefit the public.

## Cong-backed candidate wins municipal polls, Selja terms win 'rejection of BJP'

TDG NETWORK  
CHANDIGARH

The Congress-backed candidate Mahesh Kumar Goyal, popularly known as "Jhorada Wale," secured a victory in the Kalanwali Municipal Council presidential election held in Sirsa district. The win was celebrated by Sirsa MP Kumari Selja, who hailed it as a reflection of the public's trust in the Congress and a rejection of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) governance.

Goyal defeated the BJP candidate by 1,029 votes in the Kalanwali Municipal Council presidential election as Mahesh secured 5127 votes, while Sunil Kumar, who came in second, received 4,098 votes.

The election, held on June 29, witnessed a peaceful and enthusiastic turnout, with polling conducted amid tight security. The vote counting took place on June 30 in a well-organized and calm environment, with no reported disruptions, showcasing effective management by the local administration.

Reacting to the result, Kumari Selja congratulated Mahesh Kumar Goyal and said the victory represents the people's faith in the Congress. "This win is a symbol of the trust and support of the people of Kalanwali. I am confident Ma-

hesh will continue to work in the public interest," she stated on social media. Selja also took the opportunity to attack the BJP, accusing it of failing on governance and leadership over the past decade.

Selja, a prominent Dalit leader and senior Congress MP, criticized the BJP for turning into a party of "empty slogans" and failing to address critical issues like unemployment, inflation, and farmers' welfare. She said the win in Kalanwali indicates a growing public dissatisfaction and a shift towards the Congress in local and grassroots elections.

Her sharp critique echoed the Congress party's broader strategy in Haryana, where it continues to challenge the BJP on performance and promises. The Kalanwali win, she said, would "energize the cadre and build momentum" for the party's future electoral battles.

The Kalanwali Municipal Council win comes at a strategic time for the Congress, which has been struggling to regain ground in Haryana after consecutive defeats in the state elections. Despite winning 37 seats in the 2024 Assembly polls, the Congress fell short of the majority, while the BJP returned for a third term with 48 seats.



THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON LANGUAGE WAR IN INDIA

42% believe regional languages should be prioritised in respective states

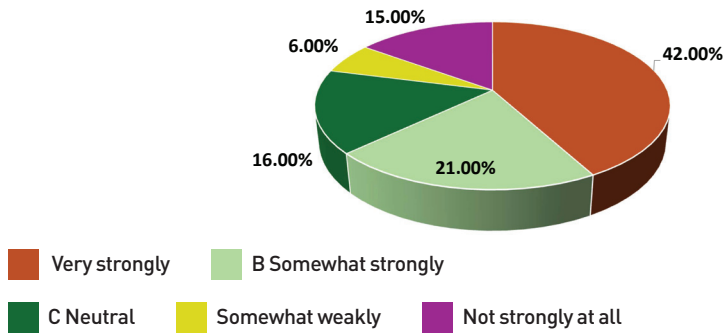
The Maharashtra government's decision to introduce Hindi as a third language for Classes 1 to 5 in Marathi and English medium schools has sparked political backlash. Though the move isn't mandatory, opposition parties, in-

cluding Shiv Sena (UBT), accuse the BJP-led government of imposing Hindi at the cost of Marathi. Sanjay Raut announced public protests, saying Uddhav and Raj Thackeray would burn the resolution in Mumbai. Aaditya Thackeray

demanding School Education Minister Dada Bhuse's resignation, stating that no language should be forced on students and calling for a focus on improving existing curricula rather than burdening children with more languages.

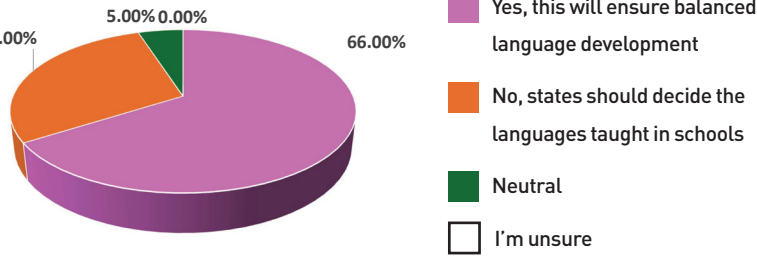
Q1.▶

How strongly do you believe that regional languages should be prioritised in their respective states over Hindi?



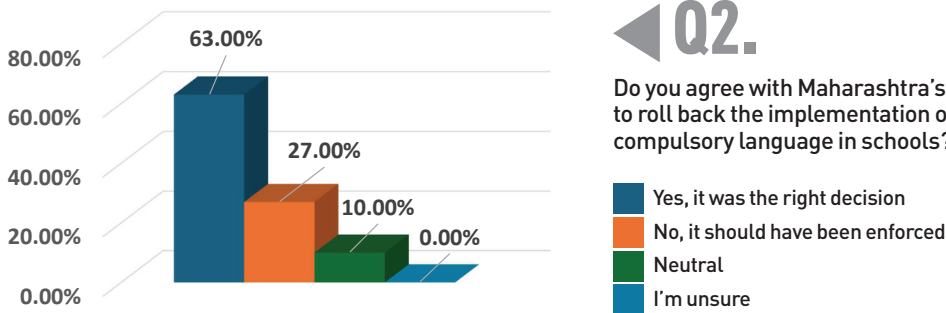
Q5.▶

In your opinion, should a three-language policy be enforced across all Indian schools (Hindi, English, and a regional language)?



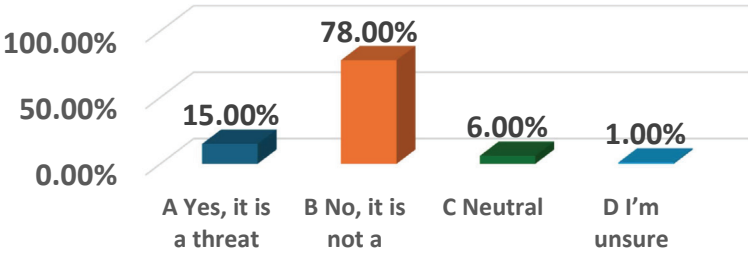
Q2.◀

Do you agree with Maharashtra's recent decision to roll back the implementation of Hindi as a compulsory language in schools?



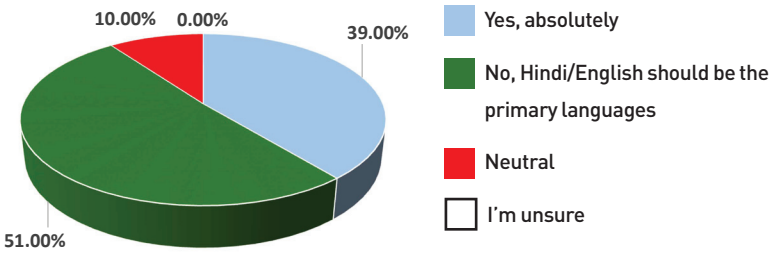
Q6.◀

Do you think the growing use of Hindi in national policies and education is a threat to regional languages like Marathi, Telugu, or Kannada?



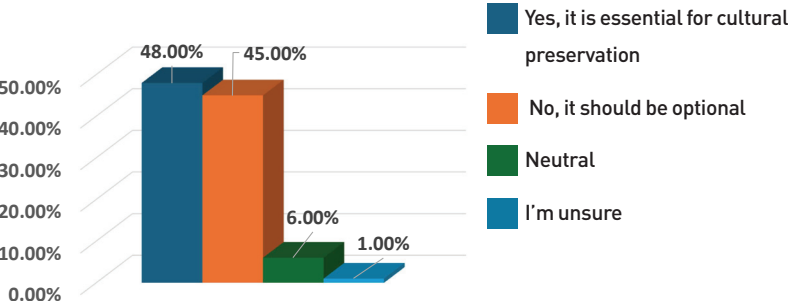
Q3.▶

Should Telugu be promoted as the primary language in Telangana over Hindi or English?



Q7.▶

Should the government promote regional languages for business and education to ensure local cultures and identities are preserved?



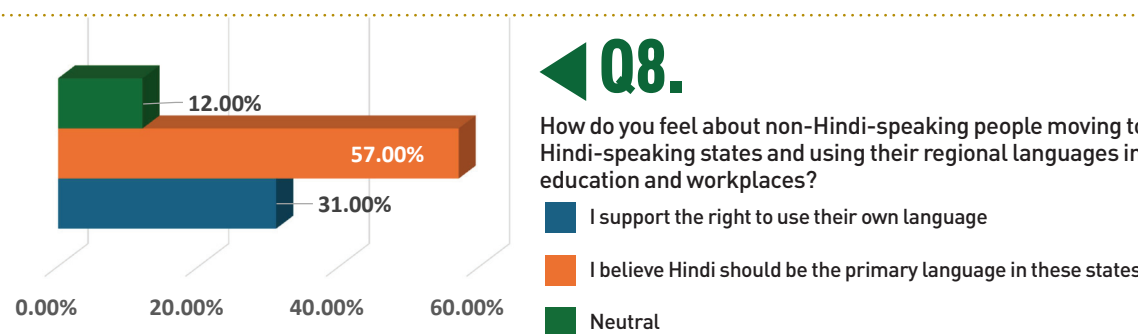
Q4.◀

Should companies in Bengaluru prioritise Kannada knowledge for hiring, given the city's regional identity?



Q8.◀

How do you feel about non-Hindi-speaking people moving to Hindi-speaking states and using their regional languages in education and workplaces?



At least 12 killed in T'gana blast

CONTINUED FROM P1

from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for the next of kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

The company said it deeply mourns the loss of lives and extends heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased. Asserting that the unit was fully insured, the firm assured all possible support to those affected.

Sigachi Industries also said production at its Hyderabad plant would be paused for around 90 days to restore affected equipment and structures.

In addition to the human impact, the incident also caused damage to certain ancillary equipment and civil structures within the facility, it said in a regulatory filing.

Y Nagi Reddy, Director General of the Telangana State Disaster Response and Fire Services, said it was suspected that the blast occurred in the drying unit of a plant.

"Industrial experts are saying that during the drying process, or a handling process, the pressure could have built up, followed by the blasting of the material that led to the blasting of the

entire building," Reddy told reporters.

He said efforts were also on to search and rescue those trapped in the collapsed three-story building.

Inspector General of Police (Multizone) V Satyanarayana said the impact of the blast was felt for about five km in the Pashamylaram area.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy expressed anguish over the incident and directed officials to take all steps to save the trapped workers and provide them advanced medical care, an official release said.

Meanwhile, the state government has also appointed a five-member committee headed by Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao to monitor the ongoing rescue efforts in the blast incident. The panel will also probe the incident.

Venkatswamy said the person in charge of the factory also lost his life in the accident, and "there is nobody from the factory side to give us really what happened."

After the incident, the district Collector and Superintendent of Police reached the spot within 30 minutes, he said.

He said a good ex gratia

amount would be ensured to the kin of the deceased, and the government would also consider interim help to the affected families.

He said DNA tests were being conducted in hospitals to identify some of the deceased.

At least half a dozen bodies need to undergo DNA profiling to establish the identity, as they were charred beyond recognition, a Revenue Department official said.

Sigachi Industries is a pharmaceutical company dedicated to pioneering advancements in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), Intermediates, Excipients, vitamin-mineral blends, and Operations and Management (O&M) services, according to the company's website.

Earlier, IGP (Multizone) Satyanarayana, quoting factory sources, said there were 150 people in the factory at the time of the blast, and 90 people were in the same area where the explosion occurred. He said the explosion occurred between 9.28 am and 9.35 am.

About ten firefighting engines were pressed into service, he said, adding the personnel of NDRF and SDRF were also engaged in the rescue operation.

Bad assets of banks fall to multi-decadal low of 2.3%

CONTINUED FROM P1

green loans or not recognise NPAs at all, the RBI had to step in and force lenders to recognise certain loans as non-performing through the asset quality review. As the state-run lenders had to be capitalised using public money as a result of the same.

The FSR said loan write-offs, including technical write-offs -- which can be recovered in the future -- were one of the prime reasons for the reduction in GNPA over the last five years.

As per the FSR, write-offs to GNPA ratio for SCBs moved up to 31.8 per cent in FY25 from 29.5 per cent in the previous year, led by private sector lenders and foreign banks, and added that write-offs by PSBs exhibited a marginal decline.

The half-yearly slippage ratio, measuring new accretions to NPAs as a share of standard advances at the beginning of the

half year, remained stable at 0.7 per cent.

From a sectoral perspective, the agricultural sector had the highest contribution to GNPA at 6.1 per cent, while it was broadly stable on the personal loans side at 1.2 per cent.

However, public sector banks' GNPA from the credit card segment moved up to 14.3 per cent as against 2.1 per cent in case of the private sector rivals.

Share of the large borrowers in the GNPA was 37.5 per cent as compared to their 43.9 per cent share in the overall outstanding loans. This cohort's GNPA ratio declined from 3.8 per cent in September 2023 to 1.9 per cent in March 2025, the FSR said.

None of the top-100 borrowers were classified as NPAs, the FSR said, adding that their share in the overall loan pie was stable over the last six months at 15.2 per cent.

Guides must in East Khasi Hills

CONTINUED FROM P1

isolated areas, she said.

Kurbah who is also the Chairperson of the District Tourism Promotion Society (DTPS) cited safety and security concerns following the Raja Raghuvanshi murder case that shook the state which also led to the arrest of eight people from Indore.

Tourism officials said the order would be strictly enforced, and violators may

face penalties or be denied access to trekking routes.

The administration also plans to deploy more trained guides and work with local communities to implement the directive effectively.

The East Khasi Hills District has popular trekking destinations such as the double-decker living root bridge, waterfalls and meadows.

The tourism department

has emphasised the need for better safety measures to protect the region's reputation as a safe and serene tourist destination.

Tourism Minister Paul Lyngdoh has projected a significant growth of around two million footfalls this year and the department has lined up several programs, including the Cherry Blossom Festival, in which international artists will perform in the state capital.

No change in interest rates on small savings

CONTINUED FROM P1

compared to other savings options.

Deposits made under the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, which is aimed at encouraging savings for the education and marriage expenses of girl children, will continue to earn an interest rate of 8.2 per cent.

This scheme is an integral part of the government's 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' initiative.

The National Savings Certificate (NSC), which is a fixed-income investment

plan, will keep its interest rate at 7.7 per cent.

This scheme is considered a secure investment with moderate returns.

The Post Office Monthly Income Scheme (PO-MIS), which provides regular monthly income to investors, will offer an interest rate of 7.4 per cent.

The Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP), a government-backed savings scheme designed to double the investment over a specific period, will continue to provide an interest rate of 7.5 per cent.

India Gate is out of bounds if you carry a bag

CONTINUED FROM P1

Another visitors said earlier "we used to take the bags, but now we are not allowed to carry them anymore.... We can't keep the bags here and there. At least,, the bags should be kept somewhere and locked."

Authorities have not said how long the new restrictions will stay in place. It is believed that the curbs have been put in place following heightened security efforts

to preserve and beautify India Gate.

Security guards stationed at the barricade said they were instructed not to allow entry with any kind of bag, even small backpacks or handbags. "We are just following orders."

Visitors said they understand the need for heightened security in a high-profile zone like India Gate. But they lamented lack dissemination of information about new rule.

'CM change' chorus grows in K'taka

CONTINUED FROM P1

dates, District Congress Committee chiefs, before meeting ministers, Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister, he said.

According to party sources, as part of the first phase of his three day visit, Surjewala on Monday held one-on-one meetings with legislators from the Chikaballapura and Kolar districts. He is expected

to have heard their grievances and collected feedback on the government's functioning, they said.

Meanwhile, when reporters asked about some state Congress leaders openly discussing a possible change of chief minister in the state in October, Kharge, who was in the city said it is up to the party "high command" to decide on such matters and that one should not create any unnecessary problem.

"See, that is in the hands of the high command. Nobody can say here what is going on in the high command. This is left to the high command, and the high command has got power to take further action. But unnecessarily, one should not create a problem," he said.

Speculation over leadership change has resurfaced after Congress MLA H A Iqbal Hussain claimed that Shivakumar

may get an opportunity to become chief minister in two to three months, while Cooperation Minister K N Rajanna hinted at "revolutionary" political developments in the state after September.

However, Siddaramaiah in Mysuru asserted that the Congress government in the state will remain "as solid as a rock" for five years and maintained that he and Shivakumar share good terms.

Prez: Animals are 'jeevan dhan'

CONTINUED FROM P1

our 'saadhan' (for transportation) and 'bal' (strength) for the farmers. Hence, I do not find the word 'pashu' appropriate for animals as they are 'jeevan dhan'. We cannot think of life without them," she added.

She said in the Indian culture, the presence of God is seen in all creatures. "The belief that our Gods and sages communicated with

animals is also based on the same philosophy," she said.

Murmu noted that several species of animals have either become extinct or are on the verge of extinction and emphasised that their conservation is crucial for biodiversity and the health of the Earth. She said the power of thinking and understanding that God has given to humans should be used for the welfare of all living beings.

Citing an example, Murmu said during her childhood days, vultures were a common sight, but that is not the case today.

The chemical drugs used in veterinary medicines could be behind the dwindling numbers of some species of the bird. Banning such drugs is a commendable step towards the conservation of vultures, she said.

"The Covid pandemic

warned us that a culture based on consumption can cause unimaginable damage not only to mankind but also to other living beings and the environment," she asserted. She also appealed to the IVRI and other institutes to play a leading role in increasing biodiversity, prevention and control of zoonotic diseases, and finding indigenous and low-cost treatments and nutrition for animals.



# RAVINDRA CHAVAN LIKELY TO BE APPOINTED AS MAHA NEW BJP CHIEF

Mahendra Bhatt retains Uttarakhand BJP post; Ramchander Rao lead Telangana, and P V N Madhav for Andhra Pradesh is new pick

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

**M**aharashtra BJP working president and four-term MLA Ravindra Chavan is set to be elected president in place of Chandrashekhar Bawankule, a Cabinet minister in the BJP-led government in the state, while incumbent Uttarakhand president and Rajya Sabha MP Mahendra Bhatt is set to begin a new term.

V P Ramalingam and K Beichhua were elected BJP presidents of Puducherry and Mizoram respectively on Monday, while single nomination for the post was filed in states like Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, making their election a mere formality on



Tuesday.

The BJP has now new state presidents, including some who were reelected, in 16 states, a figure that will rise on Tuesday. Some big states like Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh may also follow in the next few days.

The BJP has picked seasoned organisational men but with low public profile in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in Ramchander Rao and P V N Madhav respectively.

The development has brightened the prospect for the BJP to elect its new national president to replace Nadda, a Cabinet minister in the Modi government, in July.

Rao's choice, however, triggered a furious reaction from fiery Hindutva leader and MLA T Raja Singh, who resigned from the BJP. The elevation of Rao, a relatively low profile in the Telangana organisation riven with factionalism, is being seen as a balancing act and also a reward to old organisation hands.

The BJP's decision to re-

place its Lok Sabha MP Daggubati Purandeswari as its Andhra president with a seasoned organisation man is driven by its leadership's wish to build the organisation in a state where it is an ally of the ruling TDP but remains a minor electoral player.

Purandeswari, the daughter of towering Andhra leader N T Rama Rao and sister-in-law of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, enjoys a certain stature due to her family background and long stint in politics during which she served as a Union minister in the UPA government when she was in the Congress.

However, BJP sources said a thorough organisation leader like Madhav can be more helpful in building its organisation.

While Rao is a Brahmin, Madhav is from the Backward Classes, giving the party a toe hold in a community outside the ones that form the bulwark of all major political players in the state.

In Uttarakhand, the party, having made a Thakur leader in Pushkar Singh Dhami as the chief minister, has opted for a Brahmin face in Bhatt as its president. Chavan is a Maratha, a powerful community in Maharashtra.

The chief minister said Chavan started his political journey as a youth wing worker before becoming a municipal corporator, an MLA, and later a minister. "Chavan is a four-time legislator and a long-time colleague in the party. We are happy he has filed his nomination.

## BJP's fact-finding team slams TMC during Kolkata visit to probe campus rape

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA

A fact-finding team of the BJP, which paid a visit on Monday to the law college in South Kolkata where a 24-year-old student was gangraped by three people, including an alumnus close to the ruling party, on June 25, said criminals are appointed as teachers and staff without verification.

The team comprised former Union Ministers Satpal Singh and Meenakshi Lekhi and party MPs Biplob Kumar Deb and Manan Kumar Mishra. Mishra is also the Chairman of the Bar Council of India. The team will submit its report to the BJP national president JP Nadda.

Addressing a press conference after the visit, Satpal Singh attacked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee over the incident and said that crimes against women have now become a "pattern" in West Bengal.



### Kolkata law college suspends classes indefinitely

TDG NETWORK  
KOLKATA

The authorities of the South Calcutta Law College, where a student was allegedly by an alumnus and two of her seniors, decided to suspend classes for all students for an indefinite period, a notification issued on Monday said.

The decision was taken

by the governing body of the college.

"All BA LLB and LLM (General and Honours) classes of South Calcutta Law College will be suspended and the college premises will remain closed for all students until further notice as decided by the Governing Body," the notification, issued by the college authorities on June 29, said.

## Day after stampede, thousands make beeline to have glimpse of sibling deities in Puri

TDG NETWORK  
PURI (ODISHA)

A day after three people were killed and 50 others injured in a stampede near Shree Gundicha temple in Puri, thousands of devotees on Monday made a beeline to have a darshan of the sibling deities — Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath.

In view of Sunday's incident, barricades have been erected in front of the Shree Gundicha temple and different queues made for the smooth darshan of the deities at 'Adapa Mandap' (the podium on which the deities are seated) situated inside



the temple, a senior police officer said.

"We are alert... by the grace of the Lord, everything is running smoothly. Devotees are entering the Shree Gundicha Temple without any hassle," said

Soumendra Priyadarshi, an ADG-rank IPS officer who has been assigned the responsibility of overseeing the police arrangement during Rath Yatra.

He was assigned the task by Chief Minister Mohan

Charan Majhi after the stampede.

Devotees believe that they can wash away their sins if they have darshan of Lord Jagannath atop the 'Adapa Mandap'.

At least three persons, including two women, were killed and around 50 others injured in a stampede near Shree Gundicha temple in Puri on Sunday morning during a ceremony related to the ongoing Rath Yatra festivities, officials said.

The incident took place around 4.20 am when thousands of devotees had gathered near the chariots parked in front of the temple, they said.

AJIT MENDOLA  
NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi can take an important decision regarding Karnataka after returning home. Rahul and his sister Priyanka Gandhi are on a foreign tour these days. Party sources say that Rahul will return soon. The matter has become serious in view of the latest political developments in Karnataka.

After the statement of the party's national president Mallikarjun Kharge that everyone will have to accept the decision of the high command, the politics of Karnataka has heated up. Kharge's

statement is being linked to the leadership change in the state. In November this year, it will be two and a half years since Siddaramaiah became the Chief Minister. Supporters of Deputy Chief Minister and State President D Shivkumar are hopeful that he will get a chance to become the Chief Minister after two and a half years.

When Siddaramaiah became the Chief Minister two and a half years ago, it was decided that under the formula of two and a half years, D Shivkumar would be made the CM after two and a half years. The leaders of both the factions started making statements regarding

this formula. As the tension increased, state in-charge Randeep Surjewala met the leaders and expressed that everything is fine. The party is trying to pacify both factions by making changes in the cabinet. But it does not seem that the matter will be resolved peacefully.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is not going to leave the chair easily. Both prominent leaders of the state are said to be close to Rahul Gandhi, but it does not seem that both will agree on the issue of the chair. The party has also appointed a state president to keep Shivkumar happy. But for some time now, D Shivkumar and his supporters have

## Patnaik condemns assault on Odisha officer, seeks action

ANAND SINGH  
NEW DELHI

Former Odisha Chief Minister and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) chief Naveen Patnaik on Monday dubbed the attack on a state government officer as shocking and demanded with Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to take immediate and exemplary action against not only those who purported but more importantly the political leaders who orchestrated and conspired this shameful attack.

His remarks came soon after the video of the attack on Sahoo went viral on social media.

Patnaik took to X and said, "I am utterly shocked seeing this video. Today, Ratnakar Sahoo, OAS Additional Commissioner, BMC, a senior officer of the rank of Additional Secretary was dragged from his office and brutally kicked and assault-

ed in front of a BJP Corporation, allegedly linked to a defeated BJP MLA Candidate."

Slamming the state government, the BJD leader said, "What is more appalling is that this happened in broad daylight, in the heart of the capital city - Bhubaneswar to a senior officer while he was in his office, hearing grievances of people."

Demanding strict action, the former Chief Minister said, "I ask Mohan Charan Majhi ji to take immediate and exemplary action against not only those who purported but more importantly the political leaders who orchestrated and conspired this shameful attack. The people named by the officer in his FIR have behaved like criminals. If a senior officer is not safe in his own office, then what law and order will ordinary citizens expect from the Government.\*

## Maha Cong plans to contest BMC polls solo amid alliance tensions

ANAND SINGH  
NEW DELHI

With Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and Raj Thackeray targeting the Maharashtra government on three languages row and speculations rife that two brothers may unite for BMC polls, the Maharashtra Congress on Monday held a meeting to strengthen the party and chalk out strategy for the BMC polls, with sources indicating that the grand old party might go solo.

The Maharashtra Congress meeting was held at the old party headquarters here and chaired by party's state in-charge Ramesh Chenchithalla, and attended by Maharashtra Congress chief Harshwardhan Sappal, Mumbai Congress chief Varsha Gaikwad, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan, Naseem Khan, Rajani Patil, Mukul Wasnik, Nana Patole, Bala-saheb Thorat and several



others.

According to sources, during the meeting several issues were discussed to strengthen the party in the state and also to discuss its preparations for the Brihan-mumbai Municipal Corporation elections scheduled later this year.

The source said that the Congress may decide to go solo in the BMC polls and has asked Varsha Gaikwad to prepare on all the 228 seats.

The source further said that the Varsha Gaikwad has been asked to prepare and decide on the BMC polls to go solo but without giving a negative message to Shiv Sena (UBT), as it is part of Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi

alliance in the state.

Raj Thackeray had broken his ties with the Shiv Sena 20 years and floated his own party Maharashtra Nirman Sena (MNS).

However, Congress source revealed that many party leaders felt that it is necessary to strengthen the party in the state as its condition is deteriorating and it must go solo in the BMC polls to safeguard the party's interest as it has been losing voters to its alliance partners in the state.

The source said that some members also said that the BMC polls also helps the party to prepare new leadership and thus it is important to contest solo in the BMC polls.

However, the source said that if Uddhav and Raj Thackeray come together for BMC polls, then the party will look for going solo and the MVA alliance will remain intact as it will come together after the polls.

## 'Today's exchanges harming social fabric'

TDG NETWORK  
JAIPUR

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday expressed concern over the current political scenario in the country, saying today's political atmosphere is not favourable for Indian democracy and social health.

He also dismissed former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot's claim that he was under pressure, saying he neither functions under any pressure nor exerts pressure (on anyone).

Speaking at 'Sneh Milan Samaroh' organised by the Rajasthan Pragatisheel Manch at the Constitution Club here, Dhankhar said the intensity and tone of political exchanges today were detrimental to the democratic and social fabric of the nation.

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Rajasthan Governor Haribhau Bagade on Monday strongly responded to former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's recent re-



marks, during a conference organised by the Former MLA Association at the Constitution Club.

Gehlot, in a public statement made in Jodhpur, alleged that constitutional authorities such as the Vice President, the Governor, and the Lok Sabha Speaker were working under pressure. Reacting to this, Vice President Dhankhar dismissed the claim, calling it baseless and concerning.

"I do not come under anyone's pressure," Dhankhar said.

"Nor do I exert pressure on others. How can someone who has drunk the water of Rajasthan ever come under pressure?"

## Firebrand T'gana BJP MLA Raja Singh resigns from party over leadership issues

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Upset over the possible appointment of Ramchander Rao as BJP's Telangana President, the party's firebrand MLA Raja Singh on Monday wrote to Union Minister G Kishan Reddy saying that he is resigning from the primary membership of the saffron party.

Reddy is presently the state

chief and the party high command is likely to announce new successor on Tuesday.

Singh said the decision to appoint the new head of the party in the state has come as a shock and disappointment, not just to him, but to lakhs of Karyakartas, leaders, and voters who have stood by the party through every high and low.

"With great sadness, I have decided to resign from

the primary membership of the Bharatiya Janata Party. I request you, Shri Kishan Reddy ji, to kindly inform the Hon'ble Speaker of the Telangana Legislative Assembly that T Raja Singh is no longer a member of the BJP," he said in the letter.

There are many capable senior leaders, MLAs, and MPs within Telangana who have tirelessly worked for the growth of BJP and who have



the strength, credibility, and connections to lead the party forward. Unfortunately, it ap-

pears that some individuals, driven by personal interests, have misled the central leadership and taken decisions by running the show from behind the curtain, he alleged.

"This not only undermines the sacrifices of grassroots workers but risks pushing the party into avoidable setbacks," he said.

He said he has been a dedicated Karyakarta, elected three times in a row with the

blessings of the people and support of the party.

"But today, I find it difficult to stay silent or pretend that all is well. This is not about personal ambition, this letter reflects the pain and frustration of lakhs of loyal BJP Karyakartas and supporters who feel sidelined and unheard," Singh said.

Though he may be stepping away from the party, the Goshamahal legislator said he re-

mains fully committed to the ideology of Hindutva and the service of Hindu Dharma and the people of his constituency.

Later, speaking to reporters, Singh said he went to the BJP office to file a nomination for the state president post.

The nomination should be supported by ten state BJP council members. However, he alleged that some of the members who were sup-

porting his candidature were threatened by few party leaders that they would be suspended if they chose to back Singh.

In August 2024, Singh was suspended from the party following his alleged controversial remarks against "Islam and Prophet Mohammed" in a video which was later pulled down by the social media platform on which it was uploaded.



# AAP GUNS FOR SIRSA FOR 'DEROGATORY' REMARKS AGAINST SLUM DWELLERS

AAP protests in Delhi, demands sacking of Minister Sirsa over controversial remarks against slum dwellers from Bihar, UP

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) legislators and workers held a protest outside the office of Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa in West Delhi's Rajouri Garden on Monday, demanding his removal from the Cabinet over alleged "derogatory" remarks.

AAP said Sirsa's alleged "derogatory" remarks targeted slum dwellers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

There was no immediate response available from the minister or the BJP on the allegations.

The protest came a day after Sirsa said, "I want to tell Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi and AAP that you can protest as

## AAP VS SIRSA: SLUR ROW SPARKS POLITICAL FIRESTORM

- AAP accuses Minister Sirsa of derogatory remarks against UP-Bihar slum dwellers.
- Sirsa equated slum residents with "Rohingyas and Bangladeshis" in recent comments.
- AAP leaders say BJP targeting Purvanchalis, warn of electoral consequences.
- No response yet from Sirsa or BJP on AAP's demands and protest.



much as you want for Rohingyas and Bangladeshis, but we will not allow them to stay in this nation... We will not get involved in any such politics that compromise the lives of people in Delhi." He further alleged

that "they commit crimes everywhere" and "their establishments will be demolished."

Reacting sharply, AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha said, "The BJP is demolishing slums for days now, and Minister

Sirsa crossed a line by calling the residents Rohingyas. Many of these people are from UP and Bihar. The people of Purvanchal are hurt. We demand that Sirsa apologise immediately or the chief minister must re-

move him from his post."

Joining the protest, AAP leader Vinay Mishra said, "This is the same person who stayed in slums before elections. Now, he insults those very people. The BJP's hatred for Purvanchalis is not new. His statement will have consequences not only in Delhi but also in Bihar elections."

Sharing videos of the protest on X, AAP wrote, "The BJP has been calling brothers and sisters of Purvanchal Bangladeshi Rohingyas. Now, Minister Sirsa once again made a hateful statement against Purvanchalis. Today, AAP leaders, workers, and the Purvanchal community surrounded his residence in protest."

## PWD Min Parvesh pays tribute to former CM Sahib Singh Verma

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Parvesh Verma on Monday paid tribute to his late father and former Chief Minister and father Sahib Singh Verma, on his 18th death anniversary.

Verma, while speaking to the media, said that the party's resolution was to fulfil the dreams of Sahib Singh Verma.

"Today, all of us performed a havan here on the 18th death anniversary of former Delhi Chief Minister Sahib Singh, paid tribute to him, and remembered him. Thousands of people from the NCR came and remembered him, with whom he was connected... Our resolve is to fulfil his dreams, and we are moving forward in that direction," Parvesh Verma said while speaking to the media.

Earlier, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta also paid homage to the former CM Sahib Singh Verma and stated that he was a strong voice for the workers, farmers and the marginalised communities in Delhi's politics.

In a post on social media X, the CM wrote that Verma's service and principles were his resolve. "On the death anniversary of former Chief Minister Dr. Sahib Singh Verma ji, who remained a strong voice for workers, farmers, and marginalized communities in Delhi's politics, I offer my respectful homage. Service and principles were his resolve. From rural Delhi to Parliament, his life was a symbol of dedication to the nation,

## CM Rekha: Sahib Singh was voice for workers, marginalised in Delhi

**New Delhi:** Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday paid homage to former Chief Minister Sahib Singh Verma on his 18th death anniversary and stated that he was a strong voice for workers, farmers, and the mar-

"On the death anniversary of former Chief Minister Dr. Sahib Singh Verma ji, who remained a strong voice for workers, farmers, and marginalised communities in Delhi's politics, I offer my respectful homage. Service and principles



ginalised communities in Delhi's politics.

In a post on social media X, the CM wrote that Verma's service and principles were his resolve.

was his resolve. From rural Delhi to Parliament, his life was a symbol of dedication to the nation, simplicity, and relentless struggle," the post read. She further wrote in her post that the patriotic fervour and ascetic life of public service of Verma would continue to inspire generations forever.

"His patriotic fervour and

ascetic life of public service will continue to inspire future generations forever," the post further read. Sahib Singh Verma was known for his strong roots in agriculture and community service, having grown up in a traditional rural setting.

## AC mechanic dies after falling from 8th floor of building in Subhash Place

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

An air conditioner mechanic died after falling from the eighth floor of a building in Netaji Subhash Place area of the national capital, police said on Monday.

The incident occurred on Sunday afternoon when the mechanic was repairing an air conditioning unit on the 8th floor of Agrawal Cyber Plaza.

An investigation is underway in the case. Officials are looking into the exact sequence of events that led to the fall and whether adequate safety equipment and protocols were in place at the time of the incident.

Further details awaited. Meanwhile, a 23-year-old labourer from Uttar Pradesh was found hanging at Masoodpur village near Vasant Kunj North police station area in Delhi, police said on Sunday.



According to the police, a PCR call was received on Saturday regarding the suicide of a 23-year-old man at Masoodpur Village. The body of the deceased was shifted to Safdarjung Hospital, where he was declared brought dead.

The deceased was identified as Uday Bhan, a resident of Badaun, Uttar Pradesh, who had arrived in Delhi around 45-50 days ago with his elder brother Hetram.

Both were employed as labourers at the Delhi Metro construction site, Masoodpur. The deceased worked the night shift, while his brother worked the day

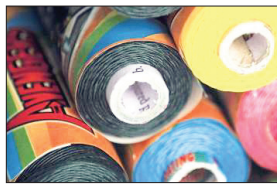
## Delhi Police to launch crackdown on sale, stockpiling of Chinese manjha

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police will launch a drive against selling and stockpiling of Chinese manjha in the national capital, an officer said on Monday.

Chinese manjha, a sharp string used for flying kites, which is coated with glass, metal, or other sharp materials, has been banned in the capital since 2017.

On June 27, a 22-year-old man died after his throat was slit by a Chinese manjha



near Bara Hindu Rao Hospital in north Delhi.

The victim, Yash Goswami, a resident of Karawal Nagar, was on his way to home when he came in contact with the Chinese manjha and suffered a deep cut on his neck.

"We have communicated

## Light rain, thunderstorms hit Delhi-NCR, temp dips sharply

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi and adjoining NCR witnessed light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and gusty winds on Monday morning, pushing the temperatures several degrees down and rendering the air cleaner.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) recorded widespread precipitation across various parts of Delhi-NCR from Sunday night. Safdarjung, the city's base observatory, recorded 14 mm rainfall in the 24 hours until 8.30 am on Monday. Palam and Lodi Road logged 16.2 mm and 17.3 mm of rainfall respectively during the same period.

As per the IMD's three-hourly rainfall data, Najafgarh saw the highest spell at 5.5 mm between 2.30 am 5.30 am on Monday, followed Safdarjung at 4.4 mm rainfall, and Palam, Pusa and Narela at 1 mm rain each.

The rainfall led to a notable drop in day temperatures on Monday. According to the IMD, the minimum temperature recorded at



8.30 am at Safdarjung station was 24 degrees Celsius, 3.9 notches below the season's average.

The air quality improved slightly, though the Air Quality Index (AQI) continued to stay in the 'satisfactory' category. The AQI recorded was 73 at 9 am on Monday, against 83 on Sunday evening.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board, an AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

The IMD had issued a nowcast warning for Monday morning, forecasting light rain and thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds with speeds

up to 30-40 kilometres per hour across all four sectors of Delhi -- northwest, northeast, southwest and southeast. Parts of NCR, including Ghaziabad, Noida, Gurgaon and Faridabad, also experienced similar conditions.

The Met office has issued a yellow alert (Be Aware) for most of Delhi and NCR, while certain parts like northwest Delhi and sections of NCR such as Jhajjar, Bhiwani and Panipat were under the green zone (No Warning).

More light to moderate showers are likely in parts of the region over the next 24 hours, as per IMD officials, who also advised residents to avoid open spaces during thunderstorms and remain alert to possible waterlogging in low-lying areas.

## HC grants custody parole to gangster Bawania to see his ailing wife in hosp

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday granted custody parole of jailed gangster Neeraj Bawania to see her ailing wife and give consent for her surgery. Initially, he had sought interim bail to take care of her.

Bawania is in custody in the case linked to the murder of a rival gang member in a jail van in 2015.

Justice Manoj Jain granted custody parole to Neeraj Sehrawat, alias Bawania, for July 1, between 10 am and 4 pm. His wife is admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) in Mehta Hospital in Delhi's Pandav Nagar.

The Jail Superintendent has been instructed to make adequate arrangements for his safety, given the high risk involved.

He has been directed not



to interact with anyone else except his wife and the concerned doctor.

While granting the custody parole, the high court considered the submissions of the prosecution that there is an apprehension of gang war in Delhi and one person has been killed.

He is a high-risk prisoner and if released on bail, he may pose a danger to himself and to society. He is also a flight risk, Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) Laksh Khanna argued.

Senior advocate N Hariharan, along with advocate

Siddharth Yadav, appeared for Bawania and submitted that if there is apprehension by the state, his client may be granted custody parole for two days.

Later on, the defence counsel submitted that he may be granted one-day custody parole as there is no one to see her and sign the papers required for surgery. Surgery is imminent, he submitted in response to a query raised by the court.

The High Court on June 25 issued notice on the bail plea of jailed gangster Neeraj Sehrawat alias Bawania.

## Delhi court gives life term to man for killing wife

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has sentenced a man to rigorous life imprisonment for the murder of his wife in 2013.

Additional sessions judge Rakesh Kumar was hearing the arguments on the quantum of sentence against the accused Satender Pal Singh, who was convicted under Section 302 (murder) of IPC on June 5.

On June 6, the court's sentencing order read, "The convict is sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for life and to pay a fine of Rs 50,000 for having committed the offence punishable under section 302 of the IPC."

The prosecution alleged Singh strangled his 35-year-old wife, Vimlesh, with her scarf on June 7, 2013.

In the 87-page conviction order, the court trashed Singh's argument that his wife died by suicide due to mental illness, holding her death to be "homicidal".

The court observed signs of resistance at the scene of crime as broken pieces of bangles were scattered near the body coupled with her struggle, indicated by injury marks on her body.

"Photographs of the de-



ceased also show that the ligature mark on her neck is atypical kind of mark which is not suggestive of suicidal hanging but it is more suggestive of a homicidal strangulation, which is also corroborated by the cause of death as mentioned in the postmortem report."

Singh, the court held, had strained relations with his wife and was last seen in his wife's company, putting the onus on the accused to provide a plausible explanation about the circumstances of her death.

"The weapon of the offence, i.e. chunni (scarf) has been recovered and it has been proved the injury found on the person of the deceased could be caused by that chunni. In these circumstances, the accused owes an explanation but he has failed to do so and in his statement, he has simply stated that this is a case of suicide, which in the light of evidence produced by the prosecution and the photographs of the scene of crime is not plausible and is unacceptable," it said.

## Cop suffers from chest pain after being caught taking bribe

TDG NETWORK  
PATNA

A Head Constable of Delhi Police, currently under treatment at Burari Hospital, suffered chest pain after he was caught red-handed while taking a bribe at Burari Police Station.

According to the Vigilance Department of Delhi Police, a head constable was caught red-handed accepting a bribe of Rs 25,000 and subsequently suffered chest pain requiring hospitalisation. The incident occurred at the Burari police station in North Delhi on Friday night. The team rushed him to Burari Hospital, and now

he is under treatment, officials added.

A team from the Vigilance department had laid a trap for the head constable after a local businessman complained about the officer demanding a bribe of Rs 75,000 to not remove the mobile tower from his terrace. The complainant was instructed to offer the bribe in three instalments of Rs 25,000 each.

The head constable was apprehended while accepting the bribe, but he suffered chest pain and was rushed to the hospital.

According to Vigilance, the officer is currently



stable and will be arrested once discharged from the hospital. An investigation is underway to determine the full extent of the officer's involvement in the bribery case.

Earlier, the Rouse Avenue Court had granted bail to a

traffic cop on June 14 who was allegedly collecting bribe money through a man, being used as a helper, from transporters and other persons in the Samaypur Badli Traffic Circle.

The helper, identified as Dalip Kumar, filed a

complaint at the Vigilance Branch, claiming that the accused cop had been using him to collect bribe money for the past two years, though he was not aware of it.

An FIR was registered by the vigilance, and accused Assistant Sub-Inspector Vijay Kumar was arrested red-handed on May 21, 2025, when he was receiving Rs 30,000 collected by Dalip Kumar.

Special Judge Atul Krishna Agrawal granted bail to Vijay Kumar after considering the facts, including the custody of the accused and parity with the co-accused,

who is enlarged on bail. The complainant has retracted his allegations in the complaint. "Considering the period of judicial custody of the accused as well as the fact that the recovery whatsoever has already been effected, and also the fact that co-accused Head Ct. Surender has already been granted bail by the Learned Concerned Court vide order dated 06.06.2025, accused Vijay Kumar is admitted to bail on his furnishing a personal bond in the sum of Rs. 50,000 with one surety in the like amount," Special Judge Agrawal ordered on June 12.



# UNION MINISTER LASHES OUT AT MAMATA GOVT OVER KOLKATA GANG RAPE CASE

Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar accuses Mamata Banerjee govt of inaction on rising sexual violence in Bengal.

TDG NETWORK  
KOLKATA

Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar, on Monday, slammed Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee-led West Bengal government over the rising incidents of crime against women in the state after the case of an alleged gang rape of a law student within her college premises in Kolkata.

Speaking to the media, Majumdar pointed out that in the past eight months, two such incidents have occurred, first one the RG Kar

## MAJUMDAR BLAMES TMC FOR RISING CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

- Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar cited two major rape cases in 8 months in Kolkata.
- Accused the Mamata govt of suppressing victims' families and civic voices.
- Claimed West Bengal Police act as TMC cadres in uniform, not law enforcers.
- BJP forms fact-finding team to visit affected families, submit report to JP Nadda.



rape and murder case and the recent rape of a student at a law college in South Kolkata.

"In a gap of eight months, two such incidents have occurred in West Bengal. One is RG Kar and the other is in Kasba, the town in South Calcutta Law College. The girl is nineteen years old and a first-year student. She was raped. Despite being a woman chief minister, such incidents continue to occur repeatedly," he said.

"Here in the Barrackpore, I went to the district a few months ago to meet that family, a disabled girl was

raped and murdered. One incident after another is happening in West Bengal, and Mamata Banerjee is sitting quietly. That is why our national president, JP Nadda, under the leadership of Satyapal Singh ji, a former chief minister like Viplav Dev, a central minister like Meenakshi Lekhi, and the rest, has formed such a team of four people. They have sent the team, and I will take them to those places. And will prepare a report and submit it to the national president through this committee," Majumdar said.

The West Bengal BJP President also accused the state government of destroying democracy and claimed that the police force has become a cadre of the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC).

"Mamata Banerjee has destroyed the entire democracy here, and the police are behaving in such a way that there is no police. It is a cadet of Mamata Banerjee's party who is in uniform. They are cadet members, but they are wearing uniforms, and that is why, again and again, they are behaving in that way, stopping everyone from

protesting. Even the civic society, which we call the Sushil Samaj in Bengal, was also stopped. The Vice President of the Women's Commission, who came here, was stopped; the family is being intimidated. The family is kept in such a position that they do not open their mouths. An atmosphere of fear has been created in the whole of Bengal," Majumdar stated.

The Union Minister also criticised the TMC leadership, pointing out that leaders like Kunal Ghosh and Kalyan Banerjee have made anti-woman remarks.

"Look at the party where Kunal Ghosh belongs, the manner in which one MP is imposing on another party woman. The way Kalyan Banerjee is putting allegations on Mahua Mitra, the way he spoke to a woman is anti-woman. The way they are fighting with each other and the way they fight with a woman from her party; then her party is not safe. So leave the rest of Bengal alone," Sukanta Majumdar said.

# Governor visits South Goa under Khushal Kalyan Yatra

TDG NETWORK  
PANAJI

Goa Governor PS Shreedharan Pillai undertook a visit to several significant religious sites, including the Shree Sateri Shantadurga Temple in Xeldem, Quepem, the Our Lady of Poor Church in Tilamol, and the Shree Damodar Temple in Zambaulim, as part of the "Khushal Kalyan Yatra" initiative on Monday. On his arrival at Shree Sateri Shantadurga temple, the Governor was welcomed by Nilesch Cabral, MLA and Former Minister. Others present were Kavita Gawas Desai, Sarpanch; Siddharth Gawas Desai, ZP Member; Paresh Gawas Desai, President; and other committee members of Shree Sateri Shantadurga Temple.

Paresh Gawas Desai, President, felicitated the Governor by offering a Shawl, Shriphal and a portrait of the deity.

Later, the Governor vis-



ited Our Lady of Poor Church, Tilamol and offered prayers. On his arrival, Fr. Aldrin D'Costa, Parish Priest and Fr. Aiden Fernandes and Fr. Denrich D'Costa welcomed the Governor by presenting bouquets of flowers.

Nilesch Cabral, MLA and Councillors, Sarpanch and Panchayat Members were present.

Fr. Aldrin D'Costa, Parish Priest, briefed the Governor about the functioning of the church and presented a memento.

Upon arrival at the historic Shree Damodar temple in

Zambaulim, the Governor was welcomed by Subhash Faldessai, Minister for Social Welfare, and Manjunath Duple, President of the Devasthan Samiti. Other committee members were also present.

During the Khushal Kalyan Yatra, the Governor offered prayers at all the places of worship he visited, invoking divine blessings for the peace, happiness, and welfare of the people of Goa and the Nation.

The Governor presented a cheque of Rs 50,000 each to all the holy places that he visited today.

# KTR slams Amit Shah over inaction on Telangana graft claims

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Bharath Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao has launched a scathing attack on Union Home Minister Amit Shah, demanding to know why the BJP-led Centre has failed to order an investigation into the corruption allegations against the Congress government in Telangana, a release from BRS PRO said.

Reminding Shah of his remarks made earlier in Nizamabad, where he called the Revanth Reddy-led government an "ATM" for the Congress high command, KTR questioned, "Why hasn't the Union Home Minister acted upon it? What is stopping the Centre from initiating a probe through the CBI or ED?"

Alleging a covert understanding between the BJP and Congress, KTR said,



"In Delhi, they stage a mock fight. In Telangana, they strike secret deals. Is BJP shielding Revanth Reddy because it cannot take on BRS alone?"

KTR reminded that even Prime Minister Narendra Modi had once accused the Congress of running a "RR Tax" scam in Telangana, but no investigation was initiated. "If you only make allegations during visits, but allow Congress to loot in broad daylight, what message are you sending to the people?"

he asked.

The BRS leader also took strong exception to what he described as an orchestrated campaign to defame the Kaleshwaram Project, which played a pivotal role in making Telangana the top rice-producing state in the country. "Unfortunately, a landmark irrigation initiative like Kaleshwaram is being targeted purely for political gain," he said.

On the BJP's developmental record in the state, KTR noted, "Despite eight BJP MPs and two Union Ministers from Telangana, not a single project has been given national status. No IIT, IIM, or central medical institute has been granted. This discrimination hasn't gone unnoticed."

KTR also ridiculed the Centre's repeated "launches" of the Turmeric Board, pointing out that Union Minister Piyush Goyal had already virtually inaugurated it earlier this year.

# Uttarakhand CM Dhami participates in Space Conference 2025

TDG NETWORK  
DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Monday participated in the Space Technology and Applications Conference 2025.

The event focused on the role of Himalayan states in building a Developed India by 2047. ISRO Chairman Dr. V. Narayanan was present as the Chief Guest.

Welcoming scientists and participants from across the country, the Chief Minister said that this conference will be a milestone in realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.



The Chief Minister emphasised that space technology is no longer limited to research alone but plays a significant role in communication, agriculture, weather forecasting, disaster management, education, health, and infrastructure development. He congratulated ISRO and all scientists on the proud

moment of Indian scientist Shubhashu Shukla hoisting the national flag at the International Space Station, calling it a matter of immense national pride. He added that Shukla's contribution will lay a solid foundation for future space missions, including Gaganyaan.

On this occasion, the Chief

Minister inaugurated a dashboard developed by ISRO and UCOST to make Champawat a model district, and also unveiled a publication by ISRO. He reiterated the state government's strong commitment to promoting science and technological innovation, mentioning that significant progress is being made in establishing Science City, Innovation Centres, and cutting-edge laboratories in areas such as AI, robotics, and drones. The Chief Minister expressed confidence that this conference would play a key role in making Uttarakhand a "space-technology friendly state", contributing to its sustainable development.

# CISF reinvents airport security to meet new challenges

ABHINANDAN MISHRA  
NEW DELHI

In a demonstration of its commitment to evolving alongside the rapidly transforming aviation landscape, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) convened a high-level workshop last week, bringing together all key stakeholders in India's civil aviation and security ecosystem. Held at the Airport Sector Headquarters on 27 June, the "Functional Workshop of Airport Sector" was attended by senior officials from CISF, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, BCAS, AAI, Delhi Police, Bureau of Immigration, SPG, NSG, DIAL, and major airlines including Air India Express and IndiGo.

The workshop under-



scored CISF's renewed emphasis on strengthening airport security through collaboration, technological innovation, and a more passenger-centric approach. Participants discussed ways to make security processes more efficient without compromising on vigilance.

A major point of focus was the integration of emerging technologies such as facial recognition for airport entry, automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), Fast

Tag-linked vehicle screening, and the use of artificial intelligence for data-driven threat analysis.

These upgrades are designed to streamline security checks, reduce wait times, and enhance situational awareness. CISF officials also highlighted the development of digitized standard operating procedures and the use of technology to refine real-time risk assessment and operational coordination.

# Jaipur Foot camp restores mobility to 75 disabled Afghans in Kabul

TDG NETWORK  
JAIPUR

A five-day disabled rehabilitation camp was recently held in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, through a collaborative effort between the Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) and the Government of India. During this camp, 75 Afghan citizens were fitted with the Jaipur Foot, enabling them to walk again.

The camp was organised under the Ministry of External Affairs' "India for Humanities" initiative, with all expenses covered by the Government of India. The BMVSS team, consisting of seven technical members led by treasurer Vimal Chopra, carried out the work amid



challenging conditions, donning helmets and bulletproof jackets to ensure safety in the conflict-affected area.

D.R. Mehta, founder and chief patron of BMVSS, highlighted that the camp would strengthen humanitarian ties between India and Afghanistan. He also announced plans for a larger future camp in Afghanistan, aimed at fitting artificial legs to many more disabled individuals.

# Telangana govt to introduce Bill for welfare of gig workers

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Revanth Reddy-led Telangana government is set to introduce legislation that will protect the rights and support the 4.2 lakh gig workers in the state. Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh shared a post on his official 'X' handle, informing about the development.

The bill will contain key provisions, including the mandatory registration of gig workers by aggregators and the formation of a Tripartite board comprising workers, aggregators, and the government, which will monitor gig worker welfare.

Furthermore, there is a provision for establish-



ing a welfare fund for gig workers, which will be administered by the tripartite board.

"The Congress Government in Telangana is set to introduce legislation to protect and support the 4.2 lakh gig workers in the state. Key provisions - Mandatory registration of gig workers by aggregators, a Tripartite board comprising workers, aggregators, and govt to monitor gig

worker welfare and a welfare fund for gig workers to be administered by the tripartite board", Jairam Ramesh said in his 'X' post.

The Congress leader claimed that the main agenda of the bill is to promote economic and social justice in a "meaningful" manner. Jairam Ramesh informed that, after Rajasthan and Karnataka, Telangana will become the third state to enact the law.

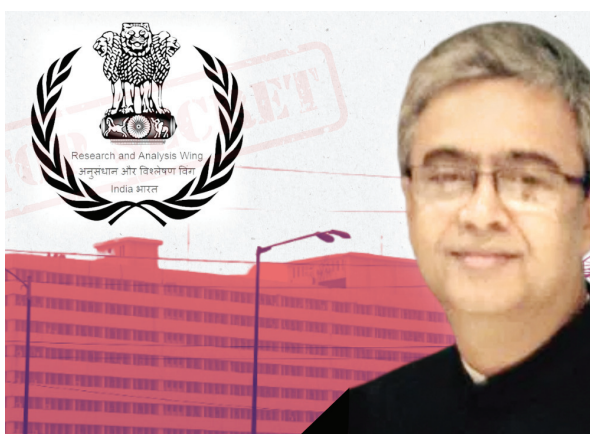
# Ravi Sinha retires as RAW chief, reshapes agency's operational contours

ABHINANDAN MISHRA  
NEW DELHI

As Ravi Sinha (IPS) demits office today, 30 June, as the chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), he leaves behind a two-year tenure marked by quiet actions, deep recalibration, and a deliberate reshaping of the agency's operational contours. Rather than operating within the constraints of legacy templates,

Sinha expanded the very framework within which R&AW had traditionally functioned—adapting it to meet the complexities of a shifting geopolitical and threat landscape.

When the pages of history are turned back, they will narrate that at a time when India's external threats were no longer confined to borders or uniforms, Sinha's leadership was defined not by what made



headlines—but by what didn't.

In March 2024, a low-intensity blast at a café in Bengaluru triggered what would later become a case study in hybrid terror. Initially appearing as a localized act, the incident led to the arrest of four operatives linked to the Islamic State, revealing a deeper penetration by foreign handlers into India's soft urban targets. Almost si-

multaneously, in Kashmir, a new front was opened by "The Resistance Front"—a well-equipped offshoot of Lashkar-e-Taiba, backed by Pakistan's ISI and enabled by hi-tech equipment sourced from foreign suppliers.

Under Sinha's command, the threat architecture was swiftly decoded and countermeasures discreetly implemented on the ground. The actors that were op-

erating behind the TRF façade were identified and exposed, without much noise and fanfare. Pakistan's intelligence agency's ISI's plan to plant a new theory of birth of new and brutal form of localised terrorists was nipped at the roots even before it could achieve its objective, of a massive anti-India propaganda and shielding Lashkar-e-Taiba.

But perhaps the most

intriguing development during his tenure was the emergence of the "unknown men" phenomenon in Pakistan.

Between 2023 and 2025, over 30 current and former terrorists (or even more, the real numbers might never become public)—individuals directly linked to attacks on Indian soil—died in Pakistan under mysterious circumstances, all unnatural deaths.



# GST COLLECTION HITS RECORD HIGH, SHOWS RISING COMPLIANCE

Survey confirms strong industry support for GST with 85% happy with the system

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) system has achieved a major milestone in 2024-25, with a record gross collection of Rs22.08 lakh crore, showing a 94 per cent growth over the previous year.

According to a release by the finance ministry, the average monthly GST collection stood at Rs 1.84 lakh crore, the highest since GST was launched in 2017.

GST collections have steadily increased over the years, rising from Rs.11.37 lakh crore in 2020-21 to Rs 20.18 lakh crore in 2023-24, reflecting stronger economic activity and better compliance.

As of April 30, 2025, there are now over 1.51 crore active GST registrations, showing growing participation in the

## GST SEES HIGHEST-EVER COLLECTIONS, RISING INDUSTRY SUPPORT

- FY25 GST collections touched Rs 22.08 lakh crore, up 9.4% YoY, with Rs 1.84 lakh crore monthly average.
- Over 1.51 crore active registrations signal rising compliance and wider tax participation.
- 85% of businesses express satisfaction in Deloitte's GST@8 survey, citing simplification and tech-driven processes.
- SME approval rose to 82%, with benefits including faster refunds, digitalisation, and fewer tax barriers.



tax system.

The GST Council, which was formed under the Constitution to guide GST policy, has played a key role in shaping the system. It is chaired by the Union Finance Minister and includes state finance ministers and other

key officials.

Since its formation in 2016, the Council has held 55 meetings, taking many important decisions to make the GST system simpler and more business-friendly.

Now in its eighth year, GST is widely seen as one of In-

dia's most important tax reforms. It replaced multiple indirect taxes with a single nationwide system, helping create a common national market and reducing the cost of doing business.

Businesses—especially small and medium ones—

-benefit from easier compliance, faster refunds, and fewer tax-related hurdles.

The recent Deloitte GST@8 survey confirms strong industry support for GST. It found that 85 per cent of business leaders had a positive experience with the system.

Key reasons included simplified tax processes, smooth input tax credit flow, the removal of old state taxes and check posts, and better use of digital technology.

Among small and medium enterprises (SMEs), support for GST also grew—from 78 per cent last year to 82 per cent this year—showing broader acceptance of the system. As GST enters its ninth year, it continues to evolve with a focus on ease of doing business, better compliance, and stronger economic growth.

## Industrial output slows to 9-month low of 1.2% in May

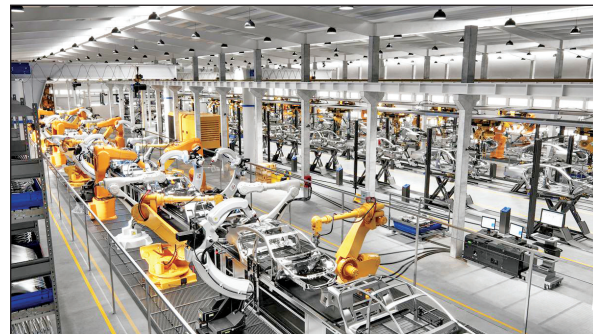
TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India's industrial production growth slowed to a nine-month low of 1.2 per cent in May 2025 due to poor performance of manufacturing, mining and power sectors, according to official data released on Monday.

The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had expanded by 6.3 per cent in May 2024.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) also revised upwards industrial production growth for April to 2.6 per cent from the earlier estimate of 2.7 per cent released last month.

The NSO data showed that the manufacturing sector's output growth decelerated to 2.6 per cent in May 2025



*The NSO data showed that the manufacturing sector's output growth decelerated to 2.6 per cent in May 2025 from 5.1 per cent in the year-ago month.*

from 5.1 per cent in the year-ago month.

Mining production contracted by 0.1 per cent against a growth of 6.6 per cent a year ago.

Power production declined by 5.8 per cent in

May 2025 against 13.7 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

During the April-May period of FY26, industrial production grew by 1.8 per cent compared to 5.7 per cent a year ago.

## Overseas asset growth led by investments, deposits: RBI

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India witnessed a strong increase in its overseas financial assets during the financial year 2024-25, mainly driven by higher overseas direct investments, currency and deposits, according to the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The data also highlighted that more than 72 per cent of the total growth in India's foreign financial assets came from these three components, with reserve assets alone accounting for over 54 per cent of the increase.

Currency and deposits, along with direct investments, also contributed significantly to the overall growth in overseas assets held by Indian residents.

RBI stated, "Over 72 per cent of the rise in India's overseas financial assets was due to an increase in overseas direct investment, currency and deposits."

During 2024-25, India's total external financial assets grew by USD 105.4

billion. In comparison, its external financial liabilities increased by USD 74.2 billion. As a result, the net claims of non-residents on India declined by USD 31.2 billion during the year.

The RBI report also noted that this decline in net claims was mainly due to a higher rise in Indian residents' overseas financial assets (USD 60.0 billion) than the increase in foreign-owned assets in India (USD 25.8 billion) in the January-March 2025 quarter.

The ratio of India's international financial assets to international financial liabilities improved to 77.5 per cent in March 2025, compared to 74.1 per cent a year earlier. This indicates a stronger external financial position for the country.

On the liability side, inward direct investments, loans, and currency and deposits played a major role. In fact, inward direct investment and loans together accounted for over three-fourths of the rise in foreign liabilities of Indian residents during the January-March 2025 period.

## Fiscal deficit at 0.8% of FY26 target by May-end

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The central government's fiscal deficit fell to 0.8 per cent of the full-year target at the end of May, mainly due to a whopping Rs 2.69 lakh crore dividend received from the Reserve Bank of India.

The fiscal deficit, or gap between the government's expenditure and revenue, had touched 11.9 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) for 2025-26 or Rs 1.86 lakh crore in April.

Following the RBI's dividend payout, the Centre's fiscal deficit was reduced to 0.8 per cent of BE of 2025-26 or Rs 13,163 crore, the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) showed.

The Centre estimates the fiscal deficit during 2025-26 at 4.4 per cent of the GDP or Rs 15.69 lakh crore.

It stood at 3.1 per cent of BE of 2024-25 in the first two months of the previous financial year.

According to the CGA, the amount the government received under the head 'dividends and profits' was Rs 2.78 lakh crore or 86 per cent of the BE.

The data on monthly accounts showed that the Government of India received Rs 7.32 lakh crore, 21 per cent of corresponding BE 2025-26 of total receipts, up to May 2025.

This comprised Rs 3.5 lakh crore tax revenue (net to centre), Rs 3.56 lakh crore of non-tax revenue and Rs 25,224 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

## Markets retreat as profit booking ends rally

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Indian stock markets witnessed a decline on Monday as investors booked profit after a rally for the past four sessions. At the end of the trading session, Nifty was down 124.00 points or 0.48 per cent at 25,513.80 and the BSE's Sensex was down by 458.47 points or 0.55 per cent, reaching 83,600.43.

"Nifty has closed below the upper Bollinger band, indicating a pause in the rally at the current levels. The pause can likely be the profit booking after a breakout from the 25200 levels," noted Praveen Dwarakanath, Vice President of Hedged.in.

Among the index constituents, Tata Consumer, Kotak bank and Axis bank emerged as the top losers, while Trent and Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) were the major gainers.

On the sectoral front, Nifty Private Bank, Nifty Realty and Nifty Auto closed in the red zone, while Nifty PSU

Bank and Nifty Mid-small Healthcare ended the day in the positive zone.

"The momentum indicators are in the over-bought region which can also be the reason for today's fall," Dwarakanath added.

Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said the focus will be on tariff settlement with the US government, "as the due date is nearing and India is yet to conclude the agreement which could create uncertainty amongst the investors".

"While volatility will continue, India's strong growth prospects going forward would temper the fall," he said. Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst, Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, also referred to profit booking and noted that gold traded with modest gains.

"Gold traded with modest gains, rising by 0.40 per cent to USD 3,290 in Comex and 0.50 per cent to Rs.95,950 in MCX, supported by weakness in the dollar index.

## Bank credit growth slows to 9.6% year-on-year: SBI report

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The credit growth of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) has moderated to 9.6 per cent as on 13 June 2025, a sharp decline from 19.1 per cent recorded a year ago, according to a recent report by the State Bank of India (SBI).

The slowdown is attributed to weaker momentum and unfavourable base effects.

The report stated that, excluding the merger impact of HDFC with HDFC Bank (effective from 13 July 2023), the adjusted credit growth stands at 10.6 per cent as on 13 June 2025, compared to 15.5 per cent a year ago.

It stated "SCBs credit growth moderated to 9.6 per cent, as on 13 June 2025 (19.1 per cent a year ago);

As per SBI's analysis, the total credit increased by Rs 70,005 crore (0.4 per cent YTD) till 13 June 2025. This is significantly lower as compared to the credit growth of Rs 2.74 lakh crore (1.7 per cent YTD) during the same period last year.

After three consecutive years of robust credit growth between FY21 and FY24, credit momentum began to slow from June 2024, eventually settling at 11.1 per cent in FY25.

The report also highlighted that bank-group-wise



*SBI report said "The bank-group wise contribution to SCB growth indicates that private banks' growth slowed down significantly compared to PSBs".*

data showed a key shift; the private banks saw a sharp slowdown, while public sector banks (PSBs) maintained relatively stable growth.

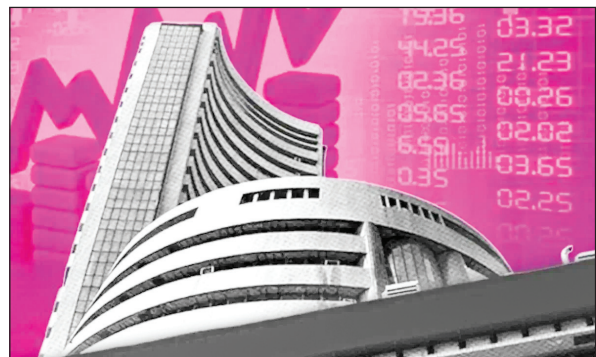
SBI report said "The bank-group wise contribution to SCB growth indicates that private banks' growth slowed down significantly compared to PSBs".

PSBs recorded a credit growth of 12.2 per cent in FY25, compared to 13.6 per cent in FY24. In contrast, credit growth of private sector banks declined to 9.5 per cent in FY25, marking the lowest level since FY21.

The report also pointed out changes in the sectoral composition of credit growth. The share of the

industry sector in incremental credit rose to 17 per cent in FY25 from 11 per cent in FY24. A major positive trend came from the MSME sector, which saw a 17.8 per cent year-on-year increase in credit. The improvement is driven by better balance sheet quality and reduced delinquencies.

SBI credit to MSMEs showed a strong growth because of multiple factors, including, formalization through UDYAM registration number seeding, enhanced guarantee cover provided under government schemes, changes in the definition of MSMEs, and a reduction in turnover thresholds for mandatory onboarding on the TReDS platform.



## Two-wheeler, tractor sales to rise; car, truck growth to lag: Report

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The automotive sector is expected to perform well in the coming years, especially in the two-wheeler (2W), tractor, and SUV segments, according to the Nuvama report.

Experts believe these categories will see high single-digit growth between FY25 and FY27, while growth in cars (passenger vehicles or PVs) and commercial vehicles (CVs) may remain slower.

June 2025 is likely to bring a mixed performance in vehicle sales. Two-wheeler and tractor sales are expected to benefit from strong rural demand and the ongoing marriage season.

This could result in high single-digit year-on-year



(YoY) growth. However, PV and CV sales may remain muted, with a slight decline compared to last year.

Passenger vehicle sales are under pressure due to weak consumer sentiment. Fewer people are showing interest in buying cars, and many are delaying their purchases.

In the two-wheeler segment, domestic sales are expected to grow by around 7 per cent YoY, thanks to rural demand and wedding-related purchases.

## India, US trade talks heat up over agri issues

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India has hardened its position on issues related to agriculture as negotiations with the US team in Washington have entered a crucial stage, an official said on Monday.

The official also said that the stay of the Indian team, headed by special secretary in the department of commerce Rajesh Agrawal, is expected to be extended further.

The team is in Washington for negotiations on an interim trade agreement with the US. Both sides are rushing to close a deal ahead of the July 9 deadline for the full implementation of a 26 per cent reciprocal tariff which has been suspended since April.

"If the proposed trade talks fail, the 26 per cent tariffs will come into force again," the official added.

The stay of the Indian of-



ficials has already been extended for three days until June 30. Initially, the delegation was scheduled to stay for two days with the talks having commenced on June 26.

Another official said that the commerce ministry has informed domestic exporters and industry that the talks are on for the first

phase of the proposed bilateral trade agreement.

There would be more phases.

These talks are significant as both countries are engaged in negotiations for an interim trade deal and are trying to finalise the pact before July 9, the deadline for the expiry of the suspensions of reciprocal tariffs im-

posed by the Donald Trump administration on April 2.

On April 2, the US imposed an additional 26 per cent reciprocal tariff on Indian goods but suspended it for 90 days. However, the 10 per cent baseline tariff imposed by America remains in place. India is seeking full exemption from the additional 26 per cent tariff.

## India's textile sector needs fair deal from ASEAN countries: Exim Bank

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India's trade with its top ASEAN partners like Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia has grown a lot, even though India has taken a protectionist approach after signing the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement (AITIGA). But Indian exporters, especially in the textile sector, are still facing major challenges.

A report by India-Exim Bank noted that a large number of Indian textile products have been put on "exclusion" or "sensitive" lists by ASEAN countries.

This means they don't get duty-free access, making it harder for Indian textiles to compete in those markets. Countries like the Philippines and Vietnam also offer zero-duty access under AITIGA,

but Indian businesses are not using this opportunity fully.

The study suggests that the trade agreement needs to be re-examined and renegotiated. Many products that India is strong in exporting are blocked or restricted by ASEAN countries. These are called "offensive" products,



and India should push for better access to them.

At the same time, there are "defensive" products where India should keep higher tariffs to protect local industries and reduce the trade gap.



BUILDING A BETTER INDIA

# HOW CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LAWS DRIVE COMPANIES TO CREATE A FAIR AND THRIVING SOCIETY

OPINION

ABHINAV PANDEY



“True corporate success is measured not by profits alone, but by the lives uplifted and communities transformed through shared responsibility.” India’s corporate sector is a driving force behind the nation’s economic growth, creating wealth, jobs, and innovation. Yet, true progress lies not only in profits but in uplifting society. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), as mandated by the Companies Act, 2013, reflects India’s commitment to ensuring businesses contribute to the greater good. As a lawyer, I see this law as a groundbreaking step that blends legal duty with moral responsibility, making India a global leader in corporate accountability.

The provisions of the Act, supported by key judicial decisions, have empowered companies to transform lives while fostering a culture of ethical governance. This is a story of law and goodwill working together to build a stronger, fairer India.

The backbone of India’s CSR framework is Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013. This section requires companies with a net worth of Rs 500 crore, a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore, or a net profit of Rs 5 crore to spend at least 2% of their average net profits from the past three years on CSR activities. These activities, listed in Schedule VII, include education, healthcare, environmental protection, gender equality, and rural development. The law mandates that companies form a CSR Committee with at least three directors, including one independent director, to create a CSR policy, oversee its implementation, and ensure transparency. Companies must report their CSR efforts in their annual board reports under Section 134. If they

cannot spend the required amount, they must explain why, following the “comply or explain” principle. The Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014, clarify how these activities should be carried out, often through registered trusts, societies, or Section 8 companies. Amendments in 2021 added teeth to the law, introducing penalties of up to Rs 1 crore for companies and Rs 2 lakh for officers for non-compliance, and requiring unspent CSR funds to be transferred to designated accounts or funds like PM CARES.

This legal framework has delivered impressive results. In 2022-23, Indian companies spent over Rs 25,000 crore on CSR, impacting millions of lives. Leading firms like Tata, Reliance, and Infosys have set high standards. Tata has built schools in remote areas, Reliance has supported digital education, and Infosys has improved access to clean water. These efforts align with national priorities like Swachh Bharat for cleanliness and Skill India for job training, showing how the law encourages businesses to tackle India’s challenges. Partnerships between companies, the government, and NGOs have amplified this impact, creating projects that bring lasting change, such as rural electrification and women’s empowerment programs. The law’s flex-

ibility is one of its strengths. The “comply or explain” approach allows companies to choose projects that suit their capabilities, encouraging innovation. For example, tech companies are using digital tools to support education, while others focus on sustainable farming or renewable energy. Smaller companies, though sometimes limited by resources, are also contributing through local initiatives like community health camps or tree planting. This adaptability ensures that CSR is accessible to businesses of all sizes, making it a shared mission across India’s corporate landscape.

However, no law is without challenges. Some companies prioritize short-term projects that look good on paper but lack lasting impact. A 2021 study by the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs noted that a portion of CSR funds remains unspent or is directed to urban areas, leaving regions like Bihar and the Northeast underserved. Smaller companies often struggle to design effective CSR programs due to limited expertise. The 2021 amendments have addressed some of these issues by enforcing stricter compliance, but gaps remain. Stronger oversight and better guidance for smaller firms could make the law even more effective.

The judiciary has played a vital role in shaping CSR’s legal and ethical dimensions.

The 1987 Bhopal gas tragedy case Union Carbide Corporation v. Union of India was a turning point. The Supreme Court held the company accountable for the disaster, ensuring compensation for victims and emphasizing that businesses must prioritize safety and welfare. In 2013, the Sterlite Industries case saw the Court close a Tamil Nadu factory for environmental violations, reinforcing that corporate actions must not harm society or nature. The 2019 Vedanta Resources PLC v. Lungowe case, though decided in the UK, had implications for Indian operations, as it held parent companies liable for subsidiaries’ actions, pushing firms to adopt robust CSR and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) practices. These rulings complement the Companies Act, reminding businesses that their responsibilities extend beyond legal compliance to ethical conduct.

To strengthen this framework, I propose a few practical suggestions. First, the government should establish an independent body to monitor CSR spending, ensuring funds are used effectively and reach underserved areas. Second, companies should align their CSR projects with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals to contribute to global priorities while addressing local needs. Third,

training programs should be offered to smaller companies to help them design impactful CSR initiatives. Fourth, businesses should collaborate more with local communities to ensure projects, like water supply systems or schools, meet specific needs. Finally, companies should view CSR as a strategic opportunity, not just a legal requirement. Initiatives like Hindustan Unilever’s Project Shakti, which empowers rural women while boosting business, show how CSR can benefit both society and companies.

India’s CSR law is a powerful tool for progress. It combines legal precision with a vision for a better society, encouraging businesses to act as partners in nation-building. The Companies Act, supported by judicial wisdom, has created a system where companies can thrive while helping others. Every school built, every hospital improved, and every community uplifted is a testament to this law’s success. With stronger oversight, more collaboration, and a shared commitment to doing good, India’s CSR framework will continue to inspire businesses, communities, and the nation to build a future that is fair, sustainable, and full of hope.

*The Author is Legal Researcher, Columnist and Final Year Law Student at University of Lucknow*

PERSPECTIVE  
A PAUSE

## MANASAROVAR YATRA: INDIA, CHINA RELATIONS ARE NOT BACK TO NORMAL

What are we to make of the sudden “bonhomie” in India-China relations? The first batch of Indian pilgrims has reached Manasarovar. The Chinese ambassador to India is waxing eloquent about the civilizational links between the two countries. Are we, thus, witnessing a reset in relations that have fallen in hard times post the Galwan valley clash of June 2020? The answer to this would be, at one level, particularly on the surface, “yes”; but deep down the answer is “no”. Whatever be the civilisational connections between the two countries, the fact is that normalization along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is still lacking. There may have been a disengagement of troops—even though problems remain—de-escalation has not taken place. China continues to build military and dual use infrastructure on its side of the LAC. Left without any choice, India too has to ramp up its infrastructure along the LAC. Moreover, there are credible reports that China has augmented its troops by 30% in the Tibetan region, directly facing India. Hence, India continues to be in the crosshairs of Chinese military target.



Then take the case of the hurdles on India’s path to become a manufacturing powerhouse. China’s ban on rare earth exports has had a negative impact on the manufacturing capacity of the Indian automobile industry. China created trouble even in sending trained manpower to Foxconn’s plant to manufacture iPhones in India. And these are just a few examples.

In fact, what sort of a normalization is this when till date India itself has refused to resume direct flights to China? The flights were suspended during the Covid outbreak in early 2020; soon after came the Galwan clash and ever since direct flights have not been restored. There was some talk of restoration of flights recently, but the malign role that China played during Operation Sindoor by offering operational support to Pakistan, made Indian policymakers delay the decision. Also, India is yet to reverse its stand on allowing investments from countries sharing a border with it—meaning, China—to come in.

A pertinent question here is, given the current situation, why does India want to normalise ties with China to the extent possible? It’s primarily because there has to be some sanity in any neighbourly relations, and India cannot be forever in a war of attrition, the way it is along the LAC.

As for China’s push towards normalization of ties, it has to be seen in the context of Beijing keeping its border with India trouble free for the immediate future, as it concentrates on consolidating itself against the US. It may even be looking at India as a target of dumping cheap goods.

Hence, those who see in the Manasarovar Yatra a major breakthrough, need to temper their excitement. It has to be seen for how long China is willing to keep this route open for Indians, or if it uses this matter as a pressure point for India in border negotiations. Lest we forget, if in China’s view 21st century is Asia’s century, there is no place for India there except as a vassal state of China. So notwithstanding the outreach to India, it expects its supremacy to be recognised and accepted by India—something, it goes without saying, India will never do. But then two neighbours cannot be in a state of war, hot or cold, permanently. There has to be a pause, at least overtly. So this so-called normalization is a pause in overt hostilities at best. Nothing more.

JOYEETA BASU

# Bridging the distance between doctors and patients with technology

OPINION

SHIVANI PURANIK

Bridging the distance between doctors and patients with technology – the commitment of doctors brought to fruition through Vriddha Mitra, a community-based program for the care of older adults

Pune, India — At 2:30 p.m. on a Wednesday afternoon in Laxmi Nagar, Yerawada, 70-year-old Vimal Gaikwad\* sits in a crowded community hall, waiting to see her doctor. But instead of someone in a stethoscope and white coat entering the room, a screen lights up – the doctor greets her with a smile and asks how she has been, and she shares her troubles.

On this Doctors’ Day, we celebrate the commitment to care exemplified by almost 40 doctors around the city through out-patient care that is virtually organized and implemented – a growing model of remote healthcare delivery aimed at providing quality health care to elderly residents in Pune’s urban slums.

In these communities, where access, affordability, and mobility-related issues often stand in the way of a doctor’s visit, the ‘Virtual OPD’ addresses these gaps with a simple solution – bringing the doctor to the community through online

meets.

Presently, over 36,000 elderly in Pune city are receiving consistent care at their doorstep through Vriddha Mitra (Friends of Older People), a program run by the NGO SCHOOL (Society of Community Health Oriented Operational Links). Launched in Pune in 2019, Vriddha Mitra works with five partner organizations in the city – including Deep Griha Society, MASHAL, Sevadham Trust, Snehideep Jankalyan Foundation, and Vanchit Vikas – to deliver at-home care for the underserved elderly population who live in the slums of the city. The crux of this framework is “ageing in place”, giving the most vulnerable strata of older people the opportunity to age in the comfort of their own homes without the intervention of institutional care.

The concept of Virtual OPDs was born during the COVID-19 lockdowns. At a time when providing care to this vulnerable group was associated with several challenges, Dr. Pawan Pathak – the COO of SCHOOL, would connect with the elderly from his home in Gwalior using a mobile phone operated by the field staff in Pune, providing reassurance as well



as medical advice. The field staff – referred to as ‘community officers’ within the program but simply as ‘tai’ and ‘dada’ by the elderly whom they serve – would check vital signs, having been trained under the program, and facilitate conversations between the elderly and the doctor. “We didn’t want to wait for the elderly to come to institutions. We wanted to meet them where they are,” says Dr. Pathak.

The idea of using technology in the form of online meetings to bridge the medical service-delivery gap was fairly novel at the time of the pandemic, and while many were sceptical at first, the network quickly grew, with several doctors seeing the merit in the idea of being able to provide consultations to vulnerable groups without adding the risk of infection while also making care more accessible.

Dr. Prakash Onawale, one of the first doctors to start conducting virtual OPDs with Vriddha Mitra, began consulting the elderly in Pune, and now is regularly conducting sessions all over the country. Over the years, he has become so deeply connected to the elderly through these sessions that he continued them over the last six months from abroad, making adjustments to his schedule to accommodate his patients according to Indian Standard Time. “When we started, I wasn’t sure this method was going to work. Conducting an OPD, talking to patients, and providing consultations requires a connection that seemed difficult to foster online. Now that we’ve been working with this model for so many years, I continued with my patients even when I was in Canada, talking to people in Pune, Bhopal, and Gwalior

– that’s how strong the bond is, regardless of the medium of delivery.”

Finding tremendous utility in the virtual OPDs, it was integrated as a vital facet of Vriddha Mitra, and has since amassed a network of 46 doctors across 6 geographies in India. On a yearly basis, over 1600 virtual OPDs are conducted across India in order to provide medical counselling to elderly residents from slums, translating to over 30,000 individuals receiving care through this mechanism each year. In some cases, when the elderly are immobile or bedridden, a special teleconsultation is also done in their homes to ensure that they are not left behind. Over 6000 teleconsultations take place yearly.

Today, doctors from across the country contribute pro bono, setting aside several hours every month to serve their queue of patients on-

line. The service is free for the elderly from the slums.

The care doesn’t end when the online session does – the community officers are connected with the elderly throughout their care continuum, explaining the instructions given by the doctors, enabling the correct treatment and strong referral practices to medical institutions and facilities, and constantly following up with them and their family. The community-based model has gradually expanded beyond Pune, now operational in seven other locations – Mumbai, Delhi, Bhopal, Urban and Rural Gwalior, Varanasi, and Lucknow, serving almost 53,000 older adults in the country.

Beyond the implementation of the Virtual OPD mechanism in urban locations to connect to older adults in urban slums, it is also being executed in rural Gwalior under the program. These areas, with a paucity of clinics and where the reach of medical services is much lower in comparison to its urban counterparts, are significantly enriched by the introduction of virtual care from doctors around the country. By opening up avenues for care through technology, this intervention is revolutionizing service delivery, showing how genuine will from doctors, with a little bit of support and organization, can add tremendous value to lives.

\* Pseudonym used  
*Shivani Puranik is a Communications Specialist at non-profit organization called SCHOOL. SCHOOL focuses on SDG-3, Good Health & Wellbeing.*



Today, 1 July 2025, marks eight years since the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced, unifying India's indirect taxes into a single system. GST has simplified compliance, boosted transparency, and strengthened the economy, driving record revenues and supporting millions of businesses. As it enters its ninth year, this report highlights its key achievements and impact.



TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

On 1 July 2025, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) will complete eight years since its rollout. Introduced in 2017 as a major step towards economic integration, GST replaced a maze of indirect taxes with a single, unified system. It made tax compliance easier, reduced costs for businesses, and allowed goods to move freely across states. By improving transparency and efficiency, GST helped lay the foundation for a stronger, more integrated economy.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called it "a path-breaking legislation for New India." Eight years on, the numbers speak for themselves. In 2024-25, gross GST collections hit a record Rs 22.08 lakh crore, marking a year-on-year growth of 9.4 per cent. This rise reflects the growing formalisation of the economy and improved tax compliance.

A recent report by Deloitte titled GST@8 described the past year as a blockbuster for GST. It credited the government's timely reforms, clear guidance to taxpayers, and steady upgrades on the GST portal as key reasons behind this success. These measures not only improved ease of doing business but also strengthened the tax base.

#### JOURNEY OF GST Structure and Key Features of the GST System

GST rates in India are determined by the GST Council.

cil, which includes representatives from the Union and State or Union Territory governments. The current GST structure consists of four main rate slabs: 5 percent, 12 percent, 18 percent and 28 percent. These rates apply to most goods and services across the country.

In addition to the main slabs, there are three special rates: 3 percent on gold, silver, diamond and jewellery, 1.5 percent on cut and polished diamonds and 0.25 percent on rough diamonds. A GST Compensation Cess is also levied on select goods such as tobacco products, aerated drinks and motor vehicles at varying rates. This cess is used to compensate states for any revenue loss resulting from the transition to the GST system.

#### KEY FEATURES OF GST ARE:

**One Nation, One Tax:** GST brought together a wide range of indirect taxes under one umbrella. It replaced levies like excise duty, service tax, VAT and others. This helped remove the cascading effect of taxes and brought consistency in the tax system across the country.

**Dual Structure:** The GST system is designed with a dual model. It includes Central GST (CGST) and State GST (SGST) for transactions within a state. For trade between states, Integrated GST (IGST) applies.

**Destination-Based Tax:** GST is charged at the point of consumption rather than origin. This ensures a smooth flow of tax credit

across the supply chain and lowers the overall tax burden on the final consumer.

**Input Tax Credit (ITC):** Businesses can claim credit for taxes paid on inputs. This prevents tax on tax and reduces costs across the production and distribution chain.

**Threshold Exemption:** Small businesses with turnover below a certain limit are exempt from GST. This makes compliance easier and protects micro enterprises from excessive paperwork.

**Composition Scheme:** This scheme is meant for small taxpayers with a turnover below a set limit. It allows them to pay GST at a fixed rate on their turnover. The scheme involves less documentation and simpler returns.

**Online Compliance:** All GST processes including registration, return filing and payments are done through the GSTN portal. This digital approach improves efficiency and ease of doing business.

**Sector-Specific Exemptions:** Sectors such as healthcare and education are either exempt or taxed at lower rates. This keeps essential services within reach for all.

**Account Settlement:** GST ensures smooth sharing of revenues between the Centre and States. Credit transfers are done seamlessly to maintain fiscal balance and cooperation.

**Benefits of GST**  
Eight years on, GST continues to make everyday business easier and fairer. From helping small firms breathe easier to making groceries cheaper for families, the reform has left its mark. It has also unclogged highways and made supply chains faster. Here's a look at how GST is helping MSMEs, benefiting consumers and reshaping logistics across the country.

**SUPPORT FOR MSMEs**  
GST has brought major relief to micro, small and medium enterprises. Earlier, thresholds under VAT and other state taxes were very low, making compliance difficult for small businesses. GST changed this by setting a higher exemption limit. Initially fixed at Rs 20 lakh, the threshold for goods was later raised to Rs 40 lakh, giving breathing space to many small traders and manufacturers.

To ease the burden further, GST introduced a composi-

# EIGHT YEARS OF GST



tion scheme. This allows small businesses to pay tax at a fixed rate on their turnover, with minimal paperwork. The scheme covers goods up to Rs 1.5 crore and services up to Rs 50 lakh in annual turnover.

GST has also opened doors for easier access to credit. Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) is a platform for financing/discounting of trade receivables of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. On these platforms, the financing of Factoring Units (FUs) helps in improving the access to finance by MSMEs. As informed by SIDBI, as on May, 2024, four digital platforms have been authorized to carry TReDS operations in the country. There are more than 5,000 buyers and over 53 Banks/13 NBFC registered as financiers.

#### OTHER NOTABLE INITIATIVES FOR MSMEs INCLUDE:

A composition scheme has been introduced for service providers with turnover up to Rs 50 lakh. They can pay tax at a flat rate of 6 per cent and file annual returns with quarterly tax payments.

Small taxpayers with turnover up to Rs 5 crore can now file returns every quarter instead of monthly. This has made compliance easier and helped them focus more on their businesses.

Taxpayers can now file NIL returns for GSTR-3B through SMS. This service is also available for GSTR-1 and CMP-08, making return filing faster and simpler.

#### BENEFITS TO CONSUMERS

GST is a consumer-friendly reform. It places the end-user at the centre of the tax system. With the removal of multiple taxes and improved compliance, the average tax rates have come down. The number of registered taxpayers has grown from 60 lakh to around 1.51 crore. This has expanded the tax base and allowed the government to lower rates on many essential items.

Goods like cereals, edible oils, sugar, snacks and sweets now carry lower

tax rates. A study by the Finance Ministry noted that GST helped households save at least four per cent on monthly expenses in total. Consumers now spend less on daily necessities.

#### BOOST TO THE LOGISTICS SECTOR

GST has transformed the logistics industry. Long queues of trucks at state borders and corruption-prone checkpoints have become a thing of the past. Goods now move faster and more freely across state lines.

Transport time has improved by over 33 per cent, according to several studies. Companies have cut down on fuel costs, and major highways are less congested. Earlier, firms had to maintain separate warehouses in every state due to varied tax laws. With GST, this is no longer needed. It has allowed businesses to build smarter and more centralised supply chains.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER GST

Since its rollout, the Goods and Services Tax has shown strong growth in revenue collection and tax base expansion. It has steadily strengthened India's fiscal position and made indirect taxation more efficient and transparent.

In 2024-25, GST recorded its highest-ever gross collection of Rs 22.08 lakh crore, reflecting a year-on-year growth of 9.4 percent. The average monthly collection stood at Rs 1.84 lakh crore.

In 2020-21, the total col-

lection was Rs 11.37 lakh crore, with a monthly average of Rs 95,000 crore. The following year, it rose to Rs 14.83 lakh crore, and then to Rs 18.08 lakh crore in 2022-23. In 2023-24, GST collections reached Rs 20.18 lakh crore, showing consistent growth in compliance and economic activity.

The number of active taxpayers has also seen a sharp rise. As of 30 April 2025, there are over 1.51 crore active GST registrations.

#### THE GST COUNCIL

The GST Council is the key decision-making body responsible for shaping and guiding the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax in India. It was constituted as per Article 279A of the Constitution following the passage of the 122nd Constitutional Amendment

State in charge of Revenue or Finance

● The Minister in charge of Finance or Taxation, or any other Minister nominated by each State Government

● Any person nominated by the Governor of the State where there is a proclamation of emergency under Article 356 of the Constitution

Since its formation, the Council has held 55 meetings and played a vital role in the evolution of the GST regime. It has taken several major decisions to simplify the system, ease compliance, and support economic growth.

#### INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

The GST@8 report by Deloitte provides valuable insights into how Indian businesses perceive the Goods and Services Tax after eight

years of implementation. Businesses continue to express growing confidence in the tax system and its long-term stability.

Respondents attributed their positive outlook to several key improvements:

● Simplified and more transparent tax processes

● Seamless Input Tax Credit flow, which helped reduce the overall tax burden

● Elimination of legacy taxes and state-level check posts

● Widespread use of digital platforms and technology-driven compliance

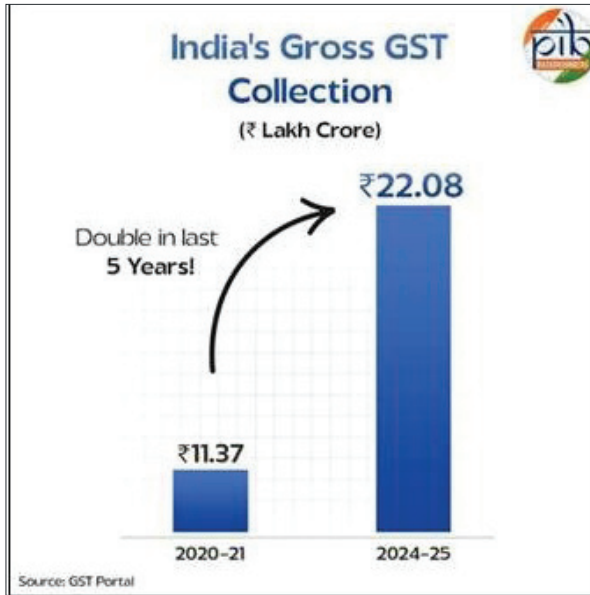
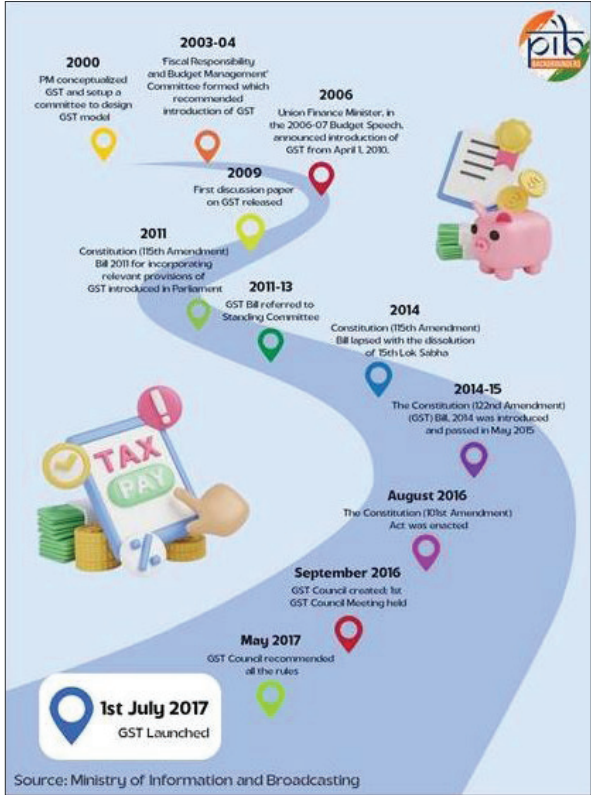
● Uniform procedures across states and faster refunds

GST was widely recognised for improving ease of doing business, streamlining tax administration, and supporting economic growth. Among micro, small and medium enterprises, positive sentiment increased from 78 percent last year to 82 percent this year, reflecting broader acceptance among smaller firms.

#### CONCLUSION

Eight years after its launch, the Goods and Services Tax has firmly established itself as one of India's most important economic reforms. It replaced a complex web of indirect taxes with a unified system that is simpler, fairer and more efficient. GST has helped create a common national market, reduced the cost of doing business and brought greater transparency to the tax system.

The consistent rise in revenue collections and a growing base of over 1.5 crore active taxpayers reflect its success. Businesses, especially small and medium enterprises, now face fewer compliance hurdles. The Deloitte GST@8 survey confirms this positive shift. It found that 85 percent of respondents across industries had a favourable experience with GST, citing simplified processes, improved credit flow and stronger digital infrastructure. As GST enters its ninth year, it continues to evolve with a focus on ease of doing business, better compliance and wider economic participation.



#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

85% of respondents reported a positive experience with GST. This marks the fourth year in a row where



# NATIONAL DOCTORS' DAY 2025

## HONOURING THE HEALERS OF THE NATION

**TDG NETWORK**  
JAIPUR

India observes National Doctors' Day every year on July 1 to recognize and celebrate the dedication, compassion, and tireless service of medical professionals. The day marks the birth and death anniversary of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, a legendary physician and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal, who made immense contributions to the field of medicine and public health. He was awarded the Bharat Ratna on February 4, 1961, in recognition of his remarkable service to the nation.

National Doctors' Day is not only a tribute to Dr. Roy but also an occasion to ap-

preciate doctors across the country who continue to serve patients selflessly, often under challenging conditions. The day highlights the crucial role doctors play in saving lives, promoting wellness, and strengthening healthcare systems.

The theme for National Doctors' Day 2025 is "Behind the Mask: Who Heals the Healers?" This theme sheds light on the emotional and mental challenges faced by doctors, encouraging society to recognize their humanity and the support they need. Celebrated nationwide, this day serves as a reminder of the invaluable contribution of doctors and the importance of supporting their well-being as they continue to heal others.



## Just as doctors relieve patients, I relieve passengers: Dr. Hitesh



DR. HITESH KUMAR JANGID

Dr. Hitesh Kumar Jangid, a resident of Pratap Nagar, Jaipur, is a dentist by profession and currently

serves as the Assistant Divisional Manager at the Sirohi depot of Rajasthan Roadways. Reflecting on his dual roles, Dr. Hitesh says, "Just as a doctor's job is to relieve patients' pain, my job now is to provide relief to passengers by ensuring smooth and safe travel." Before joining Rajasthan Roadways, Dr. Hitesh actively practiced dentistry, focusing on improving oral health. Though his role has shifted from clinic to depot, his dedication to service remains unchanged. He now ensures that buses run efficiently and safely, upholding the reputation of

Rajasthan Roadways as one of the most trusted transport services in the country. Even in his administrative role, Dr. Hitesh continues to serve as a dentist for his colleagues. He offers free dental consultations and treatment to Roadways employees whenever needed. During his earlier posting at the Sindhi Camp busstand in Jaipur, he also extended these services to passengers. On National Doctors' Day, Dr. Hitesh stands as a unique example of someone who blends medical service with public duty—continuing to care, heal, and serve in every way he can.

## A Doctor and a promoter of Rajasthani art and culture: Dr. Anupama Soni

**TDG NETWORK**  
JAIPUR

Jaipur. National Doctors Day is celebrated every year on 1 July in the country. The purpose of this day is to appreciate the dedication and selfless work of doctors. Doctors not only give a second life to the patients, but there is also a doctor who is moving towards promoting Rajasthani art and culture along with keeping it alive.

Rajasthan's dentist Dr. Anupama Soni has taken the culture of Rajasthan not only in the country but also abroad. She has also won the title of Mrs. Asia International.

Dr. Anupama Soni says that Rajasthani culture has a different identity in the whole world. Being a daughter of Rajasthan, and a doctor she feels it is ingrained in her personality to show affection and give warmth to all the patients she comes across.

She believes that it is in the spirit of every person from Rajasthan to be hospitable, em-



pathetic and she as a protector of Rajasthani culture and a professional whose motto is to bring relief to the patients feels proud and happy to be into this profession. She says that when she chose to become a doctor, she knew that along with treating patients, she would also dedicate herself to raising awareness about Rajasthani culture among the youth.

## AYURVEDA IS A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION FOR MODERN HEALTH CHALLENGES: PROFESSOR BHARATHI KUMARAMANGALAM



PROFESSOR BHARATHI KUMARAMANGALAM

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, continues to hold great relevance in the modern world. With its roots dating back over 5,000 years, Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to health and well-being, emphasizing balance between the body, mind, and spirit. Despite rapid advancements in modern medicine, Ayurveda remains significant due to its natural, preventive, and personalized healing methods.

One of the key strengths of Ayurveda is its focus on prevention. Rather than just treating diseases, Ayurveda promotes a healthy lifestyle through proper diet (Ahara), daily routines

(Dinacharya), seasonal practices (Ritucharya), and mental discipline. This is especially relevant today, as lifestyle-related disorders such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and stress are on the rise.

Ayurveda uses herbal remedies, dietary guidelines, detox therapies like Panchakarma, and mind-body practices like yoga and meditation. These are increasingly being adopted globally for their natural healing benefits and minimal side effects. As modern medicine grapples with drug resistance and chronic illness, Ayurveda's plant-based, personalized approach offers sustainable solutions.

In today's fast-paced world, Ayurveda's timeless wisdom provides a path to balanced living, disease prevention, and long-term health—making this ancient science deeply relevant even in the 21st century. The writer is a Professor (Senior Administrative Grade), and Head, Department of Prasutitantra and Stree Roga, National Institute of Ayurveda, M/I Ayush, GOI, Jaipur

## DOCTORS ARE HEALERS WITH EMPATHY AND CAREGIVERS LIKE FAMILY: DR. DEEPAK PANCHOLI



DR. DEEPAK PANCHOLI

Doctors are often seen as life-savers, but beyond prescriptions, diagnoses, and surgeries, their true power lies in empathy—the ability to understand and share the feelings of their patients. In moments of illness, uncertainty, or crisis, a doctor's reassuring presence, kind words, and emotional support often bring as much healing as the treatment itself. This deep connection is what makes doctors feel like family to many.

Empathy in medicine isn't just a soft skill; it's a necessity. Patients come to doctors not only for medical care but also for comfort. A compassionate doctor listens with patience, explains with clarity, and treats with dignity. For someone battling chronic illness or undergoing long-term treatment, the doctor often becomes a confidant—someone who walks beside them through the highs and lows of their health journey.

In rural areas or close-knit communities, the doctor is not just a medical

professional but a part of the extended family. They are present during births, emergencies, recoveries, and farewells. Their involvement goes beyond the clinic—attending family functions, making home visits, and offering help in times of need. This familiarity builds a bond that no technology or machine can replace.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, this sense of familial responsibility became even more visible. Doctors worked tirelessly, putting their own lives at risk to save others.

They became the only point of human contact for many isolated patients. Their empathy gave strength to countless families who couldn't bear their loved ones in hospitals.

Medical knowledge can be taught, but empathy is nurtured by experience and genuine care. The most respected doctors are those who remember that every patient is someone's child, parent, or partner. They treat not just diseases, but people—with their fears, hopes, and emotions.

In many ways, doctors become more than healthcare providers—they become part of their patients' lives. They are there in moments of vulnerability, offering not just medicine, but compassion. And it is this human connection, this blend of professionalism and warmth, that makes doctors not just healers—but family.

# Bringing smiles for five generations

**TDG NETWORK**  
JAIPUR

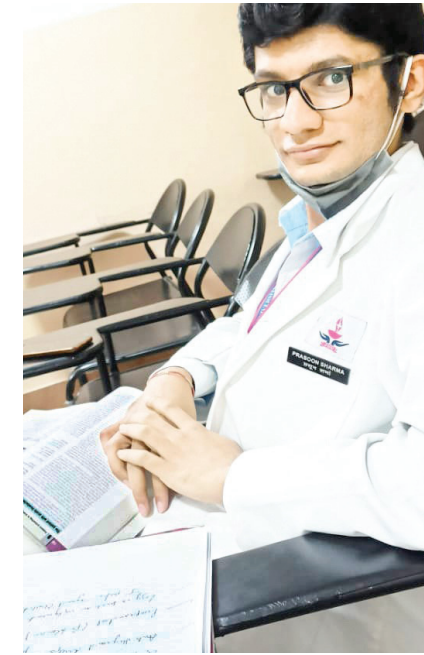
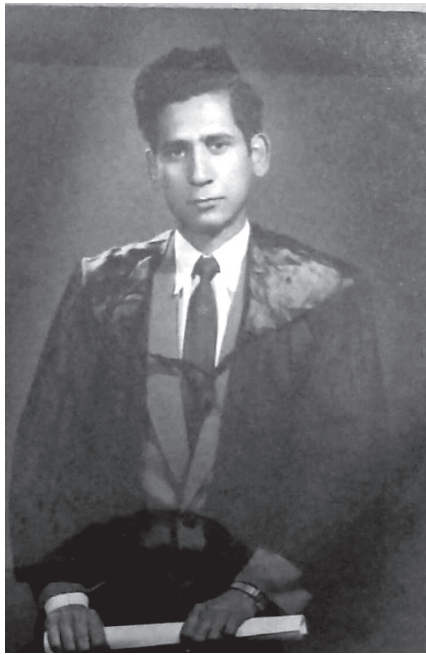
On the occasion of Doctors Day, we are bringing to you the story of a family of Jaipur city, whose five generations are in the medical profession and have been engaged in serving the common people in Jaipur city for about 120 years.

### GENERATION 1

Ayurvedacharya Purohit Dr. Prabhudayal Vyas served in Vyas dispensary, Jaipur for about 38 years during the British rule before independence. He served continuously in this clinic from 1902 to 1940. Even today, remnants of his memories remain in the photo. Many British officials and royal families were admirers of Purohit ji's treatment and often came to him for treatment. Purohit ji was the royal physician in the Jaipur royal family.

### GENERATION-2

Dr. Brij Mohan Sharma, son of Purohit Dr. Prabhudayal Vyas, was a MBBS batch graduate from King George Medical College, Lucknow in 1924. He played a leading role in the era of treatment by allopathy in Jaipur and Jhunjhunu city and also promoted it. He served continuously in the city till 1956. During this time, he started a series of free medical camps at many places, which was highly appreciated. He was honored for his services by the then British officials as well as Jaipur State.



*Dr. Brij Mohan Sharma's son Dr. Hemant Kumar Sharma was a third batch MBBS student of SMS Medical College in 1947. After this he did MS (Anesthesia). He was among the few doctors who did MS Anesthesia in this era.*



### GENERATION-3

Dr. Brij Mohan Sharma's son Dr. Hemant Kumar Sharma was a third batch MBBS student of SMS Medical College in 1947. After this he did MS (Anesthesia). He was among the few doctors who did MS Anesthesia in this era. He served for a long time and till 15 years before his death in 2013, he was busy in his medical practice. He retired from the post of Professor in the prestigious SMS Medical College of Jaipur.

### GENERATION-4

Dr. Hemant Kumar Shar-

ma's son Pediatrician Dr. Vivek Sharma is known for his dedicated services not only in Jaipur city but in the entire country. He is from the 1982 MBBS batch of SMS Medical College. Many articles of Dr. Vivek have been published in prestigious journals of foreign countries and he regularly writes health articles to educate the common people.

### GENERATION-5

Dr. Vivek Sharma's son Dr. Prasan Sharma is from the 2017 MBBS batch. He is also working for further higher studies.



# IAEA CHIEF SAYS IRAN MAY RESTART URANIUM ENRICHMENT ‘IN MONTHS’

TDG NETWORK  
TEHRAN

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi said that US strikes on Iran fell short of causing total damage to its nuclear programme and that Tehran could restart enriching uranium “in a matter of months,” contradicting US President Donald Trump’s claims the US set Tehran’s ambitions back by “decades”, CNN reported.

Grossi’s comments appear to support an early assessment from the Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency, which suggests the United States’ strikes on key Iranian nuclear sites last week did not destroy the core components of its nuclear programme, and likely only set it back by months.

While the final military and intelligence assessment has yet to come, Trump has repeatedly claimed to have



“completely and totally obliterated” Tehran’s nuclear programme.

The 12-day conflict between Israel and Iran began earlier this month when Israel launched an unprecedented attack it said aimed at preventing Tehran from developing a nuclear bomb. Iran has insisted its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes.

The US then struck three key Iranian nuclear sites before a ceasefire began. The

extent of the damage to Tehran’s nuclear programme has been hotly debated ever since.

US military officials have in recent days provided some new information about the planning of the strikes, but offered no new evidence of their effectiveness against Iran’s nuclear programme.

Following classified briefings this week, Republican lawmakers acknowledged the US strikes may not have eliminated all of Iran’s nu-

*US military officials have in recent days provided some new information about the planning of the strikes, but offered no new evidence of their effectiveness against Iran’s nuclear programme.*

clear materials - but argued that this was never part of the military’s mission, CNN reported.

Meanwhile, The Washington Post reported on Sunday that the US had obtained intercepted messages in which senior Iranian officials discussing the attacks said they were not as destructive as they anticipated.

Asked about the different assessments, Grossi, Director General of IAEA, said, “This hourglass approach in weapons of mass destruction is not a good idea.”

“The capacities they have are there. They can have, you know, in a matter of months, I would say, a few cascades of centrifuges

## Israel pounds Gaza city after forcing evacuation orders

TDG NETWORK  
GAZA CITY

Israel has launched at least 50 aerial strikes across Gaza, with a significant focus on eastern Gaza City, following forced evacuation warnings by the Israeli military, Al Jazeera reported.

According to medical sources cited by Al Jazeera, Israeli forces killed at least 68 Palestinians in Gaza on Sunday, including 47 in Gaza City and the northern areas of the territory. The ongoing war has now killed at least 56,500 people and wounded 133,419, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry. In contrast, around 1,139 people were killed in Israel during the October 7 attacks, during which over 200 individuals were taken captive.

Al Jazeera further reported that Egypt’s Foreign Minister has revealed efforts to broker a new Gaza deal involving a 60-day ceasefire in exchange for the release of some Israeli captives.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chaired a high-level security meeting at the Southern Command base in Beersheba on Sunday, with top military and security officials. The agenda focused on the war in Gaza and prospects for a ceasefire. However, Al Jazeera reported that the meeting concluded without any tangible breakthrough.

Military sources suggest Israel is nearing the end of its ground operations in Gaza, asserting that no further strategic gains

are possible without endangering the remaining captives held in the territory. Despite this, Netanyahu has reiterated his belief that it is possible to defeat Hamas while simultaneously securing the release of hostages through military means.

Mediators continue to urge Israel to send delegations to Cairo or Doha to negotiate a ceasefire agreement. However, Israel reportedly seeks only a temporary pause in fighting that would allow for resumption of military operations after 60 days. In contrast, Hamas has demanded a permanent end to the conflict—a disagreement that has persisted for months and remains the primary obstacle to any resolution, according to Al Jazeera.

Amid these stalled negotiations, the Israel Defense Forces announced the elimination of Hakhm Muhammad Issa Al-Issa—one of the founders of Hamas’ military wing—describing him as a mas- termind of the October 7, 2023, attack in a late Saturday night post.

## Dubai conducts first test flight of aerial taxi

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Dubai has successfully completed the first test flight of an aerial taxi, a fully electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, marking a major step in its efforts to introduce sustainable and next-generation urban transport.

The aerial taxi is designed to offer fast and zero-emission travel within cities, operating with minimal noise and requiring only a small landing footprint.

Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, said the achievement reflects the



city’s commitment to placing the UAE at the forefront of transformative technologies that drive global progress.

“Further, the successful aerial taxi test flight demonstrates our determination to transform breakthrough technologies into practical solutions that enhance quality of life and set new benchmarks for urban development,” he said.

Conducted by Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) in partnership with Joby Aviation, the Joby Aerial Taxi flight took place at a designated site in the Dubai desert.

Mattar Al Tayer, Director General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of RTA, said the launch underscored Dubai’s commitment to keeping pace with rapid global transfor-

airs Minister Ron Dermer is set to meet American officials in Washington ahead of another round of indirect negotiations in Cairo. Dermer is expected to face mounting pressure from the Trump administration to bring an end to the Gaza war. Major sticking points remain, including Hamas’s insistence on a permanent end to the war and changes to current aid delivery mechanisms, which the group claims are inaccessible and dangerous for Gazans.

Simultaneously, Netanyahu is believed to be planning a visit to the US in the coming weeks to advance a broader diplomatic initiative. This includes ending hostilities in Gaza and normalizing ties with additional Muslim-majority nations. According to IDF sources speaking to Channel 12, the army believes it has achieved most of its strategic objectives in Gaza and that further gains could risk the lives of remaining hostages.



Later Sunday night, Netanyahu led a high-level cabinet meeting at the IDF’s Southern Command Headquarters in Beersheba to discuss ongoing efforts surrounding the Gaza war and potential hostage deal. The meeting included Defense Minister Israel Katz, ministers, Netanyahu’s aides, and senior IDF officers. According to Hebrew media reports, the meeting concluded without a decision, with further discussions scheduled for Monday. Arab mediators were reportedly hopeful Israel would agree to send a delegation to Cairo during the meeting, The Times of Israel added.

On Monday, Strategic Af-

## China says Sino-India border dispute ‘complicated’

TDG NETWORK  
BEIJING

China on Monday said that the boundary dispute with India is complicated and will take time to settle but at the same time, it expressed its readiness to hold discussions on the delimitation of the border and keep it peaceful.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in his meeting with Chinese counterpart Dong Jun in Qingdao on June 26 proposed that India and China should solve the “complex issues” under a structured roadmap comprising steps to de-escalate tensions along the frontiers and rejuvenate the existing mechanism to demarcate the borders.

Singh and Dong held bilateral talks on the sidelines of a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in the Chinese port city of Qingdao, with a focus on maintaining peace and tranquillity along the Line



of Actual Control (LAC).

Asked for China’s reaction to Singh’s remarks, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said, “What I can tell you is that China and India have established the Special Representatives (SRs) mechanism on the boundary question and reached the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the China-India Boundary Question”.

The two sides have diplomatic and military communication mechanisms at various levels, she said.

“China stands ready to maintain communication with India on issues including delimitation negotiation

and border management, jointly keep the border areas peaceful and tranquil, and promote cross-border exchange and cooperation,” she said.

Questioned about the prolonged delay in resolving the border issue despite 23 rounds of the SR-level talks, Mao said, “The boundary question is complicated, and it takes time to settle it”.

“The positive side is that the two countries have already established mechanisms at various levels for thorough communication. We hope that India will work with China in the same direction, continue to stay in communication on relevant issue and jointly keep the border areas peaceful and tranquil,” she said.

The 23rd round of the meeting of the SRs, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, was held here in December last year. It was the first meeting of the SRs



It’s raining stars. What appears to be a giant cosmic umbrella is now known to be a tidal stream of stars stripped from a small satellite galaxy. The main galaxy, spiral galaxy NGC 4651, is about the size of our Milky Way, while its stellar parasol appears to extend some 100 thousand light-years above this galaxy’s bright disk. (NASA)

## Pak army chief describes terrorism in J&K as ‘legitimate struggle’

TDG NETWORK  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir has described terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir as a “legitimate struggle”, saying his country would always stand by the people of Kashmir in their struggle.

Field Marshal Munir also warned India of a “befitting response” in case of any future attack, weeks after the

two nations briefly locked horns in a dangerous conflict.

“What India labels as terrorism is, in fact, a legitimate and lawful struggle for freedom, recognised by international law,” Munir said while addressing a passing out ceremony at Pakistan Naval Academy, Karachi, on Saturday.

“Those who have tried to suppress the Kashmiri peo-



ple’s will and pursue conflict elimination instead of resolution have only made the movement more relevant

through their own actions,” he claimed.

He said that Pakistan would always stand by the people of Kashmir in their struggle for the right to self-determination. “Pakistan is a strong advocate for a just resolution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with United Nations resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people,” he added.

In the past, Munir had

described Kashmir as Pakistan’s “jugular vein”.

India has repeatedly told Pakistan that the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh “was, is and shall forever” remain an integral part of the country.

The ties between the two countries nosedived after India abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution, revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, and bifurcat-

ing the State into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019.

In his address, Munir also claimed that Pakistan proved itself as a “net region stabiliser” after having repelled the Indian military attack twice. He was apparently referring to the 2019 Balakot strike after the Pulwama terror attack and the recent Operation Sindoor following the Pahalgam terror attack.

“Pakistan, despite grave

provocations, acted with restraint and maturity and demonstrated its commitment to regional peace and stability, which has led to Pakistan’s role as a net regional stabiliser,” he claimed. “As we steadily, but surely, build our comprehensive national power, any enemy acting on the perceived vulnerability of Pakistan under the illusion of strategic impunity or miscalculation, would get

a swift and a very befitting response,” he said.

The army chief also said that underterred by the efforts by adversaries, Pakistan would continue on the path of progress, development and prosperity.

He also reaffirmed the armed forces’ commitment to eradicating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, vowing to take the fight to its logical conclusion.



# 'I AM NOT OFFERING IRAN ANYTHING': TRUMP DENIES NUCLEAR DEAL TALKS

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has denied engaging in any talks with Iran or offering them concessions.

In a late-night post on Truth Social, Trump stated, "I am not offering Iran ANYTHING, unlike Obama, who paid them \$Billions under the stupid 'road to a nuclear weapon JCPOA (which would now be expired!)), nor am I even talking to them since we totally OBLITERATED their Nuclear Facilities."

On Friday, Trump also refuted media reports suggesting that his administration had explored the possibility of allowing Iran access to up to \$30 billion for a civilian nuclear energy program.

In response to the ongoing tensions, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas



Araghchi said on Saturday that President Donald Trump should put aside the "disrespectful tone" towards Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei if the US wants to have a deal with Iran.

Underscoring that Iran does not take it kindly to threats and insults, Araghchi said that Iran would not hesitate to unveil its real capabilities.

"The complexity and tenacity of Iranians are famously known in our magnificent carpets, woven through countless

hours of hard work and patience. But as a people, our basic premise is very simple and straightforward: we know our worth, value our independence, and never allow anyone else to decide our destiny," Iranian Foreign Minister wrote on X.

He added, "If President Trump is genuine about wanting a deal, he should put aside the disrespectful and unacceptable tone towards Iran's Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, and stop hurting his millions of heartfelt

followers."

"The Great and Powerful Iranian People, who showed the world that the Israeli regime had NO CHOICE but to RUN to 'Daddy' to avoid being flattened by our Missiles, do not take kindly to Threats and Insults. If Illusions lead to worse mistakes, Iran will not hesitate to unveil its Real Capabilities, which will certainly END any Delusion about the Power of Iran", the post further mentioned.

He concluded his remarks by saying, "Good will begets good will, and respect begets respect."

The remarks by the Iranian Foreign Minister come amid the backdrop of the US hinting towards talks with Iran.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt on Thursday (US local time) had said the Trump administration is focused on

diplomacy and peace, adding that the US continues to remain in close communication with the Iranians.

Addressing a press briefing, Leavitt said, "I spoke to our special envoy Witkoff at length this morning and I can assure all of you we continue to be in close communication with the Iranians and through our intermediaries as well, namely the Qataris, who have been an incredibly ally and partner throughout this entire effort. As I said, this administration is always focused on diplomacy and peace, and we want to ensure we can get to a place where Iran agrees to a non-enrichment civil nuclear program."

Her remarks follow after the US had conducted precision strikes on three Iranian nuclear sites under Operation 'Midnight Hammer'.

# Germany to help Ukraine make more weapons faster

AGENCIES  
KYIV

Germany aims to help Ukraine manufacture more weapons more quickly as Kyiv looks to strengthen its negotiating position in peace talks with Russia about ending their more than three-year war, the top German diplomat said Monday.

"We see our task as helping Ukraine so that it can negotiate more strongly," Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said during a visit to the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, accompanied by German defense industry representatives.

US-led international peace efforts have failed to make progress on halting the fighting, Russian President Vladimir Putin has effectively rejected a ceasefire and hasn't budged from his



war goals.

"When Putin speaks of peace today, it is pure mockery," Wadephul told a news conference with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha. "His apparent readiness to negotiate is only a facade so far."

Russia's invasion shows no sign of letting up. Its grinding war of attrition along the roughly 1,000-kilometre front line and long-range strikes on civilian areas of Ukraine have killed thousands of troops and civilians.

Ukraine is outgunned and short-handed on the front line and international aid has been vital for Ukraine's resistance against its neighbour's bigger army and economy. Germany has been Ukraine's second-largest military backer after the United States, whose continuing support is in doubt.

"We want to build new joint ventures so that Ukraine itself can produce faster and more for its own defense, because your needs are enormous," Wadephul said while standing next to Sybiha.

"Our arms cooperation is a real trump card — it is a logical continuation of our delivery of material," Wadephul said. "And we can even benefit mutually from it — with your wealth of ideas and your experience, we will become better."

# Senate Republicans are in a sprint on Trump's big Bill after weekend of setbacks

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

After a weekend of setbacks, the Senate is trying to sprint ahead Monday on President Donald Trump's big bill of tax breaks and spending cuts despite a series of challenges, including the sudden announcement from one GOP senator that he won't run for reelection after opposing the package over its Medicaid health care cuts.

An all-night session to consider an endless stream of proposed amendments to the package, in what's called a vote-a-rama, was abruptly postponed, but it's now underway. With Democrats united against the Republican president's legislation and eagerly lined up to challenge it, the voting could take all day.

"It's time to vote," said Senate Majority Leader John Thune of South Dakota.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said the "hardest



choices" for Republicans are still to come. His side plans to bring "amendment after amendment after amendment to the floor, so Republicans can defend their billionaire tax cuts and so they can try to explain their massive cuts to Medicaid to people back home."

The hours ahead will be pivotal for the Republicans, who have control of the Congress and are racing against Trump's Fourth of July deadline to wrap up work. The 940-page "One Big Beautiful Bill Act,"

## MUSK SLAMS TRUMP-BACKED SENATE BILL

Washington: Tech billionaire Elon Musk strongly criticised President Trump's "big, beautiful bill," calling it "political suicide for the Republican Party," The Hill reported.

"Polls show that this bill is political suicide for the Republican Party," Musk said in an X post on Saturday. In another message, he branded the Senate draft as "utterly insane and destructive," stating, "It will destroy millions of jobs in America and cause immense strategic harm to our country!" The Hill noted.

as it is now formally titled, has consumed the Congress as its shared priority with the president, with no room politically to fail, even as not all Republicans are on board.

AGENCIES  
LONDON

A Palestinian human rights group lost its legal challenge on Monday to the British government's decision to supply Israel with parts for F-35 fighter jets and other military equipment.

Al-Haq alleged that the U.K. broke domestic and international law and was complicit in atrocities against Palestinians by allowing essential components for the warplanes to be supplied to Israel.

The government said the ruling showed it had rigorous export rules and it would continue to review its licensing agreements, a



spokesperson said.

The government last year suspended about 30 of 350 existing export licenses for equipment deemed to be for use in the conflict in Gaza because of a "clear risk" the items could be used to violate international humanitarian law. Equipment included parts for helicopters

and drones.

But an exemption was made for some licenses related to components of F-35 fighter jets, which are indirectly supplied to Israel through the global spare parts supply chain and have been linked to bombing the Gaza Strip.

Components manufac-

tured in the U.K. are sent to assembly lines in the U.S., Italy and Japan that supply partners — including Israel — with jets and spare parts, the court said.

Two High Court judges ruled that the issue was one of national security because the parts were considered vital to the defense collaboration and the U.K.'s security and international peace. They said it wasn't up to the courts to tell the government to withdraw from the group because of the possibility the parts would be supplied to Israel and used to violate international humanitarian law in Gaza.

# Severe heat wave hits southern Europe and raises wildfire risks

AGENCIES  
ROME

Major heat waves across southern Europe have pushed temperatures above 40 C (104 F) in countries including Italy, Spain and Greece, as local authorities issued fresh warnings against the risk of wildfires.

Experts link the rising frequency and intensity of these heat waves to climate change, warning that such extreme weather events are becoming increasingly common across Europe's southern region.

Severe heat was recorded in Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal before the weekend, with locals and tourists alike taking shelter from the sweltering conditions.

Two-thirds of Portugal were on high alert Sunday for extreme heat and wildfires, with temperatures expected to top 42 C (107 F) in Lisbon.

In Italy, a few regions — Lazio, Tuscany, Calabria, Puglia and Umbria — were planning to ban some outdoor work



activities during the hottest hours of the day in response to the record-high temperatures. Italian trade unions pushed the government to expand such measures at a national level. On Sunday, the Italian Health Ministry placed 21 out of 27 monitored cities under its highest heat alert, including top holiday destinations like Rome, Milan and Naples. In Rome, tourists tried to seek shade near popular spots like

the Colosseum and the Trevi Fountain, using umbrellas and drinking from public water fountains to stay cool.

Similar scenes were reported in Milan and Naples, where street vendors sold lemonade to tourists and residents to offer some refreshment from the heat.

Greece was again on high wildfire alert because of extreme weather, with the first summer heat wave expected

to continue throughout the weekend.

A large wildfire broke out south of Athens on Thursday, forcing evacuations and road closures near the ancient Temple of Poseidon. Strong winds spread the flames, damaging homes and sending smoke across the sky.

Greek authorities deployed 130 firefighters, 12 planes and 12 helicopters to battle the blaze, while police evacuated

40 people, with five areas under evacuation orders.

In Spain, locals and tourists were desperately trying to keep cool this weekend, as the country sizzled in temperatures as high as 42 C (107 F) in the southern city of Seville along with other locations in southern and central parts of the country.

Southern regions of Spain recorded temperatures above seasonal averages, prompting health alerts and safety recommendations from authorities. The country's national meteorological service Aemet has said that June is set to break yet another record, becoming the hottest such month since records started.

Experts warned that intense heat can affect daily life, especially for vulnerable populations such as the elderly and children.

Local authorities advised against physical activity during the hottest hours of the day, and recommended drinking plenty of fluids.

# Jair Bolsonaro rallies supporters in Sao Paulo to protest his SC trial

AGENCIES  
SAO PAULO

Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on Sunday attended a public demonstration in Sao Paulo to protest against his ongoing Supreme Court trial in the South American country.

A couple of thousand people gathered on Paulista Avenue, one of the city's main locations, in a demonstration that Bolsonaro, before the event, called "an act for freedom, for justice."

Bolsonaro and 33 allies are facing trial over an alleged plot to overturn the 2022 presidential election results and remain in power. They were charged with five counts related to the plan.

The former president has denied the allegations and claims that he's the target of political persecution. He could face up to 12 years in prison if convicted.

"Bolsonaro, come back!" protesters chanted, but the former president is barred from running for office until 2030.

# 6 killed in crash of small plane in Ohio

AGENCIES  
YOUNGSTOWN

Six people were killed when a small plane crashed minutes after taking off from an Ohio airport, officials said.

The Cessna 441 with six people on board crashed near Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport on Sunday morning, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. Authorities remained on the scene Monday.

There were no survivors, Western Reserve Port Authority Executive Director Anthony Trevena said at a news conference. The victims were taken to the Trumbull County Coroner's Office, Trevena said, but he did not release their names.

It was difficult to get to the site of the crash, Howland Township Fire Chief Raymond Pace said.

"We're very fortunate. This is a extremely tragic situation, but it could have been

*It was difficult to get to the site of the crash, Howland Township Fire Chief Raymond Pace said.*

worse," Pace said, noting that there were three houses near the spot where the plane crashed.

Publicly available flight tracking data showed that the plane's destination was Bozeman, Montana, said Michael Hillman, president of aviation company JETS FBO Network. "These were the best of the best in terms of the folks here at the field, as well as the pilots. I can't say enough about them," Hillman said at the news conference. "I'd give anything to rewind the day and take them to breakfast instead."

The FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board will investigate and the NSTB will lead the investigation.

# US skips global UN meeting aimed at raising trillions to combat poverty

AGENCIES  
BARCELONA

Many of the world's nations, but not the United States, gathered Monday in Spain to tackle the growing gap between rich and poor nations and try to drum up trillions of dollars needed to close it.

"Financing is the engine of development. And right now, this engine is sputtering," United Nations Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres said in his opening comments at the four-day Financing for Development meeting in Seville.

Many countries face escalating debt burdens, declining investments, decreasing international aid and increasing trade barriers.

Co-hosts the U.N. and Spain believe the meeting is an opportunity to close the staggering \$4 trillion annual financing gap to promote

development, bring millions of people out of poverty and help achieve the U.N.'s badly lagging Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

Even though the gathering comes amid global economic uncertainty and geopolitical tensions, there is hope that the world can address one of the most important global challenges: ensuring all people have access to food, health care, education and



water.

More than 70 world leaders are attending, the U.N.

said, along with representatives of international financial institutions, develop-

ment banks, philanthropic organizations, the private sector and civil society.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez told the delegates that the summit is an opportunity "for us to raise our voice in the face of those who seek to convince us that rivalry and competition will set the tone for humanity and for its future."

At the last preparatory meeting on June 17, the

United States rejected the outcome document that had been negotiated for months by the U.N.'s 193 member nations and announced its withdrawal from the process and the Seville conference.

The Seville Commitment document, approved by consensus, will be adopted by conference participants without changes. It says delegates have agreed to launch "an ambitious package of

reforms and actions to close the financing gap with urgency."

It calls for a minimum tax revenue of 15% of a country's gross domestic product to increase government resources, a tripling of lending by multilateral development banks and scaling up of private financing by providing incentives for investing in critical areas like infrastructure.



# HOLLYWOOD ROLES FOR WOMEN HAVE EVOLVED BEYOND MALE GAZE FOCUS: JOHANSSON

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON D.C.

Actress Scarlett Johansson, known for her roles in 'Avengers', 'Black Widow', and other successful films, recently spoke about how opportunities for women in Hollywood have evolved since she began her career, according to Variety.

Johansson shared that early in her career, many of the roles offered to her were centred around "desirability" and focused on the goals and needs of male characters. However, she believes the industry is now entering "a different time for young women."

"The messaging is different, there are many more role models, women are



visible in powerful positions, and the opportunities I have had to play women who don't have to be just one thing, or another have

increased," Johansson told Variety.

She added, "When I was younger, a lot of roles I was offered or pursued had am-

bitions or character arcs revolving around their desirability, the male gaze, or male-centred stories. That is less frequent now; something has shifted."

Johansson has been vocal about her experiences with representation in the industry. In 2022, she revealed that she felt "hypersexualised" at a young age, which made it difficult to break into diverse roles.

"I kind of became objectified and pigeonholed in this way where I felt like I wasn't getting offers for work I wanted to do," she said.

"I remember thinking to myself, 'I think people think I'm 40 years old.' It stopped being something desirable, and I was fighting against it," she added, as reported by Variety.

## Ibrahim, Kajol, Prithviraj star in emotional thriller 'Sarzameen'

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Ibrahim Ali Khan, son of Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh, is set to appear in his second film, 'Sarzameen', following his acting debut in 'Nadaaniyan' earlier this year. The upcoming film features him alongside powerhouse performers Kajol and Prithviraj Sukumaran.

Directed by Kayoze Irani and produced by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions, 'Sarzameen' is slated to release on JioHotstar on July 25. The makers unveiled its teaser on Monday, giving audiences a



glimpse into the emotionally charged narrative.

Speaking about his directorial debut, Irani said in a press note, "Sarzameen will always hold

a special place in my heart—not just because it marks my first feature film as a director, but because it tells a story that is both deeply intimate and pro-

foundly intense. Working with phenomenal artists like Prithviraj Sir, Kajol Ma'am, and Ibrahim has been nothing short of a privilege."

He added, "The emotional battlefield in 'Sarzameen' is just as powerful and consuming as the one unfolding on the frontlines."

Producer Karan Johar echoed the sentiment, calling 'Sarzameen' "a deeply emotional story about duty, family, and the choices that define us." He described it as "not just a thriller, but a powerful personal journey that speaks to the times we live in."

## Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce enjoy NYC date night

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON D.C.

Taylor Swift and Kansas City Chiefs star Travis Kelce were recently spotted spending quality time together in New York City. The couple, known for their close bond, were seen holding hands during a date night outing, reported People.

For the evening, Swift wore a pink and white houndstooth Balmain dress featuring gold chain straps and six gold buttons down the front. She completed her look with a tan purse and matching shoes. Kelce chose a casual oversized white short-sleeve shirt paired with black pants, black shoes, and stylish sunglasses.

This outing came shortly after they were seen leaving a Manhattan restaurant on June 20. The couple also enjoyed time together in Nashville, dining with Swift's childhood best friend Abigail Anderson and her husband Charles Berard. Additionally, Swift surprised fans with a performance at Kelce's Tight Ends & Friends



*Looking ahead, an insider revealed that Swift is "really looking forward" to supporting Kelce throughout the upcoming NFL season.*

concert at Brooklyn Bowl. Their relationship, which began in 2023, has been marked by multiple public appearances. The couple stepped out for dinners in Florida and attended the NHL Stanley Cup final on June 12. Fans dubbed their appearance at Kelce's event as their "red carpet debut." Kelce co-founded the annual three-day summer training camp in 2021 with George Kittle and Greg Olsen.

Swift and Kelce are no strangers to sports outings. Last summer, they

enjoyed a PDA-filled day at the US Open in New York City alongside fellow Chiefs player Patrick Mahomes and his wife Brittany. Taylor has also been a frequent supporter at Travis' home games in Kansas City whenever her schedule allows.

Looking ahead, an insider revealed that Swift is "really looking forward" to supporting Kelce throughout the upcoming NFL season. This will be her first full season free of tour commitments since they began dating, allowing her to be more present.

## Mundey Young to star in horror thriller 'As Night Falls'

AGENCIES  
LOS ANGELES

Actor Mundey Young will be seen in a pivotal role in the upcoming horror film 'As Night Falls', which also stars Jack Parr and Sophia Eleni. The supporting cast includes Aaron-Jon North ('The Nun II', 'The Burning Girls'), Fran McAteer, Dale Hayes, David Sayers, Oliver Smiles, and Millie-Sue Hayward, as reported by Variety.

The film is written and directed by Leroy Kincaide, known for the exorcist hor-



ror 'The Last Rite', which starred Bethan Waller and Johnny Fleming. 'The Last Rite' was Kincaide's directorial debut feature and is currently streaming on Hulu following its U.S. release by Samuel Goldwyn Films in

2021. Produced by Kincaide and Chloe Chudasama under the Nocturnal Pictures banner, 'As Night Falls' takes audiences into a chilling dystopian nightmare. The story follows Jane and Aidan, who are struggling to survive five months after the world has fallen eerily

### BRAIN PICKING



For me, physical beauty is never the reason for attraction to anyone.

— KATRINA KAIF  
(Indian Actress)

## 'Mandala Murders' to be out on July 25

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Get ready for an exciting lineup of shows and films this July, including the much-anticipated 'Mandala Murders', a mythological-crime thriller from YRF Entertainment. The series is set to premiere on Netflix on July 25.

'Mandala Murders' is cre-



## Kriti Sanon shares joyful June moments, gears up for birthday month

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Actor Kriti Sanon recently shared her June photo dump, capturing memorable moments with family, friends, her team, and pets. Among the highlights is a playful picture of Kriti making goofy faces with her sister Nupur, along with a heartwarming shot of her hugging her dog.

Clearly, Kriti enjoyed a fun-filled June and is now looking forward to July, which is special for the 'Do Patti' star as her birthday falls on the 27th.

Reflecting on her June memories, she captioned the post, "Surrounded with my happy people, Love and Self Love, June is almost kha-

tam.. Birthday Month starting soon."

On the professional front, Kriti will soon be seen in 'Tere Ishk Mein', starring opposite Dhanush.

At IIFA 2025, she expressed her excitement about the film, saying, "It's a beautiful film—something I haven't done before. Love stories are my favourite

genre, and Anand Sir does them so well and uniquely. Working with Dhanush for the first time is also very exciting." Last year, on the 10th anniversary of 'Raanjhanaa', director Aanand L. Rai announced the project, stating, "There couldn't be a more perfect day to unveil our next venture, 'Tere Ishk Mein', with Dhanush."



## Poonam Dhillon recalls Rishi Kapoor's charm and warm hospitality

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Though veteran actor Rishi Kapoor passed away on April 30, 2020, his legacy continues to shine through his memorable performances and charismatic presence in Indian cinema. In a heartfelt conversation with ANI, actress Poonam Dhillon fondly recalled her time working with the late star, reminiscing about his unique screen presence and the Kapoor family's legend-



ary hospitality. Reflecting on their collaborations in films like 'Zamana', 'Biwi O Biwi', 'Ek Chadar Maili Si', and 'Yeh Vaada Raha', Poonam highlighted how "Chintu," as Rishi was lovingly known, brought something magical to film songs.

"I've learnt a lot from him," she said. "Rishi Kapoor was probably the only actor who could sing a sad song with a smile. Later, when I watched Raj uncle's films, I noticed he did the same."



# HOW BAD POSTURE IS SILENTLY HURTING ATHLETES - A SPORTS DOCTOR'S GUIDE TO INJURY-FREE TRAINING



DR. ABHISHEK VAISH

Whether you're a professional athlete or someone who plays sports for fitness, your posture plays a crucial role in your performance and more importantly, in preventing injuries. From runners to gym-goers, poor form and alignment often go unnoticed until pain or injury strikes.

"Posture is not just about standing straight; it's about how your body moves in space. Every muscle and joint must work in balance," says Dr. Abhishek Vaish, a senior orthopedic and sports injury specialist based in New Delhi.

## WHAT IS BAD POSTURE IN SPORTS?

Bad posture means incorrect body alignment during activity. This could mean:

- Slouching while cycling or lifting weights
- Twisting your torso improperly during tennis or cricket



Running with your head tilted down or shoulders hunched

In sports, even small deviations in alignment get magnified due to repetitive motion and high impact. For example, runners who tilt their pelvis forward or strike the ground with their heels too hard often develop shin splints, knee pain, or IT band syndrome.

## COMMON INJURIES LINKED TO BAD POSTURE

- 1. Lower Back Pain**  
Improper posture while lifting weights or doing squats puts enormous stress on the lumbar spine. This leads to disc strain or muscle pulls.

- 2. Knee Injuries (Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome)**

"If the knees collapse inward during squats or jumps, it's a sign of weak glutes and poor posture a dangerous combination," says Dr. Vaish.

- 3. Shoulder Injuries (Impingement or Rotator Cuff Tear)**

Slouched shoulders while doing push-ups, pull-ups, or overhead movements can irritate the rotator cuff, eventually leading to tears or chronic pain.

- 4. Neck Strain and Headaches**

Poor head posture during cycling or running (forward-head posture) places extra tension on neck muscles.

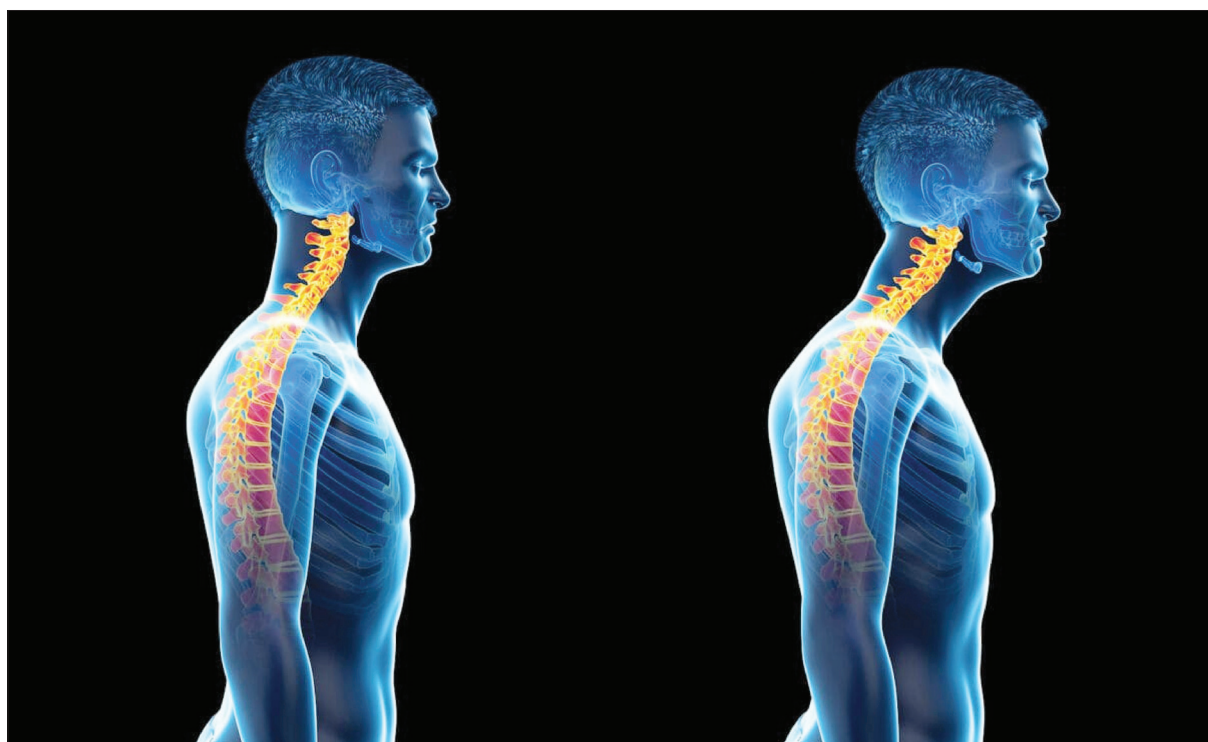
- 5. Ankle and Foot Problems**

Misaligned running posture leads to flat-foot strain, plantar fasciitis, or recurrent ankle sprains.

## WHY POSTURE MATTERS: THE MUSCLE IMBALANCE FACTOR

Dr. Abhishek Vaish emphasizes that bad posture often stems from muscle imbalance — tight muscles on one side and weak ones on the other. "If your core is weak or hamstrings are tight, your body compensates by shifting the load to other joints like the knees or lower back — which is how injuries begin."

This imbalance can often



go undetected until pain surfaces, especially in athletes who overtrain or skip flexibility and mobility work.

## PREVENTIVE TIPS FROM DR. ABHISHEK VAISH

To avoid posture-related sports injuries, seek the following guidelines:

- 1. Postural Assessment:**

Get your posture and movement patterns analyzed by a physiotherapist or sports doctor, especially if you're active in sports or fitness.

- 2. Warm-Up with Mobility**

Work:

Include dynamic stretches for hips, shoulders, and spine before every workout or match.

- 3. Strengthen Core and Glutes:**

A strong core and gluteal region act like shock absorbers for the whole body.

- 4. Focus on Form, Not Just Reps:**

Whether you're lifting, sprinting, or practicing yoga, technique matters more than quantity.

- 5. Listen to Your Body:**

Persistent tightness, dull pain, or cracking sounds during movement are sig-

nals that your posture might be off.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP?

If pain persists despite rest or stretching, it's time to consult an expert.

"Don't wait for the pain to get worse. Early diagnosis and corrective therapy can prevent long-term damage," advises Dr. Abhishek Vaish.

He often uses a combination of posture correction exercises, physiotherapy, and sport-specific retraining to help patients recover and return stronger.

Posture isn't just about looking confident — it's about moving safely, performing better, and staying injury-free. Sports injuries caused by bad posture are preventable, but only if we're aware and proactive. "Good posture is the foundation of athletic longevity. Train smart, not just hard," concluded Dr. Abhishek Vaish.

*Inputs by Dr. Abhishek Vaish, Sr. Orthopedic Surgeon and Sports Injury Specialist from Indraprastha Apollo Hospital and Healing Touch Clinic in Okhla New Delhi*

## WHEN TO WORRY: UNDERSTANDING PERSISTENT JOINT PAIN IN CHILDREN



### FOOD IS MEDICINE

DR ANISH DESAI

We have seen children complain about being sore and having pains after a long day of physical activities, yet it is important for us to think twice about persistent joint pain. Growing pains are often temporary and benign. However, if the discomfort is persistent over weeks and is interfering with your child's usual daily activities, it is important to take notice. Getting it evaluated is an important factor in being able to manage the cause well and in ensuring the long-term growth and health of the child

with unknown cause

- Pain moving from joint to another

**The Importance of Timely Diagnosis**

Diagnosis is often ruled out through careful analysis to determine the potential causes of symptoms and to take into account how symptoms have developed over time. Inflammatory markers, autoimmune screening, and joint fluid can also answer the ultimate cause.

The sooner the issue is discovered, the less likely the children will experience joint damage leading to an improved quality of life. For instance, in juvenile idiopathic conditions, the earlier the intervention the less inflammation the child experiences, retain mobility of the joints and prevent longer term complications.

**Supporting the Child's Health at Home and School**

Moderated physical activity, eating a healthy diet of anti-inflammatory foods, and adequate rest can help enhance recovery. Additionally, health educators and caregivers need to be kept informed so that accommodations such as rest periods or modified physical activities, can be made as required.

Although joint pain may feel quite small as a childhood complaint, it is always important to recognize, diagnose, and treat persistent or worsening symptoms. Early recognition and diagnosis along with a comprehensive care response, can make a real difference in managing the condition and enabling the child to have an active, healthy life.

By Dr. Suresh Virmani, Associate Director & Head - Paediatric Orthopaedics, Sarvodaya Hospital, Faridabad



## Understanding the Difference: Normal vs. Concerning Pain

It is normal for children to have occasional joint pain due to small injuries, overuse of muscles or growth spurts. However, if joint pain is a regular complaint, especially if they become limited by pain, are unable to sleep properly and continue to complain of joint pain along with swelling, redness, or stiffness, the parents must consult a health care professional. Joint pain can arise from different things, A benign condition like hypermo-

possible bone infection. It is important to seek a medical opinion to ensure timely diagnosis and treatment if you see any of these:

- Pain has persisted beyond few weeks, especially if the pain is slowly increasing and getting worse
- Your child seems unusually stiff, especially after they wake up in the morning or after sitting for a long time
- They have some trouble walking, running or climbing stairs.
- They have frequent fevers and feel more tired than usual or lose of weight

## The Science of Resistant Starch: Benefits for the Gut and Beyond

### TDG NETWORK

In recent years, resistant starch (RS) has emerged as a powerful dietary component with profound effects on gut health. Unlike regular starch, which is broken down and absorbed in the small intestine, resistant starch resists digestion and reaches the colon intact. Here, it acts as a substrate for fermentation by the gut microbiota, producing short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) such as butyrate, acetate, and propionate key metabolites with multiple health benefits.

One of the most significant benefits of resistant starch is its role in maintaining intestinal integrity. SCFAs, especially butyrate, are a primary energy

source for colonocytes the cells lining the colon. Butyrate strengthens the gut barrier, reduces inflammation, and may even help lower the risk of colorectal cancer. Furthermore, the production of SCFAs lowers the pH in the colon, creating an environment that favors the growth of beneficial bacteria and inhibits pathogenic microbes.

Resistant starch also ex-

hibits prebiotic properties by selectively promoting the growth of beneficial gut bacteria, particularly species within the Bacteroidetes and Firmicutes phyla. These microbial changes can positively influence not only gut health but also systemic functions, including immune regulation and metabolic balance.

Dietary sources of RS are diverse and include



legumes (lentils, beans, chickpeas), whole grains (barley, oats), and tubers (especially cooked and cooled potatoes). Additionally, green bananas and certain processed foods like whole grain breads and pastas contain appreciable amounts of RS. Food preparation methods, such as cooking followed by cooling, can significantly increase RS content through a process called retrogradation.

There are five types of RS, categorized based on their resistance to digestion. RS1 is physically inaccessible starch found in whole or coarsely ground grains. RS2 is present in raw foods like unripe bananas and raw potatoes. RS3 is retro-

graded starch formed after cooking and cooling. RS4 is chemically modified for industrial use, and RS5 involves amylose-lipid complexes.

Incorporating resistant starch into the diet whether through natural foods like legumes and cooled grains or fortified products presents a valuable strategy to support gut health and microbial balance. By enhancing the production of beneficial short-chain fatty acids and promoting a healthier gut environment, resistant starch may help reduce the risk of metabolic disorders. As research continues, RS is poised to play a key role in nutrition-based approaches to long-term health and wellness.

## When One Falls Sick, Not Everyone Around Has To: How to Stop Infections from Spreading at Home

### TDG NETWORK

In many households, one person gets the flu or a viral infection, and within a few days, the rest of the family develops symptoms as well. However, the transmission of infection within a home is not unavoidable. It is possible to contain the illness and save others from becoming unwell by adopting proper habits and hygiene practices.

## How Germs Travel Inside a Home

Germs do not only stay on the body of a sick individual. A cough, sneeze, or even an innocuous contact may transmit bacteria and viruses onto those around us (people and pets) and also land on inanimate surfaces - such as kitchen sinks, countertops, door handles, remote controls, drapery, and couches. These germs may survive for hours or more, and your home is, therefore and your home



may harbor germs

## One Easy Habit That Makes a Big Difference

Cleaning on a regular basis is beneficial, but disinfection is essential, particularly when someone is unwell. Germ protection and regular cleanliness go together with the help of an efficient surface disinfectant.

That's when a reliable surface disinfectant can make all the difference. Savlon Surface Disinfectant Spray protects from illness caus-

ing germs\* like bacteria and viruses commonly found on various surfaces, eliminating a wide range of germs including antibiotic resistant bacteria\*, respiratory infection causing viruses like H1N1, RSV, H9N2\*, fungi, and odor-causing molds\*. It is designed for everyday use and leaves behind a pleasant, fresh fragrance. A product such as this one can be used on both hard and soft surfaces that one frequently comes in contact with. These include

table tops and desks, chairs and sofas, doorknobs, kitchen sinks, shower taps, toilet areas (including the bowl and faucets), mattresses, car seats, curtains, upholsteries and carpets. By making it a daily habit to disinfect these areas, especially when someone is sick, you can add an extra layer of protection for your family.

## The Hidden Hotspots You Shouldn't Miss

To avoid infection, take special care of frequently touched areas such as:

- Doorknobs
- Dining tables, desks and worktops
- Toilet area
- Sofas, beds, chairs and carpets
- Car interiors

You can also prevent infection spread in your home by following these few but effective measures:

- Designate the ill individual with separate per-

sonal items like towels, cutlery, and water bottles and refrain others from sharing these items

- Promote the usage of disposable tissues and masks, particularly in common spaces, to trap coughs, sneezes and respiratory droplets

- Clean often-touched surfaces twice a day, paying special attention to common areas shared by all members in the household

- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth after contacting any item

## Because Care Begins at Home

A sanitized and clean home is more than just a comfort. It is your first line of defense. You can keep your family safe and stop illnesses from spreading by being a little more mindful and much more routine-oriented, so that one person's sickness isn't an issue for anyone else in the family.



# JULY BORN? NUMEROLOGY POWER MANTRA FOR YOU!!!



SACRED PULSE

JYOTSNA G BANSAL

Have you ever wondered how your birth month and date influence your personality and life path? If you were born in July, you possess a unique energy shaped by the numbers in your birth date. Numerology reveals general traits connected to these specific numbers of your birth date. Keep in mind, the traits shared here can vary depending on your exact birth date numbers. The Power Mantras, for each July birthdate, are just one way to tap into your strengths and overcome obstacles on your personal journey toward success.

**Born on 1, 10, 19, 28 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 1: Self-Neglect, Insecurity  
July 10: Overthinking, Delay  
July 19: Rigidity, Frustration  
July 28: Aggressiveness, Insensitivity  
**Power Mantras:**  
July 1: Use your intuition to inspire positive change while caring for yourself and others. Balance vision

and care.  
July 10: Observe deeply, act decisively; combine insight with courage.  
July 19: Embrace change with positivity. Inspire through resilience and kindness  
July 28: Channel ambition with strategy, clarity and insight. Pursue goals confidently.  
**Born on 2, 11, 20, 29 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 2: Internal Conflict, Insecurity  
July 11: Impatience, Over-sensitivity  
July 20: Restlessness, Lack of Focus  
July 29: Suppression, Emotional Drain  
**Power Mantras:**  
July 2: Serve with sensitivity and strength. Balance duty and self-care. Nurture with strength.  
July 11: Combine bold action with thoughtful cooperation to achieve clarity.  
July 20: Build meaningful bonds guided by insight and optimism. Balance curiosity with discipline.  
July 29: Lead with loyalty

Born on	Key Traits
1, 10, 19, 28 July	Determined, Competitive, Ambitious, Intuitive, Empathetic, Confident, Visionary
2, 11, 20, 29 July	Sensitive, Empathetic, Responsive, Organized, Selfless, Caring, Loyal, Responsible
3, 12, 21, 30 July	Intuitive, Observant, Analytical, Logical, Creative, Independent, Artistic
4, 13, 22, 31 July	Loyal, Organized, Practical, Grounded, Innovative, Determined, Analytical
5, 14, 23 July	Imaginative, Charismatic, Practical, Vibrant, Ambitious, Determined, Optimistic, Sociable, Convincing, Generous
6, 15, 24 July	Optimistic, Energetic, Charismatic, Kind, Supportive, Focused, Practical, Innovative, Compassionate, Loyal
7, 16, 25 July	Ambitious, Imaginative, Determined, Intuitive, Sensitive, Supportive, Creative, Analytical
8, 17, 26 July	Determined, Practical, Energetic, Strong-willed, Focused, Independent, Logical, Ambitious, Protective, Influential, Generous
9, 18, 27 July	Resourceful, Energetic, Popular, Loyal, Sensitive, Compassionate, Committed, Practical

and nurturing spirit. Balance dedication with self-care, inspire kindness and commitment.  
**Born on 3, 12, 21, 30 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 3: Criticism, Misunderstanding  
July 12: Over-control, Manipulation  
July 21: Confrontation, Insensitivity  
July 30: Narrow-mindedness, Rigidity  
**Power Mantras:**  
July 3: Express your truth with grace and inspire others with thoughtful innovation. Engage thoughtfully.  
July 12: Step forward confidently, express your creativity and listen deeply.  
July 21: Combine intellect and compassion to create meaningful change. Lead kindly and build meaningful connections.

July 30: Express vision with passion and practicality. Lead with steady care and inspire progress.  
**Born on 4, 13, 22, 31 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 4: Over-attachment, Over-Intensity  
July 13: Overload, Confusion, Pessimism  
July 22: Impulsiveness, Restlessness, Indecision  
July 31: Neglecting Loved Ones, Overwork, Imbalance  
**Power Mantras:**  
July 4: Build with loyalty and vision; protect with strength and care.  
July 13: Communicate clearly, build strong foundations, balance vision with realism, trust your intuition.  
July 22: Channel energy wisely. Act with clarity, compassion and steadfast focus.  
July 31: Seek knowledge

passionately. Work collaboratively. Balance progress with love & care.  
**Born on 5, 14, 23 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 5: Restlessness, Emotional Conflict  
July 14: Over-sacrifice, Emotional Exhaustion  
July 23: Authoritarianism, Intolerance  
**Power Mantras:**  
July 5: Lead with charm and intent. Shine brightly with vibrant creativity. Balance freedom and focus.  
July 14: Lead with courage and vision. Stay grounded with discipline. Embrace change with freedom. Maintain balance and self-care.  
July 23: Speak boldly, listen openly and nurture growth. Inspire kindness. Embrace change gracefully.  
**Born on 6, 15, 24 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**

JULY Born?

Numerology

Power

Mantra

for YOU!!!

practicality and inspire through thoughtful action. Stay open to feedback.  
July 16: Balance your dreams with reality, nurture connections patiently and support others.  
July 25: Stay grounded and committed. Lead courageously and kindly.  
**Born on 8, 17, 26 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 8: Overwork, Neglecting Others  
July 17: Procrastination, Isolation  
July 26: Provocation, Confrontation, Addiction  
**Power Mantras:**  
July 8: Drive progress with strength and clarity; support others with care.  
July 17: Achieve success through passion and kindness. Trust your intuition, nurture meaningful relationships.  
July 26: Channel strength with thoughtful purpose. Balance boldness with sensitivity, care and insight for lasting influence.  
**Born on 9, 18, 27 July**  
**Things to Avoid:**  
July 9: Frustration, Overthinking.  
July 18: Emotional Suppression, Isolation  
July 27: Overcontrolling, Rigidity  
**Power Mantras:**

July 9: Pursue dreams with calm focus and inspire kindness and strength.  
July 18: Inspire with loyalty and insight. Lead with wisdom, strength, vision and resilience.  
July 27: Drive progress with determination, insight and empathy. Combine energy with wisdom.  
By embracing your unique qualities and staying mindful of challenges, you can take purposeful steps toward your dreams. Let these power mantras be your daily source of strength, guiding you to lead with clarity, kindness and courage. No matter your birth date, July's energy calls you to shine boldly and leave a lasting, positive mark on the world.  
Jyotsnaa G Bansal is a Reiki Grandmaster, practicing Numerologist (with published Numerology Research Papers in International Journals), IKS & Vedic Learner & Seeker, Author, Columnist, Researcher, Counselor and Crystals & Spiritual Guide. She has presented Research papers at various Colleges & Universities including DU, CSU, SLBSN-SU. Mail her - jyotsnaathmoonlite@mail.com

## Awakening Beyond Religion: Spiritual Freedom in the Modern World



AIR ATMAN IN RAVI

HAPPINESS  
AMBASSADOR AND  
SPIRITUAL LEADER

Religion is often confused with spirituality. People think that if they are religious, they are spiritual. Spirituality, awakening, Enlightenment, however, is beyond religion. While religion can be considered the kindergarten of faith, spirituality is the university. And while there are many religions and sects, spirituality is 'one'. Religion can be described as an organised way of praying to God, an institution that lays down a code of conduct based on morals and ethics for its fol-

lowers. Spirituality is the science of the spirit, the Soul. It helps us realize who we are – the Atman, the Soul, a Spark Of Unique Life, a part of God. This realization is the purpose of life. Spirituality proclaims that one universal truth – God is one. God is not a person or a saint but energy, a Power – the Supreme Immortal Power, a Power that is nameless, formless, birthless, deathless, beginningless and endless. God does not live in the sky. God is within us, in every being, in fact, in everything. God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient.  
Of course, religion has long offered a framework for understanding existence, morality and the Divine, but a growing number of individuals are distancing themselves from religion and seeking spiritual freedom – a direct, personal experience of purpose, joy, meaning and connection that is not defined or confined by dogma, rituals or institutional structures.  
This shift is not necessar-


ily a rejection of religion, but rather an evolution beyond it. In fact, religion means well. Religion introduces God to us; it begins our journey to God. Religion teaches us to pray, it helps us to reach out and connect with God. It encourages devotion, Bhakti, love. At the same time, unfortunately, religion limits us. Each religion has its own God, scriptures, practices and beliefs and each religion believes in its own supremacy – 'our God is the only God'; 'our scripture is the only true scripture'. In fact, one of the key drivers of this awakening beyond religion is disillusionment with religious institutions. Questioning one's religion is considered blasphemy. Scandals, hypocrisy, rigid doctrines and exclusionary practices have led many to question the relevance of religion in their lives. That is why people are going beyond religion and turning inward to the path of self-inquiry, peace and direct experience. The focus shifts from belief in something

external or duality to awareness of the Divine or sacred within or non-duality.  
The modern spiritual seeker evolves drawing from a wide range of sources: meditation, mindfulness, nature, ancient wisdom, the guidance an enlightened master and even science – Quantum Physics and Quantum Mechanics. This approach reflects a desire for authenticity, a search for truth that resonates personally rather than being imposed externally. While science has been at loggerheads with religion because of the latter's focus on myths, rites and rituals, it has synergy with spirituality. Both science and spirituality believe that everything in this world is energy.  
Technological innovation and globalization have also played a role in this transformation. The internet has made spiritual teachings easily accessible. People can now explore Buddhism, Sufism, Advaita Vedanta, Indigenous wisdom and contemporary spiritual movements from

the comfort of their homes. Moreover, the popularity of meditation, mindfulness and wellness culture (mental and emotional wellbeing) has opened new doors to spiritual exploration. Practices once considered esoteric, like Yoga are becoming popular. While Yoga is more than exercises or breathing techniques, Asanas or Pranayama, it encourages discipline and leads to peace which are a part of spiritual growth.  
Awakening beyond religion often leads to a deeper, more meaningful relationship with life itself – one that honours interconnect-edness, reverence, a sense of oneness and love. Despite the uncertainty, chaos, rifts and divisions in the world today, this spiritual freedom offers hope. It empowers individuals to move beyond inherited beliefs and step into a direct, personal relationship with the mystery of existence and realize the purpose of life. It is a new way of being, a way of living – awake, aware and free.

You probably saw the videos – young women officers from the National Defence Academy marching shoulder to shoulder with men. Pride swelled, didn't it? WhatsApp lit up: "Betiyaan kisi se kam nahin", tricolour emojis, applause everywhere.  
But between forwarding that clip and settling in for the evening, another feeling crept in – one harder to name. Maybe your daughter mentioned her friend is in a live-in relationship. Maybe the neighbour whispered about the unmarried girl next door being pregnant. Suddenly, all that pride about breaking boundaries felt distant, replaced by something heavier – a quiet worry, a discomfort that tradition might be slipping away.  
This isn't someone else's dilemma – it's ours. It lives within us.

ego. One whispers love, courage, compassion. The other clings to fear, image, control. Both live within us. The one we feed shapes the India inside our hearts.  
Our past wasn't innocent of this struggle. Ancient texts show a more fluid world, where love wasn't always caged by societal permission. Tamil Sangam poetry speaks of kalavu unions – women choosing partners, living together before marriage, their love woven into verse, not buried in shame.  
Yet, in sitting rooms across the country, love still unsettles us. A same-sex relationship, a live-in bond, an unexpected pregnancy – they stir discomfort. Progress feels good when it's an Instagram post. It feels threatening when it's our own child, our own sibling, standing at that crossroad between duty and desire.



MODERN DAY MONK

DEEPAM CHATTERJEE

Our sages spoke of this inner war long before we called it 'progress versus tradition.' In the Kathopanishad, young Nachiketa stands before Yama, Lord of Death, who offers the boy two paths – Shreya and Preya. One is the harder, higher truth. The other feels safe, but keeps the soul small.  
Every generation walks this fork. And today, it is at our doorstep.  
A few days ago, a tragedy made that choice painfully real. On 27 June 2025, Karishma Choudhary, a young woman from Nagaur, Rajasthan, ended her life. Days earlier, her family had taken the life of Sahdev Ram – the man she lived with, quietly defying a child marriage forced on her. They hoped love could rewrite their story. But tradition's grip proved stronger. Crushed by "log kya kahenge", her family ended Sahdev's life. Five days later, Karishma ended hers.  
On 24 June, the Allahabad High Court ruled that live-in relationships still clash with middle-class Indian values. Laws may evolve, but mindsets drag their feet. And when hearts rebel, women pay the heavier price.  
You might think this is distant – a village tragedy. But pause. It's closer than we admit. In sitting rooms, over dinner, in whispers after guests leave – the same contradictions surface.  
One India builds space missions, celebrates women scientists, Army officers, CEOs. Yet in another, quieter India, a daughter-in-law is barred from the puja room during her period. A girl who tops her exams still serves tea to guests, her ambitions folded behind polite smiles.  
These contradictions aren't new. They live not only in our homes – but within ourselves. Our shastras have always known this. The Bhagavad Gita speaks of the battle between Atma and Ahamkara – the higher self and the

*One India builds space missions, celebrates women scientists, Army officers, CEOs. Yet in another, quieter India, a daughter-in-law is barred from the puja room during her period. A girl who tops her exams still serves tea to guests, her ambitions folded behind polite smiles.*

We like to believe the conflict is outside. But it isn't. It hides in our reactions, our silences, our judgements. The question isn't whether India is changing – it already is. The real question is whether we can hold both – love for tradition and our children's hunger for freedom – without betraying either.  
Yama's lesson to Nachiketa was clear: Shreya, the higher path, demands discomfort. It asks us to loosen fear and ego. But it leads to growth – of self, families, society.  
The two Indias aren't just out there – they breathe in our homes, WhatsApp chats, reactions, silences.  
Which India will you nourish – the one clinging to control, or the one daring to love beyond conditions? The choice isn't easy. It never was. But perhaps real dharma begins there – not in blind obedience to rules, but in the quiet honesty that whilst we share news of progress, inside us, old fears still linger.  
The two Indias aren't outside – they live within us. And they wait – not for headlines, but for small, private acts of courage.  
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## Vedic Martial Arts



ASHWINI GURUJI

Vedas is a synonym for gyan. Rishis who were from bharat, which is also called the land of the vedas have brought various aspects into the physical world be it solutions to possible problems, all the scientific discoveries of past and future and all the known and unknown arts.  
Vedic Martial Arts was developed by Agastya muni. Much later, Bodhidharma took it to China and Kalaripattu of Kerala is its

offshoot.  
The equipment used in Vedic martial arts are spears, swords, sticks, knives and gada. These were some simple-looking things, which the rishis carried but are also very potent tools.  
Vedic Martial Arts is to do with internal energy movements and aligning them to the biorhythms of the body to awaken hidden shaktis, which give glow and radiance to the body and reverse ageing. It develops phenomenal strength in the body and any attack can be easily ward off. The senses remain fully active due to this internal awakening. Mantras, asans and some exercises are also part of Vedic martial arts.  
If you are attacked at any time or if anyone tries to grope you, irrespective of the number of people, the basic principle is, that at one time



maximum of two people can come within arms length of touching you. Techniques are used to ward off and injure the attacker by striking gently at vital points also called marma sthans.  
There is no age group, but the younger you start the more the chances of holding on to your youthful abilities and glow. In later ages it's less effective as most of the shukra of the body gets lost and shaktis have faded.  
Though the personal attention of the Guru can awaken

arts.  
Classes are held at various dhyana ashram centers all over the world. Like all aspects of the vedas, there is no commercial angle attached to it. Just like the yagya which is taught by dhyana ashram, this is also free of cost, all it requires is commitment and regular practice with dedication.  
There are various levels to it and depending on your individual ability, a teacher is assigned to you. If there is phenomenal potential in you then I personally take you through.  
Ashwini Gururji is the Guiding Light of Dhyana Foundation and an authority on the Vedic Sciences. His book, 'Sanatan Kriya, The Ageless Dimension' is an acclaimed thesis on anti-ageing.  
For more details [www.dhyana-foundation.com](http://www.dhyana-foundation.com)



# AYUSH SHETTY CLINCHES US OPEN TITLE

AGENCIES  
IOWA

India's second-highest ranked Men's Singles player Ayush Shetty secured his first BWF World Tour title with a dominant win at the US Open 2025, defeating third seed Brian Yang of Canada 21-18, 21-13 in the men's singles final on Sunday.

In women's singles, 16-year-old Tanvi Sharma delivered one of the standout stories of the tournament, reaching the final with a string of fearless performances, with victories over World Ranks 23, 40, 50, and 58 en route, according to a release from the Badminton Association of India (BAI).

The 20-year-old rising star from Karnataka, Ayush,



India's Ayush Shetty wins his first Badminton World Federation World Tour title by defeating Canada's Brian Yang in the US Open men's singles final, on Sunday. (@BAI\_Media X/ANI Photo)

became the first Indian to win a World Tour title this season. The victory capped

off a stellar week for Shetty, who also stunned World No. 6 and top seed Chou

Tien-Chen in the semifinals to underline his potential on the big stage. Though she fell

## SCORES - FINALS

**Men's Singles:** Ayush Shetty (4) defeated Brian Yang (CAN) (3) 21-18, 21-13

**Women's Singles:** Tanvi Sharma beaten by Beiwen Zhang (USA) (1) 11-21, 21-16, 10-21. (ANI)

to top seed Beiwen Zhang of the USA in three games (21-11, 16-21, 21-10), Tanvi etched her name in the record books as the youngest Indian ever to reach a BWF World Tour final. The teenager, ranked World No. 66 and a member of India's Asian Team Championship-winning squad, showcased her readiness for the senior circuit with poise, variety, and attacking flair.

## ASIAN CUP



Indian women's football team midfielder Soumya Guguloth has undergone a successful surgery after she suffered a nasal bone fracture during her side's AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers victory over Timor-Leste here. (X)

## Vani finishes sixth, Diksha eighth in Amundi German Masters

AGENCIES  
HAMBURG

Indian pair Vani Kapoor and Diksha Dagar had a fine finish in the top 10 at the Amundi German Masters on the Ladies European Tour.

Vani, playing her third event of the season, was Tied-sixth and Diksha was T-8 as Singapore's Shannon Tan won the title. India's Avani Prashanth was T-26.

Vani rallied from a disappointing third round to shoot 2-under 71 in windy conditions in the fourth round on the North Course at Green Eagle Golf Courses in the final round of the 2025 Amundi German Masters. That helped her close at Tied-sixth and get her first Top-10 finish since October 2022, when she finished T-8 at her home event, the Hero Women's Indian Open.

Vani, who has won four times in her home Tour WPGT this year, shot rounds of 72-70-76-71 to total 3-under for the week.



Singapore's Shannon Tan sank a par putt on the last to secure a one-shot victory and her second Ladies European Tour (LET) title after a tense final day at the 2025 Amundi German Masters.

Vani was the best Indian this week as Diksha Dagar, who was in contention over the first two days with 69-73, shot 74-74 over the final two rounds and ended Tied-eighth. It was Diksha's fifth Top-10, and she has also been in the Top-15 on two other occasions. She is now back in Top-10 of the Order of Merit. Avani Prashanth,

the third Indian to make the cut this week, had a very straightforward even par round with one birdie and one bogey, and she finished T-26 at 2-over total. Her rounds this week were 73-74-74-73. Shannon Tan, who led overnight with a score of 12-under-par, opened with eight pars before making back-to-back bogeys on the ninth and 10th holes.

A birdie on 11 put the Olympian back to a three-shot advantage over Germany's Helen Briem, who was playing in the group in front.

## Saptak Talwar finishes in T31 in France

AGENCIES  
LE VAUDREUIL

India's Saptak Talwar carded a 2-under 70 in the final round to finish Tied-31st at the Le Vaudreuil Golf Challenge.

Talwar had four birdies,



including on fifth, eighth, 15th and 16th holes, and a couple of bogeys on the first and ninth holes.

David Horsey (69) secured the title after being forced to enter a four way playoff against Daniel Young (67), James Allan (65) and Joseba Torres (66). They were all

tied at 16-under.

Horsey ended the playoff on the first hole with a birdie. The hole selected for the playoff was the 10th hole.

Horsey carded 3-under 69 on the final day having played rounds of 72, 66, 65 and 69 and a combined

## 'I think Brett Lee could throw the javelin well': Neeraj Chopra

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

India's world champion and Olympic gold medalist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra on Monday shared his pick for the cricketer he believed would be best suited to take up the javelin.

Speaking to JioStar, Neeraj Chopra said, "I have heard that Brett Lee was a javelin thrower. I think he could throw the javelin well, especially when he was in his peak years. I would like to try javelin with Jasprit Bumrah too, and hope he teaches me some bowling skills. While bowling and javelin are both throws, they are very different. I would like to learn from Bumrah."

During his international career, Brett Lee was recognised as one of the fastest bowlers in the world. During his time representing Australia, Lee won multiple ICC titles with the team: the 2003 Cricket World Cup, the 2007 Cricket World Cup, the 2006 ICC Champions Trophy, and the



2009 ICC Champions Trophy. Meanwhile, Neeraj will be in action during the 'Neeraj Chopra Classic' at Bengaluru on July 5. He reclaimed his number one spot in men's javelin throw world rankings from Anderson Peters of Grenada following a string of brilliant performances on the international stage.

World Athletics updated the rankings earlier this week, increasing Neeraj's points to 1,445 compared to Peters' tally of 1,431, according to Olympics.com. Also, Pakistan's Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem sits at number four

with 1,370 points to his name.

Neeraj lost his top spot to Peters back in September 2024, just shortly after the Paris Olympics, where he attained a silver medal with a throw of 89.45, and Peters took home the bronze.

The year 2025 has been incredible for Neeraj, as he kickstarted with a win at the Potch Invitational in Potchefstroom, South Africa, in April and followed it up with a very special second-place finish at Doha Diamond League, where he crossed the 90-metre mark for the first time ever with a throw of 90.23 m.

## National selection trials: Suruchi Singh continues her brilliant form

AGENCIES  
DEHRADUN

Suruchi Inder Singh continued her brilliant form in the season as she finished on top of both the final and qualification of T3 10m Pistol Women event of the National Selection Trials 3 and 4 (Rifle and Pistol) for Group 'A' athletes being held here at the Trishul Shooting Range, Maharana Pratap Sports College, Raipur.

Navy marksman Niraj Kumar completed the double in the 50m 3 Positions Men event with a win in T4, while Samrat Rana edged Saurabh Chaudhary to win the 10 m Air Pistol Men's T3 final.

In a star-studded final, Suruchi finished with a score of 245.6, 1.1 better than Manu Bhaker, who shot 244.5 to finish in second



place, while Rahi Sarnobat finished in third with a score of 223.1. Esha Singh, Pranjali Prashant Dhumal, Simranpreet Kaur Brar, Priya Muralidhar and Sakshi Anil Suryavanshi occupied fourth to eighth spots, respectively.

Suruchi was also way ahead of the field in the qualification round, finishing with a score of 585, four better than Esha Singh, who shot 581. Rahi (580), Manu

(578-20x), Priya (578-17x), Pranjali (576), Sakshi (574-18x) and Simranpreet (574-15x) completed the top eight.

In the first final of the day, Samrat Rana leaped to first place with a 10.5 in the final shot, ahead of Saurabh, who could only manage a 9.6. In the end, Samrat ended with a score of 241.7 while Saurabh took second place with a score of 241.5. Aditya Malra finished in third with a score of 217.8.

## Woakes outlines Pant's threat; host to discuss way to counter

AGENCIES  
BIRMINGHAM

England's seasoned quick Chris Woakes confessed that the hosts will have discussions around negating the threat posed by India vice-captain Rishabh Pant and some other players in the second Test, scheduled to take place at Edgbaston on Wednesday.

In the series opener at Headingley, while Indian bowlers fell flat and tried to force breakthroughs with a toothless attack, batters took centre stage and led a valiant attack. India had five centuries in the five-wicket defeat in Leeds, featuring Yashasvi Jaiswal (101), Shubman Gill (147), KL Rahul (137) and Pant (134 and 118).

With the second Test of the five-match gruelling series on the horizon, Woakes ex-



pressed the excitement that comes while bowling against the explosive Pant, who is capable of putting the opposition bowlers on the back foot.

"Rishabh's a player who you don't really know what's coming next. He's a player who keeps you on your toes as a bowler, which is sometimes exciting to bowl against. But sometimes, he can put you on the back foot as a bowler. He makes the game move forward. It's exciting to be a part

of the game when he's at the crease," Woakes told reporters in a press conference on Monday.

With the Pant threat looming yet again at Edgbaston, Woakes remains hopeful of pulling the curtains down early on the much-anticipated fireworks from the south-paw, along with other Indian stars, whom he refrained from mentioning. "But look, he scored two hundreds, obviously up at Headingley, he played really well, chanced his arm on a few occasions and came off. Hopefully, this week, we can get him a little bit earlier. I think we haven't really met up yet, but I'm sure we'll have some discussions around some of the players that we came up against last week and how we can bowl at them a little bit better," he added.

## Ireland women promoted to FIH Hockey Pro League

AGENCIES  
LAUSANNE

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) confirmed that the "Green Army" - Ireland's national hockey team - will join the FIH Hockey Pro League for the 2025-26 season. It will be the first time that the finalists of the 2018 FIH Hockey Women's World Cup will join the "League of the Best".

Ireland was promoted

Ikram said: "Congratulations to the Ireland Women's team for joining the next season of the FIH Hockey Pro League! It's wonderful to see a new team participating in the 'League of the Best'. Qualifying through the FIH Hockey Nations Cup confirms how much the latter is a great springboard to join hockey's elite."

Speaking after the announcement, Ireland Women's Head Coach Gareth Grundie said: "I am delighted that we have been given the opportunity to participate in the FIH Pro League 2025/26 Season 7. It's a testament to the quality of play this team has achieved to date and is an excellent and invaluable opportunity for further improvement. It comes at an ideal time for us as a programme also, pitting us against the World's best teams as we go in search of qualification for the 2026 FIH World Cup in the Netherlands and Belgium."



## World Super Kabaddi League kicks off new chapter for the game

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

World Super Kabaddi League (WSKL) and the Uttar Pradesh Kabaddi League (UPKL) announced the launch of the inaugural edition of WSKL - a groundbreaking step towards making Kabaddi a truly global sport.

With the active engagement of nearly 30 countries and formal confirmation from 20 national federations, the inaugural season is tentatively scheduled for February-March 2026 and will be hosted in Dubai, a strategic location chosen to maximise international exposure and fan accessibility.

Following the success of UPKL, under the banner 'Apna Bharat, Apna Khel', which focused on nurturing talent within India, WSKL represents a bold new chapter. Unlike UPKL, which was largely India-centric, WSKL has been conceptualised as an international platform with a singular mission: to globalise Kabaddi and pave the way for its inclusion in the Olympic Games.

WSKL is backed by the International Kabaddi Federation (IKF) and holds commercial rights through the South Asian Kabaddi Federation, positioning it as a credible and globally supported league.



WSKL is fully owned and operated by SJ Uplift Kabaddi Pvt Ltd and was founded by Sambhav Jain, a passionate advocate for the growth and modernisation of Kabaddi.

Speaking about this ambitious new venture, Sambhav Jain, Director and Founder, SJ uplift Kabaddi Pvt Ltd, said as quoted by WSKL press release, "Kabaddi has always deserved a larger stage, not just for India but for the global sporting community. With WSKL, our goal is to reimagine the sport for a global audience, unlock international talent, and take decisive steps towards Olympic recognition. The success of UPKL gave us the foundation, but WSKL is about creating a Kabaddi league that belongs to the world. We are

building this with a vision for the next decade, not just the next season."

The league has committed a total player purse of Rs 48 crore across its eight franchises, underscoring the strong investment appetite for this new sports property. WSKL has already secured interest and participation from prominent Kabaddi nations, including South Korea, Iran, Thailand, Pakistan, Malaysia, Japan, Canada, and the United States, with discussions underway on onboard additional countries.