



**2**  
**CONGRESS MP TAGORE BLASTS RIJITU'S CLAIM ON WOMAN 'LURED' TO ATTEND RAHUL'S RALLY**



**11**  
**UN DECLARES FAMINE IN GAZA AS ISRAEL THREATENS TO RAZE**



**16**  
**ASIAN SHOOTING C'SHIP: ELAVENIL VALARIVAN STRIKES 10M AIR RIFLE GOLD**

## PM MODI SLAMS OPPOSITION, UNVEILS Rs 18,200-Cr PROJECTS IN BIHAR AND WEST BENGAL

PM Modi on Friday hit out at the Opposition while unveiling key rail and metro projects in Bihar and West Bengal.

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE/  
TDG NETWORK  
GAYA/KOLKATA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched blistering attacks on the Opposition during back-to-back rallies in Bihar and West Bengal, while also inaugurating and laying the foundation stone for major infrastructure projects worth thousands of crores.

Addressing a gathering in Bihar's Gaya, Modi accused the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Congress of plunging the state into "an era of darkness" during their rule. "Remember the condition here during the rule of lantern (RJD). This region was in the clutches of red terror. Cities like Gaya were in darkness, there was no education or employment, and generations were forced to migrate. For the RJD, the people of Bihar were nothing more than a vote bank," he said.

He also recalled an instance when a Congress Chief Minister allegedly barred people from Bihar from entering his state. "No one can forget this hatred. Despite such misbehaviour, the RJD remained



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates the 6-Lane Aunta-Simaria Bridge on the river Ganga, in Begusarai along with Bihar Governor Arif Mohammad Khan, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Deputy CMs Samrat Chaudhary, Vijay Kumar Sinha and Union Minister Giriraj Singh. ANI

### AMRIT BHARAT EXPRESS

- Third modern train after Vande Bharat & Namo Bharat
- Covers 1,000 km for approx. Rs 450
- Equipped with Kavach safety system, fire detection & push-pull technology

### PM'S ATTACK ON OPPOSITION

- RJD era called "an era of darkness"
- Congress accused of showing "hate" towards Bihar
- Defends Bill barring jailed leaders from holding office

Lalu Prasad Yadav, Modi remarked: "Some are out on bail, some are running around courts in the 'Rail ke khel', and those roaming free on bail are opposing this law because they fear their misdeeds being exposed. But in our fight against corruption, no one is above the law."

Earlier in the day, Modi flagged off the Amrit Bharat Express from Gaya to Delhi, calling it India's "third modern train" after the Vande Bharat and Namo Bharat. Designed to be affordable yet modern, it boasts advanced braking systems, fire detection in non-AC coaches, and push-pull technology. Capable of covering 1,000 km for about Rs450, the train is aimed at making long-distance travel more accessible.

Later in Kolkata, the Prime Minister sharpened his attack on the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC), alleging that crime and corruption had become its identity. "Over the past 11 years, the BJP government at the Centre has provided every kind of support for Bengal's development, but most of the money sent here is looted by TMC cadres. That money is spent on

silent. Today, the NDA government is answering their hateful campaign by creating opportunities so that Bihar's youth can live with dignity in their own state," he said. The Prime Minister used the occasion to defend the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, which seeks to bar Prime Ministers, Chief Ministers, or Ministers from continuing in office if they are imprisoned for more than 30 days. In a veiled reference to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and RJD supremo

## Congress faces internal dissent ahead of VP election

AJIT MAINDOLA  
NEW DELHI

Preventing cross-voting in the upcoming Vice Presidential election is set to be a major challenge for the Congress party. Acting on the advice of its allies, Congress fielded former Supreme Court judge B. Sudarshan Reddy from Telangana, but doubts persist over whether all alliance partners will stand by the choice. Sources suggest that even within Congress, cross-voting cannot be ruled out.

The party's internal discord is a major factor. Several MPs are reportedly dissatisfied with the neglect they face, blaming it on the coterie surrounding Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi. MPs from Hindi belt states, in particular, feel sidelined. Adding to Congress's worries, rumblings of discontent have also emerged within allies DMK and TMC. The position of Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena and the Aam Aadmi Party also remains uncertain.

### 'MATTER OF PRIDE FOR TAMIL NADU'

"CP Radhakrishnan's nomination as NDA's Vice-Presidential candidate is a matter of pride for Tamil Nadu and reflects PM Modi's commitment to honour Tamil culture, language and leadership," said Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Tirunelveli. He added that once elected, Radhakrishnan will uphold Tamil Nadu's pride as Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks during the BJP Kerala leadership meeting, in Kochi on Friday. ANI

Critics argue that Congress erred strategically. Under pressure from allies, it lost an opportunity to strengthen its position in North India. A farmer leader from the region, many believe, could have galvanised support. Instead, the party opted for Sudarshan Reddy from Telangana, an upper-caste candidate. This choice appears at odds with Rahul Gandhi's repeated endorsement of the "Telangana formula" of 80% reservation for backward classes, which

he has championed as a national model.

The backstory of Reddy's nomination reflects Congress's predicament. Initially, the party considered a senior DMK leader, but TMC opposed the move and suggested a non-political face from the South. Reddy eventually emerged as the consensus candidate. Congress now hopes neutral parties such as BRS and YSR Congress will back its nominee, but BJP is likely to use the choice to ac-

■ P3

## SC eases stray dog curbs, allows release after sterilisation

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday modified its earlier ruling of 11 August on the management of stray dogs in Delhi-NCR, allowing their release back into the same locality after sterilisation and vaccination, while directing that animals in-

fectured with rabies or showing aggressive behaviour be kept separately in shelters or pounds.

A three-judge bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and NV Anjaria clarified that stray dogs must be sterilised, dewormed, immunised and then returned to their original areas. However, rabid or

ferocious animals, though sterilised and vaccinated, will not be released.

The court also prohibited the public feeding of stray dogs on streets, instructing the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to establish dedicated feeding zones in each ward. The designated areas must be clearly identifiable. ■ P3

## 'Robber mentality': Rajnath hits back at Asim Munir

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said that Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir's recent remarks comparing India's economy to a luxury car and Pakistan's to a dump truck amounted to an admission of failure and reflected the "robber mentality" of the neighbouring country.

Speaking at The Economic Times World Leaders' Forum 2025 in New Delhi, Singh said Munir's analogy backfired, as critics worldwide questioned why two nations that gained inde-



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. ANI

pendence at the same time had such contrasting trajectories. "India built a Ferrari-like economy through hard work and foresight, while Pakistan remains a dumper

truck — this is their own failure," he said.

The Defence Minister cautioned that if Munir's statement was meant as a warning, India was fully prepared to deliver a "be-fitting reply." Referring to Pakistan's repeated threats, including recent nuclear sabre-rattling, Singh stressed that India's response to any misadventure would be decisive, citing past demonstrations of strength.

Singh further said Munir's comments revealed Pakistan's mindset since its inception. "The Chief of the Pakistan Army, knowingly

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday approved The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, a legislation aimed at encouraging e-sports and online social games while imposing a blanket ban on online money gaming.

The Bill, cleared by the Lok Sabha on Wednesday and the Rajya Sabha the following day, prohibits the offering, operation, or facilitation of money-based online games—whether involving skill, chance, or both. Service providers, advertisers,



President Droupadi Murmu. ANI

promoters and financiers of such platforms face strict penalties, though players themselves will not be punished.

Under the law, offenders may face imprisonment of up to three years and/or fines of

up to Rs1 crore for running or facilitating money games. Advertising such games may attract up to two years in prison and fines up to Rs50 lakh, while repeat offences could invite three to five years in

■ P3

## KTR blames Congress govt for urea crisis, hails KCR's leadership

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) on Friday launched a scathing attack on the Congress-led Telangana government, holding it responsible for what he described as a "severe urea shortage" troubling farmers across the state.

In an official release, KTR accused the government of administrative incompetence and warned that the "downfall" of the present rulers had begun as farmers



BRS Working President KT Rama Rao. ANI

were being pushed "to their limits." He alleged that the current dispensation was indulging in "petty politics" and lacked the governance expertise needed to resolve the crisis.

■ P3

## Two govt employees sacked in Kupwara for LeT links

AJAY JANDYAL  
JAMMU

In a continued crackdown on terror sympathisers within the government system, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday ordered the dismissal of two government employees for alleged links with Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

Invoking Article 311(2)(c)



J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. ANI

of the Constitution—which empowers the administra-

tion to terminate government employees without departmental inquiry in the interest of national security—the LG administration removed Khurshid Ahmed Rather, a teacher from Karnah, and Siyad Ahmad Khan, an Assistant Stockman in the Sheep Husbandry Department from Keran, Kupwara.

Officials said law enforcement and intelligence agen-

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed that persons excluded from the draft electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in poll-bound Bihar can submit applications for inclusion online, with physical submission of forms no longer mandatory.

■ P3

## Supreme Court allows online applications for 65 lakh voters excluded in Bihar rolls

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said individual applicants, either themselves or with the assistance of booth-level agents (BLAs) of political parties, are entitled to apply online for enrolment. The court instructed the 12 recognised political parties in Bihar to direct their BLAs to help voters in filing applications with requisite documents, includ-



ing Aadhaar or any 11 valid proofs under Form 6.

The bench expressed surprise that out of nearly 1.6

lakh BLAs in Bihar, only two objections had been filed so far. It directed that efforts be made to facilitate the inclusion of approximately 65 lakh voters excluded from the draft rolls, barring those who are deceased or have voluntarily migrated, before the cut-off date of September 1.

The directives came during hearings on petitions challenging the Election

Commission of India's (ECI) decision to conduct SIR in Bihar. The petitions, filed by RJD MP Manoj Jha, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), PUCI, activist Yogendra Yadav, Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra, and former MLA Mujahid Alam, alleged large-scale voter suppression and demand quashing of the ECI's June 24 direc-

■ P3



# CONGRESS MP TAGORE BLASTS RIJITU'S CLAIM ON WOMAN 'LURED' TO ATTEND RAHUL'S RALLY

Tagore labelled Union Minister Rijitu's actions as a descent from a Union Cabinet Minister to a 'common troll'.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Manickam Tagore accused Union Minister Kiren Rijitu of spreading 'fake news' and misinformation about Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

In a post on X, Tagore criticised Rijitu for sharing a video featuring a woman, claiming she was 'lured' to attend a political event by Rahul Gandhi in Bihar.

Tagore labelled Rijitu's actions as a descent from a Union Cabinet Minister to a "common troll," accusing him of diverting attention from the "Vote Chori" allegations raised by Gandhi.

He further alleged that Rijitu was avoiding questions on the "Vote Chori" issue and instead posting "fake videos with misinformation" to undermine Gandhi's campaign.

Tagore's post stated, "Unparliamentary Affairs Minister @KirenRijitu is busy spreading fake news about the Leader of Opposition. From a Minister of the Union

## 'STOOPING LOW FOR PUBLICITY'

■ Tagore accused Rijitu of stooping low for publicity and diverting attention from key issues.

■ Rijitu reportedly shared a video claiming a woman was "lured" to Rahul Gandhi's Bihar event, which Congress says is misleading.

■ Tagore claimed the BJP is avoiding the "Vote Chori" (vote theft) issue raised by Rahul Gandhi, opting instead for misinformation.

■ Rahul Gandhi is leading the 'Voter Adhikaar Yatra'—a 16-day, 1,300-km campaign across 20 districts in Bihar.

■ On Day 6, the Yatra reached Jamalpur, with participation from Congress, RJD, and CPI(M) leaders.

■ The Yatra aims to highlight alleged voter fraud and disenfranchisement ahead of the 2025 Bihar Assembly elections.

■ Tagore asserted that the BJP's "rattled response" proves Rahul Gandhi's campaign is unsettling the Modi government.



Congress MP Manickam Tagore

Cabinet to a common troll -- see how low he has stooped for cheap publicity. Instead

of answering questions on Vote Chori and protecting democracy, Rijitu is posting

fake videos with misinformation. This rattled response shows only one thing People's

## Today we are shoulder to shoulder with developed nations: ISRO chief

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman V Narayanan on Friday addressed the inaugural session of the National Meet 2025, calling it a landmark step in expanding space applications to benefit citizens at the grassroots level.

"This is an important milestone in our journey for bringing space applications to the grassroots. Today, there are 55 space applications--ranging from television broadcasting to weather forecasting--ensuring the safety and security of every citizen of Bharat through satellites," Narayanan said.

Reflecting on India's progress, he noted that just five decades ago the country had no satellite technology. "50 years ago, we did not

have satellite technology. Last month, on June 30th, the NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar Satellite) became the costliest satellite in the world. The entire satellite is built by ISRO and launched using our own rocket precisely



ISRO Chairman V Narayanan

into orbit.

Today we are shoulder to shoulder with developed nations," he said.

The ISRO chief highlighted several achievements in 2025 and said, "This year,

on January 29, we had our 100th rocket launch. This year, India became one among four countries to successfully dock and undock two satellites in orbit. We successfully sent Shubhanshu Shukla to space under the direction of PM Modi. Today, the best camera available in the moon orbit belongs to India."

Narayanan stressed the need for continuous improvement to make operational applications more "accurate, frequent, and responsive to users."

We are meeting for the inaugural function to ensure continuity in improvement and to make our operational applications more accurate, frequent, and responsive to users. We have to utilise resources from the private sector for many activities.

## Bangladeshi border guard detained after crossing into Tripura, BSF on high alert

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In a dramatic incident along the India-Bangladesh border, the Border Security Force (BSF) on Thursday apprehended an armed Bangladeshi border guard who allegedly crossed into Indian territory with ill intentions.

According to BSF sources, the incident occurred in the afternoon at Kamthana village under Madhupur police station in Sepahijala district of Tripura. The apprehended trooper has been identified as Mohammad Miraj Islam, a jawan of the 60th battalion of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), posted at Madla in Brahmanbaria district of Bangladesh.

Officials on condition

of anonymity said Miraj, along with another BGB jawan, intruded nearly 100 meters inside Indian territory through border gate No. 136-137 and ventured into a tea garden. Alert



Representative Image Kolkata

BSF personnel noticed the movement and rushed to the spot, managing to capture Miraj, while the other intruder escaped back across the border.

## CISF trains private guards to strengthen port security

ABHINANDAN MISHRA  
NEW DELHI

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has launched its first-ever specialized training programme for private security personnel deployed at ports, marking a key step in strengthening India's hybrid port security model.

The two-week Port Facility Security Course, rolled out simultaneously at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), Mumbai and Chennai Port Authority (ChPA), is designed to build the capacity of private security guards who safeguard critical cargo zones, warehouses, and access points at smaller and intermediate ports.

While CISF secures all 13 major ports, the bulk of India's nearly 200 ports rely heavily on private security. The new initiative aims to standardize training, enhance compliance with the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, and strengthen overall maritime security protocols.

Developed by CISF in



consultation with the Directorate General of Shipping and other stakeholders, the curriculum combines classroom sessions with hands-on drills. Modules cover port operations, threat identification, emergency response, legal frameworks, and the use of technical security equipment.

During the pilot phase, 40 personnel from JNPA, DPA Kandla, and MPA Mumbai joined the course at JNPA's training facility, while 26 personnel from NMPA Mangalore, KPL Ennore, ChPA Chennai, and VOCPA Tuticorin began training at ChPA's centre.

Sunil Paliwal, IAS,

Chairperson, ChPA, called the initiative a "critical advancement in port security management."

S.R. Saravanan, IPS, IG CISF (South Sector), told the Daily Guardian that the focused training would empower security staff with "confidence and professionalism" to protect critical infrastructure.

The rollout comes against a backdrop of heightened maritime vigilance, with Indian ports earlier this year temporarily placed under MARSEC Level 2 due to geopolitical concerns. Officials said the training will be extended to other ports on both coasts in the coming months.

## Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla meets President Murmu

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, who recently became the first Indian to travel to the International Space Station as part of the Axiom-4 mission, met President Droupadi Murmu on Friday here at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

President Murmu expressed her best wishes to Shubhanshu Shukla for being the first Indian to return from the International Space Station (ISS). Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair and Group Captain Punyashlok Biswal, along with Chairman, ISRO and Secretary, Department of Space, Dr V Narayanan and Director, Human Space Flight Centre, Dinesh Kumar Singh, were also present. The President extended her best wishes to

the entire team for future endeavours, especially for the Gaganyaan Mission. After meeting with the President, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla shared his experi-

ences in space. In a post on X, the President said, "Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, Group Captain Prasanth Bal-



Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla and ISRO Chairman V Narayanan call on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

ences in space. In a post on X, the President said, "Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, Group Captain Prasanth Bal-

Centre, Shri Dinesh Kumar Singh, called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

## Assam court sentences man to death for murder of student

NIBIR DEKA  
NEW DELHI

A Dhemaji court in Assam on Thursday awarded the death penalty to Rintu Sarma for the brutal murder of college student Nandita Saikia, who was killed in 2021 after rejecting his marriage proposal.

District and Sessions Judge Ajay Faglu held the crime to be in the "rarest of rare" category, convicting Sarma under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code. Along with the death penalty, he was sentenced to 10



years of rigorous imprisonment under Section 307 (attempt to murder) and three years under Section 324 (causing hurt with dangerous weapons), with fines under both charges.

On August 21, 2021, Sarma, a fourth-grade em-

ployee at Moridhal College, attacked Nandita with a machete while she was returning home with her classmate, Kashmina Dutta, and Kashmina's father, Deba Dutta, in Dhemaji town. All three sustained severe injuries. Nandita, then a student of Moridhal College, was later shifted to Dibrugarh, where she succumbed to her wounds five days later.

The verdict came after a four-year trial during which 41 witnesses were examined and police submitted a 400-page chargesheet.

Expressing relief, Nandita's father said, "We waited four years for this day. I only hope higher courts uphold the judgment so no one dares commit such a crime again." Survivor Kashmina Dutta added, "The memory of that attack will never leave us, but today justice feels served."

The victim's counsel welcomed the ruling, describing the killing as "a crime against society" and stating that the court had "rightly imposed the harshest punishment."

## Rising Ganga water level causes flood-like situation in UP's Kanpur villages

TDG NETWORK  
KANPUR

The rising water level of the Ganga River has caused a flood-like situation in several villages of Kanpur.

Earlier, on Tuesday, the increase in the Ramganga river water level also created a flood-like situation in nearby areas, destroying crops in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad, leaving farmers in distress and waiting



for compensation from the government.

Sugarcane and paddy

fields were submerged, causing heavy financial losses to the farmers. The

exact estimate of the loss is yet to be calculated.

Moradabad Divisional Statistical Officer of the Horticulture Department, Harjeet Singh, said that farmers who have insurance under Fasal Beema Yojana will be compensated accordingly.

He said, "We don't have an exact estimate of the loss yet. If the farmers have insurance under the 'Fasal Beema Yojana', they will be insured accordingly.

## Sports, tourism can take J&K to global level: Union Min

ASHIQ MIR  
SRINAGAR

Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse, on Thursday said that the Khelo India Water Sports Festival in Srinagar reflects the Centre's firm commitment to promoting sports, nurturing local talent, and boosting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. She emphasized that the synergy of sports and tourism holds the power to catapult the region onto the global stage.

Seeking at the inaugural event held at Dal Lake, Khadse noted, "There is immense potential in J&K.

By integrating tourism with sports, we can elevate the region's profile internationally." She said the government is dedicated to providing top-tier infrastructure and opportunities to young athletes across the Union Territory.

Khadse also touched on the sensitive issue of Indo-Pak sports exchanges. "The nation and its citizens come first. We cannot hurt the sentiments of our people," she said in response to the ongoing restrictions on Pakistani players in India. "While sports are important for growth and unity, national security and emo-



Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse

tions take precedence," she asserted.

At the event held at SKICC, the minister highlighted that over 400 athletes from across India are participat-

ing in competitions such as rowing, canoeing, and kayaking on the iconic Dal Lake. "The enthusiasm of the youth here is inspiring. Under the leadership of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, our aim is to strengthen both sports and sports tourism."

She also announced that every district in J&K will be equipped with five Khelo India Centres, and talent identification programmes are actively underway. "We want to see youth from J&K on international platforms, bringing home medals and pride," Khadse added.

The festival also featured cultural showcases highlighting the rich heritage and spirit of Kashmir, marking the first-of-its-kind water sports event held on Dal Lake.



THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON ANIRUDDHACHARYA CONTROVERSY

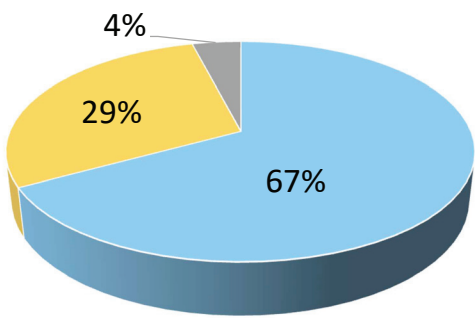
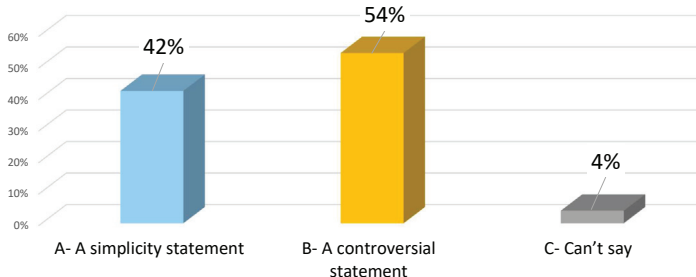
67% of people believe that Aniruddhacharya breaking decorum by giving controversial statements.

Swami Aniruddhacharya sparked outrage after a viral video showed him claiming women aged 25 are often in multiple relationships and unfit for marriage, suggest-

ing early marriage at 14. His remarks led to protests and legal complaints. He later apologised, alleging the clip was edited and possibly manipulated using AI.

Q1.▶

What is your opinion on Aniruddhacharya's statement "Dogs and cats stay in live-in relationships?"



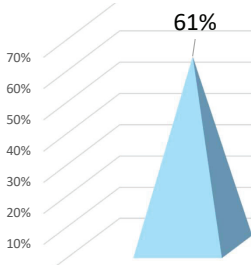
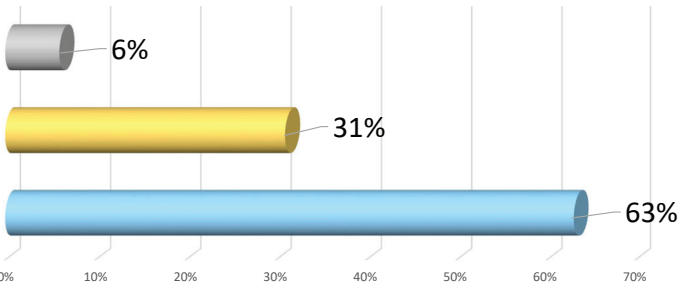
Q2.◀

Is Aniruddhacharya breaking decorum by giving controversial statements?

Yes, absolutely  
Not at all  
Cannot say

Q3.▶

Is Aniruddhacharya doing business in the name of religion for popularity?



Q4.◀

Does Aniruddhacharya deliberately give indecent statements?

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON SUPREME COURT STRAY DOGS VERDICT

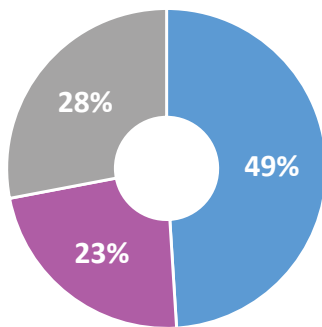
69% of people support feeding stray dogs in public places.

The survey on the Supreme Court's verdict regarding stray dogs shows mixed public opinion. While 49% see it as humanity's victory, 69% support feeding dogs in public places.

Most disagree with blaming MCD, 47% back Maneka Gandhi's concerns, and 72% demand a national policy for stray dogs' management.

Q1.▶

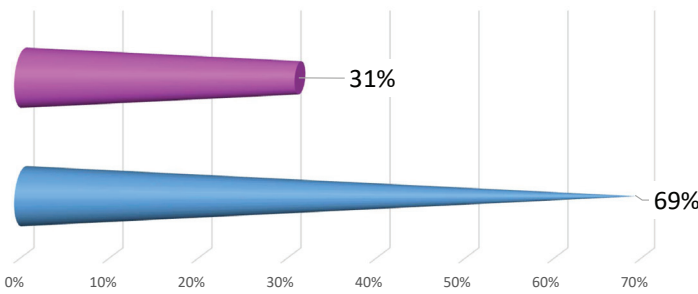
The Supreme Court has ordered that caught stray dogs should be vaccinated and released back in the same area. What is your opinion?



Victory of humanity  
Negligence in rules  
Can't say

Q2.◀

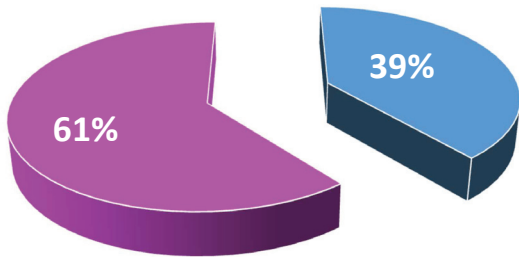
Do you support feeding stray dogs in public places?



Yes, absolutely  
Not at all

Q3.▶

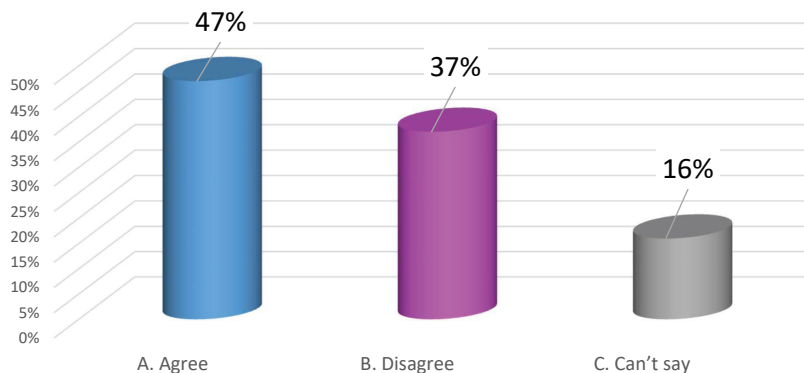
Do you agree with holding MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) responsible for stray dog menace?



A. Agree  
B. Disagree

Q4.◀

What is your opinion on questions raised by Maneka Gandhi on the Supreme Court's decision?



Congress faces internal dissent

CONTINUED FROM P1

cuse Congress of hypocrisy on backward class politics.

Numerically, however, the contest is already tilted. NDA's nominee, C.P. Radhakrishnan from Tamil Nadu, enjoys the support of 427 out of 782 MPs, comfortably above the 391 needed for victory. In contrast, the INDIA bloc has only 355 MPs. Radhakrishnan, an

OBC leader, also allows BJP to consolidate its outreach to both southern and backward class constituencies.

While the outcome is seen as a foregone conclusion, the real intrigue lies in the scale of cross-voting. Unlike regular legislative votes, whips are not applicable in Vice Presidential elections, and the ballot is secret. NDA is expected to hold firm, but cross-voting in Congress

and its allies is a strong possibility. Whether DMK will openly oppose an OBC candidate like Radhakrishnan, or whether Mamata Banerjee makes a last-minute move, remains to be seen.

Voting is scheduled for 9 September, and with Radhakrishnan's victory almost assured, the real story will be how deep the cracks run within Congress and the INDIA bloc.

PM Modi slams Opposition, unveils Rs 18,200-cr projects

CONTINUED FROM P1

them instead of the people, and as a result, Bengal lags behind other states in welfare schemes," Modi said.

He accused the TMC government of blocking central welfare programmes, depriving people of benefits in housing, healthcare, education, and employment. "So long as the TMC government is in power, the progress of the state will remain stalled. TMC jaabe, tabhi asol parivartan ashbe (TMC will go, only then will real change come)," he declared, urging voters to bring the BJP to power in West Bengal.

Modi said Bengal needed

DEVELOPMENT PUSH IN BIHAR

- Projects worth Rs 13,000 crore inaugurated
- Aunta-Simaria bridge over the Ganga opened
- NDA vows jobs and respect for Bihar's youth

KOLKATA METRO EXPANSION

- Noapara-Jai Hind Bimanbandar inaugurated
- Sealdah-Esplanade reduces travel time from 40 mins to 11 mins
- Beleghata-Hemanta Mukhopadhyay line to boost IT hub connectivity

"saccha parivartan, asol parivartan, not just in slogans" but in real change that ensured jobs for the youth, safety for women, fair prices for farmers, and an end to corruption. He added: "In

the 21st century, 25 years have already passed. The coming years are very important for both the country and Bengal. We should not fritter away this time."

The Prime Minister also

inaugurated metro projects in Kolkata, including the Noapara-Jai Hind Bimanbandar, Sealdah-Esplanade, and Beleghata-Hemanta Mukhopadhyay lines. He highlighted India's metro network as now the world's third largest, describing the expansion as a boost for green mobility and urban connectivity. The Sealdah-Esplanade stretch, for instance, will cut travel time from 40 minutes to just 11 minutes.

Banerjee, however, skipped the Prime Minister's event, instead taking to X to recall her role in sanctioning and planning Kolkata's metro corridors during her stint as Railway Minister.

In addition, Modi inaugurated the Aunta-Simaria bridge project in Begusarai and laid the foundation stone for projects worth nearly Rs13,000 crore in Bihar. In Kolkata, he announced new development works worth over Rs.5,200 crore, including the six-lane elevated Kona Expressway.

With assembly elections due in Bihar later this year and West Bengal a key battleground, Modi's twin offensive underscored the NDA's campaign pitch: a mix of aggressive anti-corruption rhetoric and a development narrative anchored in high-profile infrastructure projects.

SC eases stray dog curbs

CONTINUED FROM P1

fied, signposted and proportionate to the local dog population. It further ordered the creation of a municipal helpline to report violations.

Animal lovers wishing to adopt strays may apply to the MCD, after which tagged dogs may be handed over under the responsibility of the adopter. In addition, the court directed that each individual dog lover and NGO participating in the case deposit sums of Rs25,000 and Rs2 lakh respectively, to be used for stray management infrastructure.

Expanding the scope of the case beyond Delhi-NCR, the bench impleaded all states and Union Territories and issued notices to their Animal Husbandry departments to respond on framing a national policy. It also directed the trans-

fer of all stray dog-related petitions pending in High Courts to the apex court.

The order marked a modification of the Supreme Court's 11 August ruling by a two-judge bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan, which had ordered all stray dogs in Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, Gurugram and Faridabad to be removed and not released back on the streets. That ruling, the bench had then said, followed decades of inaction by civic authorities despite rising public safety concerns, with government data recording over 37 lakh dog bite cases across India, including more than 25,000 in Delhi alone.

Friday's revised order drew widespread reactions. Senior advocate and petitioner Nanita Sharma hailed it as a "balanced

order" that involved all states and ensured sterilisation for regular strays while keeping aggressive dogs confined. BJP leader and animal rights activist Maneka Gandhi called it a "scientific judgement", noting that relocation and fear trigger dog bites. She also highlighted the government's allocation of Rs2,500 crore for the Animal Birth Control programme, the first such funding in 25 years.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi welcomed the verdict as a "progressive step toward balancing animal welfare and public safety," while Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh described it as a "very good decision" that aligned with the civic body's current practice of sterilising strays and retaining aggressive dogs.

Prez clears Online Gaming

CONTINUED FROM P1

jail and penalties of up to Rs2 crore. Key offences have been classified as cognisable and non-bailable, with provisions empowering authorities to search, seize, and arrest without warrant in certain cases. The legislation provides legal recognition and support to e-sports, now acknowledged as a competitive sport in India. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports will frame a dedicated structure to promote e-sports, alongside measures to encourage online social games. Officials said the ban

seeks to address rising cases of addiction, financial ruin, and even suicides linked to money gaming, while also curbing risks of money laundering and terror financing. Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and IT, S Krishnan, said the government would soon notify the date of enforcement and frame necessary rules. He acknowledged that the move could result in an estimated annual GST revenue loss of Rs15,000-20,000 crore but stressed that social welfare outweighed revenue concerns.

KTR blames Congress

CONTINUED FROM P1

KTR contrasted the Congress government's approach with that of former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, crediting KCR with meticulous planning to ensure timely urea supplies. He recalled that KCR personally monitored urea transport by liaising with South Central Railway for dedicated goods trains, coordinating with neighbouring states for truck fleets, and devising village-level distribution strategies to prevent shortages. He claimed the people of Telangana now recognise the difference between "Delhi-based leaders who are all talk and no action" and KCR, whom he described as embodying a "hundred-year vision." Concluding, KTR said the farmers' plight was the outcome of the Congress government's lack of foresight and experience, a stark contrast to KCR's hands-on leadership.

‘Robber mentality’: Rajnath

CONTINUED FROM P1

or unknowingly, has pointed towards a robber mentality which Pakistan has been a victim of since its birth," he said, adding that India's Operation Sindoor should have already dispelled any such delusions.

Expanding his address to the global stage, Singh said India envisioned a new world order rooted in responsibility, equality, and

cooperation. "Indian ethos does not see the global order as a contest for dominance, but as a shared journey towards harmony, dignity, and mutual respect," he said.

Calling for a "rules-based order," the Defence Minister stressed that only India could lead such a framework, ensuring equal opportunities, collaboration over competition, and secu-

rity over uncertainty.

Highlighting India's economic rise over the past eleven years, Singh quoted economist Jagdish Bhagwati: "Earlier, the World Bank used to tell India what to do; now, India tells the World Bank what to do." He said this shift demonstrated India's transformation from a dependent economy into a self-reliant global powerhouse.

SC allows online applications in Bihar

CONTINUED FROM P1

tive requiring many voters to submit proof of citizenship.

The ECI, in an affidavit filed earlier in the day, told the apex court that details of 65 lakh electors omitted from the August 1 draft rolls had been uploaded on the websites of all 38 District Electoral Officers. Physical copies have been displayed in panchayat offices, block development offices, and Panchayat Bhavans across villages, with advertisements issued in

newspapers, on radio, television, and social media to spread awareness. The poll body added that Aadhaar cards can be submitted with claims by aggrieved voters.

According to the ECI, the names were deleted due to reasons such as death, change of residence, or duplicate entries. The Commission said the move was in compliance with the Supreme Court's August 14 order directing it to publish a booth-wise list of excluded electors.

The ECI, however, has re-

jected the allegations. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, in a press conference on August 17, termed Rahul Gandhi's accusations an "insult to the Constitution," asking him to either submit a signed affidavit substantiating his claims or apologise to the nation. "There is no third option," Kumar said, setting a seven-day deadline.

The case will continue to be heard by the Supreme Court, with the future of 65 lakh excluded voters hanging in the balance as Bihar heads towards crucial polls.

Two govt employees sacked in J&K

CONTINUED FROM P1

cies conducted a detailed investigation and gathered concrete evidence establishing that the duo was in direct contact with LeT operatives and was actively supporting the terror ecosystem in the Valley. "Their activities posed a serious threat to the security and

integrity of the Union Territory, leaving no option but to terminate their services," a senior official stated.

This is not the first such action by the LG administration. In recent months, several employees with proven links to terror organisations have been dismissed under similar provisions. The

move underscores the government's zero-tolerance policy towards terror sympathisers and its resolve to cleanse the system of elements aiding militancy.

Officials added that more such actions are likely as investigations into terror financing and support networks continue across J&K.



# NAIDU MEETS FM, SEEKS ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION FOR PENDING PROJECTS

Andhra Chief Minister Naidu asks for Rs 5,000 crore from Centre for several developmental initiatives being undertaken in state

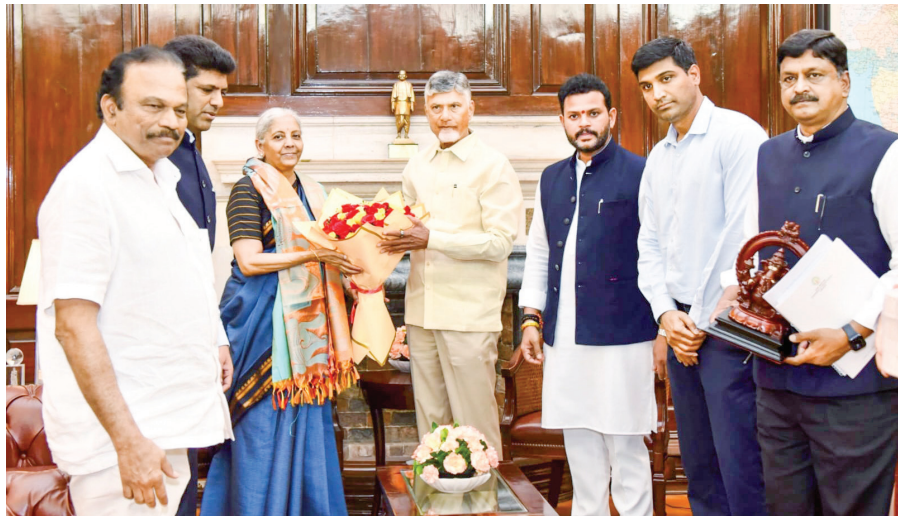
TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the national capital on Friday.

The Chief Minister sought financial assistance from the centre for several developmental initiatives being undertaken in Andhra Pradesh.

He submitted a representation seeking an additional allocation of Rs 5,000 crore for pending capital projects in the state.

The memorandum also requested necessary orders on the proposals submitted by the State Government for the release of Rs 250 crore under the Single Nodal



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman meet Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and others in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

Agency (SNA Sparsh) incentive scheme guidelines for the financial year 2024-25.

He highlighted that so far, the state has received Rs 2,010 crore under the Spe-

cial Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme.

Welcoming the Purvodaya scheme announced by the centre for the integrated development of eastern

states, the Chief Minister said Andhra Pradesh would greatly benefit from it. He urged the centre to finalise the modalities for implementing the scheme at the earliest.

## YSRCP's Meda Reddy slams media over 'baseless' speculation over Kharge meeting

RAJ KIRAN BATHULA  
HYDERABAD

Rajya Sabha MP Meda Raghunatha Reddy has come down heavily on a section of the media for “deliberately distorting” his recent meeting with AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge, terming the reports as “baseless political speculation.”

In a video statement released from Hyderabad on Thursday, Raghunatha Reddy clarified that his interaction with Kharge was purely personal, rooted in a 35-year-old association, and bore no political implications. “Some media outlets have irresponsibly tried to project this meeting as a sign of political realignment. I strongly condemn such misrepresentations,” he said.

The senior parliamentarian reiterated his unwavering loyalty to YSR



Rajya Sabha MP Meda Raghunatha Reddy

Congress Party (YSRCP) President and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. “As long as I am in politics, my journey will remain with YS Jagan. There is no question of deviation,” he affirmed, stressing the “deep bond of trust” he

shares with Jagan.

Underscoring the unity within the YSRCP parliamentary wing, Raghunatha Reddy asserted that all party MPs stand firmly behind Jagan's leadership. On the issue of the upcoming Vice-Presidential election, he made it clear that the party would act collectively and strictly follow the decision of Jagan Mohan Reddy. “There should be no room for speculation. Whatever decision our leader takes, we will abide by it,” he said.

Turning his focus towards state politics, the Rajya Sabha MP vowed to intensify efforts to restore YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to the Chief Minister's chair in Andhra Pradesh. He lashed out at the current coalition government, accusing it of pursuing “anti-people policies” that have hurt the common man.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, along with Telugu Desam Party (TDP) MPs, met NDA Vice Presidential candidate CP Radhakrishnan in Delhi on Friday.

Speaking to the reporters, Andhra Pradesh CM expressed happiness over the NDA's selection of CP Radhakrishnan as the Vice President candidate.

“We are very happy that NDA has selected CP Radhakrishnan as a candidate for the post of Vice President of India. He is the best suitable candidate. We are very happy to extend our support to him. TDP joined the NDA before the elections. Both governments in Delhi and Andhra Pradesh have an NDA government. Apart from that, he is a gentleman.

## K'taka Dy CM DKS denies rumours of joining BJP-RSS

TDG NETWORK  
BENGALURU

Amid the row over reciting the RSS anthem in the Karnataka Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday denied the speculations of joining hands with the BJP and RSS.

“I am a genuine Congressman. A Congressman by birth. I will remain a Congressman as long as I live. My life, my blood is all for Congress. I am now leading the party. I will stand as its pillar,” Dy CM DK Shivakumar said firmly while responding to media queries at Vidhana Soudha.

When asked if there is a discussion about joining hands with the BJP and RSS, Shivakumar replied, “I have no intention of joining hands with them in any way, directly or indirectly. I am a genuine Congressman. I am doing research on the Janata Dal and the BJP. I have also learned about RSS.”

He added that RSS is investing in building educa-



tional institutions in every district of the state.

“I have done my own research on every political party. I know how the RSS built its organisation in the state. The RSS is taking educational institutions under its wing everywhere, including every taluk and district. It is investing a lot of money. It is working to reach out to children,” he said.

On reciting the RSS anthem in the Assembly, Shivakumar said that one should notice “good qualities” in others.

“Politically, we may have differences. As a political person, don't I need to know who are my friends and who are my enemies among my political opponents? That

is why I have learned the history of the RSS. In some cases, there are some good qualities in some organisations. Shouldn't we also notice them? It is our nature to speak directly and boldly. We should notice the good qualities in others, and that is what we have done,” he told the reporters.

“Each of you (media) also has a quality. There is a quality that slips when you try to catch it. There is also a good quality. Shouldn't we notice them?” he added.

When asked about the BJP's Dharmasthala Yatra, he said, “BJP is a customer of this.

What they are doing is politics. The investigation team, led by senior officer Mohanty, is doing its job neatly.”

Amidst a debate over the M Chinnaswamy Stadium stampede in the Karnataka Assembly on Thursday, Dy CM DK Shivakumar broke into the RSS anthem during his exchange of words with BJP MLA R Ashoka.

## ED raids 30 places linked to Karnataka Cong MLA Veerendra, others in illegal betting case

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday carried out searches at 30 locations across six states in connection with a money laundering case against Karnataka Congress legislator KC Veerendra, his brother and several others for their alleged involvement in illegal online and offline betting, officials said.

Veerendra is the Congress MLA from the Chitradurga assembly seat in Karnataka.

ED's Bengaluru zonal office searched 30 premises spanning Chitradurga (six), Bengaluru (10), Jodhpur (3),



Hubli (one), Mumbai (two), and Goa (eight), including five prominent casinos - Puppy's Casino Gold, Ocean Rivers Casino, Puppy's Casino Pride, Ocean 7 Casino, and Big Daddy Casino.

The officials said that the preliminary findings sug-

*The officials said that the preliminary findings suggest that Chitradurga MLA Veerendra and his associates were running multiple illegal betting websites under names such as King567, Raja567, Puppy's003, and Rathna Gaming.*

gest that Chitradurga MLA Veerendra and his associates were running multiple illegal betting websites under names such as King567, Raja567, Puppy's003, and Rathna Gaming.

The investigation further revealed that Veerendra's brother, KC Thippeswamy, was operating three Dubai-

based entities, Diamond Softtech, TRS Technologies, and Prime9 Technologies, that were linked to the call centre and gaming operations.

The agency also covered premises linked to Anil Gowda, brother of MLA Kusuma H from Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bengaluru.

## Amit Shah attends BJP's state leadership meet in Kochi

TDG NETWORK  
ERNAKULAM

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday attended the BJP Kerala State Leadership Meet in Kochi in Kerala's Ernakulam district.

Kerala BJP chief Rajeev Chandrasekhar and other senior leaders felicitated Amit Shah at the meeting. The meeting comes ahead of the local body elections in the state.

Earlier today, Amit Shah attended a media event in Kochi.

On Thursday, BJP Leader Anoop Antony Joseph told ANI, “The BJP is holding a state-level leadership meeting tomorrow in Ernakulam, to be headed by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Last month, he also visited Kerala and addressed ward-level members of the BJP who are preparing for the upcoming local body elec-



Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

tions. Tomorrow, he will be interacting with the workers from the district level to the state level.”

Amit Shah took to X to announce his Kerala and Tamil Nadu visits. The Union Minister said that he will attend a media conclave and interact with party workers in Kochi.

While in Tamil Nadu, he will head the BJP's ‘Booth Karyakarta Sammelan’.

“Leaving for Kochi. Will be in two states close to my

heart-Kerala and Tamil Nadu, tomorrow. In the morning will attend the Manorama News Conclave and then will interact with karyakartas and leaders of @BJP4Keralam in Kochi. Later in the day, will travel to Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu and interact with BJP karyakartas of the state at the ‘Booth Karyakarta Sammelan,’” Shah wrote.

Meanwhile, extensive security arrangements have been made in Tamil Nadu's Tirunelveli as Union Minister Amit Shah will participate in the BJP booth committee members' southern regional meeting. The police, led by Tirunelveli City Commissioner of Police Santosh Hadimani, have made comprehensive security arrangements in the city, at the helipad, at the Armed Reserve Police Grounds and at the venue of the meeting.

## Maharashtra CM seeks Thackeray, Pawar's support for NDA's VP pick

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis on Friday reached out to Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and NCP-SC leader Sharad Pawar, seeking their support for the NDA's Vice Presidential candidate, CP Radhakrishnan. While Thackeray said he would consider the request and respond after discussions, Pawar indicated that his party would back the Opposition's nominee. Speaking to reporters, CM Fadnis said, “I spoke to Uddhav Thackeray ji and Sharad Pawar ji and requested them to support Maharashtra Governor's (CP Radhakrishnan) candidature for Vice Presidential elections. Uddhav ji told me that he will discuss and let me know. Sharad Pawar ji said that he will have to go with the candidate fielded by the Opposition.” Earlier, Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi expressed confidence that Radhakrishnan would serve as an “outstanding” Vice President. “Along with Ministers, Party colleagues and NDA leaders, accompanied Thiru CP Radhakrishnan as he filed his nomination for the post of Vice President of India. The NDA family is confident that he will be an outstanding VP and will enrich our journey towards national progress,” PM Modi's post on social media X read. CP Radhakrishnan on Wednesday filed his nomination papers for the Vice Presidential elections in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chandrapuram Ponnusamy Radhakrishnan, who has been the Maharashtra Governor since July 31, 2024, had earlier also served as the Governor of Jharkhand, Telangana and Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry.

## Telangana BJP chief alleges detention during protest against state govt

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Telangana Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President N Ramchander Rao on Friday alleged that he was detained by the Moinabad Police while en route to the Secretariat to protest against the State government over various public issues in Greater Hyderabad. Rao, who was reportedly touring Chevella, said he was detained while heading towards the protest site. He also shared images from the protest on the social media platform X. “In the context of calling for a siege of the Secretariat over public issues in Greater Hyderabad, the police arrested me at Moinabad while I was on a tour in Chevella,” Rao said. The BJP leader hit out at the Congress-led State government, ac-



Telangana Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President N Ramchander Rao

cusing it of failing to address key civic problems. “This is merely an attempt to suppress questioning on public issues. The drainage system under @GHMCOnline jurisdiction has completely collapsed. Roads are riddled with potholes, traffic control is nonexistent, and colonies have become a living hell due to the stench of garbage. Drinking water shortages, electricity issues... these are the daily struggles

of the people. The recent incidents in Ramanthapur and Old City areas, where innocent lives were lost, are all outcomes of government negligence,” he said. He also took aim at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy over his frequent visits to Delhi, rather than “serving the people”. “@revanth\_anumula, as Chief Minister, is confined to Delhi tours rather than serving the people. As the Municipal Administration Minister, his priority is not public service but commissions,” he added. Slamming the Congress government further, he said, “A Congress government that cannot solve problems, plays with people's lives, and suppresses democracy is not needed in Telangana!” He added that the BJP state unit would continue its fight on every issue.

## DMK attacks TVK leader Vijay for disrespecting CM Stalin

TDG NETWORK  
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Minister and senior DMK leader K N Nehru on Friday slammed Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader Vijay for referring to Chief Minister M K Stalin as “Uncle” during a public conference in Madurai, terming the remark disrespectful.

Speaking to reporters, Nehru criticised Vijay's



TVK leader Vijay Chennai.

comment, stating it showed arrogance and belittled a leader with over four de-

cades of political experience.

“That shows his level. To criticise a Chief Minister who has been in politics for over 40 years, and a leader of a major party, by someone who just entered politics recently, is a low-standard comment. People will give a fitting reply. We, too, will respond appropriately in the elections. There is no change in that. Just because 10 or 50 people

gather and say anything, it doesn't mean it's right. It is not right,” he stated.

Earlier on Thursday, TVK chief and actor Vijay addressed a conference for TVK party workers in Madurai.

The TVK president held the party's second state conference in Madurai, marked by a massive show of strength as party workers gathered in large numbers to participate in the rally.

TDG NETWORK  
PALAKKAD

Palakkad MP V K Sreekandan addressed the controversy surrounding Congress MLA Rahul Mamkootathil, who faces allegations of obscene conduct with writer Honey Bhaskaran and model Rini Ann George.

Sreekandan clarified that no decision has been made regarding Mamkootathil's

resignation from his MLA post.

He further noted that when the allegations surfaced, the party leadership promptly asked Mamkootathil to resign, and he complied voluntarily.

“It is not decided that Rahul Mamkootathil will resign from the MLA post. It is the party leadership to make a decision. First of all, the complaint is vague. When such remarks came out, the

party leadership asked him to resign, and he did voluntarily. The party has decided to conduct an inquiry, based on its report, further action will be taken. At present, we don't know whether it was any fault on his side. If there is anything serious from his side, the party will inquire and take strong action,” he said.

Meanwhile, Palakkad MLA Rahul Mamkootathil is currently inside his resi-

dence in Adoor, Pathanamthitta. The police have barricaded the road leading to his house, and heavy security has been deployed due to ongoing protests.

BJP leader V Muralaeeharan demanded the resignation of Palakkad MLA Rahul Mamkootathil over the allegations of ‘obscene conduct’.

He further alleged that the Congress party is trying to protect the MLA.



# NOT AFRAID TO FIGHT FOR DELHI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS: CM REKHA

Holding first public meet after attack, the CM vows to fight for Delhi citizens

## Man sloganeering against MLA Lovely at CM's public meet held

### REKHA GUPTA FEARLESS AFTER ATTACK

- CM addresses first public event since August 20 assault
- Declares she will not tire until Delhi gets its rights
- Promises Yamunapar focus with expressway, water and sewer lines
- Assures Yamuna cleaning, parking spaces and public toilets for residents



Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta at a public function on Friday. (ANI)

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Addressing her first public event after the attack, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, on Friday, said she will not be afraid and will not get tired till the people of Delhi get their rights.

Addressing an event organised by the Association of Wholesale Readymade Garments Dealers in Gandhi Nagar Market, Shahdara, Rekha Gupta said, "I assure you that your Chief Minister Didi will not be afraid, will not get tired, will not lose. Till Delhi gets its rights, she will keep fighting with you. It is my vow to continuously fight with you."

This comes after Rajkot resident Rajesh Khimji at-

tacked CM Rekha Gupta during a Jan Sunvai program on Wednesday in the national capital. He was detained by the police immediately and has been sent to a five-day police custody.

Addressing the event in Gandhi Nagar Market, the Chief Minister said that the government will place 'Yamunapar' at the forefront of Delhi's development.

She said, "We will once again place 'Yamunapar' at the forefront of Delhi's development. I congratulate the brothers and sisters of Yamunapar for the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway built by Prime Minister Modi, as it will make our lives and daily routines much more convenient."

She assured the public that the River Yamuna would be cleaned and said that it would appear better

with time.

"A very large number of people live on this side of the Yamuna in Delhi and are waiting for Mother Yamuna to be cleaned... Mother Yamuna will start appearing better and more beautiful with time," the Chief Minister said.

Further, she gave assurance for water and sewer lines, parking lots and public toilets in the 'Yamunapar' region of the national capital.

CM Rekha Gupta said, "There will be water lines and sewer lines all across the Yamunapar. Wherever there is no water pipeline, water pipelines will be laid there. Wherever there is a problem of parking, multiple parking lots will be built. Wherever there is no toilet, toilets will be built there."

## CM leaves her residence for first time after attack

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday left her residence to attend a program in Gandhi Nagar market. This is the first time that CM Gupta has left her residence since she was attacked on August 20.

CM Rekha Gupta was attacked by Rajkot resident Rajesh Khimji during a Jan Sunvai program on Wednesday at the Chief Minister's residence in the national capital. He was detained by the police immediately and has been sent to a five-day police custody.

Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj on Thursday alleged that the Delhi Police are hiding the CCTV footage of the attack on CM Rekha Gupta to cover up their failure.

"We are glad that in Rekha Gupta's case, the police have registered an FIR, but I believe that the police are hiding the CCTV footage of the incident to cover up their failure," Saurabh Bharadwaj told ANI.

Referring to the previous attacks on AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal, Bharadwaj claimed that his matter was kept "weak", the AAP leader said that whenever the attack

happened on the former Delhi CM, it was said that the people were angry with him.

"It was the duty of the police to register a case of 'attempt to murder' in such attacks earlier, and the accused should have been taken into police custody so that such activities do not happen again, as was done in the case of Rekha Gupta. But in Arvind Kejriwal's case, the matter was deliberately kept weak, security was lax, and whenever an attack occurred, it was said that the people of Delhi are angry," he said.

The Delhi Police has intensified its probe into the attack, with investigators now seeking dump data from both her personal and official residences.

Officials said the move is aimed at piecing together a clear picture of the accused Rajesh Khimji's presence and movements before and during the incident.

According to senior police sources, dump data, which provides details of mobile tower locations, device signals and call records of all numbers active in a particular area, is being retrieved from telecom service providers for specific time windows.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A businessman, claiming to be a BJP worker, was apprehended on Friday from Gandhi Nagar in Delhi's Shahdara for raising slogans against MLA Arvinder Singh Lovely at an event where Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was also present, Deputy Commissioner of Police Shahdara said.

DCP Shahdara, in a statement, said that the apprehended man, Praveen Sharma, has a business of TV cables in Ajeet Nagar and claims to be a BJP worker for the last 40 years.

"A person, namely Praveen Sharma, who has a business of TV cables in Ajeet Nagar and claims to be a BJP worker for the last 40 years, today raised slogans against MLA Gandhi Nagar constituency, Arvinder Singh Lovely, while the MLA was addressing the public at the event where the CM was also present," DCP said.

The police official added that Sharma was apprehended and there was no security breach.

"Praveen Sharma was behind the barricades in a street where he was im-



Police arresting the man sloganeering at BJP event on Friday. (ANI)

DCP Shahdara, in a statement, said that the apprehended man, Praveen Sharma, has a business of TV cables in Ajeet Nagar and claims to be a BJP worker for the last 40 years.

Immediately apprehended and removed. No security of the VIP was breached at any point in time," DCP Shahdara said.

This comes after Rajkot resident Rajesh Khimji attacked CM Rekha Gupta during a Jan Sunvai program on Wednesday in the national capital. He was detained by the police immediately and has been sent to a

five-day police custody.

Apart from this, Delhi Police on Friday also detained a friend of the accused Rajesh Khimji, from Gujarat's Rajkot, police sources said.

It is alleged that Rajesh's friend transferred money to him. The Delhi Police is currently tracking ten people who were in contact with the accused through calls and messages.

## Yamuna continues to flow close to danger mark

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Yamuna River in the national capital continues to flow close to the danger mark. Drone images from Loha Pul on Friday showed the water flowing close to the danger level.

Visual from Loha Pul on Thursday also showed the water close to the 205 m mark. The river has so far crossed the danger level only once, and the overflowing river water reached the residential areas. But the change in water level of the river has kept the authorities on their toes. The administration has set up temporary camps in schools for people living near the Yamuna camp.

On Wednesday, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta visited the residential area at Yamuna Bazaar, where water from the overflowing Yamuna River had entered, and assured that



Yamuna River in the national capital continues to flow close to the danger mark on Friday. (ANI)

there is no flood-like situation in Delhi and the water level will drop within one to two days.

After assessing the affected area, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said, "The situation is under control. The water level was close to 206 m in the morning, but it has not crossed this mark yet. The water should recede in a day or two. We are providing food and water, as well as a medical facility here. There is no flood situation in Delhi."

She said that the administration has made arrange-

ments in school for those who want to go to a safer location, providing them with a place to stay and food, as well as all the necessary help in the affected area.

CM Gupta visited the affected area to analyse the situation and talk to the people living in the area.

The Yamuna River is flowing close to the danger mark after all 18 gates of Hathinikund Barrage in Haryana's Yamunanagar were opened on Sunday due to rising water level after continuous rain.

## Parliament security breach: Man scales wall to jump inside, caught by CISF personnel

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A security breach at Parliament was foiled on Friday morning when alert security personnel nabbed an intruder who entered the complex by climbing a tree and scaling the wall, Parliament security sources said.

The sources said that the man jumped the wall between TKR 2 - North Utility of Parliament gate and got into the Parliament complex.

Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) security personnel at Parliament caught the intruder immediately and questioning underway, Parliament Security Sources said.

The sources said that the man reached the Garuda gate of the new Parliament building by jumping over the wall from the Rail Bhawan side.

On December 13, 2001 there was an attack on the old building of the Parliament by terrorists belonging to Paki-



Parliament complex. (ANI)

The sources said that the man reached the Garuda gate of the new Parliament building by jumping over the wall from the Rail Bhawan side.

stan based terrorist organizations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). Fourteen people including five terrorists were killed in the attack.

In December 2023, coinciding with the 22nd anniversary of the 2001 Parliament terror attack, two individuals jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber from the visitors'

gallery during Zero Hour and released yellow gas from canisters. They were heard shouting anti-government slogans. Simultaneously, outside the Parliament complex, two people were seen using similar canisters to release coloured smoke while chanting slogans. Six people were arrested in connection with the incident.

## Satish Golcha takes charge as Delhi Police Commissioner

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Senior IPS officer Satish Golcha on Friday took charge as Delhi's newly appointed Police Commissioner at the Delhi Police Headquarters. After taking charge, Commissioner Satish Golcha held a meeting with senior officers to review the law-and-order situation in the national capital. In his first interaction with senior officials after assuming charge, Golcha directed the force to remain vigilant, focus on crime prevention, and ensure better coordination across units to maintain peace and security in Delhi. Golcha, a 1992-batch IPS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre, has served as Special Commissioner (Law & Order) and has held key assignments in



IPS Satish Golcha assumes charge as Delhi Police Commissioner on Friday. ANI

the force.

He is known for his emphasis on technology-driven policing and community outreach. On Thursday, the Central government appointed Satish Golcha as the new Delhi Police Commissioner. Golcha was serving as Director General (Prisons), Delhi. He took this role initially in an interim capacity amidst rising jail violence and gang-related unrest.

## Mayor hails SC's revised order on stray dogs

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh on Friday welcomed Supreme Court's revised decision on stray dogs in the NCR region stating that it is a very good decision.

He stated that he had implemented the Supreme Court's order, noting that the dog lovers had requested the dogs be sterilised and then left. Raja Iqbal Singh pointed out that the aggressive dogs should be kept and treated.

"We welcome the decision. This is a very good decision, and we will implement it 100%. The dog lovers and the NGOs also wanted the dogs to be sterilised and left. The corporation already did the same. Ferocious and aggressive dogs that have developed the habit of biting should be treated and kept. The public should not face any problem. We all love street dogs and we



Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh. (ANI)

are all dog lovers, so this is a very good decision...." Raja Iqbal Singh told ANI.

Animal rights activist Praateek Yadav said that Supreme Court's order is for the purpose of animal welfare stating that the order directs the authorities to focus on neutering and animal birth control.

"Supreme Court order is for animal welfare. The order says the authorities need to focus on neutering and animal birth control.

## Dog lovers' rally getting more support than BJP's rally: AAP

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Following the Supreme Court's revised order on stray dogs, Aam Aadmi Party leader Saurabh Bharadwaj on Friday took a dig at the BJP, stating that the rally of dog lovers was getting more support than the party's rally.

"I had already said that the rally of dog lovers (the dog enthusiast community) was getting more support than the BJP's rally," Saurabh Bharadwaj wrote on 'X'. The Supreme Court on Friday modified its earlier order of August 11 regarding the management of stray dogs in Delhi and NCR (National Capital Region), directing that the animals will be released



Aam Aadmi Party leader Saurabh Bharadwaj. (ANI)

back into the same area after sterilisation and immunisation.

The court clarified that stray dogs infected with rabies or showing aggressive behaviour will not be released back and will be kept separately. "Stray dogs will be released back to the same area after sterilisation and immunisation, except those infected with rabies or exhibiting aggressive behaviour," the court ordered.

## Another school get bomb threat in city

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Another school in Delhi received a bomb threat via e-mail on Friday morning, triggering a swift response from authorities.

According to Delhi Fire Services, information about the threat was received at around 7:00 AM. The school is located in Dwarka, Sector 7.

Teams from Delhi Police and the Fire Department immediately rushed to the spot to ensure the safety of students and staff. A thorough search operation is underway to verify the authenticity of the threat.

Further details are awaited. This incident comes amid a series of similar hoax threats reported in schools across the national capital in recent months.



Authorities on alert as school receives bomb threat on Friday. (ANI)

Six schools across Delhi received bomb threats so far in a matter of days, prompting swift action from the Delhi Police and Fire Department. The schools include Andhra Education Society Senior Secondary School (Prasad Nagar), BGS International Public School (Dwarka, Sector 5), Rao Man Singh Senior Secondary School (Chhawla), Maxfort School (Dwarka, Sector 1), and Indraprastha International School (Dwarka, Sector 10).



## BIHAR ELECTION 2025

## RAHUL ATTACKS PM OVER BIHAR RALLY, SAYS NOT UTTERED A WORD ON 'VOTE CHORI'

TDG NETWORK  
BHAGALPUR

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not uttering a word on his government's alleged attempt to steal votes by using the Election Commission during his visit to Bihar's Gayaji earlier in the day.

Addressing a public gathering on the sixth day of the Congress 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' at Bhagalpur, Gandhi also attacked Modi for the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

"The SIR is an attempt by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP and the EC to steal your votes. They are trying their best to snatch your voting rights. The 'vote chor' came to Gayaji, but did not say even a word on his government's attempt to steal votes with the help of the EC," Gandhi said.

The former Congress president also wondered why Modi maintains a stoic silence over the issue.



Lok Sabha LoP and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi greets the supporters during the Voter Adhikar Yatra in Bihar. ANI

Reiterating his charge that the BJP, in collusion with the Election Commission of India, was stealing elections in state after state, Gandhi said the PM also did not say a word on the alleged irregularities in Maharashtra and Karnataka polls and the Manipur issue.

"How the EC added

about one crore voters in Maharashtra after the BJP-led alliance lost there in the Lok Sabha elections, it's a well-known fact. Vote Chori is an attack on the Constitution of India. The INDIA bloc will not allow the BJP to steal voting rights of the people of Bihar," he said.

The entire country now

## Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar to join Rahul's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar will join Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 16-day-long 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar.

While Shivakumar will take part in the march on Saturday and Sunday, Siddaramaiah will join on August 29. "Rahul Gandhi ji is taking out a 16-day-long yatra in Bihar covering about 1,300 km. I will also join him on August 29 and wish him the best," Siddaramaiah told reporters here on Friday. Speaking in the Assembly, Shivakumar said he would be travelling

to Bihar for two days. "Rahul Gandhi is doing a yatra in Bihar. I will be going for one day, and the chief minister will go on another day. Some of our MLAs are also joining," he said. According to his tour schedule shared with the media, Shivakumar is set to join the march at Mirchaibari in Katihar district on Saturday and participate in the yatra the following day as well. Rahul Gandhi began the 1,300-km yatra on August 17, which will cover more than 20 districts in Bihar as the Congress intensifies its campaign against what it calls "vote chori" (vote theft).

knows that Narendra Modi steals votes, the Congress leader alleged.

All measures being taken by the NDA government are anti-poor, and it has closed all options of employment for the youth,

Gandhi claimed.

Modi wants to dismantle the Constitution that Mahatma Gandhi and BR Ambedkar gave the country its Constitution, which has secured the future of its people, he alleged.

## One crore Bihar youth will be given jobs if voted to power: CM

TDG NETWORK  
GAYA JI (BIHAR)

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Friday said that youth in the poll-bound state will be provided with massive job opportunities if the NDA returns to power here.

Addressing a rally in Bihar's Gaya district on Friday, Bihar CM said, "Pension for elderly, persons with disabilities, and widows has been increased from Rs 400 to Rs 1100, with this, 1.12 crore people will benefit. Free domestic electricity will be provided to everyone. 39 lakh people have been given employment. Employment opportunities will further increase. In the coming five years, one crore youth will be given jobs. New industries will be set up with all kinds of help from the centre."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone and inaugurat-



ed multiple development projects worth Rs 12,000 crore at Gaya in Bihar today.

Prime Minister also inaugurated the four-lane Bakhtiyarpur to Mokama section of NH-31, worth around Rs 1,900 crore, which will ease congestion, reduce travel time, and enhance passenger and freight movement. Further, improvement to the two-lane with paved shoulders of Bikramganj-Dawath-Nawanagar-Dumraon section of NH-120 in Bihar will improve connectivity in rural areas, providing

new economic opportunities for the local population

PM Modi also inaugurated the 8.15 km long Aunta-Simaria bridge project on NH-31, including the 1.86 km long 6 lane Bridge on river Ganga, constructed at a cost of over Rs 1,870 crore. It will provide direct connectivity between Mokama in Patna and Begusarai.

The bridge has been constructed parallel to an old 2-lane dilapidated railcum-road bridge "Rajendra Setu" which is in poor condition forcing heavy vehicles to re-route.

## Two disgruntled RJD MLAs turn up at PM's rally in Bihar

TDG NETWORK  
GAYA JI

Two disgruntled RJD MLAs in Bihar on Friday turned up at a rally addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Gayaji, triggering speculations that they might cross over to the NDA ahead of the assembly polls.

Nawada MLA Vibha Devi and Rajauli legislator Prakash Veer were seen taking a seat, in the back row, on the podium erected on the Magadh University premises.

Notably, Vibha Devi's husband Raj Ballabh Yadav, a multiple-term former MLA, recently walked out of jail following an acquittal

by the Patna High Court in a POCSO case that caused him to spend several years behind bars.

Yadav, who is known to enjoy tremendous clout in Nawada district, was said to have been unhappy when the RJD denied a ticket to a member of his family in last year's Lok Sabha polls. His brother, Binod Yadav, quit the RJD and contested the Nawada Lok Sabha seat as an Independent. Prakash Veer, who is enjoying his second consecutive term from a seat reserved for SCs, has been said to have fallen out of favour with Tejashwi Yadav, son and heir apparent of RJD president Lalu Prasad.

## Former Thakurganj MLA rejoins JD(U) ahead of polls

TDG NETWORK  
PATNA

Former Thakurganj MLA Gopal Agarwal officially joined the Janata Dal (United) party on Friday, expressing his happiness at returning to his "old house" after a decade-long hiatus.

Agarwal, who has been associated with the JD(U) in the past, reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening the party in Bihar.

"I am very happy to be back in my old house. I have been cut off from the party for 10 years, but I have worked as a soldier for the party in every parliamentary election. I have always been blessed by the Prime Minister, the President, Lallan Bhaiya, and all. I

will do my best to strengthen the party in Bihar," Agarwal said. He further pledged to work alongside Naushad Alam and Prahlad Kumar Sarkar to secure all 24 assembly seats in the Seemanchal region, aiming to help JD(U) form the government again in 2025 under the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Welcoming Agarwal into the party, Bihar JD(U) President Umesh Singh Kushwaha congratulated him on his decision to rejoin at a crucial time ahead of elections. "Today, Gopal Agrawal, who has joined the Janata Dal (United), has returned home at a time when we are in the middle of an election. I would like to tell him that he has made

the right decision at the right time. He will have a huge responsibility to fulfil this decision," Kushwaha said, extending his best wishes to Agarwal.

Meanwhile, in a significant political development in Bihar ahead of the Assembly polls scheduled to be held later this year, former Union Minister Ram Chandra Prasad Singh has merged his political outfit, Aap Sabki Awaz (ASA), with the Jan Suraj Party, led by Prashant Kishor.

Singh left JD(U) in 2023 to join Bharatiya Janata Party and in 2024 announced the formation of his own Party, 'Aap Sabki Awaz', announcing his contention for the 2025 Bihar election.

## Tiger found dead in MP's Satpura reserve; poaching suspected

TDG NETWORK  
NARMADAPURAM

A tiger was found dead in the Satpura reserve in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram district on Friday with one of its paws of a right leg missing, a forest

ibha Netam said the wild animal's carcass was spotted by a motorboat patrolling team in the backwaters of the Tawa river near Badh Chapda village in the reserve.

After being retrieved from the backwaters, one of the ti-



department official said. The missing paw led to suspicion that the tiger was killed by poachers, but forest department officials did not confirm the same.

This was the second feline to have been found dead in the Satpura Tiger Reserve (STR) in the last 10 days.

STR deputy director Rish-

ger's paws of a right leg was found missing, Netam said. A case was registered and the carcass was sent for post-mortem, the official added.

A tiger was found dead in STR on August 12 with officials suspecting the feline died following a territorial fight.

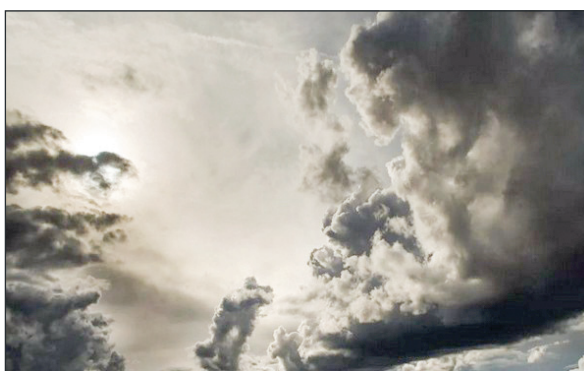
## IMD predicts thunderstorms, heavy rainfall for next 24 hours in Uttarakhand

TDG NETWORK  
DEHRADUN

The India Meteorological Department on Friday issued an orange alert for Uttarakhand, forecasting thunderstorms/lightning and very intense rain at different places of the state.

The alert has been issued, which remains in effect till Saturday afternoon.

According to the Meteorological Department, "In the



next 24 hours (Orange Alert from 22.8.2025, 2:05 PM to

23.8.2025, 2:05 PM) there is a possibility of thunder-

storms/lightning and very intense rain at different places in Dehradun, Tehri, Pauri, Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudrapur, Nainital, Almora and Udham Singh Nagar such as Kotdwar, Rishikesh, Gangotri, Kashipur, Kedarnath, Joshimath, Mussoorie, Munsyari, Lohaghat, Ranikhet, Khatima and adjoining areas".

An orange alert is issued when heavy rainfall is anticipated, typically exceeding

115.6 mm and up to 204.4 mm within 24 hours.

Earlier, the Thal-Munsyari and Munsyari-Milam roads were closed in Pithoragarh, said the Pithoragarh Police and urged people to stay on alert in areas prone to rain and landslides. In a tweet on X, the Pithoragarh District Police said, "Closed Road Routes - Thal - Munsyari route is closed, Munsyari - Milam route is closed. All other national/state high-

ways are open. Stay alert in areas prone to rain and landslides." Roadblocks due to landslides and falling stones are common in Uttarakhand, causing disruptions and leading to loss of life as well. On Wednesday, two people died after debris fell from a mountain on the Gangotri Highway in the Dabrani area of Uttarkashi, said Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.

## Karnataka Deputy CM Shivakumar sings RSS anthem, stuns Assembly

TDG NETWORK  
BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is also the Congress state president, took everyone by surprise when he sang the RSS anthem during a discussion in the state Assembly on the Chinnaswamy stadium stampede, which claimed the lives of 11 people. A sudden musical note amazed the House, which heard the first few lines of the RSS Anthem 'Namaste Sada Vatsale Matrubhoomi' as shown in a video of the proceedings. Shivakumar's recital came

when the BJP legislators accused Shivakumar of being an Rs abettor' of the stampede as he created mass frenzy.

They alleged that Shivakumar went to receive the RCB team on their arrival at the Bengaluru airport, waved the Kannada flag throughout the journey from the airport to the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Replying to the accusations on Thursday, Shivakumar said, "I am a member of the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and people there, including the KSCA secretary, are my



friends. I am the Bengaluru In-Charge Minister. I had gone to the Airport and Stadium (on June 4). I also held the Karnataka flag. I did wish them (RCB) and I kissed the cup as well. I have done my job".

He added, "The accident happened. Such things have happened in other states as well. If needed, I will read out the list of incidents that have occurred in other places as well. I, too, have many things to say about you as

well".

The Deputy CM also said he grew up with Home Minister G Parameshwara.

To this, Leader of the Opposition BJP R Ashoka reminded Shivakumar that he once said he wore RSS Chaddi.

Much to the amusement of the House, Shivakumar sang 'Namaste Sada Vatsale Matrubhoomi.....'.

The opposition welcomed the anthem by thumping the table but there was an absolute silence in the Congress camp.

The BJP legislator V Sunil Kumar quipped, saying,

"Hope these lines are not removed from the records".

Shivakumar sought to know did the governments ever take responsibility whenever such incidents took place.

"You should feel proud that this government quickly (after the stampede) acted and initiated action against police officers and the Royal Challengers Bengaluru," he said.

As the video went viral, questions about his possible tilt towards the BJP were raised. Shivakumar clarified on Friday that he is an ardent Congress leader.



# CRITICAL MINERALS EXPLORATION UNDERWAY IN NORTHEAST INDIA: REDDY

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy on Thursday said that exploration of critical minerals is currently underway in the northeastern states of Mizoram and Assam.

In an interview with the media, the Minister added that the government will consult with the North-eastern states.

Acknowledging the presence of region-specific legal frameworks, Reddy said that the Centre will consult with the northeastern states to explore the scope of extraction of critical minerals in these states.

“Arunachal Pradesh has been brought into the auction regime in the coal sector for the first time... In Mizoram and Assam, too, exploration on criti-



cal minerals is ongoing... There are different Acts in the northeast, so we will speak with them and then attempt mining after discussion,” the Union Minister told ANI.

Talking about the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill 2025, passed by Parliament, Reddy said the government is pursuing reforms in the mining sector to

reduce dependence on imports and strengthen domestic capability.

The Union Minister added, “The Mines and Minerals Bill is a major reform in the Mining Sector, especially in critical minerals and coal. We are bringing in reforms continuously. Six amendments were brought in for further reforms. In the days to come, we are working towards amend-

ing the entire MMDR (Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act... There would be fair sales in the days to come. Critical minerals are required for national security and development - from cellphones to aeroplanes... They are needed in every sector.”

“We are dependent on foreign countries as of now, but different countries have created hurdles now. So, we are trying to bring in Aatmanirbharta in this sector,” Reddy said.

According to official data from the scientific agency, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has initiated 108 projects over the past five years, with 23 ongoing mineral exploration projects during the 2022-23 field season in the Northeast region.

The GSI is implementing 1,200 exploration projects nationwide from

FY 2024-25 to 2030-31, aiming to strengthen domestic critical mineral discovery.

The Union Cabinet approved the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) on 29 January 2025, running from 2024-25 to 2030-31. It has an outlay of Rs 16,300 crore, with expected investments of Rs 18,000 crore from PSUs and stakeholders.

Mission scope includes the entire critical minerals value chain: from exploration, mining, beneficiation, and processing to recovery from end-of-life products.

Recently, Reddy had said the central government is actively encouraging private companies to mine and explore critical minerals overseas and bring them back into the country to serve the needs of the domestic industry.

# Goyal urges plantation boards to expand outreach

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI



Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Piyush Goyal, reviewed the functioning of the country's plantation boards, stressing the need for stronger export diversification, brand promotion, and collective showcasing of India's plantation products, as per a press release issued by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Goyal highlighted that India's plantation sector, ranging from tea and coffee to spices and rubber, holds vast untapped potential in global markets. He urged the Boards to expand their outreach by not only promoting value-added products but also ensuring the highest quality standards.

He emphasized that India must maximize benefits from existing Free Trade Agreements (FTA) to push plantation exports to new destinations.

Calling for a unified strategy, the Minister said that the promotion of brand 'India' should be undertaken jointly by the Boards in collaboration with

the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF). He suggested that a 'Bharat Pavilion' be set up at all major international and domestic trade fairs to allow the Boards to collectively present their products under a single national identity.

Additionally, he directed the Boards to give special focus on their Geographical Indication (GI) products, ensuring that 'India' is clearly reflected in their logos.

The welfare of growers and workers also came up as a priority during the discussions. Goyal urged the Boards to ensure that families engaged in plantation sectors are supported through existing wel-

fare schemes. He underlined the importance of skilling programmes for these communities, directing the Boards to work in coordination with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

The Minister expressed satisfaction that several capacity-building initiatives were already underway, particularly those encouraging good agricultural practices, organic production, and better quality standards.

Ease of doing business, Goyal stressed, must be at the heart of the Boards' outreach. He advised that stakeholders, including growers and exporters, should receive assistance through sensitization drives and simplified procedures.

Looking ahead, the Minister encouraged the Boards to consider establishing a common incubation centre modeled on the Atal Innovation Mission. Such a centre, he said, would help promote research, innovation, and start-ups within the plantation sector, paving the way for new ideas and entrepreneurship.

# Nifty slips below 25,000 before US tariffs come in effect amid weak global cues

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Indian stock markets opened on a cautious note in negative territory on Friday as investors turned wary ahead of the implementation of impending US tariffs, alongside weak global cues and no progress in the Ukraine conflict.

The benchmark Nifty 50 index opened at 25,064.15, slipping by 19.60 points or 0.08 per cent, while the BSE Sensex started the session at 81,957.74, down by 42.97 points or 0.05 per cent.

Market experts highlighted that the sentiment remains fragile, with traders unwilling to take aggressive positions.

Ajay Bagga, Banking and Market Expert, told ANI, “Indian markets will find it difficult to sustain the last week's minor upmove. US punitive tariffs seem slated to go into effect on Aug 27th, with Ukraine seeing no

## GOLD FALLS RS 250

**NEW DELHI:** capital on Friday amid a weak global trend, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,00,620 per 10 grams on Thursday. In the national capital, gold of 99.5 per cent purity slipped Rs 150 to Rs 1,00,050 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Friday. It had settled at Rs 1,00,200 per 10 grams in the preceding session. However, silver prices rallied by Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,15,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Friday. The white metal had ended at Rs 1,14,000 per kg on Thursday, according to the Association. On the global front, spot gold was trading 0.25 per cent lower at USD 3,330.48 per ounce in New York.

## RUPEE DECLINES 27 PAISE AGAINST US DOLLAR

**Mumbai:** The rupee fell 27 paise to close at 87.52 against the greenback on Friday as domestic equity markets ended weaker and the US dollar strengthened ahead of the speech of Fed Chairman Jerome Powell. However, inflow of foreign funds and a drop in Brent crude prices supported the domestic unit at lower level. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 87.37 against the greenback and traded in the range of 87.32-87.55 before settling at 87.52, down 27 paise from its previous close. The rupee pared initial gains on Thursday to settle lower by 18 paise at 87.25 against the greenback.

progress on peace talks. All eyes are on the Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium where Fed Chair Jerome Powell is scheduled to speak on Fri-

day. Traders will closely monitor his speech for any clues on U.S. interest rate cuts in September following recent job market weakness.”

# Sebi gets three executive directors

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD



Market regulator Sebi has announced that three executive directors -- Amit Pradhan, Avneesh Pandey and Sanjay Chandrakant Purao -- took charge on Friday.

Before their promotions as executive directors, Pradhan, Pandey and Purao were holding the positions of chief general managers at Sebi.

In his new role, Pradhan will handle legal affairs and the prosecution & settlement department, while Pandey will manage the information technology department. Purao will take care of the corporation finance investigation department, recovery and refund, along with the internal investigation department, the

regulator said in three separate statements.

In his prior role, Pradhan was Chief General Manager and Regional Director at Sebi, heading the Northern Regional Office in New Delhi. He has about 28 years of experience in legal and regulatory affairs, enforcement, policy development at Sebi, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) and Competition Commission of India (CCI).

He has also handled quasi-judicial work as a full-time designated authority and adjudicating officer.

Pandey, who sees himself as a technology strategist, process innovator and cybersecurity evangelist, was chief general manager in Sebi. He has about three decades of securities market regulatory experience in covering a wide range of IT initiatives, including business process innova-

tion, big data analytics, SupTech, cybersecurity, IT audits and inspection.

Purao was the Chief General Manager and has handled diverse departments since joining Sebi in 1996.

He has served in various departments, including integrated surveillance, corporation finance investigation, market regulation, investment management and corporation finance.

Purao has also headed the Hyderabad office of the regulator.

He has also been a member of various domestic policy-making and advisory committees, as well as international committees, dealing with areas of mutual interest and cooperation with international regulators.

# Result of underwriting auction for govt securities announced

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday announced the outcome of the underwriting auction held on August 22, 2025, for government securities. According to an RBI press release, Primary Dealers successfully underwrote the entire notified amount of Rs. 6,000 crore for the 5.91 per cent Government Security (GS) 2028 and Rs. 30,000 crore for the 6.33 per cent GS 2035.

For the shorter-tenure 2028 bond, the Minimum Underwriting Commitment (MUC) was fixed at Rs. 3,003 crore, while the Additional Competitive Underwriting (ACU) accepted stood at Rs. 2,997 crore. The ACU commission cut-off rate for this security was set at 0.25 paise per Rs. 100.

In the case of the longer-tenure 2035 bond, the MUC was higher at Rs. 15,015 crore. The ACU accepted amounted to Rs. 14,985



crore, with a commission cut-off rate of 0.79 paise per Rs. 100.

The central bank confirmed that the auction for the sale of these securities was also conducted on the same day, ensuring complete subscription. This, according to the press release, reinforced stability in the government securities market.

The announcement followed the government's earlier decision to re-issue two securities with a total notified amount of Rs. 36,000 crore through an auction conducted by the RBI in Mumbai. The government

also kept the option to retain an additional subscription of up to Rs. 2,000 crore for each security.

The auction process, managed through the RBI's Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber) system, accepted bids electronically. Non-competitive bids, meant for small investors and eligible institutions, do not require quoting any yield or price; instead, securities are allotted at the average auction price.

Under competitive bidding, institutions quote the yield or price at which they want to purchase, while in non-competitive bidding, allotment is done at the average auction price.

The RBI stated that the auction followed the price-based method for re-issued securities, with the minimum bid size set at Rs. 10,000 and in multiples thereafter. These issuances are a part of the government's regular borrowing programme aimed at meeting financing needs.

# Govt hikes registration renewal fee of vehicles older than 20 years

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI



The transport ministry has raised the registration renewal fee for motor vehicles older than 20 years to discourage people from keeping them.

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH), in a notification, announced that the renewal fee for light motor vehicles (LMVs) older than 20 years has been doubled to Rs 10,000 from Rs 5,000.

According to the notification, for motorcycles older than 20 years, the renewal fee will rise from Rs 1,000 to Rs 2,000. For three-wheelers and quadricycles, the renewal cost will increase from Rs 3,500 to Rs 5,000.

In case of imported two- or three-wheelers, the cost of the renewal of the certificate of registration will be Rs 20,000, while for imported vehicles with four or more wheels, it will be Rs 80,000.

The draft amendment was issued in February and finalised on August 21.

The ministry, in October 2021, increased the registration and renewal fee for motorcycles, three-wheelers and cars.

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court ordered authorities not to take coercive action against the owners of diesel vehicles that are more than 10 years old and petrol vehicles older than 15 years in Delhi-NCR.

The decision came after the Delhi government urged the court to consider the actual usage of vehicles rather than just their manufacturing year while implementing the end-of-life vehicle policy.

# E-commerce leads refund grievances with 3,594 cases

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI



The e-commerce sector has recorded the highest volume of refund-related grievances with 3,594 cases, resulting in refunds worth Rs 1.34 crore facilitated by National Consumer Helpline (NCH), said the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution on Friday.

The NCH successfully facilitated refunds amounting to Rs 2.72 crore in July 2025, addressing 7,256 consumer grievances across 27 sectors, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution said on Friday.

The e-commerce sector was followed by the Travel & Tourism sector, which accounted for refunds of Rs 31 lakh.

The helpline's technological transformation has significantly enhanced its reach and efficiency. Call volumes have increased more than tenfold, from 12,553 in December 2015 to 1,55,138 in

December 2024.

Similarly, average monthly complaint registrations have grown from 37,062 in 2017 to 1,11,951 in 2024. Consumer adoption of digital channels has also surged, with grievance registration via WhatsApp rising from 3 per cent in March 2023 to 20 per cent in March 2025.

NCH acts as a unified platform bringing together consumers, government agencies, private sector companies, and regulatory bodies. The number of convergence partners has expanded steadily from 263 in 2017 to 1,131 companies in 2025, strengthening col-

laborative redressal mechanisms.

In line with its mandate to safeguard consumer rights and promote fair trade practices, the Department of Consumer Affairs, GoI, monitors grievance data received through the NCH.

In addition, the Department also identifies companies with a high volume of complaints that are not yet part of the convergence programme for further engagement. NCH collaborates with companies demonstrating a proactive approach to grievance redressal, onboarding them as convergence partners on a voluntary basis.

# Private capex outlook for FY26 lower than FY25, SBI warns of further slip

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The intended private capital expenditure (capex) for FY26 is significantly lower than the numbers of FY25, and may decline further amid the impact of US tariffs, according to a report by the State Bank of India (SBI).

The report highlighted that while government

spending has been driving growth, the economy now urgently needs private sector participation to sustain momentum.

It stated “Data..... indicated that the intended capex for FY26 is significantly lower than the FY25 numbers”

The report stressed that private investors must “hold the baton now,” as muted private investment

remains a major concern for sustainable growth.

Based on a survey of 2,170 enterprises conducted in April 2025 across agriculture, manufacturing, IT and other sectors, SBI noted that the intended capex for FY26 is not only below FY25 levels, but also faces risks of further weakening due to global trade headwinds.

According to the data



in the report, actual private capex stood at Rs 3.9 lakh crore in 2021-22,

rising to Rs 5.7 lakh crore in 2022-23, before declining sharply to Rs 4.2 lakh crore in 2023-24. In recent years, private capex has stagnated at around Rs 4.9-6.6 lakh crore.

The intended investment for FY26 is pegged at Rs 6.6 lakh crore, but the report highlighted that this is still not very encouraging when compared to the scale

required for higher economic growth.

The report pointed out that while government capital expenditure has lifted the economy, private investment has not complemented or crowded in to the same extent.

The peak elasticity of government capex to GDP stands at 1.17, suggesting that public spending has provided a push to eco-

nomic activity. However, the muted presence of private investment is acting as a constraint, limiting the multiplier effect of government-led initiatives.

“The somehow somber elasticity at 1.17 implies in the Indian context that government capital expenditure has been able to lift the economy to a higher trend. However,

the muted presence of private investment is a clear constraint to push the multiplier to ever higher levels,” the report stated.

The report emphasized that since public investment has already done the heavy lifting in recent years, the next phase of growth can only be sustained through stronger private sector participation



# MALLIKARJUNA MAGIC – THE 2ND JYOTIRLINGA

## OPINION

PRIYA S. TANDON



It is believed that when Sati immolated herself and Shiva performed the Tandava, various parts of her charred body fell in different directions. The Sri Shaila Parvat was where the neck of Sati fell, and it became a Shaktipeeth. We were blessed to have the opportunity to visit the Mallikarjuna Temple, the second of the Jyotirlingas, at Srisailem, Andhra Pradesh during the auspicious month of Sawan. The drive from Hyderabad to the temple took 41/2 hours. We were eager to go for Darshan right away, but were told that the temple opens at 6 PM. So we first went to the Sri Saakshi Ganapati Mandir. Here, Ganpati sits holding a pen and a notepad. It is said that He keeps a record of all devotees visiting the Mallikarjuna Temple. As we sat there, and the Panditji was chanting Man-

tras, a little mouse came and sat beside my husband. It was a strange sight, but somewhere we felt that perhaps the Mooshak-Vahana of Ganesha had come. We visited the Gram Devi Temple which is a small Devi Temple of the local deity. Thereafter, we went to the Veerbhadra Temple. He is the Kshetriya Lokpal here. At 6 PM sharp, we entered the Mallikarjuna Temple. At the entry of the garbhagriha, was a 4 feet high, idol of Ganesha made of pure gold. It had been installed on the same day and was called Ratnagarbha Ganesha. There was a definitive magnetic aura about it and it was an overwhelming experience to pay obeisance to this magnificent Ganesha. As we entered the Garbhagriha, we saw the Mallikarjuna Sivalingam. We sat close to it and offered Abhishekham of water and milk as well as white Mallika (Jasmine) flowers. To be able to touch the Shivalinga that is known to be Swayambhu (self-manifested), from time immemorial and has been touched by Lord Rama, Chatrapati Shivaji as well as Sathya Sai Baba was an overwhelming experience. The priest allowed both of us to bow down and

touch our foreheads to the Shivalinga. It was an amazing experience to plug-in to the charging radiation that emitted from the Sivalingam. It was almost as if we were in a trance. The crowds were huge, so it was not possible to stay there too long, but in those few moments, the bliss was unquantifiable. It is said that once Shiva and Parvati told Ganesha and Kartikeya that it was time for them to get married. Both were excited and it was decided that whosoever would go around the world three times and come back earlier, would get married first. Karthikeya set out on his peacock at the fastest speed possible and started circumambulating the universe. Ganesha on the other hand thought, his Mooshak-vahana (mouse), would take aeons to go around the universe three times. So he sat on his mouse and went around Shiva and Parvati as they sat together. He completed three circumambulations and said, "You, my parents, are my world. I have gone around my world thrice. Hence I have won the race!" Shiva was impressed by Ganesha's intelligence and presence of mind. Ganesha was soon married to Riddhi and Siddhi. When Karthikeya got back, he was enraged and dejected that Ganesha was married first although Ganesha was the younger son. In anger, he decided to leave home and set off for Krauncha Parvat, his birthplace in Uttarakhand. Shiva and Parvati



*The temple is built on the banks of the Pataalganga, a part of the River Krishna. It is believed that there is a direct pathway to Mount Kailash, under the Pataalganga. The Rishis of yore used it to travel to Kailasha from Mallikarjuna! Scientists and historians who visit here are unable to define the aura here.*

went there to appease him and ask him to come back but he refused. Shiva wanted to stay in a place close by, so that he could keep an eye on Kartikeya. He decided to stay at Shri Shaila Parvat (now called Srisailem). It is believed that Shiva visits Srisailem to check on Kartikeya every Amavasya

day and Parvati visits here every Purnima day. The inscriptions on the temple show evidence that the temple structures date back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and was built by the Satavahan dynasty. Many additions and expansions were done during the time of King Harihara of the Vijayanagar empire in the 14-15<sup>th</sup> century. As is prevalent in Southern part of India, men enter the Garbhagriha wearing a Dhoti and Anga Vastra. Women can wear any Indian attire that is modest and not revealing. I really appreciate that the temples in the South, maintain the dress code as per our ancient customs and traditions. The temple is built on the banks of the Pataalganga, a part of the River Krishna. It is believed that there is a

direct pathway to Mount Kailash, under the Pataalganga. The Rishis of yore used it to travel to Kailasha from Mallikarjuna! Scientists and historians who visit here are unable to define the aura here. I would think that due to the potent energy of Mahadev here, the Yogis or Sadhakas of ancient times were able to connect mentally to the Lord of Kailasha, while meditating here. It was perhaps a virtual pathway to Mahadev ... As we came out of the Mallikarjuna Temple, just a few yards away was the Shaktipeeth of Maa Brahmaramba or Bhramari Devi. There is also a story about a demon called Arunasur, who had a boon from Brahmaji, that he could not be killed by anyone having two or four feet.

Resultantly, no human or animal could have killed him. He terrorised and victimised many people. When Goddess Parvati took him to task, she came in the form of thousands of Black Bees that swarmed around Arunasura's body. They stung him all over his body, such that the poison injected by their stings killed him. She told him that she had manifested in this form because he could not be killed by any two or four legged creature. A black bee has six legs. The mention of this form of the Devi is there in the 10<sup>th</sup> verse of The Mahishasura Mardini Stotram. (... Sunayana Vibramara bbramara, Bbramara bbramarad-bipadhe, Jaya Jaya Hey Mahishasura Mardini Ramyaka pardini Shailasuthe.) There is a huge pillar of pure gold where the flag of Shiva is hosted. Similarly there is a gold pillar in the compound outside the Devi Temple as well. One Sivalingam is there that has been installed there by Sitaji herself. There is a huge idol of Nandi in the compound. He sits facing Mallikarjuna Swamy. This pilgrimage is unique in its own way, because this is the only place where the Shiva Jyotirlinga and the Devi Shaktipeeth are in the same compound. Every spec of this place exudes energy. Walking here makes you feel that each spec of the soil has divine vibes. India has so many beautiful places to see and experience ... I hope everyone gets to see some ... if not all!

# Trump's global stage: Diplomacy or PR campaign?

## OPINION

ANINDITA MAHAPATRA

The international political area has been transformed into an elaborate stage performance for the past three months. And this performance has starred only one dominant actor: Donald J. Trump. In quick succession, the U.S. President has claimed credit for ceasefires, threatened and suspended, and resumed tariffs, berated allies, welcomed rivals, and even promoted himself as a Nobel Peace Prize candidate. The tornado of announcements, tweets, videos and photo opportunities has left observers asking whether Trump is advancing U.S. interests or simply staging a large-scale public-relations campaign for himself.

### THE MEDIATION MIRAGE

In May, Trump announced that the United States had successfully mediated a ceasefire between India and Pakistan. This self-asserted claim was swiftly dismissed by India. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, India's most senior diplomat, clarified that the ceasefire was a bilateral arrangement negotiated directly between the Director Generals of Military Operations of both countries, with no third-party involvement. The Prime Minister empha-

sized India's long-standing policy of rejecting external mediation on its disputes with Pakistan. The implausibility of Trump's claim, in contrast with India's firm denial, was widely reported by esteemed and trustworthy Indian and international media channels, highlighting Donald Trump's tendency of inserting himself in sensitive conflicts. This episode was far from the end of the elaborate PR performance. The subsequent months witnessed Trump's repeated citation of his role in stopping wars across the globe. Through implications and direct assertions, he brandished an unreliable tally as evidence of his supposed peacemaking record. The reliability of the tally can be easily contested due to the simple event of Trump claiming he settled six wars, when in conversation with the Ukrainian President, and claiming the number had gone up to seven, the very next day in an interview, with no mention of the seventh alleged war that he had solved. Interestingly, the headline of a story in The New York Times is: "Trump Says He's Ended 6 (or 7) Wars." He further asserted that such achievements were worthy of rec-



Russian President Vladimir Putin meets United States of America President Donald Trump, in Alaska

*Trump has seemingly particularly targeted India by not only imposing additional tariffs on Indian goods but also accompanying the move with a rude remark online. In a widely reported post, he declared that "India and Russia can take their dead economies down together."*

ognition by the Nobel Peace Prize committee. However, fact-checking organizations highlighted that many of these ceasefires were either temporary and disputed, or under progress with U.S. involvement being peripheral at best. The India-Pakistan example served as a promi-

nent case where Trump's narrative diverged sharply from reality.

### TARIFF THEATER

In the midst of his loud proclamations of being an international peacemaker, Trump reignited economic hostilities through his trade

policy. The initially announced 90-day pause on new tariffs was revoked, and resumed on August 7, with a gravely uneven approach. The United States granted a 3-month extension of its tariff truce to China, its own primary rival in global trade, while shoving other nations with reciprocal tariffs, signalling that Trump's trade wars were far from over. Trump has seemingly particularly targeted India by not only imposing additional tariffs on Indian goods but also accompanying the move with a rude remark online. In a widely reported post, he declared that "India and Russia can take their dead economies down together." Interna-

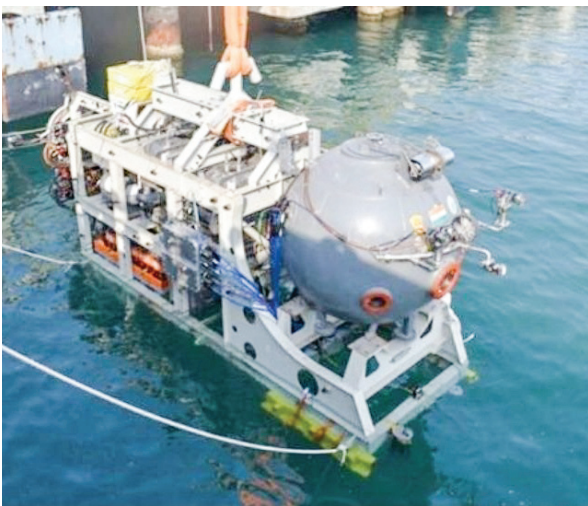
tional media outlets labelled this statement as both inflammatory and counterproductive, especially due to the need for Washington D.C. and New Delhi's partnership to counterbalance China. This entire pattern shows dramatic, and even erratic choreography of actions from Trump which may confuse the markets but proves highly effective in keeping Trump's name in global headlines. **THE ALASKA SPECTACLE** The most telling case for this entire phenomenon to be more of a PR stunt than intelligent strategic diplomacy is Trump's recent meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. On August

15, Putin flew to Alaska for a summit hosted by the U.S. Broadcasts surrounding the meeting were heavily dominated by images of handshakes, military flyovers, and tightly managed press moments. Yet no concrete agreements or solutions surfaced. **THE NOBEL PUSH** Interwoven with these events was a sturdy nudge towards the Nobel Peace Prize. Trump's offhand suggestion soon escalated into an official talking point. On July 31, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters it was "well past time" for Trump to be recognized with the award. It was further claimed that President Trump had brokered an average of about

"one peace deal or ceasefire per month during his six months in office". The remark was picked up globally, with supportive coverage amplifying the claim and editorials deriding it as absurd. The juxtaposition of a press secretary formally promoting her boss for the world's most prestigious peace prize, especially as tariff battles reignited and summits yielded little, deepens the impression of a campaign more focused on branding than diplomacy. **DIPLOMACY OR BRANDING?** Trump's international politics reveal a consistent pattern: bold announcements, provocative language, self-crediting of disputed outcomes, and headline-dominating performances that often lack substantive follow-through. Each episode, whether contested ceasefire claims, tariff wars, or summits without results, functions as a part of a larger campaign that keeps Trump at the center of global political discourse. As Trump continues to oscillate between claims of peace-making and economic confrontation, the world is left to ask: are these the moves of a statesman's diplomacy, or a global public-relations campaign? For now, the answer may depend less on outcomes, and more on Donald Trump's most natural skill, optics.

*Anindita Mahapatra currently works in the research team of Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies*





On August 5 - 6, 2025, aquanauts Raju Ramesh and Cdr Jatinder Pal Singh descended 4,000 m and 5,000 m aboard the French submersible Nautilie, marking a monumental step in our nation's deep-sea journey. X post

*India's 5,000-metre Nautilie rehearsal pressure-tests life support, comms, and retrieval—putting a safe, crewed 6,000-metre Matsya within reach, and responsibly unlocking ISA-licensed critical minerals.*

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India's deep-ocean program has accelerated in the 2020s under the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM), aiming to deploy an indigenous crewed submersible Matsya-6000 capable of 6,000 m depths. Key milestones include the recent event of India's first manned 5,000 m dives (using the French Nautilie sub) in August 2025, and extensive wet trials of Matsya-6000 itself in 2024-2025. These developments parallel global history (e.g. bathyscaphe Trieste, Jiaolong, Alvin, Mir) and set the stage for India joining the handful of nations with deep-crewed submersibles.

#### NAUTILIE EXPEDITION TO MATSYA-6000

- **2021:** Union Cabinet approves the Deep Ocean Mission (aka Samudrayaan), encompassing manned and unmanned submersibles, underwater vehicles and deep-sea mining R&D. This marked formal commitment to develop an Indian deep-diving capability.
- **2022-2024:** NIOT (National Institute of Ocean Technology) completes design of Matsya-6000 (3-person titanium sphere) and builds subsystems under MoES (Ministry of Earth Sciences). Early dry dock tests validate life-support, ballast, thrusters and communications hardware. In late 2024, Matsya-6000 completed integrated dry tests simulating 500 m depths, then moved to L&T Shipbuilding (Kattappalli) for wet trials. In Jan-Feb 2025 eight shallow-water dives (five unmanned, five manned) were performed to qualify life-support, control systems and sensor payloads.
- **Feb 2025:** PIB press release confirms Matsya-6000 wet-test success. Crucially, the tests included manned dives to verify life-support reliability under pressure and communications/telemetry, though limited by shallow depth. This paves the way for a planned 500 m manned dive by end-2025. The 2.1 m sphere (to be upgraded to 80 mm titanium) is being engineered for 96 h emergency endurance and multi-node acoustic comms.
- **Aug 2025:** Two NIOT aquanauts (Raju Ramesh and Cdr. J.P. Singh) join a French cruise off Portugal and ride Nautilie to 4,025 m and 5,002 m depths in early August. Nautilie – a 3-person French DSV (commissioned 1984) rated to 6,000 m – served as a training platform. The divers planted

Indian and French flags on the abyssal plain and “gained invaluable experience” in deep dive procedures (pre-dive prep, buoyancy control, trajectory tracking, comms protocols, etc. NIOT reports these lessons directly inform Matsya's development.

- **2025-2026 (Ongoing):** NIOT plans progressive trials of Matsya-6000: unmanned 500 m dives by late 2025 (as per MoES), shallow



X post

manned dives (spring 2026), then deeper tests in the Bay of Bengal. The upgraded 28-tonne titanium crew sphere is under fabrication by ISRO. By end-2026 Matsya is slated to carry three people to 6 km and retrieve them safely, completing India's first crewed abyssal mission. The goal is to conduct marine studies and explore polymetallic nodules within India's authorized seabed area.

#### WHY 5,000 M MATTERS

The two Nautilie dives in Aug 2025 were test missions to “de-risk” India's human submersible system at extreme pressure. Specific objectives included:

- **Life support and habitability:** Crews spent ~4-6 hours at 5,000 m, verifying that the submersible environment can sustain humans (oxygen, CO<sub>2</sub> scrubbing, temperature control) under real deep-sea conditions. The preceding Matsya trials had already pressure-qualified life-support components; the Nautilie dive gave the Indian team confidence in operating them in situ.
- **Communications:** Testing underwater comms protocols was key. At 5,000 m, acoustic voice/data links are

the only means. In Nautilie both continuous voice and an acoustic modem were used. NIOT personnel practiced these and noted challenges (e.g. degraded voice quality). Matsya-6000 will use acoustic modems, an underwater telephone and periodic VHF surfacing checks.

- **Navigation and tracking:** The dives allowed the team to refine trajectory planning and buoyancy trim

in strong currents and high pressure.

- **Emergency and retrieval drills:** Although Nautilie has its own drop-weight system, the mission rehearsed fallbacks (e.g. dropping ballast, emergency ascent). Matsya is designed with multiple emergency drop-weights and a pop-up rescue buoy with satellite beacon. The crew practiced mission abort procedures for delayed comms (rules require status updates every 15 min or abort).

- **Integrated Mission Profile:** The divers went through full dive-planning cycles, adapting to delays, jet lag and rough seas, honing team coordination. These human factors are critical “de-risk” elements for the upcoming fully indigenous mission.

In sum, the 5,000 m dives served as a dress rehearsal for the later Matsya 6,000 m mission. By putting humans in a real high-pressure environment, India's team validated life-support reliability, deep-ocean comms, buoyancy systems and emergency procedures – all under NASA-style scrutiny. This experience directly feeds into final Matsya tests, so that when Matsya-6000 dives with a crew, “every single component...is crafted

to withstand extreme pressure”.

#### INDIA VS. GLOBAL CREWED SUBMERSIBLES

India's nascent crewed submersible program must be viewed alongside decades of foreign experience. Key international benchmarks include

- **China** – Jiaolong: A 22-tonne, 3-person submersible inaugurated in 2010. Jiaolong set a Chinese record by reaching 7,062 m (Mariana Trench) in 2012. It routinely operates ~3,000-4,000 m and has trialed up to ~7,000 m. China (via COMRA) holds multiple ISA exploration licenses for nodules, sulphides and crusts. Jiaolong demonstrates China's deep-diving mastery, and its experience informs India that deep access beyond 6 km is technically achievable.

- **United States** – Alvin and DSVs: The US Alvin (launched 1964) is a workhorse (45,000 dives) but limited to ~4,500 m today. An upgrade (completed 2014) will eventually extend Alvin to 6,500 m. The US also operates the Limiting Factor (3-person, 11,000 m) for deepest dives (Challenger Deep). The US focuses now on deep-ocean mining via ROVs and domestic legal regimes, but Alvin remains the primary crewed research submersible. By contrast, India is only now developing its first indigenous Matsya-6000 for 6,000 m; until now India used foreign subs (e.g. Nautilie) for training.

- **France** – Nautilie: Com-

missioned 1984, Nautilie is a 3-person sub rated to 6,000 m. India's 2025 dives used Nautilie. France also co-developed Victor 6000 (ROV) and maintains deep-diving vessels (Pourquoi Pas?). France (Ifremer) is a leader in marine research and has longstanding deep-sea expertise; India benefited by collaborating on Nautilie.

- **Russia** – Mir submersibles: Two 3-person Mir vessels (1987) dive to 6,000 m and famously explored the Titanic wreck. Russia (via Yuzhmorgeologiya) holds ISA contracts for nodules and hydrothermal sulphides. Russia's deep sub work is well-established but now aging; India's effort is more modern, albeit still proving itself.

- **Japan** – Shinkai 6500: A 3-person sub (1989) that can reach 6,500 m. It frequently conducts hydrothermal vent research. Japan also develops deep-sea crust and mud mining (REEs, cobalt) under national strategy.

- **Others:** The Italian-French Archimède (1960s) and US bathyscaphes (e.g. Trieste, Deepsea Challenger) have reached ~11 km, but these are unique vessels, not continuous infrastructure.

In summary, six countries already field crewed abyssal submersibles. China and Russia have built their own; France and the US have fleets (though US Alvin is older); Japan maintains one; and now India is poised to join. Indian Matsya-6000 (3-person, 6,000 m) will fill a capability gap between shallow-research submersibles and

the deepest record divers. Compared to peers, India started later and is catching up: Jiaolong reached deeper (7 km) a decade ago, and Alvin (post-upgrade) will soon also hit 6,500 m. But India's focus on indigenous design and safety (96 h endurance, emergency buoy) reflects lessons from these programs.

#### DEEP-SEA MINERALS: EEZ PLAYBOOK

Beyond exploration, India's DOM explicitly targets mineral resources in the deep sea, especially polymetallic nodules and hydrothermal sulphides within the Indian Ocean basin. Under UNCLOS, minerals beyond national waters are governed by the International Seabed Authority (ISA), which issues exploration licenses and regulates eventual exploitation. India's approach and how it compares internationally

- **India's licenses (ISA):** MoES has held ISA contracts since 2002: one for polymetallic nodules (75,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Central Indian Ocean Basin) and one for seafloor massive sulphides (10,000 km<sup>2</sup> on the SW Indian Ridge). Surveys indicate an estimated 366 million tonnes of nodules in India's assigned area, containing ~1.09% Cu, 1.14% Ni, 0.14% Co. India's ISA plan includes drilling, baseline ecology, and technology development, but mining is not yet permitted (exploitation regulations are still pending). India renews and expands its exploration plans: in 2023 NIOT renewed its 150,000 km<sup>2</sup> nodules contract and has applied for a new sulphides contract on the Indian Ridge.

- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** Within India's 200 nm EEZ, seabed minerals are India's sovereign resource. India's government encourages studying its continental margin, but no large nodules fields are known in the nearshore EEZ. India's Deep Ocean Mission also includes unmanned vehicles to map its EEZ shelves. In contrast, small Pacific is-

land states (e.g. Cook Islands, Niue) have active nodule exploration in their EEZs.

- **Polymetallic nodules** – Composition & Promise: These “potato-sized” concretions form on abyssal plains (~4-6 km deep) over millions of years. They are rich in manganese, nickel, cobalt, copper and trace metals (including lithium, REEs). Compared to land ores, nodules offer high metal concentrations and no overburden waste or terrestrial disruption. This has drawn interest for batteries and high-tech materials. In India's case, securing domestic supplies of Ni and Co (key for clean-energy transition) is a strategic motive, as noted in NIOT's plans.

- **International Seabed Authority (ISA) Regime:** The ISA's 1982 Convention designates deep seabed resources as “common heritage” – no country can mine unilaterally. All exploration/exploitation in international waters must be under ISA licensing. As of 2025, ISA has approved ~30 exploration contracts (covering >1.5 million km<sup>2</sup>). Contracts are currently exploration-only; the ISA's Exploitation Code is still under negotiation. Hence no deep-sea mining is commercially underway anywhere yet. India follows this regime: its seabed work (survey ships, ROVs, environmental studies) is done under ISA approval, pending final global rules. By law, India must share benefits with the international community once mining begins (Article 136 ISA), although details (royalties, tech transfer) remain unsettled.

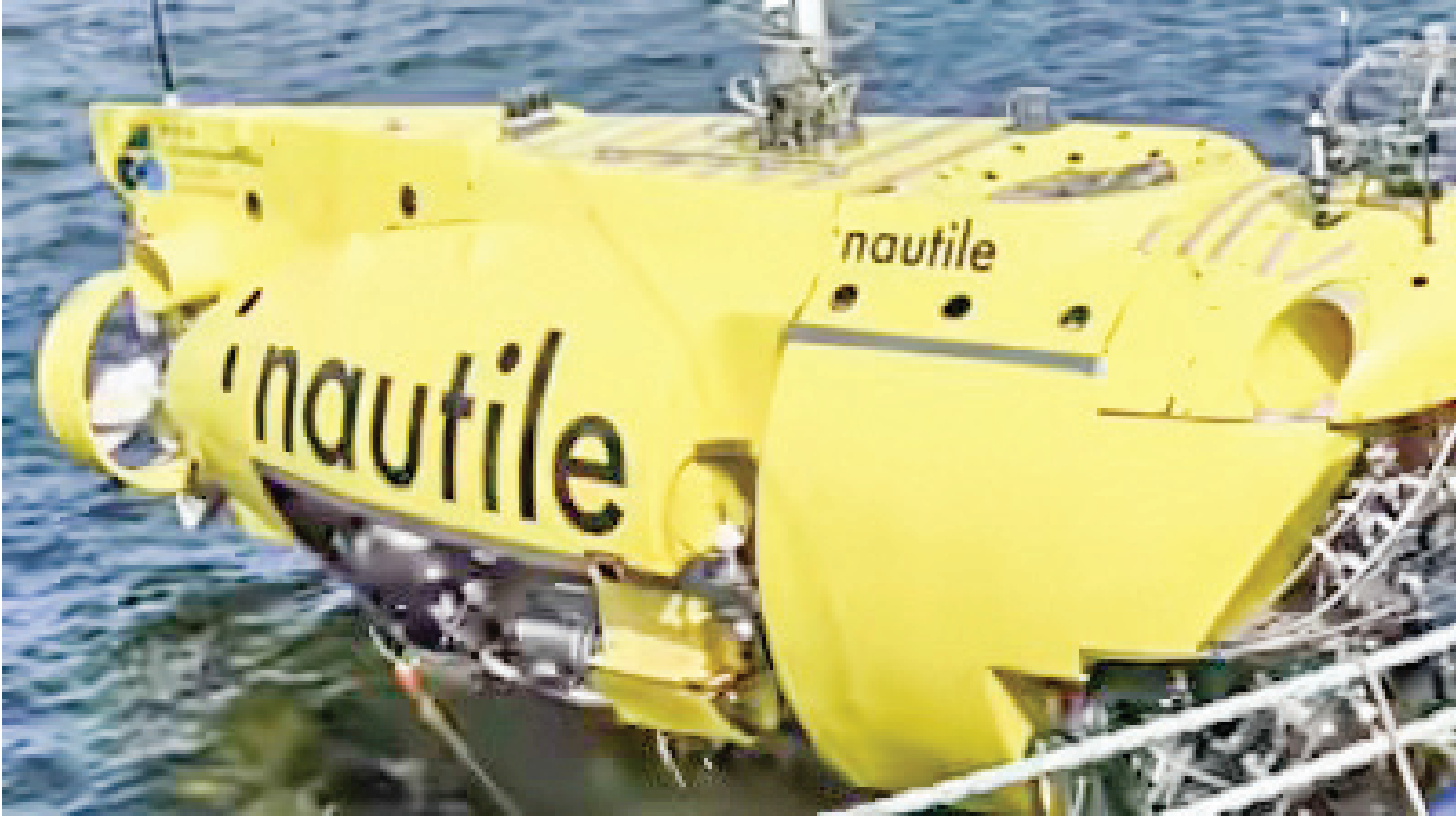
- **India's policy & strategy:** India's program (MoES/NIOT) is integrated under DOM. It involves R&D on nodule collection (e.g. a 17-tonne crawler prototype tested to 3,000 m) and metallurgy. Proposed draft regulations would allocate 1% of any project to coastal communities and require open publication of baseline data. Officially, India emphasizes sustainability and development: its seabed mission

explicitly includes “marine biodiversity studies, environmental impact assessments, and local benefits”. In parliament, ministers stress that deep-sea mining is on hold until ISA finalizes robust exploitation rules.

- **Other Countries:** China and Russia are the largest competitors in deep-sea mining. China holds multiple ISA contracts for nodules, sulphides and crusts, and has tested nodule crawlers in its EEZ. China's ocean policy makes seabed minerals a strategic priority to reduce import dependence. Russia (Yuzhmorgeologiya) similarly holds ISA licenses for Pacific nodules and Atlantic sulphides, linking deep-ocean strategy to its Arctic and energy plans. Both conduct extensive surveys and technology development. Japan, South Korea and Brazil also have active ISA programs for nodules/SMS, each aiming to secure battery metals. In contrast, some Western countries (e.g. France, New Zealand, Norway) adopt precautionary stances, pausing mining until environmental criteria are met. The U.S. (not an ISA member) is fast-tracking national leasing for nodules under domestic law, reflecting a “race” for critical minerals.

In this global context, India's approach is cautious and methodical: it builds indigenous technology (ROVs, Matsya) while gathering data, but won't mine until international regulations and safeguards are firmly in place.

The potential payoff is large – global nodules contain richer concentrations of cobalt and nickel than many terrestrial mines – but the costs and risks (environmental impact, technical challenge) are also high. India leverages its EEZ rights (for coastal minerals) and its ISA license in the Central Indian Ocean to hedge resource security, positioning itself as an emerging seabed-mining actor in alignment with international law.



X post

# INDIA'S STEPS TOWARD HUMAN DEEP-SEA DIVES: NAUTILIE TO MATSYA-6000 WET TRIALS



IS BIG TECH GETTING TOO BIG? A LEGAL LOOK AT MARKET POWER



RITIKA GOSWAMI

In the last two decades, technology has transformed from being merely a tool of convenience to becoming the very architecture on which modern life rests. From social interactions and digital payments to shopping and news consumption, a handful of technology companies dominate almost every digital sphere. Their scale, reach, and power have occasioned an urgent world-wide debate: is Big Tech becoming too powerful, and if it is, what should the law do about it?

THE SCALE OF BIG TECH POWER

The market capitalization of such businesses competes with the GDP of medium-sized countries. Apple's valuation in 2025 hit \$3.6 trillion, while Microsoft reached \$3.5 trillion, for instance. Google and Amazon each dominate systems so immense that consumers are often unable to envision daily life without them. Meta dominates close to three billion monthly active users across Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These numbers are not merely astonishing; they point to concentration of power at an unprecedented level. Market power in traditional economics meant

monopolies on products like oil, steel, or railroads. Now it's about dominance of data, algorithms, platforms, and digital ecosystems. They are now custodians of information, markets, and even political discussion. When a few companies dictate terms to billions of consumers, the legal framework is forced to ask if current regulatory regimes are up to the job.

COMPETITION LAW UNDER STRAIN

Competition law, antitrust in American parlance, was constructed on foundations laid in the industrial period. The Sherman Act of 1890 in the U.S. or India's Competition Act of 2002 aimed to thwart collusion, cartels, and monopolies. Big Tech firms, however, don't easily fit into classical traditional categories. They provide free service while monetizing data and advertising. They acquire start-ups in the guise of innovation but actually pre-empt future competition. They also create ecosystems that lock-in users, consider Apple's App Store conditions or Amazon's vertical control of logistics, retail, and cloud services. Regulators across the globe are falling behind. The European Union has come up with the Digital Markets Act (DMA) and the Digital Services Act (DSA) to tackle gatekeeping behavior and platform responsibility. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Department of Justice have initiated proceedings against Google for

abusing its dominance in search and advertising, and Meta for its acquisitions of Instagram and WhatsApp in the United States. In India, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed fines on Google repeatedly for abusing its dominant position in the Android marketplace. But, the enforcement remains slow and complex. By the time regulators move, the market might have already tipped irrevocably towards the tech giant. This is a pressing question: should competition law shift to become preemptive in action, not reactive?

DATA AS THE NEW OIL OR THE NEW MONOPOLY

Where industrial empires had been fueled by oil, digital empires are fueled by data. Each click, swipe, or search provides fuel for machine learning models that hone user targeting and platform leverage. Big Tech's ability to tap, store, and monetize data at a scale not possible for its competitors is at the heart of its dominance. Regulations like the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 try to give power to the users. However, it is claimed that these systems tend to empower Big Tech as only big corporations can keep up with the intricate compliance processes. The smaller companies fall behind, which further concentrates competition. Therefore,



ironically, consumer-protecting regulation can consolidate dominance.

THE EMERGENCE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMERGING LEGAL ISSUES

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) has heightened concerns regarding Big Tech scale. Firms such as OpenAI (funded by Microsoft), Google DeepMind, and Anthropic are competing to control generative AI. These technologies hold vast social potential but also have the potential to cause misinformation, job loss, and algorithmic prejudice. Legal experts are concerned that AI research is concentrating in the hands of only a select few companies because they possess the enormous datasets and processing capacity required to train sophisticated models. This is a concern not merely on competition grounds, but on ethical and constitutional grounds as

well: ought a small number of corporations determine how AI influences society, law enforcement, healthcare, or even democratic discourse?

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Outside of economics, Big Tech exercises tremendous control over public opinion and political processes. Social media platforms determine elections, spread misinformation, and screen the very news individuals read. Governments increasingly fret about the implications for sovereignty and democratic integrity. The Cambridge Analytica debacle revealed how data abuse could disqualify elections. In more recent years, content moderation disputes on whether or not online platforms should remain impartial conduits or direct censors have put tech conglomerates in de facto government positions. When Facebook or X (formerly Twitter) suspends

political figures or medleys election-related posts, it poses basic questions: who regulates the virtual public square?

SHOULD BIG TECH BE BROKEN UP?

One extreme suggestion that is gathering steam is breaking up Big Tech. As the U.S. government broke up AT&T's telephone monopoly during the 1980s, critics say Google or Amazon should be unbundled into separate businesses such as search, cloud, advertising, or retail. Supporters say this would revive competition and prevent the misuse of market power. Critics counter that unbundling companies will hurt innovation, productivity, and consumer welfare. For instance, vertically integrated ecosystems such as Apple offer frictionless user experiences that could be lost if unbundled. Further, in a U.S.-Chinese dominated world economy, fragmentation would

potentially dilute national competitiveness.

FINDING BALANCE BETWEEN INNOVATION AND REGULATION

The issue, thus, is balance. Governments need to inhibit abuse of dominance without chilling innovation. There needs to be a multi-dimensional approach:

- Modernising competition law to cater to data-driven markets and digital platforms.
- Enhancing international cooperation, as digital markets know no borders.
- Enforcing interoperability obligations, so smaller ones can compete without being excluded from super ecosystems.
- Ensuring consumers' rights over their data, not just through privacy legislation but also making data portability a reality and checking exploitative behavior.
- Algorithmic transparency, to hold accountable the manner in which digital platforms make choices that influence hundreds of millions of users.

INDIA'S PERSPECTIVE

For India, this discussion is not theoretical. With one of the world's biggest digital populations, India is both a market and war zone for Big Tech. Google and Amazon cases before the CCI refer to matters of predatory pricing, self-preferencing, and discriminatory contract terms. India has also expressed interest in creating its own AI governance and data localization frame-

works. Yet, India must tread carefully. Overregulation could stifle start-ups and domestic innovation, while under-regulation could allow Big Tech to entrench dominance irreversibly. A "middle path" balancing consumer interests, competition, and innovation is essential.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The question "Is Big Tech getting too big?" isn't rhetorical. It gets at the very heart of how society and law respond to technological change. Law has to make sure that technological advance doesn't centralize power in ways that are injurious to democracy, competition, and equality. The digital era requires legal systems to be as creative as the technologies they oversee. Through stricter antitrust, new privacy regimes, or structural changes, the common objective is: technology should work for society, not society working for technology. As the debate rages on in legislatures, courts, and international institutions, there is one thing that cannot be denied: the choices being made today will determine not only markets but also the boundaries of freedom, innovation, and democracy for generations to come. *Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publication. This piece is intended for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice.*

Beyond Identity: A Journey of Inspiration

TDG NETWORK

"Keep quiet and work hard, success will make noise" — this is not just a statement, but the definition of Rosie Baroliya's life. Today, when India is moving towards equality and inclusiveness, one name has emerged as a ray of hope in the entire country — Rosie Baroliya. A transgender woman, who challenged the limits of society, struggled for years and today created a new history by becoming the Rajasthan State President of the Transgender Cell of Pravasi Sangh (Regd.). This appointment is not just a personal success, but it is a revolutionary message for the entire transgender community. This is the first time in India that a transgender woman has received this honor as the State

President of the transgender wing of an organization. **'ROSIE RAJASTHANI' — A TITLE, AN HONOR** On this occasion, Rosie Baroliya was also given the honorific title of 'Rosie Rajasthani'. This name not only honors her roots, but also her unique contribution to social change. **ROSIE'S VOICE - THE VOICE OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY** Speaking to the media, Rosie said, "It is not just a post, it is a responsibility - to be the voice of the transgender community. I will demand the establishment of a transgender commission from the Government of India so that millions of people can get equal opportunities and rights." She also urged for the establishment of Saksham Na-

tional Transgender Distress Redressal Project, and shared her ideology with Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah during his recent visit to Rajasthan. **FROM STRUGGLE TO LEADERSHIP** Rozy's journey has been full of hardships. In a society where the transgender community is often marginalized, it is an extraordinary achievement to come out of it and gain recognition at the national level. She is the first transgender from Rajasthan to be issued a passport by the Government of India. Rozy is the founder and president of Nayi Soch Nayi Shakti Foundation (NSNS). This organization works for the interests of transgenders, women, children, environment and underprivileged communities. This



foundation is doing remarkable work in the direction of education, skill development, women empowerment and equal opportunities for every social class. **VOICE OF INDIA ON GLOBAL PLATFORMS** Rosie Baroliya is representing not only Rajasthan but also India on international platforms. She is the President of Women Entrepreneur Forum of Africa (India Chapter) and is continuously working to promote global leadership of women. **AN ARTIST AS WELL AS A WARRIOR** Very few people know that Rosie is also a celebrity makeup artist, who has worked with many famous personalities in Bollywood and fashion world. But she never put her career ahead of social service.

**CONNECTED WITH RELIGION AND CULTURE** Rosie is deeply connected to Sanatan Dharma and the ancient Vedic traditions of India. This connection of hers is clearly reflected in her social work, where she plays both service and faith equally. Rosie Baroliya is not just a name, but a voice of social change. She is a symbol of the new thinking that talks about equality, and is an example of the new power that can turn every challenge into an opportunity. Her story shows that identity is not made of paper but of actions. It is an inspiration not just for her but for every person who once hid himself in some corner of society. Rosie Baroliya has shown that when thinking changes, power is also born. This is the beginning — there is no stopping now.

Bridging worlds: A multifaceted professional in law, media, and service

TDG NETWORK

Lalit Sharma was born into a humble peasant family in Dausa, Rajasthan, and has carved a remarkable path through sheer dedication and perseverance. Completing his early education at a government school in Dausa, Lalit continued his academic journey at Rajasthan University, where he earned his graduation and post-graduation degrees in Sociology. His deep interest in law led him to pursue LLB and subsequently an LLM, both from Rajasthan University. In addition, he holds a diploma in Environmental Law and another in Photo Journalism from Germany, reflecting his diverse academic pursuits. Lalit Sharma's passion for knowledge and relentless work ethic have been key to his success. Known for his

discipline and determination, he is recognized today as a well-established advocate and a respected name in the media industry. His foray into media was sparked by his exceptional writing and command over language, which caught the attention of veteran media professional who introduced him to a renowned Media Group. With over 20 years of experience in journalism, Lalit has learned extensively about nuances of media. Currently, Lalit Sharma runs a successful PR firm, offering both legal and public relations services to major corporate and social groups. His firm has helped him establish valuable connections with prominent organizations across India, further expanding his influence in both legal and media circles. Beyond his professional



He is an active member of the Adiyogi Foundation and contributes significantly to other social initiatives. His involvement in service-oriented organizations and social service clubs that highlight his commitment to community welfare.

life, Lalit is deeply involved in social work. He is an active member of the Adiyogi Foundation and contributes significantly to other social initiatives. His involvement in service-oriented organizations and social service clubs that highlight his commitment to community welfare. In his personal time, Lalit enjoys practicing yoga and staying physically fit through regular exercise. A passionate writer, he frequently shares his thoughts through blogs and articles, aiming to inspire others. He is also an avid traveler, having explored various countries and cultures, which has enriched his worldview. Lalit Sharma is not just an advocate or a media professional; he is also a writer, educationist, announcer, and motivator. With a grounded

personality and inspiring journey, he continues to be a source of motivation for many. His philosophy of life is to live one day at a time and make the best of the present moment. Lalit is of the opinion that life is priceless and it is important to acknowledge and understand the significant gift. Lait says that one should not restrict himself or herself according to the world but push his limits, venture into unknown territories and learn something new. He feels that spirituality is also important for both professional and personal growth. Therefore, every individual should do something to make himself a better person and that is possible only with Spirituality. So with one life we all should try to do our best and utilize every moment happily as he says.



# UN DECLARES FAMINE IN GAZA AS ISRAEL THREATENS TO RAZE CITY

514,000 people experiencing famine, says Integrated Food Security Phase System

AGENCIES  
GAZA CITY

The world's leading authority on food crises said Friday the Gaza Strip's largest city is gripped by famine, and that it is likely to spread across the territory without a ceasefire and an end to restrictions on humanitarian aid.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, or IPC, said famine is occurring in Gaza City, home to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, and that it could spread south to Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis by the end of next month.

The IPC determination comes after months of warnings by aid groups that Israel's restrictions of food and other aid into Gaza, and its military offensive, were causing high levels of starvation among Palestinian civilians, particularly children.

Israel rejected the report, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu calling it an "outright lie."



Palestinians carry sacks of flour taken from a humanitarian aid convoy in the outskirts of Beit Lahia, northern Gaza Strip. (File photo)

## Hamas demands opening of Gaza crossings

**Gaza Strip :** Hamas called on Friday for an immediate end to the war in Gaza and the lifting of the Israeli siege on the territory after the UN declared a famine in parts of Gaza.

In a statement published online, the group called for "immediate action by the UN and the security council to stop

the war and lift the siege" and demanded that crossings be opened "without restrictions to allow the urgent and continuous entry of food, medicine, water and fuel". The group went on to say that the declaration by the United Nations confirmed the "humanitarian catastrophe" in Gaza and ac-

cused Israel of using starvation as a "tool of war". "We in the Hamas movement emphasise the importance of this UN declaration, even though it comes far too late — after long months of warnings and suffering endured by our people under systematic siege and starvation," the group said.

min Netanyahu calling it an "outright lie."

The grim milestone — the first time the IPC has confirmed a famine in the Middle East — is sure to ramp up international pressure on Israel, which has been in a brutal war with Hamas since the militant group's Oct. 7, 2023, attack. Israel says it plans to escalate the war soon by seizing Gaza City and other Hamas strongholds, which experts say will exacerbate the hunger crisis.

The IPC said hunger has been driven by fighting and the blockade of aid, and magnified by widespread displacement and the collapse of food production in Gaza, pushing hunger to life-threatening levels across the entire territory after 22 months of war.

More than half a million people in Gaza, about a quarter of the population, face catastrophic levels of hunger, and many are at risk of dying from malnutrition-related causes.



Sea salt production in Anfeh. Sea water is drawn into shallow, concrete-lined basins, where it evaporates over several months, leaving behind salt crystals that are harvested, Anfeh, Lebanon. Agencies

## Af, Pak, China vow cooperation against terror groups in meet

AGENCIES  
KABUL

At the sixth trilateral meeting of the foreign ministers of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China held in Kabul, the three sides stressed the need to enhance cooperation against regional terrorist organisations, including Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Tolo News reported.

Pakistan's special representative for Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq, said the three countries reached an understanding to step up efforts against terror outfits. "The three sides committed to strengthen joint efforts against terrorist organisations including TTP, BLA, ETIM and other regional and international terrorist outfits," he stated.

According to Tolo News, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar also addressed the matter during a joint press conference with his Chinese counterpart in Islamabad. "These mechanisms reflect our shared determination to promote regional peace, stability, prosperity, and to share the benefits among Pakistan, China, and friendship with other regional countries and beyond," he said.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi highlighted the significance of economic cooperation, particularly under CPEC. "China and Pakistan are pioneers in implementing the Global Development Initiative, and the expansion of CPEC has not only benefited the people of both countries but has also extended to other countries including Afghanistan," he noted.

Although no joint statement was issued after the Kabul meeting, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan said the discussions focused on enhancing relations among the three countries in political, economic, and transit sectors, Tolo News reported. Experts, however, expressed mixed views on the significance of the gathering. Military affairs analyst Kamran Aman remarked, "Pakistan is playing a dual game with us through China to achieve its objectives via Afghanistan. On one hand, it tries to show the world that we support TTP and the Baloch separatist groups, providing evidence of it. On the other hand, it's about capital, trade, and investment. We are witnessing that our trade with Pakistan has decreased by 28% compared to last year."

## Iran to hold call with European nations over nuclear programme

AGENCIES  
DUBAI

Just days away from a European deadline, Iran said Friday its foreign minister would hold a telephone conference call with his French, German and British counterparts to avoid the reimposition of United Nations sanctions over Tehran's nuclear programme.

The call, planned for Friday by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency, comes as the three parties to Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal threaten to reimpose those sanctions under a mechanism known as "snapback" in the accord.

The European Union's chief diplomat will also join the call, IRNA said.

The Europeans' concern over the Iranian programme, which had been enriching uranium to near weapons-grade levels before the 12-day Iran-Israel war in June saw its atomic sites bombed, has only grown since Tehran cut off all cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the conflict's wake.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi

That has left the international community further blinded to Iran's programme — as well as the status of its stockpile of uranium enriched to 60 per cent purity, a short, technical step to weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent.

Iran has long insisted its programme is peaceful, though it is the only non-nuclear-armed nation enriching uranium at that level. The US, the IAEA and others assess Iran had a nuclear weapons programme up until 2003.

European letter set deadline

In a letter August 8, the three European nations warned Iran it would proceed with "snapback" if Tehran didn't reach a "satisfactory solution" to the nuclear issues.

## 'PM Modi, Prez Putin among 20 world leaders to attend SCO summit'

AGENCIES  
BEIJING

China on Friday said the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit to be held in Tianjin later this month will be the largest in the bloc's history, with 20 world leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attending it.

The Tianjin meeting of the 10-member grouping from Aug 31-Sept 1 is the fifth summit being hosted by China. It will be the largest in SCO history, China's Assistant Foreign Minister Liu Bin told a media briefing here.

Besides Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, the summit will be attended by PM Modi and a host of

world leaders, Liu said.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, his Indonesian counterpart Prabowo Subianto, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and Vietnamese Prime Minister Minh Chinh are other prominent leaders to attend the summit, he said.

From the subcontinent, Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif, Nepal's Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu will attend the summit, Liu said. Officials of 10 international organisations, including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and SCO Secretary-General Nurlan Yermekbayev, will attend the event, making it the largest in the organisation's history.

## Sri Lanka ex-Prez held for misuse of state funds

AGENCIES  
COLOMBO

Sri Lankan police on Friday arrested the country's former president and senior opposition politician Ranil Wickremesinghe over allegations of misusing public funds during his tenure as president, police said.

Wickremesinghe, who served as the island nation's president from 2022 to 2024, was arrested on allegations of using public funds to attend his wife's graduation ceremony in London after an



Ranil Wickremesinghe arrives at the Magistrate's Court in Colombo

official visit to the U.S., police spokesman Fedrick Wootler told The Associated Press.

Wickremesinghe's aide, Danushka Ramanayake, said that the former president has been taken to a court after being arrested by the Financial Crimes Investigations Department.

Wickremesinghe is the first Sri Lankan former head of state to be arrested and is the most high profile leader who is under investigation for corruption under President Anura Kumara

Dissanayake's government which came to power last year promising to punish those accused of corruption under previous governments

Dissanayake won the presidential election in September last year in an election that saw voters reject an old guard accused of leading the country into an economic crisis. Two months later, his party won a landslide victory in the parliamentary election that enabled him to form a strong government.

## China's Wang meets Pak Army chief Munir

AGENCIES  
ISLAMABAD

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday met Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir and discussed regional security, counter-terrorism and matters of mutual interest.

Wang, who arrived in Pakistan on Wednesday to attend the 6th round of the Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in Islamabad, also met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari and reaffirmed China's commitment to working with Pakistan to promote regional peace, development, and stability.

China expressed "steadfast support" for the sovereignty and development of Pakistan as the two sides agreed to strengthen their "all-weather strategic partnership", the army said in a



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a meeting with Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir in Islamabad

statement on Friday. It said that discussions between Army chief Munir and Foreign Minister Wang focused on regional security, counter-terrorism and matters of mutual interest.

"Both sides reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen the all-weather strategic partnership and enhance coordination at regional and international forums,"

it said. "Wang Yi reiterated China's steadfast support for Pakistan's sovereignty and development," it said.

Munir expressed gratitude for China's consistent support.

Their meeting concluded with a shared commitment to advance peace, stability, and prosperity in the region, the army said.

## Nvidia's CEO says it's in talks with Trump administration on a new chip for China

AGENCIES  
BANGKOK

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang said Friday that the company is discussing a potential new computer chip designed for China with the Trump administration.

Huang was asked about a possible "B30A" semiconductor for artificial intelligence data centres for China while on a visit to Taiwan, where he was meeting Nvidia's key manufacturing partner, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp, the world's largest chip maker.

"I'm offering a new product to China for ... AI data

centres, the follow-on to H20," Huang said. But he added, "That's not our decision to make. It's up to, of course, the United States government. And we're in dialogue with them, but it's too soon to know."

Such chips are graphics processing units, or GPUs, a type of device used to build and update a range of AI systems. But they are less powerful than Nvidia's top semiconductors today, which cannot be sold to China due to US national security restrictions.

The B30A, based on California-based Nvidia's specialised Blackwell tech-

nology, is reported to operate at about half the speed of Nvidia's main B300 chips.

Huang praised the Trump administration for recently approving sales of Nvidia's H20 chips to China after such business was suspended in April, with the proviso that the company must pay a 15 per cent tax to the US government on those sales.

Chip maker Advanced Micro Devices, or AMD, was told to pay the same tax on its sales of its MI380 chips to China.

As part of broader trade talks, Beijing and Washington recently agreed to pull



Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang arrives before President Donald Trump speaks during an AI summit at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. (File photo)

back some non-tariff restrictions. China approved more permits for rare earth

magnets to be exported to the US, while Washington lifted curbs on chip design

software and jet engines. After lobbying by Huang, it also allowed sales of the H20 chips to go through.

Huang did not comment directly on the tax when asked, but said Nvidia appreciated being able to sell H20s to China.

He said such sales pose no security risk for the United States. Nvidia is also speaking with Beijing to reassure Chinese authorities that those chips do not pose a "backdoor" security risk, Huang said.

"We have made very clear and put to rest that H20 has no security backdoors. There are no such things.

There never has. And so hopefully the response that we've given to the Chinese government will be sufficient," he said.

The Cyberspace Administration of China, the country's internet watchdog, recently posted a notice on its website referring to alleged "serious security issues" with Nvidia's computer chips.

It said US experts on AI had said such chips have "mature tracking and location and remote shutdown technologies," and Nvidia had been asked to explain any such risks and provide documentation about the

issue. Huang said Nvidia was surprised by the accusation and was discussing the issue with Beijing.

"As you know, they requested and urged us to secure licenses for the H20s for some time. And I've worked quite hard to help them secure the licenses. And so hopefully this will be resolved," Huang said.

Unconfirmed reports said Chinese authorities were also unhappy over comments by US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick suggesting the US was only selling outdated chips to China.



# US HALTS VISAS FOR FOREIGN TRUCK DRIVERS AFTER FATAL CRASH

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump’s administration on Thursday abruptly stopped issuing US visas for truck drivers after a fatal crash drew national attention, its latest sweeping step against foreign visitors.

“Effective immediately we are pausing all issuance of worker visas for commercial truck drivers,” Secretary of State Marco Rubio wrote on X.

“The increasing number of foreign drivers operating large tractor-trailer trucks on US roads is endangering American lives and undercutting the livelihoods of American truckers,” he wrote. Rubio’s action came after a truck driver was charged with killing three people on a highway in Florida while making an illegal U-turn.

Harjinder Singh, who is



from India, allegedly entered the United States illegally from Mexico and failed an English examination after the crash, according to federal officials.

The case has gathered wide media attention and has been highlighted by officials in Florida, controlled by Trump’s Republican Party, with the lieutenant governor flying to California to extradite Singh personally alongside immigration agents on Thursday.

The crash has taken on a political dimension in part as Singh received his commercial license in Cali-

fornia and also lived in the West Coast state, which is run by the rival Democratic Party and opposes Trump’s crackdown on immigration.

“This crash was a preventable tragedy directly caused by reckless decisions and compounded by despicable failures,” Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said.

California Governor Gavin Newsom’s office responded that the federal government under Trump had issued a work permit to Singh, who sought asylum, and that California had cooperated in extraditing him.

## Indian-origin truck driver faces homicide charges

TDG NETWORK  
NEW YORK

An Indian-origin truck driver is facing charges of vehicular homicide in the US after three people were killed when he allegedly took a wrong turn while driving a truck on a Florida highway, according to a media report. Harjinder Singh, 28, who fled to California after the incident, has been brought back to Florida following arrest, the New York Post reported on Thursday.

“He thought he could run. @GovRonDeSantis and I brought him back to face justice,” Lt Governor Jay Collins said in a post on social media.

Singh faces three counts

of vehicular homicide for allegedly making an illegal U-turn across a busy Florida highway on August 12, the report added.

“3 innocent people were killed in Florida because Gavin Newsom’s California DMV issued an illegal alien a Commercial Driver’s License - this state of governance is asinine,” Tricia McLaughlin, the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, said in a post on social media.

“How many more innocent people have to die before @GavinNewsom stops playing games with the safety of the American public? We pray for the victims and their families.

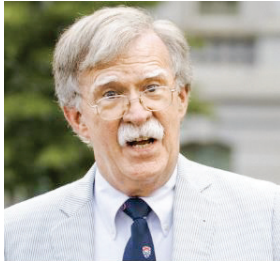
# FBI agents search ex-Trump adviser Bolton’s home

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

The FBI on Friday searched the Maryland home and Washington office of former Trump administration national security adviser John Bolton as part of a criminal investigation into the potential mishandling of classified information, a person familiar with the matter said.

Bolton, who emerged as an outspoken critic of President Donald Trump after being fired in 2019 and feuded with the first Trump administration over a scathing book he wrote documenting his time in the White House, was not in custody Friday and has not been charged with any crimes, said the person who was not authorized to discuss the investigation by name and spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

The searches, seemingly the most significant public step the Justice Department has taken against a perceived enemy of the president, are likely to elicit fresh alarm that the



their loyalty to the president.

They also unfolded against the backdrop of a 2022 search for classified documents at Trump’s Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, an action that produced since-dismissed criminal charges but remains the source of outrage for the president and supporters who insist he was unjustly targeted despite the retrieval of top-secret records. Current FBI Director Kash Patel, who included Bolton on a list of “members of the Executive Branch Deep State” in a 2023 book, said in a Fox News Channel interview this week that the Mar-a-Lago search represented a “total weaponization and politicization” of the bureau.

Trump administration is using its law enforcement powers to target the Republican’s foes. They come as the Trump administration has moved to examine the activities of other critics, including by authorizing a grand jury investigation into the origins of the Trump-Russia probe that dogged Trump for much of his first term, and as FBI and Justice Department leaders signal

# Russia’s chief diplomat says no Putin-Zelenskyy meeting planned

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW

Russia’s top diplomat said Friday there are no plans for a meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to discuss their three-year war, days after U.S. President Donald Trump said he had begun arrangements for them to sit down together.

“There is no meeting planned” between the Russian and Ukrainian leaders, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in a taped interview for NBC’s Sunday show “Meet the Press with Kristen Welker.”

Trump said in a social media post Monday that he had spoken to Putin and set in motion arrangements for a summit at a location to be decided. Trump added he would join them for a trilateral meeting afterward. Uncertainty has grown in recent days about Moscow’s commitment to U.S.-



NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, left, shakes hands with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during their briefing in Kyiv, Ukraine. Agencies

led peace efforts, as Russian officials have raised objections about cornerstones of the nascent proposals.

Lavrov said Thursday that Putin is ready to meet with Zelenskyy to discuss peace terms, but only after key issues have first been worked out by senior officials. That could involve a protracted negotiating

process because the two sides remain far apart.

Ukraine wants Western security guarantees to deter any postwar Russian attack, and U.S. and European officials are scrambling to come up with detailed proposals of how that might work. But Lavrov said earlier this week that making security arrangements for Ukraine without Moscow’s involvement was pointless.

On Thursday, a major Russian drone and missile attack on Ukraine struck an American-owned electronics plant, despite Trump’s criticism of Putin for continuing to bomb Ukrainian targets while talking peace.

“The Russians are trying to do anything to avoid the (summit) meeting. The issue is not the meeting itself, the issue is that they do not want to end the war,” Zelenskyy said Friday during a press conference alongside NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, who was visiting Kyiv.

# Russian attack on Ukraine hits US factory, sparks uncertainty over war

AGENCIES  
KYIV, UKRAINE

Russia launched a rare drone and missile attack on western Ukraine overnight, officials said Thursday, striking targets including an American-owned electronics plant and injecting further uncertainty into the U.S.-led efforts to end the 3-year-old war.

The aerial assault on a part of Ukraine that has largely not experienced such focused attacks was one of Russia’s biggest this year and came as Moscow objects to key aspects of proposals that could end the fighting.

U.S. President Donald Trump discussed the war with Russian President



Vladimir Putin in Alaska last week before hosting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and European leaders at the White House on Monday.

Russia’s Defense Ministry said the strikes targeted “enterprises of the Ukrainian military-industrial complex,” including drone factories, storage depots,

missile launch sites and areas where Ukrainian troops were gathered. Russia has repeatedly denied targeting civilian areas of Ukraine.

But in a post on X, Zelenskyy wrote that “the Russians practically burned down an American company producing electronics — home appliances, nothing military.”

“The Russians knew exactly where they lobbed the missiles. We believe this was a deliberate attack against American property and investments in Ukraine,” Zelenskyy wrote, adding: “Telling attack, right as the world awaits a clear answer from Russia on negotiations to end the war.”

Trump last month questioned Putin’s commitment to ending the war, saying the Russian leader “talks nice and then he bombs everybody.”

In a social media post Thursday, Trump criticized his predecessor, Joe Biden, for not providing Ukraine with more weaponry it needs to “fight back.”

“It is very hard, if not impossible, to win a war without attacking an invaders country,” Trump said. “It’s like a great team in sports that has a fantastic defense, but is not allowed to play offensive. There is no chance of winning! It is like that with Ukraine and Russia.”

# Australia probes Nauru-China \$1 billion deal over security fears

AGENCIES  
CANBERRA

The Australian government is looking into whether the new AUD 1 billion (USD 650 million) development agreement between Nauru and a Chinese corporation violates an existing bilateral security accord, The Epoch Times (TET) reported.

This agreement, established in December 2024, mandates that Nauru obtain Australia’s approval before forming any third-party security alliances, including those related to critical infrastructure such as telecommunications or banking.

This exclusivity requirement is intended to prevent a recurrence of the 2022 security pact between the Solomon Islands and Beijing, which grants the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) the

authority to deploy armed forces and naval ships in the area.

In exchange for the Nauru contract, Canberra has committed to support the fragile banking system of the small nation, providing USD 100 million in budget assistance and contributing USD 40 million toward policing efforts. Pacific Minister Pat Conroy confirmed that Australian officials are in discussions with Nauru to assess whether the August 5 agreement with the China Rural Revitalisation and Development Corporation (CRRDC) violated treaty stipulations, according to TET.

“This treaty is extremely significant for us, positioning us as Nauru’s preferred security partner,” Conroy stated in Brisbane on August 19. The Nauru-CRRDC agreement, which was announced

on August 11, was signed by Nauru’s Foreign Minister Lionel Aingimea and CRRDC chairman Zhang Yong.

The first phase of the three-part project is valued at AUD 1 billion and encompasses multiple sectors, including renewable energy, phosphate production, marine fisheries, water management, and agriculture. As is often the case with public contracts signed with Beijing, additional details were not disclosed.

“A scoping team from CRRDC is scheduled to arrive in Nauru in October to engage with key local ministries and stakeholders for developing a successful roadmap,” a statement quoted by TET noted.

“The consultation and implementation phase is also expected to create more job opportunities, enhance trade possibilities, and foster

cultural exchanges among people.” Minister Conroy emphasized that Canberra does not oppose development assistance from other countries. “We believe other nations should contribute their fair share and invest in the Pacific; this benefits the region,” he remarked, as highlighted by TET.

“What we have made very clear is that every nation in the world must respect the perspectives of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the consensus of its leaders, which asserts that PIF member countries should maintain security.”

This development arises as the Solomon Islands gears up to host the upcoming Pacific Islands Forum leaders’ meeting in September, with China, Taiwan, and the United States not being invited, as mentioned by TET.

## FURRY FIESTA



A giant panda cub plays with the mother, Meng Meng, left, during the cub’s first birthday party at Berlin Zoo, Berlin, Germany.

# AI helps UK woman rediscover lost voice after 25 years

AGENCIES  
LONDON

A British woman suffering from motor neurone disease who lost her ability to speak is once again talking in her own voice thanks to artificial intelligence and a barely audible eight-second clip from an old home video.

Sarah Ezekiel, an artist, was left without the use of her voice after she was diagnosed at the age of 34 with MND while pregnant with her second child 25 years

ago.

The condition, which progressively damages parts of the nervous system, can cause weakness of the tongue, mouth and throat muscles, leading some sufferers to lose their speech completely.

In the years after her diagnosis Ezekiel, from north London, was able to use a computer and voice generating technology to help her communicate, albeit in a voice that sounded nothing like her own.



Sarah Ezekiel’s son Eric grew up never knowing how his mother had once spoken.

She was also able to continue her career as an artist using a computer cursor to create her images.

But her two children, Aviva and Eric, grew up never knowing how their mother had once spoken.

In recent years, experts have increasingly been able to use technology to create computerised versions of a person’s original voice.

But the technique has generally required long and good quality recordings, and even then tended to

produce voices that while sounding something like the sufferer were “very flat and monotone”, said Simon Poole of the UK medical communication company Smartbox. Poole told AFP the firm had originally asked Ezekiel for an hour’s worth of audio.

People who are expected to lose their ability to speak due to conditions like MND are currently encouraged to record their voice as soon as possible as a way of preserving their “identity”

alongside their ability to communicate.

But in the pre-smartphone era, having suitable recordings to draw upon was far less common. When Ezekiel could locate only one very short and poor quality clip, Poole said his “heart sank”.

“Nearly cried” -

The clip from a 1990s home video was just eight seconds long, muffled and with background noise from a television. Poole turned to technology developed by New York-based AI

voice experts ElevenLabs that can produce not only a voice based on very little but can also make it sound more like a real human being.

He used one AI tool to isolate a voice sample from the clip and a second tool -- trained on real voices to fill the gaps -- to produce the final sound.

The result, to Ezekiel’s delight, was very close to her original, complete with her London accent and the slight lisp that she had once hated.



'EK DEEWANE KI DEEWANIYAT' TEASER OUT

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

The much-awaited teaser of 'Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat,' starring Harshvardhan Rane and Sonam Bajwa, is finally out.

The teaser, unveiled on Friday, hints at a story of heartbreak, passion, and emotional conflict, making fans eager to see Harshvardhan back on screen.

Harshvardhan took to his Instagram to share the teaser along with a caption that read, "Ab Dekhega Zamaana PYAAR, DARD aur NAFRAT, ab Dekhega Zamaana \*EkDeewaneKiDEEWANIYAT! Teaser out now, Link in Bio. Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat in cinemas this #Diwali - 21st Oct."

The teaser begins with the



actor and Sonam crossing paths, suggesting lost love. It then takes viewers into their past, where the two are madly in love and heading

towards marriage. The latter part of the teaser shifts to heartbreak, separation, and a painful journey of trying to find their way back to each

other.

Soon after the teaser dropped, fans flooded the comment section to express their excitement.

One user wrote, "Goosebumps all over! This is going to be MASSIVE! Need no words, just full of emotions." Another added, "Sir, Deewaniyat ki saari hadh aapne sach mein padh kar di." A third fan commented, "Diwali will not just be about lights, it will be about burning hearts full of love."

In June this year, Harshvardhan confirmed that the shoot had wrapped with a behind-the-scenes video from the celebration.

Directed by Milap Zaveri, the film was earlier scheduled to release on October 2, 2025, but the date was later pushed to October 21, 2025.

Vir Das welcomes SC's modified order on stray dogs

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Actor-comedian Vir Das has welcomed the Supreme Court's modified order on stray dogs, which says that they must be released back into their neighbourhoods after sterilisation and vaccination, except those infected with rabies or showing aggressive behaviour.

On Friday, Das took to his X account to react to the decision, emphasising the importance of sterilisation, vaccination, and giving dogs a "safe return" to their areas. The comedian further urged local au-



thorities to act swiftly in creating dedicated feeding areas. He also suggested that municipalities collaborate with trainers and behaviourists for "behav-

ioral modification" and better integration of dogs into communities.

"Thank you to the Supreme Court of India for supporting the process

of sterilization, vaccination, and a safe return of our community dogs to their neighborhoods. Hopefully, the municipality can act quickly in creating dedicated feeding areas and also work with multiple dog trainers and behaviorists in Delhi and nationwide for behavioral modification and community integration. It is nice to know our voiceless dogs can rely on your empathy and balance."

The Supreme Court on Friday revised its earlier August 11 order on stray animals and ordered their release following sterilisation and immunisation.



Janhvi Kapoor poses for her social media. (Instagram)

Salman starts shooting for 'Bigg Boss 19'



AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan has commenced his hosting duties for the upcoming edition of reality TV show 'Bigg Boss'.

On Friday, Salman was spotted on the sets of BB 19, looking dapper in a black tuxedo.

Have a look at his pictures here

The theme of Bigg Boss 19, "Gharwalon Ki Sarkaar," brings a fresh political angle to the show, placing the contestants' power struggles

*The theme of Bigg Boss 19, "Gharwalon Ki Sarkaar," brings a fresh political angle to the show, placing the contestants' power struggles and alliances at the heart of the game.*

and alliances at the heart of the game.

A few days ago, the makers released the show's teaser in which Bhaijaan was seen dressed in a Nehru jacket, flanked by black cat commandos, representing the power struggles expected

this season.

As per a press note, Salman, while speaking about the new twist, says, "I have been a part of Bigg Boss for a very long time now and as we all know, Bigg Boss reinvents the game every year, aur iss baar, it is gharwalo ki sarkar.

BRAIN PICKING



Life comes as a full circle. It feels good when you become someone's idol.

—SUSHMITA SEN  
(Indian Actress)

Vineeth dives into action genre with Nobel Thomas starrer 'Karam'; trailer out

AGENCIES  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Vineeth Sreenivasan directorial 'Karam' has finally got a trailer, offering a glimpse into the filmmaker's first action thriller film.

The film stars Nobel Babu Thomas in the lead role, who has also written the script of the movie. The trailer of 'Karam' features striking visuals and action packed sequence in the film.

The two-minute and eight-second trailer opens with Nobel Babu Thomas being briefed by the defence officials about the "militant attacks" in India, which are speculated to be the beginning of mass murders.

However, the defence officials believe that the speculation is wrong and call it a danger sign for the defence officers of India. To curb this, Nobel Thomas has been assigned a mission in a foreign country, as shown in the trailer.

The video is followed by intense action scenes of Nobel during which he was

seen fighting unidentified men on foreign soil.

Vineeth Sreenivasan shared the trailer of the movie on his official Instagram handle on Friday.

The music of the film is

The movie is slated to release in theatres on September 25, 2025.

Karam marks the seventh film of actor-turned-director Vineeth Sreenivasan in his cinema career. His



*Vineeth Sreenivasan shared the trailer of the movie on his official Instagram handle on Friday.*

composed by Shaan Rahman. 'Karam' is jointly produced by Visakh Subramaniam and

Vineeth Sreenivasan under the banner of Merryland Cinemas and Habit of Life.

previous directorial was 'Varshangalkku Shesham', which starred Pravan Mohanlal, son of superstar Mohanlal, in the lead role.

It also starred Dhyan Sreenivasan in the lead role.

REVIEW: WAR 2 ★★★★★

WAR 2



PRAVEEN NAGDA

Indian cinema is now creating not just sequels but also universe movies, bringing a great evolution of the stories with the Rohit Shetty Cop Universe films like Singham, Singham Returns, Simmba, Sooryavan-

shi, Singham Again, the Astra-verse with Brahmstra, and the Dinesh Vijan Horror-Comedy Universe with films like Stree, Roohi, Bhediya, Munjha, etc. And now we have the latest installment, War 2 from the YRF Spy Universe, following Ek Tha Tiger, Tiger Zinda Hai, War, Pathaan, and Tiger 3, giving the audience the opportunity to engage in a continuity of storytelling.

Produced by Yashraj Films and directed by Ayan Mukherji, War 2 is another action-packed film that's going to give you thrills via its spine-chilling, high-octane action. The film

opens up in a setting of a traditional Japanese monastery, having the birthday celebrations of an underworld boss, where you encounter a scary and ferocious wolf, ready to attack its target, only to make its mincemeat. As Kabir (Hritik Roshan) emerges from the horizon and befriends the wolf, you witness a brilliantly brutal action sequence of swordfight, where the Samurai emerge out of nowhere, but are neutralized by Kabir and finally kill the boss, completing his contract.

Kabir infiltrates an international club of powerful businessmen and crime lords ruling the countries, businesses, and economies, and is made to murder his own mentor from RA&W, Col. Sunil Luthra

(Ashutosh Rana). Vikram (Jr. NTR) comes in as another RA&W agent (actually Kali's implant in the system) supposed to be on a task to kill Kabir.

A childhood friendship turning into bloodthirsty enmity and, in the end, bonding as thick partners to take on the rogues of the world is the basic storyline. Jr. NTR being paired with Hritik is a bit awkward and doesn't look like a great Jugal Bandi, with Hritik always many steps ahead of his partner.

In a quite convoluted plot, plenty of flashbacks take you on an international tour of beautiful locations from Manali, Valencia, Amsterdam, Yas Island, and Davos, etc., often

digressing from the story and making it look disjointed rather than connected. However, some of the locations present wonderful settings for action sequences and bring the grandness of the narrative alive.

Ashutosh Rana shines in his performance as the RA&W Chief, and his India First motto that's carried forward by his daughter Wing Commander Kavya Luthra (Kiara Advani) and his mentee Kabir. Anil Kapoor as the new RA&W chief, Vikrant Kaul makes a decent presence, but that's pretty much expected from a seasoned actor like him.

The music is by Pritam, but none of the songs really make any impact; on the contrary, they seem to me misfits in the

film and probably wrongly inserted in the storyline. Arista Mehta as Ruhi Saini, always protected by Kabir, also gleams in the film in a brief car sequence, picturized brilliantly.

War 2 deserves a watch for its sweeping locations, stylistic bravado, and relentless action that delivers pure adrenaline-fuelled, larger-than-life entertainment. However, those looking from a pure cinematic storytelling perspective will find the film underdelivering as it is too burdened with thin plotting and a scattered pace that deflates the momentum.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals





# CAN WE PLEASE STOP PLAYING PASSING THE PARCEL THIS FESTIVE SEASON?

NAMRATA KOHLI

This festive season, can we please call a truce? A truce to stop playing the age-old social game of *Passing the Parcel*—not with music and chairs, but with gifts nobody wants.

We've all been there. You unwrap a gift with polite anticipation, and out comes... an agar-batti stand. Yes, this Rakhi, my well-meaning cousin, gifted my son—currently living in a hostel—an incense-stick holder in silver which was black on one side and clearly seemed to be a used piece. When I asked her casually why she thought of this for him, she said earnestly, "We thought he could use it while praying in his room."

Years ago, my daughter—then a teenager—received a feeder bottle from a sister-in-law who had infants at the time. She later clarified it was meant for another child in the family who was just born and that it "*accidentally*" landed in my home.

I wondered—what kind of accident delivers a baby bottle to a teenager? A slip of the hand, or a slip of the mind? Either way, it spoke volumes about how casually some people treat the act of gifting.

Because a gift isn't just an object—it's a message. And sometimes, the message is that the giver wasn't paying attention at all.

Some gifts are so bizarre, they cross over from ridiculous to



borderline insulting. It's not about the price tag—it's about the thought behind it. Zero emotion is bad enough, but when there's also zero thought, the gift turns from token to taunt.

And let's be honest—within most Indian families, the "lady of the house" still plays curator-in-chief when it comes to gifts. She decides what goes where, and to whom. The buck stops with her—the one who prides herself on keeping traditions,

relationships, and reputations intact. Which is why, when she can't be bothered to think through something as simple yet symbolic as a gift, the lapse speaks louder than the object itself.

Take this: someone once handed me an empty sagan envelope. Empty. Another time, on my wedding anniversary, I was "gifted" a portrait of Guru Gobind Singh. Now, I'm a Hindu who has Ganeshas in every room—symbols

of welcome, wisdom, and new beginnings. For me, that portrait wasn't reverence. It was recycling. A hand-me-down gesture, stripped of thought or meaning.

Faith isn't a filler for when you can't think of what to give. Passing off religious icons like spare crockery is not devotion—it's dereliction. At best, it's careless. At worst, I have no words.

Thoughtless gifting isn't harmless—it's hollow. It's not



neutral, it's lazy. Worse, it's disrespectful. A gift is never about the object, it's about the intent, the respect, the thought behind it. Everyone already has more than enough "stuff."

Here's a modest proposal: Gifts don't run households or fuel economies—they exist for one reason only: to create that small, precious "feel good" moment. To say: I see you. You matter. This is for you. Strip away the thought, and all that's left is clutter wrapped in shiny paper.

A gift, no matter how small, is supposed to be a conversation between two people. It says, *I know you, I see you, and I thought of you when I saw this. Conversely, the subtext flips: I hardly care about you. A careless gift says less*

*about what you gave—and more about how little you cared.* The wrong gift isn't neutral—it's a silent way of saying, *you don't matter enough.*

Before wrapping anything, ask three simple questions—

1. Will the recipient actually use this?
2. Is it remotely suited to their stage in life?
3. Would I be happy to receive this myself?

If the answer to all three isn't "yes," put it back on the shelf. The world has enough feeder bottles for teenagers and incense stands for college boys.

Because when we gift without thought, we're not giving at all—we're just transferring

an object from one cupboard to another. And that's not a gift. That's clutter with a ribbon. This conveyor belt of misfit gifts isn't harmless fun—it shows how the giver is either thoughtless or callous, or both.

So here's my festive pledge: I'll buy less, but think more. I'll match the gift to the person, not the price tag or my convenience. And if I really can't think of anything meaningful? I'll give NOTHING - I will give my time and be there mindfully present and that is good enough. Or take them out for coffee. At least that's one gift that won't gather dust. Because the only parcel worth passing is one wrapped in thought, not bubble wrap.

## Teaching Consent & Boundaries to Young Children



DR CHANDNI TUGNAIT

Most adults associate the concept of consent with adulthood, relationships, or sex education. But the truth is, the basics of consent and boundaries begin much earlier, right in childhood. It's not about giving children complex lessons but about shaping the way they relate to themselves and others from the very start. When kids learn that their voice matters, their body is their own, and their choices have meaning, they grow up with a stronger sense of self-worth and empathy. These early teachings become the groundwork for respectful, healthy relationships later in life. And the best part is that they can be taught in the simplest everyday moments.

**1. Start with everyday situations:** Consent isn't just about saying "yes" or "no" to touch. It's about recognizing comfort levels, respecting space, and understanding the importance of mutual agreement. For young children, this can begin with something as simple as asking before hugging someone: "Would you like a hug or a high-five?" It's about offering choice and respecting the answer. When a child says "no," let that no stand, even if it's something small like not wanting to share a toy in that moment.

**2. Language shapes understanding:** Children model what they hear. Replace vague phrases like "Be nice" with clearer instructions: "Ask before touching someone else's things" or

"Check if your friend is okay with that game." When adults use precise, respectful language, kids learn to do the same. Teach them simple scripts: "I don't like that," "Please stop," or "Can I try?" These phrases may sound basic, but they em-

boundaries. Instead, let children decide how they want to greet or interact. This small shift affirms their right to bodily autonomy. At the same time, teaching children to accept when others say no, without taking it personally, is equally im-

portant. When we start these conversations early, we normalize respect, voice, and emotional intelligence. These children grow into adults who understand that consent is not a one-time lesson; it's a lifelong practice. And that's the goal; not to raise children who fear doing wrong, but children who feel safe, heard, and confident in their ability to navigate relationships with clarity, compassion, and respect.



*Respect is shared: One common mistake is teaching children to be polite at the cost of their comfort. "Go hug uncle, he came a long way" may seem harmless, but it subtly teaches that others' feelings matter more than their boundaries.*

power children to speak up and listen when others do.

**3. Respect is shared:** One common mistake is teaching children to be polite at the cost of their comfort. "Go hug uncle, he came a long way" may seem harmless, but it subtly teaches that others' feelings matter more than their

portant. A child who knows how to hear "no" without anger is better prepared for healthy friendships and relationships.

**4. Repair & reflection matter too:** Teaching consent doesn't mean kids will always get it right. And that's okay. When they overstep a boundary, say, grab-

When we start these conversations early, we normalize respect, voice, and emotional intelligence. These children grow into adults who understand that consent is not a one-time lesson; it's a lifelong practice. And that's the goal; not to raise children who fear doing wrong, but children who feel safe, heard, and confident in their ability to navigate relationships with clarity, compassion, and respect.

*Dr Chandni Tugnait, MD (A.M) Psychotherapist, Life Alchemist, Coach & Healer, Founder & Director, Gateway of Healing shares some insights on the topic-*



ANSHUL BHATIA

In the heartlands of India, far from the metropolitan skyline, a quiet yet transformative revolution is taking place. Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, once seen as passive participants in the country's economic narrative, are emerging as vibrant entrepreneurial hubs. And leading this change are women who have transitioned from homemakers to household brand builders.

These women are leveraging digital tools, local networks, and scalable models like direct selling to build successful ventures that not only support their families but also inspire their communities.

**Digital Access and Flexible Models Drive Growth**  
The confluence of affordable internet, growing smartphone usage, and access to digital banking has democratised entrepreneurship in India's smaller cities. But access alone doesn't explain the transformation, it is **business models that offer low entry barriers, minimal infrastructure, and flexible working hours** that are truly enabling women to become entrepreneurs.

Direct selling, particularly in the **health, wellness, and personal care sector**, has emerged as a strong enabler for this demographic. Companies like IMC Business, with their wellness-driven, Ayurvedic product lines and wide-scale distributor networks, have tapped into the untapped potential of Tier-2 and Tier-3 India.

Women can start without heavy capital investments, work from home, build networks in their neighbour-

hoods, and grow their income gradually. This combination of empowerment and flexibility makes direct selling a preferred entry point into business.

**Why Direct Selling Appeals to Women in Small Towns**

There are three key reasons why direct selling is becoming a preferred entrepreneurship path for women:

- 1. Low Capital, High Trust:** Women often begin by using the products them-

ing sessions, and conducting awareness drives on wellness and Ayurveda.

**The Economic Impact Is Real**

These women are not just earning, they are transforming. The multiplier effect of women's entrepreneurship is visible in multiple forms:

**● Financial Independence:** Families are more financially secure; many reports being able to afford better education for children or invest in home improvements.

need for:

● Greater regulatory clarity and standardisation in the direct selling industry

● Enhanced skilling programs with a focus on digital and financial literacy

● Support from local governance bodies to recognise and amplify these entrepreneurs' efforts

Yet, the momentum is undeniable. With each passing year, the number of women stepping into entrepreneurship through direct selling models continues to grow.



Top Reasons Why Women are Choosing Network Marketing. QNET

selves and then sell within known circles, building credibility and word-of-mouth momentum.

**2. Personal Development:** Many platforms offer regular training, motivational seminars, and mentorship, leading to improved confidence, communication, and leadership skills, areas traditionally undernurtured in rural India.

**3. Community-Driven Growth:** Especially in semi-urban and rural regions, community relationships are strong. Women leverage these trusted networks for both product promotion and team building.

For instance, an increasing number of women associated with IMC Business are earning not just supplemental income but have grown into **regional leaders managing teams of 50 to 500 distributors**, running product train-

**● Social Mobility:** Women who once had no role beyond household responsibilities are now seen as leaders and contributors in their communities

**● Employment Generation:** Many female entrepreneurs in direct selling create mini ecosystems, employing assistants, delivery partners, and team trainers.

The growth of this model aligns perfectly with India's broader goal of **self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat)** creating work opportunities, especially in rural and semi-urban regions.

**Challenges and the Road Ahead**

Despite this progress, challenges remain. Infrastructure limitations, intermittent internet access, patriarchal resistance, and lack of formal recognition of network marketing businesses still act as roadblocks. There's a

The impact is not only economic but deeply cultural, rewriting societal expectations of a woman's role in the home and the economy.

**In Conclusion**

The transformation from homemaker to business leader is more than a personal journey, it is a national opportunity. As India moves toward becoming a \$5 trillion economy, it cannot afford to overlook the entrepreneurial potential brewing in its smaller cities. Women in Tier-2 and Tier-3 India, with the support of enabling models like direct selling, are proving that the spirit of enterprise knows no postcode.

Empowered, determined, and deeply rooted in their communities, these women are redefining the meaning of success!!

*Anshul Bhatia, General Secretary, IMC Foundation*



# USE YOUR BEST 'SANSKARS' TO CREATE HAPPINESS



B.K. SHIVANI

Can all people and situations be the way we want? We know that is not possible. Yet we have programmed ourselves to be unhappy when others do not listen to us, or when situations are not to our liking.

Why cannot people think the way I do? Why do they not understand when I say something that is good for them? The reason is that they perceive things differently. That is so because they have repeatedly chosen to see things that way, and it has become their habit. Wondering why someone thinks in a particular way is like asking, "I drink tea; why do you drink coffee?" The answer is straightforward: it is their choice. The same applies to, "I always speak the truth, why do you lie?" That is because I have repeatedly chosen to speak the truth, and it has become my habit, while the other person is

used to lying. In such situations, it is the expectation that others should be like us, which causes problems; the other person is not the problem.

Look at the people around you, those you live or work with - they are all different. Our own children, who have lived with us from the day they were born, turn out to be very different from us. That is because of their internal programming, or 'sanskars'. We need to remember that everyone functions according to their 'sanskars'. It is when we forget this that we find other people strange or unpleasant. Someone who is truthful would feel that those who lie are bad, while a person who often tells lies would wonder how anyone could speak the truth all the time. Similarly, someone who trusts easily would feel that those who distrust others are odd, while a born sceptic would wonder how people can trust others readily.

If we do not have a particular 'sanskar', we find it strange, and question it. But we need to live and work with people who have different 'sanskars'. How do we do that without friction? We need to recognise the fact that people are the way they are because of the ideas, attitudes, and beliefs



When we express love, understanding, patience, and compassion, we feel joy and contentment.

they have formed through their experiences. If we do not do this, we can end up creating negative 'sanskars' of our own - of irritation, anger, criticism, and rejection. We may have often heard or read about the soul. But when we meet people, not once do we remember that they are souls, and that I too am a soul. Each soul is on a journey, which may last several lifetimes, during which it has recorded numerous experiences.

We may liken souls to CDs, each with a unique recording on it, so they all play different songs. We can choose to enjoy the medley and get along with each other, but what do we do? We try to change the songs the other CDs are playing; in other words, we try to change others instead of adapting to them.

A CD is liked when it plays the best songs recorded on it. Souls too are valued when they act according to their

best 'sanskars'. While all CDs may have different recordings on them, they have some basic characteristics that are similar - such as their size and shape. It is the same with souls - they all have the same innate qualities, including purity, peace, love, happiness, and truth. But these virtues are rarely expressed, because the other recordings - of worry, anger, fear, dislike - have become predominant over time.

Nowadays people listen to music on their phones. They may have many songs saved on the phone, but they create a playlist, and only the songs on the playlist keep playing in a loop. As souls, we put some 'sanskars' on our playlist. For example, when we do not like something about someone, we criticise them. Criticism is on the playlist. When someone fails to do their work properly, we get angry. Anger is on the play-

*If we do not have a particular 'sanskar', we find it strange, and question it. But we need to live and work with people who have different 'sanskars'. How do we do that without friction? We need to recognise the fact that people are the way they are because of the ideas, attitudes, and beliefs they have formed through their experiences. If we do not do this, we can end up creating negative 'sanskars' of our own - of irritation, anger, criticism, and rejection.*

list. These 'sanskars' keep playing in a loop.

God reminds us that we have beautiful songs recorded in ourselves. Meditation is sitting down and identifying the beautiful songs I have recorded within myself, and then choosing to play them. Not only will I enjoy the music, so will everyone else who hears it. When the soul expresses love, understanding, patience, and compassion, it feels joy and contentment, because it is in consonance with its original qualities. It is the jarring notes of anger, ego,

jealousy, and criticism that cause discomfort and pain.

As we go through our day, we may accidentally play some unpleasant songs, when a wrong 'sanskar' is triggered. Never mind. Just change the song, as we do when playing music. Once we start doing this, we gradually reclaim control of our emotions, responses, and our life. Then we will no longer seek happiness, but instead create happiness by being the best we can be.

B.K. Shivani is a well-known motivational speaker and Rajyoga teacher.

## Understanding the laws of life



B.K. HANS

Many of us see laws as something boring, restricting, or even punishing. There are different levels of laws, human-made laws, laws of matter/nature, and the spiritual laws. Laws are abstract, invisible, hidden, but they determine our life experiences, in fact our reality. Human laws made by governments have the aim to make societies function more smoothly. These limited and constantly changing laws have a great impact on our lives, but are far from being perfect. Whereas the laws of matter and spirituality never change and always function accurately, whether we are aware of them or not. If we understand them, we can know how everything functions, foresee the outcome, and can therefore actually plan our future according to our wish and also have a feeling of security. Questions like, 'Why is this happening to me?', 'What is going on

in the world?', 'Why are things simply not fair?', 'How can this be?', indicate that we have not understood those eternal laws of life. Then we are unable to act in accordance with them and our experience of life is often not to our liking.

Therefore, thousands of scientists have made efforts for millennia to discover the laws of matter, to be able to use matter for the benefit of humankind. The resulting innovations, like the mobile phone, would astound our grandparents.

Since our body is made from matter, we are constantly confronted with the laws of matter. Therefore, let us look at some of the laws of matter most relevant to us, those which deal with movement and change.

Newton was the first to discover some of them, the laws of motion.

1. The first law of motion is of inertia - matter has the nature of being inert. By itself it will not move, it just 'wants' to sit there for eternity.

2. The second law is of acceleration - once matter begins to move, initiated by some force, it will keep on moving at the same speed in the same direction. To make it change direction or speed requires extra power from outside.

3. The third law is of cause and effect - for every ac-



When we start seeing ourselves as souls, our inner experience of life is no longer governed by material laws.

tion there is an equal and opposite reaction. In a spiritual context this is sometimes referred to as karma, however karma is not a spiritual law, it is a physical law. This law keeps the universe constantly moving in a completely determined way.

Another crucial law which deals with movement is the second law of thermodynamics, also called Law of Entropy. It states that any closed material system, a body, a planet, a society, a chair, always moves only in one direction - from order to disorder, from new to old, from concentration to dissipation, from strong to weak, from purity to impurity, from harmony to disharmony.

We see the effect of this law at work around us everywhere. All material things eventually disintegrate. The physical body ages constantly and deteriorates,

societies go down, etc.

Looking at the essence of those laws, matter actually is something very boring and strange. It is inert, resistant to change, totally determined, and knows only one direction - down towards weakness, chaos, end, and death. Still, there is nothing wrong with matter, it is as it is. If we were only the body made from matter, we should in fact experience these laws and their effects - the nature of matter - as natural.

But surprisingly, this nature of matter stands in complete contrast to our inner nature, which longs for peace, harmony, beauty, purity, strength, creativity and permanence. Therefore, we must be something more, something other than the physical body. All religions and spiritual traditions have told us for thousands of years that

there is a soul, a spirit in the body. The only conclusion can be that eternal life, love, peace, purity, inner power, harmony, are aspects of the nature, the laws of the soul. In essence, we are souls, not bodies.

This leads to the understanding that we humans have only one root problem, from which all other problems in the word derive. When we think we are matter, bodies, we get the whole package, since the nature of matter cannot be separated from matter. Then inertia, growing weakness, deterioration, loss, death etc., become our predominant experience in life, with all the consequences we can watch in the daily news.

There is only one simple solution for the whole of humanity. We have to completely disidentify from matter, from the body. When we succeed in that task, our inner experience of life is no longer governed by the material laws, but by the original nature of the soul.

This fundamental change in our consciousness will automatically lead to an inversion from the law of karma, which mandates equal give and take, to the first spiritual law, the law of love. Love is expressed mainly in two ways. First, feeling totally close to someone, like being one, and secondly, constantly giving without any

expectation. That shift is, in essence, what Christ taught in his sermon on the mount. Besides that, the first of the famous old hermetic cosmic laws, which states, 'mind over matter', will become naturally accessible once again. The growing entropy in the physical world, obviously leading faster and faster to more chaos, can only be reversed by the intervention of an energy from outside the system, which we have at hand. But as long as we think we are matter, we are mentally caught in the system and cannot bring about the necessary turnaround.

Comprehending the depth and relevance of the above, it becomes clear why the teachings of the Brahma Kumaris emphasise the practice of becoming soul conscious. The soul is seen as a small point of light, which means it has no expansion in the physical. Even from the logical and mathematical perspective that is the only imaginable non-material image. Practising and experiencing this non-physical identity will gradually open the door to unlimited spiritual energy and enable us to eventually reverse everything that has gone badly wrong.

B.K. Hans is a retired environmental lawyer and is based in the Brahma Kumaris centre in Munich, Germany.

### A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

When an obstacle comes into my life, I feel like I have lost my freedom. I enslave myself to the obstacle by thinking 'I will be free when this obstacle finishes', or 'when my relatives change' or 'when those who create obstacles for me stop creating obstacles'. In reality I must be determined to free myself first, then the obstacle will disappear. The rock will still be in the road, but it will be behind me because I was determined to get around it. When obstacles come, my freedom relies on my determination to find a way. Today let me find a way to free myself from obstacles.

## Is God to be loved or feared?



B.K. GEETA

When someone is said to be "pious and God-fearing", it generally means they have a genuine commitment to religious practices such as prayer, and live according to the moral teachings of their faith. Fearing God implies having a sense of awe and respect towards the

Almighty. God-fearing people usually live with the awareness that their actions are accountable to a higher power. That may make them more responsible in their behaviour, but does fear of God's judgment take them closer to Him?

Most of us know what happens when we fear someone. Our relationship with that person is characterised by anxiety, avoidance, submission, and even resentment. The destabilizing effect of fear does not allow us to interact normally - let alone amicably - with the other person. We may see them as all-powerful or even threatening, leading to an exaggerated perception of their power and the potential consequences of angering them. This fosters a



It is not fear, but love and faith that take us closer to God.

sense of vulnerability, because of which the main goal of our

thoughts about the other person, and our behaviour towards

them, is to minimise risk, or perceived risk, rather than engage meaningfully with them.

Fear also leads to attempts to appease or satisfy the feared person. This is the driving force behind religious rituals that are focused on appeasing or gaining favour from a deity, rather than having a deeper spiritual purpose. In some ancient religions, sacrificial offerings of food, animals, or even humans were made to ensure a good harvest, protection in war, or safety from disasters. In some cultures, deities were seen as temperamental and were regularly appeased with offerings to maintain their favour, as it was feared that otherwise they might bring droughts, famine, or destruction. This starkly illustrates

how fear creates a transactional relationship between believers and the Divine.

Is the fearsome image of God a projection of human flaws like anger, violence, and the desire for control?

The major scriptures highlight the compassionate and merciful nature of God. The Bhagavad Gita portrays God as compassionate and merciful in offering forgiveness and liberation to anyone who sincerely turns to Him. The Sikh holy book says that God is unconditionally compassionate and forgiving. Divine grace is earned through devotion, humility, and surrender - and not rituals - it says. In the Bible, numerous passages emphasise God's love, care, and willingness to forgive, even in

the face of human failings. The Koran describes Allah's mercy as the greatest of His attributes, and nearly every chapter of the holy book begins with the phrase, "In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate".

Our conditioning, karma, or lack of spiritual maturity might distort our perception of God, but the above scriptural assertions make it clear that it is love and faith that take us closer to Him. Fear may nudge us onto the righteous path, but it cannot be the basis of a loving, trusting, and fulfilling relationship with the Divine.

B.K. Geeta is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan.



# ELAVENIL VALARIVAN STRIKES 10M AIR RIFLE GOLD IN ASIAN SHOOTING C'SHIP

AGENCIES  
SHYMKENT

Indian shooter Elavenil Valarivan clinched the gold medal in women's 10m air rifle competition of the 16th Asian Championships in Shymkent on Friday (August 22, 2025) with a characteristically composed performance in the final.

The 26-year-old from Tamil Nadu, who has won multiple gold medals in World Cups, shot a score of 253.6 to finish on top in the final and claim her second gold in the continental showpiece, the first coming way back in 2019 in Taiwan when she was honing her skills under the tutelage of Olympic medallist shooter Gagan Narang at his Gun for Glory Academy.

The silver went to China's Xinlu Peng with a score of 253, (while Korea's Eunji Kwon (231.2) took home the bronze.

This was Valarivan's first individual podium finish in the ongoing event having won a silver and bronze in the team events previously.

Another Indian in the fray, Mehuli Ghosh, signed off in fourth position after scoring 208.9 in the eight-shooter



Indian shooter Elavenil Valarivan clinched the gold medal in women's 10m air rifle event. Agencies

*The trio of Shambhavi Sbravan, Hrudya Shri Kondur and Isha Anil won the gold medal in the team gold in the women's junior 10m air rifle competition with a combined total of 1896.2, which is a junior world and Asian record.*

final.

Valarivan had qualified eighth for the final with a score of 630.7. Ghosh had originally finished 10th in the event with a score of 630.3 but made the final as

two other higher-placed Indians — Arya Borse (633.2) and Sonam Maskar (630.5) — stepped aside since they were competing only for ranking points.

Valarivan's medal was

only the second senior individual gold for India in the continental showpiece, where the country is topping the charts thanks to a strong showing by its junior shooters.

Anantjeet Singh Naruka had claimed India's first senior gold in the men's skeet event. Double Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker had won the bronze medal in the women's 10m air pistol competition.

The trio of Shambhavi Shraavan, Hrudya Shri Kondur and Isha Anil won the gold medal in the team gold

in the women's junior 10m air rifle competition with a combined total of 1896.2, which is a junior world and Asian record.

The teams from China and South Korea bagged the silver and bronze respectively.

One of India's most consistent woman rifle shooters for some years now, Valarivan has time and again proven her mettle against the best in the world to be it in the World Cup, the season-ending World Cup Finals, or the Asian Championship.

Currently ranked 11th, she is now set to storm into the top-10 which is not an uncharted territory for the Indian ace, having once achieved the world number one ranking in her category.

Known for her unwavering focus and mental fortitude under pressure, Valarivan is now aiming for glory at next year's Asian Games but before that, she will want to do well at the ISSF World Championships, where she has a tea, bronze but no individual honours.

Besides the Olympics, the Worlds and Asian Games are some of the events in which Valarivan is yet to taste success in the individual events.

## Matthew becomes first batter to score four consecutive 50 in ODI

AGENCIES  
MACKAY

South Africa's star batter Matthew Breetzke continued his love affair with the bat, smashing his fourth consecutive fifty score in One-Day Internationals. The right-handed batter, on Friday in the second ODI against Australia, slammed 88 runs off 78 balls.

He scripted history with his knock against the Aussies in the second ODI in Mackay, becoming the first batter in ODI history to start his career with four consecutive scores of 50+, as per Wisden.

He started his career with scores of 150 against New Zealand, 83 against Pakistan and 57 against Australia in the first ODI of this series.

Former India opener Navjot Singh Sidhu is the only other player to score fifties in his first four innings; however, Sidhu took five matches to do so because he

did not bat against Zimbabwe as India chased down 136 to record an eight-wicket win.

Breetzke continued scoring at a good clip even after reaching his fifty, before he was dismissed for 88, mis-timing a pull shot off Nathan Ellis for Alex Carey to take a simple catch in the deep.



Representative Image.

## Three East Bengal players join national camp for CAFA Nations Cup

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU

The East Bengal trio of Anwar Ali, Naorem Mahesh Singh, and Jeakson Singh Thounaojam on Friday joined the national camp for the CAFA Nations Cup, taking the total strength of players at the disposal of newly-appointed head coach Khalid Jamil to 28.

The trio joined the national camp after East Bengal lost their Durand Cup semi-final match on Wednesday. "Anwar Ali, Naorem Ma-

hesh Singh, and Jeakson Singh Thounaojam have joined the Indian senior men's national team squad ahead of their CAFA Nations Cup 2025 campaign today," the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said on Friday.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant refused to release their seven players -- Anirudh Thapa, Deepak Tangri, Lalengmawia Ralte, Liston Colaco, Manvir Singh, Sahal Abdul Samad, Vishal Kaith -- on the ground that it was not mandatory to do that

since the tournament was not being held in the FIFA international window.

The Kolkata giants did not release their players despite bowing out of the Durand Cup on August 17.

Jamil had named 35 players for the national camp which began here with 22 of them on August 16. Jamshedpur FC players Manvir Singh and Albino Gomes -- who were in the original 35 -- as well as new addition Muhammad Uvais from Punjab FC joined the camp on Monday.

## Newlands cricket ground in Cape Town set to host SA20 4 final

AGENCIES  
JOHANNESBURG

Newlands Cricket Ground in Cape Town has been announced as the destination for the SA20 Season 4 Final, with Kingsmead, Centurion and the Wanderers hosting key Playoff matches of the competition starting on December 26.

Durban will stage a Playoff match for the first time in SA20 history, giving the east coast fans one more opportunity to experience incredible cricket and entertainment when the two best teams of the competition battle it out during Qualifier 1 on January 21, 2026.

The Highveld will play host to two crunch Playoff matches, with Centurion setting the stage for the Eliminator on Thursday, 22 January and the Wanderers serving as the decider of the second finalist with Qualifier 2 on January 23, 2026.



Representative Image.

All SA20 Champions have been crowned in front of a capacity crowd, with the three successive finals selling out in record time. SA20 League Commissioner, Graeme Smith, expects similar fanfare for the box office tickets.

"SA20 Season 4 is shaping up to be an incredibly exciting summer of cricket, kicking off on Boxing Day and running through the holiday period," League Commissioner, Graeme Smith, said.

"Durban will host a Playoff for the first time, and we're hoping this will excite the fans, especially because the two best teams of the competition will be playing in that Qualifier 1. We're also excited to go back to Centurion and Wanderers on the Thursday and Friday nights, it's always key to have the venues close together because the matches are a day apart," he said.



The Hero Asia Cup Rajgir, Bihar 2025 Trophy Tour continued its journey and arrived in Chennai. (X)

## India U18 women win bronze at World Archery Youth C'ships

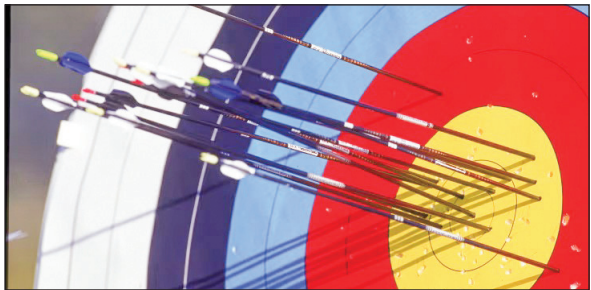
AGENCIES  
WINNIPEG

The India Under-18 women's recurve team bagged the bronze medal at the World Archery Youth Championships 2025 in Winnipeg, Canada, on Thursday, as per Olympics.com.

The Indian trio of Gatha Anandrao Khadake, Jiana Kumar and Sharvari Somnath Shende delivered a dominant performance to defeat the USA 6-0 in the bronze medal match.

Seeded fourth, the Indian team received a bye in the opening round before registering a comprehensive 6-0 win over Mexico in the second round. In the quarter-finals, they edged past Japan 5-3, but fell short against the Republic of Korea in the semi-finals, losing 6-2.

In the men's U18 recurve category, Agastay Singh,



Representive Image.

Soham Sharad Kanase and Aditya Shivprasad Pawar narrowly missed out on a podium finish, going down 5-3 to Turkey in the bronze medal clash.

India remains in contention for more medals in the compound archery events. On Saturday, the U21 men's team of Kushal Dalal, Apar Mihir Nitin and Ganesh Mani Ratnam Thirumuru will battle Germany for gold, while the U18 trio of Mohit Dagar, Yogesh Joshi and Devansh Singh face the USA in the title match.

The World Archery Youth Championships 2025 is the 19th edition of the biennial meet that has been held since 1991. A total of 570 top youth archers from 63 countries around the world are vying for medals in Winnipeg, as per Olympics.com.

India had dominated the previous edition held in Limerick, Ireland, in 2023, securing six gold medals, including three in individual events, and topping the overall medal tally with 11 medals.

## Thisara Perera backs Sri Lanka to reclaim T20 Asia Cup title

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Former Sri Lankan Cricketer Thisara Perera believes Sri Lanka has a talented side and certainly has a chance to reclaim the upcoming T20 Asia Cup in Dubai.

Sri Lanka is the defending champion of the T20 Asia Cup.

The tournament, taking place from September 9-28 in the United Arab Emirates, will feature eight teams competing for the coveted

trophy.

The event will be played in T20I format and will form an essential preparation for sides ahead of next year's ICC Men's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka will begin its campaign on September 13 against Bangladesh, the same side that handed them a 2-1 battering in the three-match T20I affair in July.

While speaking to ANI, Perera said, "Yes, of course, because we are on the right track, and we are playing

simple cricket, things you know, definitely we can have a chance to again win the Asia Cup, and now we have a very talented young side."

Apart from India and Pakistan, all the other teams are yet to announce their squad for the Asia Cup. This will be the third edition of the T20 Asia Cup. India won the inaugural edition back in 2016.

On Thursday, Sri Lanka announced a 16-member ODI squad for the Zimbabwe tour.

## NorthEast united face Diamond Harbour in Durand Cup final

AGENCIES  
KOLKATA

Kolkata will witness a historic clash on Sunday, August 24, as defending champions NorthEast United take on debutants Diamond Harbour in the final of the 134th edition of the Durand Cup at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan.

For NorthEast United, a win would mean more than back-to-back titles—it would place

them in elite company as the first team in 34 years to retain the trophy. The last club to achieve this feat was East Bengal, with a hat-trick of wins between 1989 and 1991.

Diamond Harbour, however, have scripted a dream debut campaign, defeating heavyweights like East Bengal on their way to the summit clash. Under coach Kibu Vicuna, the side now stands on the brink of history as the first debutant team in

the modern era to win Asia's oldest football tournament.

NorthEast United head coach Juan Pedro Benali downplayed the favourites tag, saying, "It's the final. There are no good teams, no favourites. It's a psychological game. The mentally stronger team will win."

Vicuna echoed a calm approach, stating, "We are playing with the champions. Pressure is a privilege, but we start with humility."

## Bishnoi wins women's gold in Kayaking 500m in Khelo India Water Sports Festival

AGENCIES  
SRINAGAR

At just 17 years of age, kayaker Dally Bishnoi has stopped keeping track of the number of medals she has won, such has been the teenager's prolific run at the national level. Dally, a product of Water Sports Academy of Excellence in Bhopal, won the women's kayaking 500m (K1) gold as Madhya Pradesh made a clean sweep of all four gold medals at stake on day two of the Khelo India Water Sports Festival on Friday. Dally won in a time of



2:11.093 seconds, pushing Uttarakhand's Pukhrambam Roji Devi (2:14.068) and Kerala's Nikita Sarkar (2:22.154) to second and third spots respectively.

Madhya Pradesh's 14-year-old Niharika Singh and Chandrakala Kushwaha

clinched the women's kayaking 500m (K2) gold in 02:04.642 seconds, while the men's canoeing (C2) team from the state, comprising Sudhir Kumar and Prince Goswami, won in 1:50.943 seconds.

Madhya Pradesh's men's

kayaking (K2) team of Aditya Singh and Manjeet also brought more glory to the state by winning gold in 1:41.595 seconds.

Dally, who hails from Handia in Harda district of Madhya Pradesh, took up the sport after drawing inspiration from her former national-level canoeist brother.

She has won two silver medals at the National Games in Uttarakhand and has more than a dozen gold and a similar number of silver and bronze in the junior and senior category at the national championships.

### MP CLINCH ALL FOUR GOLDS ON DAY 2 OF KHELO INDIA

AGENCIES  
SRINAGAR

Madhya Pradesh made a clean sweep of all four gold medals at stake on Day 2 of the Khelo India Water Sports Festival here at the Dal Lake on Friday.

Hosts Jammu and Kashmir added a silver to their overnight tally while two more silvers left Odisha at No. 2 in the medal standings, as per a release from SAI Media.

On another warm day, all four finals in canoeing and

kayaking were scheduled in the second half of the day. Madhya Pradesh, a major force in water sports, won their first gold medal in the men's 500m kayaking doubles and never looked back after that to go No. 1 on the standings.

Seven gold medals have been decided so far, and on the final day on Saturday, 17 medals will be decided, and 10 of them will be in rowing. With several Services rowers representing the 28 states and Union Territories

taking part in these Games, it should see some keen competition. All events being held here are Olympic medal events.

Niharika Singh and Chandrika Kushwaha, who won gold in K-2 Kayaking 500 metres women's doubles, said that they were glad to be in Kashmir and had prepared well for the event. They said the Sports Authority of India had helped them in their sports journey leading up to this event and were

looking forward for future events like this.

Sudhir Kumar and Prince Goswami, who won gold in the C-2 Canoeing 500 metres men's event, said that in both the 2024 and 2025 national championships, they had won bronze. They said that they were practising for the Asian Games 2026 to be held in Japan. "We loved Kashmir and the competition was great," they said. "Khelo India is a great platform and will help the youth a lot."