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AHEAD OF PM MODI'S PUNJAB VISIT, FARMERS TO GET Rs 20,000 PER ACRE AID

A day before PM Modi's flood survey, Punjab rolled out its highest-ever relief package for affected farmers and families.

TIKAM SHARMA/ AGENCIES
NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

A day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Punjab, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday unveiled a landmark relief package for farmers, labourers, and residents severely affected by the recent floods. The measures include Rs 20,000 per acre compensation for crop damage — the highest such assistance announced by any state — and ex-gratia of Rs 4 lakh to families who lost members in the disaster.

Under the newly introduced "Jiska Khet, Uski Ret" scheme, cultivators will also be permitted to commercially utilise and sell the sand deposited in their fields by floodwaters,



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. ANI

turning a liability into an income opportunity. The package further provides financial aid for collapsed or structurally damaged houses, a six-month moratorium on farm loan repayments with full interest waiver, and targeted sup-

port for livestock rearers, including a state-sponsored vaccination drive. Fogging machines will be deployed across 1,700 villages to combat post-flood vector-borne diseases.

Despite being hospital-

PUNJAB FLOOD RELIEF PACKAGE
Rs. 20,000 per acre for crop loss — highest in India
Rs. 4 lakh ex-gratia for families of deceased
Compensation for collapsed/damaged houses
Six-month moratorium on farm loans with interest waiver
"Jiska Khet, Uski Ret" scheme: farmers allowed to sell flood-deposited sand
Free livestock vaccination, fogging in 1,700 villages

UP CM SENDS RELIEF

CM Yogi Adityanath on Monday flagged off trucks carrying relief materials to Himachal Pradesh. Rs 5 crore from the UP Chief Minister's Relief Fund was sent to Punjab under PM Modi's 'One India—Excellent India' initiative.



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flag off relief material vehicles for flood-affected people of Punjab in Saharanpur on Monday. ANI

SC orders Aadhaar inclusion in voter ID list; Congress slams ECI

ANAND SINGH/
SAMBHAV SHARMA
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to include Aadhaar as the 12th acceptable document for establishing identity during the revision of electoral rolls, while clarifying that it cannot be treated as proof of citizenship.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joydip Bagchi instructed the ECI to issue clear guidelines to officials, stressing that the authenticity of Aadhaar must be verified and forged documents rejected. The court's clarification came after concerns raised by opposition leaders, who argued that the poll panel's earlier stand created confusion.



Congress MP Jairam Ramesh. ANI

Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Manu Singhvi contended that Aadhaar should be accepted to prevent eligible voters from being excluded, but reiterated that only citizenship confers voting rights. The ECI informed the court that Aadhaar would serve solely as proof of identity,

alongside the 11 existing documents such as passport, birth and residence certificates.

Reacting sharply, Congress accused the ECI of "brazen non-compliance" with the apex court's directions. Party general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the Commission was deliberately creating obstacles in voter registration, citing its refusal to accept Aadhaar earlier and its restrictions on party-appointed booth-level agents.

"This is a mess of the Election Commission's own making," Ramesh posted on X, adding that the CEC "shall not be forgiven by history" for undermining electoral fairness.

The case will be heard again by the apex court next Monday.

PM Modi to perform *Pind Daan* in Gaya on 75th b'day

ABHINANDAN MISHRA/
AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to perform *pind daan* at the Vishnupad temple in Bihar's Gaya on 17 September, his 75th birthday, in memory of his ancestors, including his late mother Heeraben. The visit, his seventh to Bihar this year, will coincide with the launch of a nationwide health campaign.

Modi is expected to stay overnight in the holy city, perform rituals during *Pitru Paksha*, and hold a grand roadshow and rally. He may also inaugurate the Purnea airport and formally launch the Patna Metro project, Bihar's first metro service. The visit comes amid the ongoing



Prime Minister Narendra Modi. ANI

Pitru Paksha Mela Mahasangam in Gaya, which attracts lakhs of devotees from across the world.

On the same day, the Prime Minister will launch the "Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan," a flagship initiative to strengthen healthcare for women and children. As part of the drive, 75,000 health camps will be organised at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and community

centres, alongside *Poshan Maab* activities at Anganwadis to boost nutrition awareness.

BJP leaders are expected to contrast Modi's spiritual observance with recent derogatory remarks made by a Congress worker against him and his late mother, framing the visit as a dignified response ahead of the Assembly poll announcement.

19 killed in Nepal protests, highest toll since 2006 movement

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI/KATHMANDU

India has issued an alert along its 1,751-km open border with Nepal after violent protests in the Himalayan nation left at least 19 people, including a child, dead in police firing, officials said on Monday.

The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), India's border guarding force, has intensified checks and stepped up deployment at several outposts to prevent any spillover of unrest. Officials described the alert as



People torches a vehicles while protesting against the government's decision to block several social media platforms, in Kathmandu on Monday. ANI

"preventive in nature" and confirmed that the situation on the Indian side remains under control.

Thousands of Nepali youths stormed parliament in Kathmandu on Monday, torching its entrance

NEPAL HOME MIN LEKHAK RESIGNS

Ramesh Lekhak stepped down on Monday, citing moral responsibility, following two decades' deadliest unrest that left 19 dead. He submitted his resignation to PM KP Sharma Oli during an emergency cabinet meeting.

and clashing with security forces after the government blocked access to social media platforms such as Facebook. P3

BJD, BRS abstain from VP polls; Congress takes a swipe

ANAND SINGH/SIMRAN BABBAR
NEW DELHI

Just a day before the Vice-Presidential elections, the Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and the K. Chandrashekar Rao-led Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) announced they will abstain from voting, citing their independent positions and focus on state welfare.

BJD Rajya Sabha MP Sasmit Patra said the deci-

Pakistani intruder caught at Indo-Pak border

AJAY JANDYAL
JAMMU

In a major security development, the Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday foiled an infiltration attempt along the Indo-Pak international border in the R.S. Pura sector, apprehending a Pakistani national. The incident occurred near the Border Out Post (BOP) Octroi, opposite Pakistan's BOP Inayat, under the jurisdiction of the 165th Battalion BSF.

According to security sources, vigilant BSF personnel spotted a youth moving suspiciously towards the border fence from the Pakistani side. When challenged, the intruder continued advancing, prompting BSF troops to detain him before he could breach the fence.

The individual was taken into custody, and initial interrogation suggested he appeared mentally unstable. However, security agencies are treating the matter with



Representative image.

the utmost seriousness. Sources confirmed that the arrested intruder has been identified as a resident of Sarkoda in Pakistan, a location of strategic importance that was targeted by the Indian Air Force during Operation Sindoor.

This revelation has prompted senior BSF officials and other security agencies to personally question the suspect. Intelligence officials are investigating whether his movement was part of a reconnaissance mission, a test of border alertness, or linked to a larger infiltration plan. Given Sarkoda's strategic significance and the heavy

damage it sustained during Indian strikes, authorities are keen to determine whether the intruder acted independently or was dispatched on a mission.

"The line of questioning aims to establish whether this infiltration attempt had a deeper operational purpose or was merely a diversionary move," a source familiar with the interrogation said.

Senior BSF officials emphasised that no infiltration attempt is taken lightly. "The border is under round-the-clock surveillance, and any misadventure from across will be dealt with firmly," an officer stated.

The arrest underscores Pakistan's repeated attempts to push individuals across the border, despite heightened security and constant vigilance by Indian forces. The R.S. Pura, Arnai, and Samba sectors remain particularly sensitive, with past instances of infiltration and cross-border activity.

Calcutta HC questions police over BJP workers' deaths

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Monday sharply questioned the police investigation into the alleged murders of two Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers in Khejuri, East Midnapore, after call records suggested suspicious communication between the investigating officer (IO) and the doctor who conducted the first post-



Representative image.

mortem.

The division bench of Justices Debansu Basak and

Md Shabbar Rashidi was hearing petitions filed by

Israel economist calls India-US 50% tariff 'temporary'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Israel's Ministry of Finance Chief Economist Shmuel Abramzon on Monday described the ongoing 50 per cent US tariff on Indian imports as likely "temporary" and expressed confidence that India and the United States would reach an agreement.

"India is a good negotiator. I believe this is a temporary situation. India and the US,

long-time partners, will find an agreement to lower these tariffs," Abramzon told ANI.

The remarks come amid escalating tensions following the US imposing a 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods, including an additional 25 per cent levy linked to India's purchase of Russian crude oil. US President Donald Trump warned that "Phase-2" and "Phase-3" tariffs could still target countries continuing trade with Russia, singling



Chief Economist at Israel Ministry of Finance, Shmuel Abramzon. ANI

out India as the world's second-largest buyer of Russian oil after China. He said these measures have cost Russia "hundreds of billions of

dollars."

Trump also noted that India had offered a "no tariff" deal following Washington's initial tariff hike and reiter-

ated that tariffs are crucial to correcting trade imbalances. "China kills us with tariffs, India kills us with tariffs, Brazil kills us with tariffs. I've understood tariffs better than any human beings in the world," he said.

The US president described the bilateral trade relationship as a "one-sided disaster," claiming India had benefited disproportionately over decades while American firms faced high barriers entering the Indian market.

PM MODI ASKS NDA MPS TO HOLD ‘SWADESHI MELA’, SAYS SELF-RELIANCE TO POWER INDIA’S RISE

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday asked the ruling NDA MPs to organise ‘Swadeshi Mela’ to promote made-in-India products and hold meetings with traders over the GST rate cuts.

‘Swadeshi’ was the main theme of his speech to the MPs at the meeting held on the eve of the vice presidential election.

Sources said PM Modi asserted that the GST rate cuts by his government have generated a “lehar” (wave) and asked MPs to build on it by spreading the message to the masses by holding meetings with them.

He stressed the need for promoting made-in-India products by holding special fairs in their constituencies, the sources said.

PM Modi advised MPs to see to it that they vote in a correct manner in the vice presidential polls on Tuesday so that no vote is wasted, the sources said.

The Prime Minister emphasised the theme “Garv se kaho ye swadeshi hai”



Prime Minister Narendra Modi (File photo)

and mentioned that the MPs should organise 20 to 30 trader conferences in their respective constituencies so that traders and shopkeepers can be educated and briefed about the GST reforms.

During the meeting, PM Modi said that the MPs could organise ‘Swadeshi Melas’ during Diwali and Navaratri to promote Indian products and encourage people to buy them.

He stated that each MP should organise an exhibition in every sector of their constituency and showcase local artisans, micro and small industries, and indigenous products.

According to Sources, Prime Minister Modi said that the GST reform is revolutionary and its benefits should reach every individual, especially in the trade sector. He asked all MPs to spread awareness about

GST reforms among all sections of society, including women, students, traders, and others. He suggested organizing programs in various places to disseminate this information.

Additionally, PM Modi mentioned that India’s concept of Swadeshi (indigenous) has evolved beyond just the traditional spinning wheel. From the charkha to advanced projects like BrahMos, India has embarked on a journey of self-reliance (Atmanirbharta). He emphasized the need to take this message to every citizen, highlighting the benefits of this approach.

Meanwhile, earlier on August 25, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged citizens to prioritise the purchase of ‘Made in India’ products during the upcoming festive season, stressing that buying indigenous goods during festivals like Navratri, Vijayadashami, Dhanteras and Diwali would contribute to the country’s self-reliance and economic progress.

Addressing a public gathering after inaugurating and laying the foundation stone

for multiple development projects in Ahmedabad, the Prime Minister reiterated his call for ‘Swadeshi’, appealing to both businesses and individuals to opt for locally manufactured items to drive national prosperity.

“This is the season of festivals. Now Navratri, Vijayadashami, Dhanteras, Diwali... all these festivals are coming. These are celebrations of our culture, but they should also be celebrations of self-reliance. Therefore, I want to reiterate my request to you once again that we must adopt a mantra in our lives: whatever we buy will be ‘Made in India’, it will be indigenous. I appeal to the citizens of our country to prioritise purchasing goods that are ‘Made in India’. Whether it’s decorative items or gifts, let us choose products manufactured within our own nation,” PM Modi said.

He encouraged businesses to refrain from selling imported items, adding, “These small yet impactful steps can play a significant role in driving our nation’s progress and prosperity.”

Central Water Commission reports severe flood conditions at 25 stations across India

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Central Water Commission (CWC) on Monday reported severe flood conditions at 25 stations across India, including 12 in Uttar Pradesh, 10 in Bihar, and one each in Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and West Bengal. Another 20 stations, including nine in Uttar Pradesh, five in Bihar, four in Assam, and one each in Delhi and West Bengal, are witnessing above-normal floods.

Inflow forecasts have been issued for 42 dams and barges in states including Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, West Bengal, and Uttarakhand.

In Uttar Pradesh, the Yamuna at Mathura, Agra, Etawah, Kannauj, and Auraiya, and the Ganga at Ghazipur, Fatehpur, Ballia, Budaun, Kanpur, and Varanasi are in severe or above-normal flood situations.

The Ghagra at Ayodhya

and Ballia is also flowing at severe levels.

In Bihar, the Ganga at Patna, Bhagalpur, Munger, and Saran, the Kosi at Supaul and Khagaria, the Gandak at Vaishali, and the Burhi Gandak at Khagaria are in severe flood situations.

In Gujarat, rivers including Narmada, Tapi, Damanganga, Mahi, Sabarmati, Anas, Som, Rel, and Banas are expected to remain above normal to severe flood levels for the next two to three days.

Districts under alert include Sabarkantha, Banaskantha, Mehsana, Aravalli, Mahisagar, Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, and Kheda. Inflows above threshold are expected in Ukai, Sardar Sarovar, Madhuban, Kadana, Dharoi, and Dantiwada projects.

In Rajasthan, above-normal to severe floods are expected in the Sabarmati and West Banas in Banswara, Dungarpur, Udaipur, and Sirohi districts, and in the Banas and its tributaries in Chittorgarh, Bhilwara, and Rajsamand. Inflows above threshold are fore-

cast for Som Kamla, Mahi Bajaj Sagar, Kalisindh, Rana Pratap Sagar, Jawahar Dam, Bisalpur, and Kota Barrage.

In West Bengal, the Ganga at Farakka in Murshidabad is in severe flood, while the Teesta at Cooch Behar and the Jaldhaka at Jalpaiguri are above normal and rising.

In Assam, the Buridehing at Tinsukia is in severe flood, while the Brahmaputra at Jorhat, Sivasagar, Tezpur, Dhubri, and Goalpara, and tributaries such as the Dhansiri and Desang, are at above-normal levels.

In Uttarakhand, the Aglar at Tehri Garhwal is in severe flood, while the Song in Dehradun and Yamuna in Uttarkashi are rising above normal. Madhya Pradesh reported severe floods at Damoh and Datia, while Jharkhand reported severe floods at Palamu and Sahibganj. Reservoir levels are critically high in the Cauvery basin, where Krishnarajasagar is at 97.7 per cent storage, Hemavathi at 99.6 per cent, Kabini at 99.7 per cent, Harangi at 97.8 per cent, and Mettur at 100 per cent.

Kulgam encounter: One terrorist killed, JCO injured in ongoing operation

ASHIQ MIR
SRINAGAR

A fierce gunbattle erupted early Monday morning in the Guddar forest area of South Kashmir’s Kulgam district, resulting in the killing of one terrorist and injuries to a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the Indian Army.

The anti-terror operation was launched jointly by the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) after receiving specific intelligence inputs regarding the presence of terrorists hiding in the dense forest zone.

As per officials, security forces advancing into the area came under sudden fire, triggering a retaliatory response. In the exchange, a JCO from the elite IO PARA unit was injured and later evacuated for medical treatment. His condition is said to be stable.

“Based on specific input by JKP, a joint operation was launched by the Army,



Representative image.

Police and CRPF in the Guddar forest of Kulgam. Troops spotted suspicious movement and were fired upon, leading to a heavy exchange. One terrorist has been killed, and a JCO has sustained injuries. The operation is still underway,” a statement from Chinar Corps said.

The identity of the slain terrorist is yet to be confirmed. The entire area remains under a tight security cordon, with more reinforcements rushed in to plug possible escape routes.

It is worth noting that this

is the second major encounter in the Guddar forest area this year. Earlier, in July, a prolonged anti-terror operation in the same region had lasted nearly 15 days. That operation led to the elimination of multiple foreign terrorists and was marked by difficult terrain, dense forest cover, and unpredictable weather, making it one of the most challenging in recent times.

Security forces remain on high alert as the current operation continues. Further updates are expected.

Two army personnel martyred, operation still underway

ASHIQ MIR
SRINAGAR

Two Indian Army personnel have lost their lives in an ongoing anti-terror operation in the Guddar forest area of South Kashmir’s Kulgam district, officials confirmed late Monday evening.

The encounter, which began in the early hours of the day, broke out after a joint team of the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the CRPF launched a cordon-and-search operation based on specific intelligence inputs about the presence of terrorists hiding in the forested region.

As the search team closed in on the suspected hideout, they came under heavy fire. A fierce gunbattle ensued in which a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) and a soldier from the elite IO PARA unit sustained critical injuries. Despite being evacuated for

treatment, both succumbed to their wounds later in the day.

“Two brave soldiers made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty during an ongoing anti-terror operation in Kulgam.

Their valour and commitment will never be forgotten,” an official said.

So far, two terrorists has been neutralized in the operation. Their identity and affiliation are yet to be officially confirmed. The area remains under tight security, with reinforcements deployed to prevent any escape and to continue the search for possible additional terrorists. This is the second significant encounter in the Guddar forest area this year. In July, a prolonged 15-day operation in the same region resulted in the killing of multiple foreign terrorists and highlighted the challenging terrain and intensity of militant activity in the area.

State of world today is cause for genuine concern: Jaishankar at BRICS meet

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Noting that state of the world today is a cause for genuine concern and the multilateral system appears to be failing the world in the face of various challenges, External Minister S Jaishankar on Monday said that “so many serious stresses are being left unaddressed” and it “is having consequences for the global order itself”.

Jaishankar, who represented Prime Minister Narendra Modi at this virtual meeting of BRICS Leaders, said that the world requires constructive and cooperative approaches to promote sustainable trade.

He noted that some of India’s biggest deficits are with BRICS partners, and there is a need for expeditious solutions.

“The last few years have witnessed the devastating impact of the Covid pandemic, major conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East/ West Asia, volatility in trade and investment flows,



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addresses the virtual BRICS Summit, in New Delhi. ANI

extreme climate events and a discernible slowing down of the SDG Agenda. In the face of these challenges, the multilateral system appears to be failing the world. That so many serious stresses are being left unaddressed is understandably having consequences for the global order itself. It is this cumulative concern that the BRICS is now discussing,” he said. The Union Minister said trade patterns and market access are today prominent issues in the global economic discourse.

“The world requires constructive and cooperative approaches to promote trade that is sustainable. Increasing barriers and complicating transactions will not help. Neither would the linking of trade measures to non-trade matters. The BRICS itself can set an example by reviewing trade flows among its member states. Where India is concerned, some of our biggest deficits are with BRICS partners and we have been pressing for expeditious solutions.

He hoped that this realization will be part of the takeaways from today’s meeting,” he said.

“The international trading system is based on the foundational principles of open, fair, transparent, non-discriminatory, inclusive, equitable and a rules-based approach with Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries. India strongly believes that this should be protected and nurtured,” he added.

Ahead of PM visit, AAP seeks Rs 20,000 cr flood relief for Punjab

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit flood-ravaged Punjab on Tuesday, the ruling AAP has demanded that he announces a relief package of Rs 20,000 crore for the border state. Punjab is currently facing one of its worst flood disasters in decades. The death toll due to the devastating floods



stands at 48 while crops on 1.76 lakh hectares have been damaged.

PM Modi will visit the state on September 9 to take stock of the situation.

Modi was deeply concerned about the flood situation in Punjab and was closely monitoring it, Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar on Sunday said.

On Monday, Punjab Cabinet ministers Aman Arora, Barinder Kumar Goyal and Dr Balbir Singh demanded that the PM should announce a relief package of at least Rs 20,000 crore for the state during his visit.

AAP MLA Mehraj Malik detained under PSA in JK’s Doda

TDG NETWORK
JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir AAP chief and MLA Mehraj Malik was on Monday detained under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) for allegedly disturbing public order in Doda district, officials said.

This is for the first time that a sitting MLA has been taken into custody under the PSA, an administrative law that allows detention without charge or trial for up to two years in some cases.

Earlier during the day, the

37-year-old AAP MLA was detained by police at Dak Bungalow while he was planning to visit flood-hit areas of his constituency, the officials said.

He was later shifted to Bhaderwah district jail under the PSA on the orders of the Deputy Commissioner of Doda, Harvinder Singh, after police prepared a dossier against him, they said.

The action against Malik, who has often courted controversies with his statements, comes amid a massive protest by government employees

who came out in support of the deputy commissioner after Malik used a social media platform to launch a disparaging campaign against him.

The protesting employees accused the MLA of “habitually” hurling abuses at senior government officers, including doctors, and provoking youths against the official machinery. In a statement, the protesting employees lauded the deputy commissioner for his “exceptional service, integrity and dedication to public welfare”, and said his compassionate approach has

made him a “beacon of hope” for the residents of Doda in general and the flood-affected population in particular.

They condemned the use of ‘abusive language and baseless allegations’ against the officer as ‘unfortunate, deplorable and unacceptable’ and slammed the ‘uncivilised and irresponsible behaviour of the legislator’. The officials said dozens of cases and complaints are registered against Malik for his ‘uncultured’ behaviour and fights with government officials in the hill district over the past one year.

Adityanath questions recruitments made during Samajwadi Party regime

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday questioned the recruitments made during the previous Samajwadi Party regime, and said that several appointments had to be probed by the CBI. “What type of recruitment used to take place? We had to then hand over a number of recruitments which had taken

place to the CBI. Now, you are seeing that one person after getting himself appointed at eight places was drawing salaries. When this matter came to light during the probe,” Adityanath said.

Without taking any names, the UP chief minister said, “Who are these people? These people are the ones from a family which used to take money from the people, recruit

them, and loot the people of UP... The recruitment was in 2016. We have initiated a probe, the probe is going on and when the probe gets completed in time, a number of relations (mentioned) in the ‘Mahabharat’ will be compelled to spend the rest of their lives in jail.

“This is because their acts were such that they were continuously pushing UP downwards instead



of allowing it to touch the heights of development,” he said.

Adityanath was speaking at a function held at Lok Bhavan in Lucknow, where he distributed appointment letters to junior assistants and X-ray technicians. On Monday, appointment letters were distributed to 1,112 junior assistants and 22 X-ray technicians in the state, the statement said.

Intensifying his attack further, Adityanath said, “These people had made

UP a ‘BIMARU’ (sick) state. This led to an identity crisis. Youths were unemployed, daughters were insecure, traders were helpless, farmers were forced to commit suicide. Traditional enterprises were on the verge of closure. There was an atmosphere of anarchy.

“Riots used to start before festivals, but in the last eight years, every district, community and person partici-

pates in festivals with enthusiasm and zeal. Today, there is also social harmony, which strengthens national unity.

The enthusiasm and zeal of the people is also playing a big role in taking UP forward with the spirit of development.”

He also said that only a healthy person can contribute to building a healthy society, and only a healthy

person can play a role in building a strong society and a strong nation.

“When the person himself is not healthy, how will the system be healthy? When the system itself becomes unhealthy, all its pillars will appear to be collapsing. Before 2017, this ‘ghun’ (wheat weevil insect) had already infested the system, which was making it hollow (from inside),” Adityanath said.

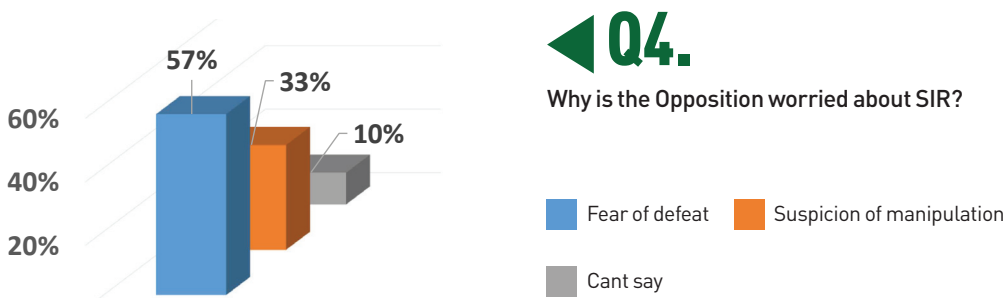
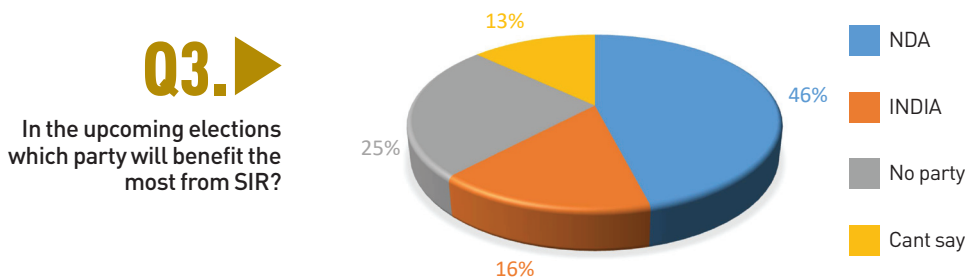
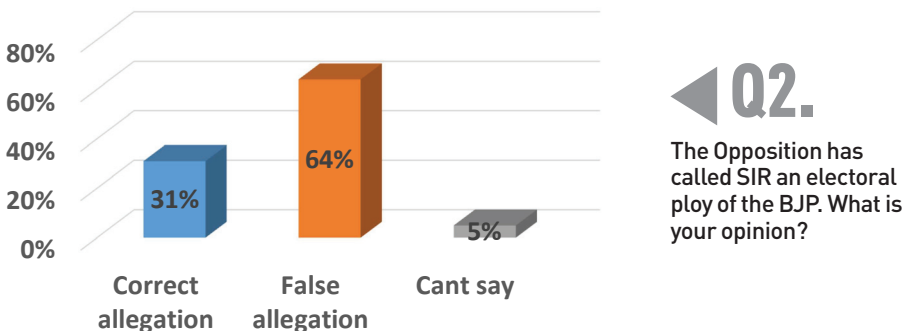
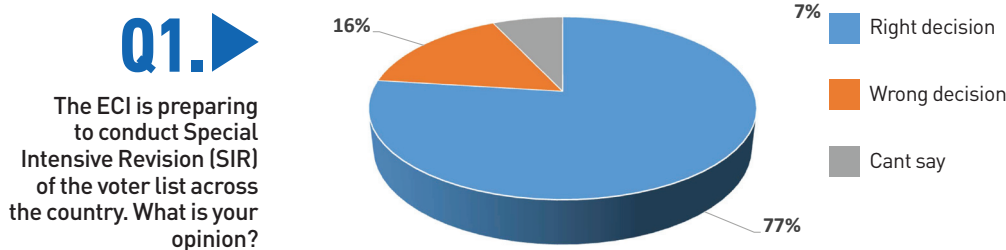
THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON ELECTION COMMISSION VS OPPOSITION

77% of respondents said that ECI preparing to conduct Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter list across the country was a right decision.

An India Newssurvey on the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision shows strong public backing, with 77% calling it the

right decision. While 64% dismiss opposition claims of bias, 46% believe the NDA will gain the most. A majority, 60%, view the revision as

a constitutional process, reinforcing confidence in electoral integrity.



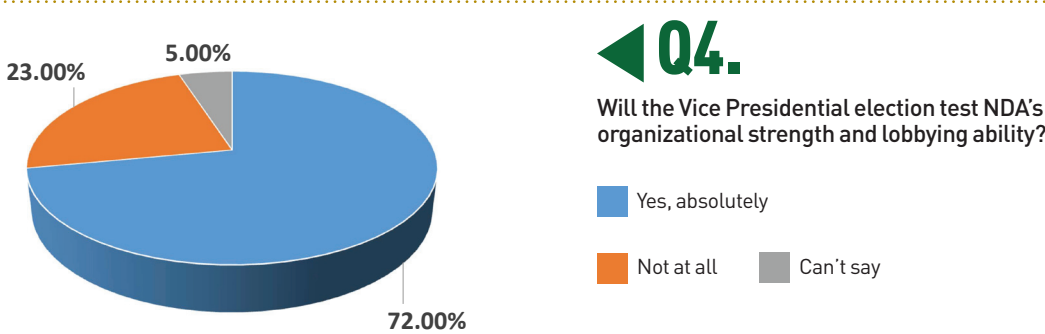
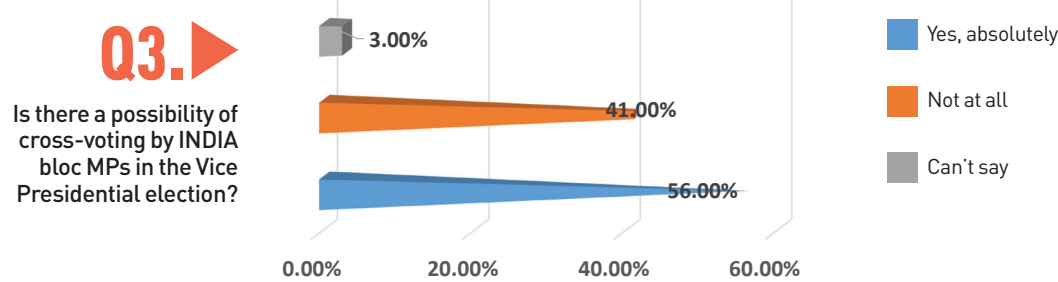
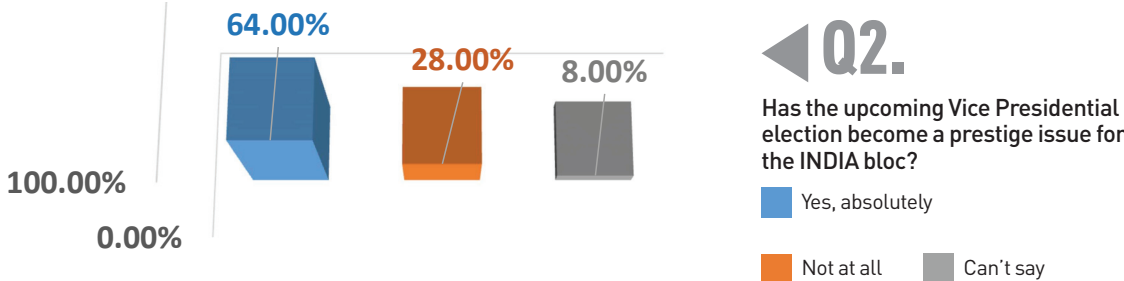
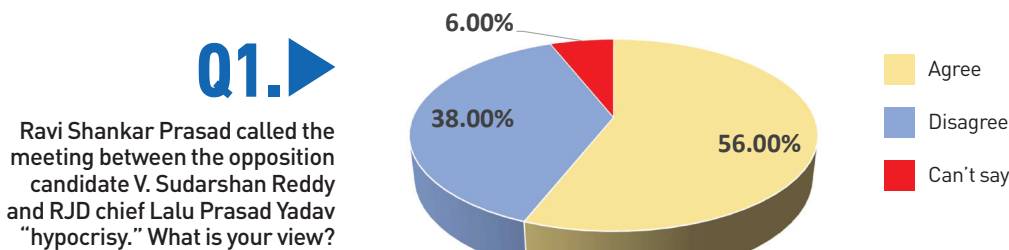
THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON VICE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2025

56% believe that there is possibility of cross-voting by I.N.D.I.A. bloc MPs in the Vice Presidential election.

Vice Presidential Election 2025 voting is scheduled tomorrow with NDA's C P Radhakrishnan facing IN-

DIA bloc's B Sudershan Reddy. Polling will be held in Parliament from 10 am to 5 pm. While BJD and BRS will

abstain, YSRCP and TDP back NDA. Opposition urges conscience voting, but numbers favour NDA.



19 killed in Nepal protests

CONTINUED FROM P1

book. The ban, imposed to curb alleged fake accounts spreading hate speech, fraud and misinformation, fuelled anger over what protestors described as rampant corruption.

According to Nepal's Ministry of Health and Population, most casualties occurred in Kathmandu, with others reported in Sunsari district. Hospitals across the capital reported mul-

tiple deaths as police used live ammunition, tear gas and water cannons. The violence marked the highest single-day death toll since the 2006 pro-democracy movement that ended Nepal's monarchy.

Eyewitnesses told ANI that students in school uniforms were among those killed. Protestors accused the government of "killing children" and ignoring public grievances. Hospitals, they said, are over-

whelmed, with shortages of ambulances and medical supplies.

Nepal's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) condemned the use of excessive force, calling it "regrettable" and urging authorities to ensure free treatment for the injured, compensation for victims' families, and a fair probe into the deaths. It also appealed to demonstrators to maintain discipline and peaceful dissent.

CONTINUED FROM P1

ised for the past three days, CM Mann joined the Cabinet meeting virtually to personally approve the relief package. "These measures have been crafted to ensure that our farmers, labourers, and ordinary people can stand firmly on their feet again in the aftermath of this calamity," he said.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government si-

multaneously demanded a massive financial aid package from the Centre, including Rs 60,000 crore in pending GST compensation, Rs 20,000 crore as special assistance, and immediate release of funds under the Rural Development Fund and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Cabinet minister Aman Arora urged the Prime Minister not to restrict his visit to symbolic gestures, but to announce

tangible support. Prime Minister Modi will conduct an aerial survey of flood-hit regions in Himachal Pradesh on Tuesday morning before arriving in Punjab. His itinerary includes a review meeting in Kangra, interaction with flood victims and relief teams, followed by an aerial survey in Punjab. He will reach Gurdaspur around 4:15 pm to meet officials, affected families, and ground staff engaged

in rescue and rehabilitation efforts. The Punjab BJP hailed the visit as proof that the Centre "always stands with the people of Punjab", while party leader Tarun Chugh accused the Mann government of turning the crisis into a "Mann-made disaster" by allowing unchecked illegal mining that allegedly weakened riverbanks. Meanwhile, former Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister and Leader of

Opposition Jairam Thakur welcomed the Prime Minister's visit to his state, warning that the scale of devastation would take "many years" for Himachal to overcome. The floods in Punjab and Himachal have devastated crops, displaced families, and left swathes of farmland buried under thick sand, prompting both state and central governments to intensify relief and rehabilitation measures.

BJD, BRS abstain from VP polls

CONTINUED FROM P1

sion followed consultations with party chief Patnaik, senior leaders, and MPs. "BJD remains equidistant from NDA and INDIA bloc. We are focused on the development and welfare of Odisha and its 4.5 crore people," he said.

Similarly, BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao declared that the party's decision stemmed from the Centre's failure to address Telangana farmers' demand for two lakh metric tonnes of urea. "We are not in NDA, we are not in INDIA bloc. Telangana people are our only bosses,"



BJD MP Sasmit Patra. ANI he asserted, reiterating the party's commitment to 70 lakh farmers in the state.

Taking a swipe at both parties, Congress General Secretary and communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh tweeted, "Two parties who have stood with the BJP staunchly over the past decade in Parliament have decided to abstain in



BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao. ANI of the Vice Presidential election tomorrow. The shape of things to come?"

The abstentions come as NDA nominee and Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan faces Congress-led INDIA bloc's candidate, former Supreme Court judge B. Sudershan Reddy, in a direct contest.

Polling will be held on 9 September from 10 am to 5 pm, with counting and results expected the same day.

The Vice-President is elected by an electoral college comprising MPs from both Houses of Parliament under Articles 64 and 68 of the Constitution. The poll was necessitated following Jagdeep Dhankhar's resignation on 21 July due to health reasons.

With support from 439 MPs, the NDA candidate holds a comfortable lead over the INDIA bloc's 324 MPs, further bolstered by backing from the YSRCP.



NDRF and Uttarakhand SDRF search and rescue operations underway following a cloudburst at Pausari Gram Panchayat near Kapkot, in Bageshwar on Monday. ANI

NIA raids multiple J&K locations

CONTINUED FROM P1

Jammu and Kashmir, including Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian, Baramulla, and Kupwara districts. Those raids targeted overground workers (OGWs) of various terrorist organisations linked to a terror conspiracy case. During the June operations, several individuals were detained and incriminating materials, including digital devices and documents, were seized. Inves-

tigators said the ongoing effort is aimed at dismantling infrastructure and networks connected to militant groups accused of trying to destabilise the region.

The NIA said it remains committed to countering threats posed by foreign-backed groups to national security. Authorities have also urged the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity. Further details are expected as the investigation progresses.

Calcutta HC questions police over BJP workers' deaths

CONTINUED FROM P1

the families of the deceased, Sudhir Chandra Paik (65) and Sujit Das (23). The two were found dead on July 12, shortly after attending a Muharram cultural programme in Janka, Khejuri. While organisers claimed the deaths were caused by electrocution, the families alleged foul play linked to communal tensions.

The controversy intensified after the initial post-mortem at Medinipur Medical College attributed the

deaths to electrocution, but a second autopsy at SSKM Hospital in Kolkata, ordered by the High Court, detected ante-mortem injuries on Das's body. The contradictory findings raised doubts over the police handling of the case.

During Monday's hearing, the bench was presented with a preliminary report containing the call detail records of the first post-mortem doctor from Tamluk Medical College. The records indicated that the doctor had been repeatedly

contacted by the IO both before and after conducting the autopsy. "Why should the IO call the post-mortem doctor so many times? Why would the IO's role not be under suspicion?" the bench asked, flagging concerns over potential interference in medical reporting.

Advocate General Kishore Dutta, representing the State, said the doctor had clarified that the calls were made without any "specific reason." The bench, however, rejected this explanation, citing the absence of

proof. "On what basis is the State saying there is nothing suspicious? You must satisfy the conscience of this court," Justice Basak remarked, granting the State a week to submit a detailed account.

The court has already directed the State to provide call detail records for 17 individuals, including the IO, the officer-in-charge of Khejuri police station, and the first autopsy doctor. Records of the remaining persons—including members of the cultural programme committee—will also be

scrutinised. "The common phone numbers have to be identified and placed before the court. Check all mobile numbers of these three persons," the bench said.

The judges also noted the discrepancy between the first and second post-mortems, saying the unexplained differences raised broader questions of credibility. "There is a disconnect between the second PM report and the conduct of the investigation until then. This is about instilling public faith in the police," Jus-

tice Basak underlined.

The families of the deceased have demanded that the probe be moved out of State control and entrusted to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), arguing that the CID, which took over the investigation last month on court orders, lacks independence in politically sensitive cases.

The next hearing is scheduled for September 15, when the State is expected to file a fuller account of the call records and explain the IO's role.

MOCKERY OF LEGAL, DELIBERATIVE PROCESSES: SONIA SLAMS GOVT ON NICOBAR PROJECT

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Terming the Great Nicobar infra-structure project a “planned misadventure”, Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Monday said it poses an existential danger to the island’s indigenous tribal communities and is being insensitively pushed through, making a “mockery of all legal and deliberative processes”.

The collective conscience cannot, and must not, stay silent when the very survival of the Shompen and Nicobarese tribes is at stake, Sonia Gandhi said in an article published in ‘The Hindu’. “Our commitment to future generations cannot permit this large-scale destruction of a most unique ecosystem. We must raise our voice against this travesty of justice and this betrayal of our national values,” she said in her article titled ‘The making of an ecological disaster in the Nicobar’.

Her remarks come days after Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul



Sonia Gandhi

Gandhi wrote to Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram, expressing deep concern over the alleged violation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in the grant of clearances to the Great Nicobar Project, and urged the government to ensure adherence to the due process prescribed under the law.

Congress leader and former environment minister Jairam Ramesh has also been highlighting concerns over the Great Nicobar project, claiming that it is inimical to ecology and the rights of forest dwellers and tribals in the area. In her

article, Sonia Gandhi hit out at the Modi government and said there has been no shortage of “half-baked and ill-conceived policymaking” in the last 11 years. “The latest in this series of planned misadventures is the Great Nicobar mega-infrastructure project. The totally misplaced Rs 72,000 crore expenditure poses an existential danger to the island’s indigenous tribal communities, threatens one of the world’s most unique flora and fauna ecosystems and is highly susceptible to natural disasters,” she said. “Nevertheless, it is be-

ing insensitively pushed through, making a mockery of all legal and deliberative processes,” Sonia Gandhi said.

She pointed out that the Great Nicobar Island is home to two indigenous communities, the Nicobarese tribe and the Shompen tribe, a particularly vulnerable tribal group.

“The ancestral villages of the Nicobarese tribals fall in the project’s proposed land area. The Nicobarese were forced to evacuate their villages during the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004. This project will now permanently displace this community, ending its dream of returning to its ancestral villages,” she said.

“The Shompen face an even greater threat. The Island’s Shompen Policy, notified by the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs, specifically requires the authorities to prioritise the tribe’s welfare and ‘integrity’ when considering ‘large-scale development proposals’.

“Instead, the project denotifies a significant part of the Shompen tribal reserve, de-

stroys the forest ecosystems where the Shompen live, and will cause a large-scale influx of people and tourists on the island,” she argued.

Ultimately, the Shompen will find themselves cut off from their ancestral lands and unable to sustain their social and economic existence, Sonia Gandhi said.

Yet, the government is stubbornly adamant and shockingly insistent, she added.

Sonia Gandhi alleged that the constitutional and statutory bodies set up to preserve tribal rights have been sidestepped throughout this process.

“As in Article 338-A of the Constitution, the Government should have consulted the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes. It has failed to do so.

“The Government should have consulted the Tribal Council of Great Nicobar and Little Nicobar Island. Instead, the Council Chairman’s plea that the Nicobarese tribals be allowed to return to their ancestral villages has been neglected,” she pointed out.

Jarange and state minister Vikhe Patil misleading community, says Maratha leader

TDG NETWORK
JALNA

Citing a GR issued by the state government last week, Maratha Kranti Morcha’s Maharashtra coordinator, Sanjay Lakhe Patil, has accused quota activist Manoj Jarange and senior BJP minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil of deceiving the Maratha community over the reservation issue.

Vikhe Patil, who heads the state cabinet sub-committee on Maratha reservation, had led negotiations with Jarange, leading to the activist calling off his hunger strike after five days in Mumbai on September 2. The state social justice and special assistance department issued a resolution (GR) on implementing the Hyderabad gazetteer, which will allow eligible members of the Maratha community to apply for Kumbi caste certificates. Kumbi, a traditional farming community in Maharashtra, was included in the OBC category in order to make them eligi-



Manoj Jarange

ble for government reservations in jobs and education. “This GR would not benefit the Maratha community. As per the existing rules, no Maratha can get a Kumbi caste certificate or caste validity unless their Kumbi lineage is already mentioned in official records. Those without documentary proof of being Kumbi or having blood relations with Kumbis cannot be issued such certificates,” Lakhe Patil told reporters on Monday.

He stated that the claims made by Jarange and Vikhe

Patil that “all Marathas will get Kumbi certificates” were false and misleading.

“This is nothing but cheating the community. Vikhe Patil should apologise to the Maratha community or tender his resignation,” Lakhe Patil demanded.

He alleged Jarange keeps making impractical demands like the implementation of the Hyderabad Gazette because he lacks knowledge of the Constitution. “By raising such false hopes, he has only misled the Maratha community.”

It is an ideological fight, we are not confused: Karunanidhi VP poll

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi issued a statement on the upcoming Vice Presidential election on Monday.

Speaking to reporters, Kanimozhi claimed that this election is an ideological fight. She also emphasised it is a fight for democracy.

“It is not a delicate situation at all because the citizens have been very clear that this is an ideological fight. It is not about any individual. It is an ideological fight, and it is a fight for democracy. So we are not confused...” said Kanimozhi. She further said that this contest is a part of the democratic process and the opposition would not go unchallenged in this contest.

“It is very important to have this election because this is a



DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi

part of the democratic process and it doesn’t mean that we have to let it go unchallenged, whoever can be from NDA. Let us wait for the votes to be counted...” said Kanimozhi.

Meanwhile, in a related development, with the Vice Presidential election around the corner, scheduled for September 9, Congress MP Pramod Tiwari expressed confidence that the India bloc candidate, Justice (Retd.) B Sudershan

Reddy would be elected as the next Vice President of India. Speaking to ANI, Congress MP Pramod Tiwari said that the voting will be done based on one’s inner conscience and added, “...In this election, voting will be done on the basis of the voice of the inner conscience. Justice B. Sudarshan Reddy will win because he is not a candidate of any political party and is not contesting on any party symbol...” Earlier on July 21, Jagdeep Dhankhar resigned on the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, citing health reasons, leaving the seat of Vice President vacant. Hence, an election was scheduled on September 9 for the post, which will witness a direct contest between Justice (Retd.) B Sudershan Reddy, backed by the INDIA bloc, and the NDA’s nominee, CP Radhakrishnan.

‘I hope that B. Sudershan Reddy wins’: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Anand Dubey

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Anand Dubey, ahead of the vice presidential election, issued a statement on B. Sudershan Reddy on Monday.

Speaking to ANI, the Shiv Sena (UBT) said, “We know that NDA has more numbers.... I hope that B. Sudershan Reddy wins.”

He further stated that the opposition aims to build consensus among as many people as possible, and the INDIA alliance remains vigilant.

“INDIA Alliance is vigilant... Our focus is on approaching as many MPs as possible, building consensus on as many people as possible and ensuring that B. Sudershan Reddy wins...” Anand Dubey told ANI.

Meanwhile, commenting on

the upcoming vice presidential election, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi said that on the basis of voting, it will become clear who is in favour of the Constitution and who is against it tomorrow.

“On the basis of voting, it will be clear who stands on which side, who is in favour of the Constitution and who is against it. In the upcoming Vice-Presidential election, we must not forget why this election has been imposed on us. It has been imposed because they decided to cut short the tenure of one Vice-President and elect a new one; this was done by the BJP, YSRCP, BJD, and other so-called neutral parties, whichever side they vote for, it will become clear whether they stand with those opposing the Constitution or with those defending it.

TDG NETWORK
HYDERABAD

Bharath Rashtia Samithi leader KT Rama Rao on Monday demanded an apology from Congress and Telangana CM Revanth Reddy for lying about the Kaleshwaram project.

KTR said that the Congress government, at one end, considers Kaleshwaram a failed project, but is laying the foundation stone of the Rs 7400 crore project from the Mallana Sagar, which is an integral part of the Kaleshwaram initiative.

“It is truly shameful that the Chief Minister and the Congress Party, who on one hand called Kaleshwaram a failed project today, are laying a foundation stone for a Rs 7400 crore project to bring water from Mallannasagar, which is an integral part of Kaleshwaram... We demand that the Chief Minister and the Congress Party apologise to the people of Telangana



KT Rama Rao

for continuously lying about Kaleshwaram for the last five to six years,” KTR told ANI.

Earlier, on September 1, the Telangana government decided to order a CBI probe into the Kaleshwaram project issue. The government has already constituted a commission, led by former Supreme Court judge Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose, to investigate alleged irregularities, misuse of public funds, and corruption in the construction of the Medigadda, Annaram, and Sundilla barrages in the Kaleshwaram project,

according to a press release from the Telangana CMO.

On September 3, KT Rama Rao condemned the move to conduct a CBI investigation against former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, describing it as a disgrace and an insult to the people of Telangana.

“It is shameful to target the visionary leader who secured drinking water for Hyderabad’s next 50 years through projects like Mallanna Sagar and Kondapochamma Sagar,” KTR said. He pointed out the hypocrisy of Congress leaders, noting that Rahul Gandhi once dismissed the CBI as “Modi’s pocket organisation,” while Revanth Reddy now praises it. “This double standard reflects the miserable state of the Congress party,” he remarked, as per a release.

The Ghose Commission of Inquiry submitted its report to the government on July 31, 2025. The state cabinet approved the commission report on August 4, 2025.

Chennai is proudly the ‘Medical Capital of India’, says Udhayanidhi Stalin

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, on Monday, while inaugurating a newly constructed government hospital in the Saidapet area of Chennai, claimed that due to the countless health sector schemes implemented during Kalaignar’s rule, Tamil Nadu, especially Chennai, is proudly called the ‘Medical Capital of India today.

The government hospital built at a cost of Rs 28.75 crore with state-of-the-art medical equipment and facilities,



Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin

comprising a ground floor and six additional floors, has now been opened for public use.

Deputy CM said that this

hospital was established to provide high-quality, advanced medical services not only to the people of Saidapet but also to those living in the surrounding areas.

Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, in his speech, said, “This 120-bed hospital will be a great benefit not only to the people of Saidapet but also to those in the neighbouring areas. As our Chief Minister always says, Education and Healthcare are the two eyes of the Dravidian Model government. During Kalaignar’s rule, countless health sector schemes were implemented.

It is because of those schemes that today Tamil Nadu - especially Chennai - is proudly called the ‘Medical Capital of India.’

“The Chief Minister has launched the ‘Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam’ (Healthcare at Your Doorstep) scheme so that medical services reach the people directly. Our government has been receiving awards and appreciation from many quarters.

Recently, Tamil Nadu received an award from the United Nations for effectively implementing the ‘Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam’ scheme”, the Deputy CM added.

BJP leaders indulging in provocation: K’taka CM on Mandya stone-pelting row

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Following the stone pelting incident during the Ganesh Idol immersion in Maddur town, Mandya, on Sunday, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that the Bharatiya Janata Party is indulging in provocation and added that legal action will be taken against those involved, irrespective of their religion or party.

Commenting on the stone pelting incident, CM Siddaramaiah said, “When the procession passed near the mosque, there was a mi-

nor clash. The police had warned the people in the procession, telling them not to stay there for too long. At that time, some stone-pelting took place...When the procession passed in front of the mosque, a clash broke out. A mild lathi-charge was carried out. When people gathered in groups to create trouble, a mild lathi-charge was used.”

He further said that 21 people have been arrested in connection with the stone pelting incident and added that legal action will be taken against those involved in the incident. He also blamed

the BJP for indulging in provocation.

“Whoever is guilty, legal action will be taken against them. It is the BJP leaders who are indulging in provocation. The police have not committed any mistake. If at all there is any mistake, action will be taken,” he said.

CM Siddaramaiah further added, “Be it Muslims, Hindus, BJP, Congress, or JD(S) -- the law will take its course. The police had warned the people in the procession, telling them not to stay there for too long. At that time, some stone-pelting took place.” Earlier

in the day, pro-Hindu organisations held a protest against the reported incident of stone pelting during the Ganesh Idol immersion in Maddur town, Mandya, yesterday. Section 144 has been imposed in the area, and some people have been arrested, as per Karnataka Home Minister G. Parmeshwara. Police also used mild lathi charge to disperse the protestors. Speaking to the reporters, Karnataka Home Minister said, “An incident has happened in Maddur town, Mandya, a stone pelting incident, which is now under control.

Air India Mumbai-Delhi flight performs go-around, lands safely on second attempt

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

An Air India flight from Mumbai to Delhi on Monday performed a go-around after an initial aborted landing but safely touched down on its second attempt, an official stated.

“Flight AI2910 operating from Mumbai to Delhi on 8 September, discontinued with landing and performed a routine go around at Delhi as per standard protocols. The aircraft landed safely

in its second attempt, and all passengers and crew have disembarked. At Air India, the safety of passengers and crew remains top priority,” An Air India Express Spokesperson said in a statement.

Earlier on Friday, Air India Express flight 1028, which was operating from Delhi to Indore, made a priority landing at Indore Airport after the pilot detected a technical snag, an Air India spokesperson confirmed.

On Sunday, Air India CEO Campbell Wilson wrote letters to employees, highlighting the airline’s progress in performance, customer experience, and network growth, while reaffirming the company’s commitment to transparency and cultural transformation.

“Like all airlines, we faced a variety of operational scenarios--some of which were under our control, and some that were not,” the CEO wrote, referring to



Representative image

the crisis the airline faced following the AI171 plane crash in Ahmedabad earlier this year.

“When the spotlight was on us, it was crucial to offer timely, clear and accurate information and the right context,” he wrote in the letters disseminated via email.

He acknowledged that Air India had deliberately been “more transparent than usual in reporting incidents and events, however small.”

While this had temporarily increased news coverage, he emphasised that in the context of Air India’s scale and size, the incidence rate was “entirely normal.”

“This transparency will, over time, help build trust. In the short term, though, it naturally resulted in an uptick of news coverage, and with more than 1,200 departures every single day--nearly one every minute--across the Air India Group, it could seem like a lot.

DELHI POLICE DIRECTS ALL POLICE OFFICERS TO APPEAR PHYSICALLY BEFORE THE COURTS

Delhi Police has directed all officers to physically appear before courts, ending a standoff with striking lawyers.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi police on Monday issued a circular directing all police officers to appear physically before the courts for evidence.

The decision comes after the Delhi lawyers went on strike against the LG's notification for deposition of police personnel through video conferencing from the Police station.

In response to the circular, Lawyers of the Delhi District Court Bar Associations withdrew their strike after the demand for physical deposition of police personnel before the court was met.

Earlier on Saturday evening, the Coordination

HIGHLIGHTS

- Delhi Police issues circular mandating physical court appearances by officers
- Lawyers withdraw strike after demand for in-person depositions is accepted
- BCI's appeal to call off agitation earlier was rejected
- Coordination Committee warns strike will intensify if



Delhi Police personnel on Court premises for deposition. ANI

Committee rejected the request made by the Bar Council of India (BCI) to recall the upcoming strike against the deposition of police personnel from Police stations. The committee said that there shall be a complete abstention from work if

their genuine demands are not acceded to.

After a meeting of office bearers, the coordination committee stated, "We firmly stand on our demand and reiterate that police personnel have to appear only in physical mode in the courts for the deposi-

tion/evidence."

On Saturday morning, a letter was issued by BCI Chairman and Senior Advocate, Manan Kumar Mishra, to recall the upcoming strike/agitation. The BCI Chairman requested the coordination committee to participate in

a proposed meeting with BCI and the Bar Council of Delhi.

"However, we would like to make it crystal clear that the Coordination Committee has raised the agitation to protect the interest of public at large and will continue with the agitation till our genuine demand is not met with," the committee said.

The committee said that its genuine demand that all the police officials have to appear physically before the court for deposition/evidence is not acceded to, we shall continue with our call for indefinite abstention from work from 08.09.2025, and the same shall be in a more intensified manner.

DELHI LAWYERS WITHDRAW STRIKE AFTER DEMAND ON POLICE DEPOSITION MET

NEW DELHI: The lawyers of the Delhi District Court Bar Associations on Monday withdrew their strike after their demand for physical deposition of police personnel before the courts was accepted.

The move comes after Delhi police on Monday issued a circular directing all police officers to appear physically before the courts for evidence.

The strike was called in protest against a notification issued by the Lieutenant Governor that allowed police personnel to depose



Protesting lawyers ANI via video conferencing from their stations.

In response to the circular, Lawyers of the Delhi District Court Bar Associations withdrew their strike after the demand for physical deposition of police personnel before the court was met.

Earlier on Saturday evening, the Coordination Committee rejected the

request made by the Bar Council of India (BCI) to recall the upcoming strike against the deposition of police personnel from Police stations. The committee said that there shall be a complete abstention from work if their genuine demands are not acceded to.

Earlier on Saturday evening, the Coordination Committee rejected the request made by the Bar Council of India (BCI) to recall the upcoming strike against the deposition of police personnel from Police stations.

Delhi CM's husband attends Govt meetings: AAP leader

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj has asked the Bharatiya Janta Party to clarify the position of Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta's husband, alleging that he frequently attends government meetings.

The AAP leader added that it was the chief minister, Rekha Gupta, and not her husband who had taken the oath of the Constitution.

"Delhi CM Rekha Gupta has taken the oath of the Constitution... No country's law allows her husband to be included in government meetings. But we have seen that her husband is attend-



Aam Aadmi Party Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj ANI

ing meetings with them, conducting inspections, giving instructions to officers..." Bharadwaj said.

Stating that CM's husband is a businessman the AAP leader asked "How can he run the government or have a stake in running the gov-

Earlier in the day, Bharadwaj in a post on X termed Rekha Gupta's husband at official government meetings as "completely unconstitutional".

ernment? This is completely unethical and unconstitutional... My question to the BJP. They should say what position Rekha Gupta's husband holds?"

Earlier in the day, Bharadwaj in a post on X termed Rekha Gupta's husband at official government meetings as "completely unconstitutional".

In his X post, Bharadwaj compared the situation to that portrayed in the popu-

lar web series "Panchayat" which portrays the functioning of a Gram Panchayat in the fictional village of Phulera.

"Delhi Government Becomes Phulera Panchayat. Just as in Phulera's panchayat, where the woman sarpanch's husband acted as the sarpanch, today in Delhi, the CM's husband is sitting in official meetings. We had previously mentioned

that the CM's husband attends official meetings, conducts meetings with officials, and carries out inspections," Bharadwaj said in X post.

"This is completely unconstitutional. In the nation's capital, democracy and the constitutional system are being mocked in this manner," he said.

Bharadwaj further questioned whether the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which often criticises Congress for dynastic politics, would justify such a move. "The BJP, which relentlessly criticises Congress for dynastic politics, should explain--is this not dynastic politics?" he asked.

Yamuna flows below danger mark in Delhi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The water level of the Yamuna River in Delhi dropped below the danger mark in the early hours of Monday, bringing relief after several days of flooding concerns.

Visuals from the Old Yamuna Bridge showed the river flowing below 205.30 metres.

The danger mark for the Yamuna in the city is 205.33 metres, while the warning level is 204.5 metres. Evacuations are generally initiated when the level reaches 206 metres.

With the level now receding, officials said the situation in the capital is gradually improving, though low-lying areas remain under watch.

The river was flowing above the danger mark last week, following heavy rainfall, leading to inundation in areas such as Monastery Market, Yamuna Bazaar,

Vasudev Ghat and nearby residential colonies.

Pumps were deployed to clear floodwater, and residents of low-lying localities were shifted to relief camps near Mayur Vihar Phase-I as a precaution.

On Friday, Delhi Minister Parvesh Verma urged people not to create unnecessary panic among citizens as he visited the Civil Lines area of Delhi amid the heavy rainfall in the national capital over

the past few days.

"There is not a drop of water in the Civil Lines area. The service road adjoining the ring road is 8 to 10 feet below the road level, and rainwater is being pumped out. It is not right to say that Delhi is submerged in the Yamuna River," he said.

Anticipating the possible flood situation, people residing in the low-lying areas were shifted to safer locations as a preventive measure.



The water level of the Yamuna River in Delhi dropped below the danger mark. ANI

Courier parcel theft of 385 mobile phones worth Rs 30 lakh cracked, four held

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Monday cracked a high-value courier parcel theft case involving 385 mobile phones worth approximately Rs 30 lakh and arrested four accused in connection with the case.

Delhi Police said that the accused in the case are Abhishek Singh (27), Vikas Singh Tomar (22), Kishan Chauhan (20), and Chetan Jha (28).

An E-FIR was registered at PS Karol Bagh on Friday under Section 303(2) BNS, following a complaint by a mobile phone trader from Siwan, Bihar. The complainant stated that he had been operating a mobile shop for the last 8-10 years and had ordered 385 new mobile phones from wholesalers in Karol Bagh, Delhi, on August 31.

The consignment was booked through BHR Courier, Bank Street, Karol

The police team scanned hundreds of CCTV footages to trace the accused and the e-rickshaw used in the theft.

Bagh, and handed over to Abhishek Singh, a courier driver, for transport in an e-rickshaw to NDLS Railway Station for dispatch via Vaishali Express.

Upon receiving the consignment in Siwan, Bihar,

the complainant discovered that the parcels contained only cardboard and waste paper instead of the mobile phones.

The police team scanned hundreds of CCTV footages to trace the accused

and the e-rickshaw used in the theft. Acting on a tip-off on September 6, a raid was conducted at Beadonpura, resulting in the arrest of two brothers, Vikas Singh and Abhishek Singh. Their residences were searched, and an e-rickshaw carrying six boxes containing 376 stolen mobile phones was recovered.

During interrogation, Vikas Singh revealed that he worked as an e-rickshaw driver in Karol Bagh, while his elder brother Abhishek

was employed with BHR Courier. Facing financial difficulties, Vikas conspired with his friend Kishan Chauhan (currently absconding) to steal valuable parcels. On August 31, they executed the theft near Jhandewalan by swapping genuine consignments with fake parcels using a duplicate key. The stolen parcels were transported to a hideout in Karol Bagh, where they were repacked into six boxes. Kishan Chauhan took nine phones, while the remaining were seized by the police.

Continuous technical and manual surveillance led to the tracing of Kishan Chauhan in Ashoka Pahari, Jhandewalan, Karol Bagh on Monday. Further investigation resulted in the arrest of his associate, Chetan Jha, from Uttam Nagar East, Delhi.

Efforts are ongoing to recover the remaining stolen property.



Representational Image

Delhi Police nabs man who stole gold urn worth Rs 1 cr from Jain function

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Monday said they have apprehended a man from Hapur in Uttar Pradesh in connection with the theft of a gold Kalash (Urn) estimated to be worth Rs 1 crore, from a religious programme held near the Red Fort in the national capital.

According to the Delhi Police's Crime Branch, the accused has been identified as Bhushan Verma, a resident of Hapur.

According to the police, the theft took place in a park near the Red Fort and was reported on September 3.

Along with a big jhari golden kalash (Urn) approximately weighing 760 grams a small jhari studded



Video grab of CCTV footage.

with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds and other items were reported stolen during the religious function organised by the Jain community.

Some of the stolen items were seized from the accused, and based on his statement, police are conducting searches in several places to retrieve other

items he stole from the venue.

DCP of North Delhi Raja Bantia said, "On September 3, a programme of the Jain community was going on. A pandal was set up there. A devotee had brought a golden Kalash studded with precious gems and it was reported stolen. A case was registered at the

According to the police, the theft took place in a park near the Red Fort and was reported on September 3.

Kotwali police station on Wednesday."

This Kalash (Urn) was brought to the programme by businessman Sudhir Jain but went missing from the stage during the function, police said.

Police said that the suspect was identified through CCTV footage, which captured his activities. Based on the footage they conducted searches and nabbed the suspect.

Nitish Katara murder case: SC declines to extend interim bail of Vikas Yadav

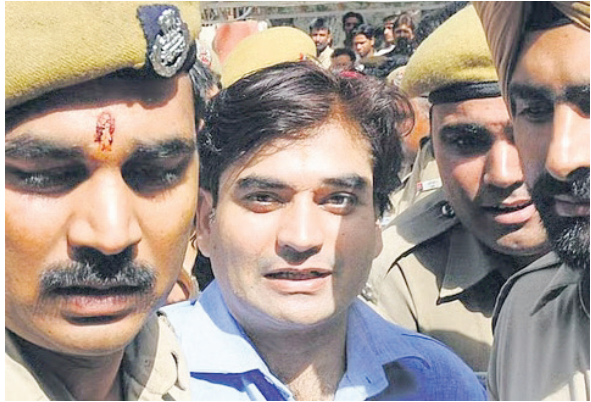
TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to grant further extension of the interim bail to Vikas Yadav, who is serving a 25-year-long jail term in the 2002 Nitish Katara murder case.

A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and Satish Chandra Sharma asked Yadav's counsel to approach the Delhi High Court for extension or grant of fresh interim bail in the case.

During the hearing, Yadav's counsel urged the bench to consider the plea seeking extension of interim bail instead of directing him to move the High Court.

However, the counsel informed the bench that he



Vikas Yadav in police custody. ANI

would approach the High Court after the apex court hinted that it would reject the plea.

Earlier, the top court had extended Yadav's interim bail by one week.

Yadav had approached the apex court against an August 22 order of the Delhi

High Court, which refused to grant an extension of his interim bail granted by the top court on July 29.

Yadav, 54, who has been in jail for over 23 years, had also sought interim bail on the ground that his marriage was fixed for September 5.

On April 24, the apex court granted interim bail to Yadav to enable him to attend to his ailing mother, who had undergone surgery and said he shall reside only at his residence in Ghaziabad. The top court has been extending his interim bail since then.

Granting interim bail to Yadav, the top court had said he shall not make any contact with the witness who deposed against him and Neelam Katara, the mother of Nitish Katara.

It had also asked the Uttarakhnad and Delhi police to provide security to witnesses and Neelam Katara.

The top court had also noted that Yadav has completed 23 years of his imprisonment in the case.

BIHAR ELECTION 2025

TEJASHWI YADAV CALLS BIHAR HUB OF UNEMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION

Tejashwi Yadav accused the NDA government of driving Bihar into unemployment, migration, and poverty.

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

With the Bihar Assembly state elections around the corner, ex-deputy minister of the state and ex-RJD MLA Tejashwi Yadav claimed that the NDA government has made Bihar a hub of unemployment, migration and poverty on Monday.

In a post on X, Tejashwi Yadav said that “Despite the Nitish-Modi government being in power in Bihar for 20 years and at the center for 11 years, the NDA government has made Bihar the main hub of unemployment, migration, and poverty. This is not my claim but what the Government of India’s NITI Aayog reports have been saying year after year.”

He further added that Bihar’s per capita income over the past 20 years continues to remain lower than that of the world’s poorest African countries,

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tejashwi cites NITI Aayog reports to slam Nitish-Modi governance
- Claims Bihar’s per capita income lags behind Uganda and Rwanda
- Questions lack of sectoral clusters, industries, and factories in Bihar
- Criticises transparency in recruitment and rising corruption before state elections



RJD MLA Tejashwi Yadav. ANI

Uganda and Rwanda.

The son of Rashtriya Janta Dal president Lalu Prasad Yadav, through his post, asked questions to Nitish Kumar and PM Narendra Modi, saying, “Why is Bihar the main hub of unemployment? And how much migration has taken place from Bihar in the past 20 years, and why is migration increasing at an unprecedented rate in Bihar?”

Furthermore, Yadav asked why the government

Additionally, he also questioned the government over the transparency of exam and recruitment processes for the past 20 years.

has not established sector-specific clusters in the state for 20 years. He also asked that how many mills, total industries and factories have shut down in the state. Additionally, he also

questioned the government over the transparency of exam and recruitment processes for the past 20 years.

Earlier, Tejashwi Yadav made a jab at the NDA-led

government of Bihar, saying that the people of Bihar will ask if Prime Minister Narendra Modi can gain “victory” in Bihar by allegedly “setting up factories” in Gujarat. On Sunday. He also slammed the NDA-led government of Bihar over the lack of development in the state.

Speaking to reporters, Tejashwi Yadav said, “Crime and corruption have increased. This is the situation of Bihar. See the condition of education, irrigation, and healthcare. Bihar is the worst when it comes to per capita income and per capita investment. Bihar is in last place in terms of Farmers’ income. There is no industry, no business.

Meanwhile, the Bihar elections are set to be held later this year, in October or November. However, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has not yet announced an official date.

Bihar has moved from Jungle Raj to Startup Raj: Min Nityanand Rai

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

With the Bihar Assembly elections around the corner, Union Minister Nityanand Rai on Monday responded to RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav’s criticism, asserting that Bihar has moved from a “jungle raj” to a “startup raj” under the NDA, highlighting the government’s focus on development and employment generation ahead of the polls.

He urged Tejashwi Yadav to acknowledge these advancements and refrain from spreading confusion.

In a post on X, Rai emphasised that the state has witnessed substantial development across multiple sectors, from agriculture and industry to IT and tourism, contrasting it with the previous regime.

“Tejashwi Yadav ji, you lack knowledge. You are unable to see Bihar’s development. You are only spreading confusion. The reality is right in front of you. Tejashwi Yadav ji, for your information, let us tell you that our Bihar has become a hub for food processing. The Prist Park in Khagaria has already



Union Minister Nityanand Rai. ANI

started, while the Mega Food Park in Motipur, Muzaffarpur, is ready. Under the PMFME scheme, Bihar ranks number 1 in the country, with 10,296 units approved and 6,589 units receiving loans in 2024-25. To make Bihar’s Makhana farmers prosperous, a Makhana Board has been established, and 89 cold storage units are being built in the state. The question arises: why didn’t all this happen during your parents’ regime? Because during your rule, farmers were looted day and night,” Rai said.

On employment and IT, Rai noted the state now hosts IT parks in Patna and Darbhanga, an SDPI Center in Bhagalpur, and active projects in Gaya and

Muzaffarpur.

He added, “When the country was riding the chariot of technology, Lalu ji used to say, “What milk will this IT-YT yield?” Today, see for yourself: IT Parks are ready in Patna and Darbhanga, an SDPI Center has started in Bhagalpur, and work is progressing rapidly in Gaya and Muzaffarpur. After the state’s IT Policy 2024, groundwork for investments worth over 4,000 crore has been laid in Bihar. Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have been approved for Buxar and West Champaran. Tejashwi ji, during RJD’s rule, IT was a joke, but in the NDA’s era, IT Parks are the path to progress and prosperity for Biharis.”

Kishor suggests Muslims ally with Hindus who follow Gandhi, Ambedkar

TDG NETWORK
KISHANGANJ

Jan Suraj Party Founder Prashant Kishor on Sunday advocated for an alliance between 20 per cent Muslims and Hindus who are “Gandhians, Ambedkarites, communists and socialists.”

While addressing a gathering at a Muslim conference in Bihar’s Kishanganj, Kishor argued that half of the Hindus don’t vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He asserted that Muslims should join hands with them to fight the “long battle”.

“In this country, Hindus are 80 per cent, and the BJP got only 40 per cent. This means that half of the Hin-

dus don’t vote for the BJP. You people have to recognise who doesn’t vote for the BJP. They are Hindus who follow Gandhi, Babasaheb Ambedkar, communism, and socialism. Jan Suraj believes that if these Hindus and 20 per cent Muslim join hands, we can fight the long battle,”



Jan Suraj Party Founder Prashant Kishor. ANI

Kishor said.

He further criticised AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi over the latter’s position that Muslims must fight alone to defeat the BJP. He said that Jan Suraj believes in fighting together with Hindus who are ideologically motivated to defeat the ruling party in

the centre.

“This is the difference between Owaisi sahib and Jan Suraj. Owaisi is my friend. He wants Muslim to fight alone with the BJP. But I want your support and that of Hindus who are ideologically inclined to ally with you,” Kishor said, adding that Mahatma Gandhi’s ideology was the only way to defeat the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh’s (RSS) ideology.

“I am not asking your vote, but want your support. You want to defeat the BJP, but you don’t know where its power lies. It is not Modi, Shah. It is the ideology of RSS. If you want to defeat the BJP, you people have to create an ideological ground.

People of Bihar will carry opposition on shoulders in polls: Congress MP Tariq Anwar

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Responding to a video of him being carried on shoulders during a flood inspection in Bihar’s Katihar, Congress MP Tariq Anwar on Monday said the incident reflects public support, adding that “the people of Bihar will carry the opposition on their shoulders in the upcoming assembly elections.”

Explaining the incident, Anwar said he was affected by sunstroke and warned against walking through muddy flood-hit areas.

Speaking to ANI, Anwar said, “I was a little affected by sunstroke because it was very hot, and secondly, the people there were saying

that if you go into the mud, you will get stuck and fall. So they lifted me on their shoulders and there was no problem...When people saw that I was uncomfortable, they themselves told me Don’t walk in the mud like this, we will take you there.”

“The way we got support from the people in



Congress MP Tariq Anwar. ANI

our yatra, youths came forward, women came forward. It seems that the people of Bihar will carry the opposition on their shoulders in the upcoming assembly elections this time,” he added.

On Sunday, Congress MP Tariq Anwar was on a visit to his constituency, Katihar, for inspection of the flood-affected areas of Manihari and the Barari areas of Katihar.

In a social media post on X, Anwar wrote, “Today, I inspected the flood-affected areas of Manihari and Barari. People are facing severe difficulties due to the floods and river erosion. I stand with the affected families in this difficult time and appeal to the

government for prompt relief and concrete solutions.”

Earlier, BJP leader Shehzad Poonawalla slammed Congress MP Tariq Anwar after a video of villagers carrying him on their shoulders during an inspection of flood-hit areas in Bihar went viral on social media.

Terming it a “sense of entitlement,” the BJP leader came down heavily on Anwar asking if he needs a “VVIP protocol” in flood affected areas too.

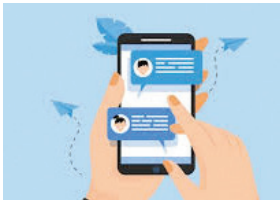
In a social media post on X, Poonawalla wrote, “Sense of entitlement of Congress. Even in flood affected areas they want VVIP protocol? Kharge ji insults farmers.

TRAI denies role in approval or rejection of political party SMS campaigns

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Monday clarified that it does not approve or reject SMS campaigns, following media reports that it had denied permission to a political party in Maharashtra.

According to a release from the Ministry of Communications, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has noted cer-



Representative Image

tain media reports alleging that TRAI has rejected the application of a political party for sending SMS to its workers in Maharashtra in relation to a campaign of the party.

As per the release, TRAI

said, “TRAI categorically denies any role in the acceptance or rejection of such individual SMS campaigns. The approval or rejection of SMS message templates is carried out by the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs).”

According to the release, TRAI said, “TRAI is not involved in the acceptance or rejection of individual SMS campaigns. These functions are carried out by TSPs in accordance with the framework prescribed under TCCCP, 2018.”

AAP MLA Mehraj Malik booked under PSA provisions

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Mehraj Malik, representing Doda constituency of Jammu and Kashmir, was booked under provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act 1978 (PSA) on Monday on grounds of his activities being prejudicial to the maintenance of public order.

According to reports, action against him has been taken after due consideration of all relevant materials, reports and circumstances clearly establishing that the continuance of such activities by a member of the Legislative Assembly posed a grave threat to peace, public order and tranquillity in a district.

Preventive detection under PSA was found necessary in the interest of maintaining public order and safeguarding law and order in the region.

AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal strongly reacted to the arrest, questioning the rationale behind the same,



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Mehraj Malik. ANI

further stating that it was an attack on democracy.

“Is demanding a hospital for the people your area such a grave crime that an elected MLA has to be thrown jail for it? Mehraj Malik is the lion of the Aam Aadmi Party. He will always remain the voice of the people, fighting for their rights. Jail, threats, and conspiracies... none of these can ever scare any soldier of AAP,” the post read.

People’s Democratic Party (PDP) MLA Waheed Para termed the arrest as a

“shameful surrender,” further stating that it is a direct assault on democracy.

Further in his post, Para demanded the protection of the democratic sanctity of elected representatives.

“Shameful surrender. Assembly Secretariat endorsing PSA against an elected MLA is a direct assault on democracy. J&K CM @OmarAbdullah must act, don’t allow the institution of MLA, the last agency of the people, to be silenced. Today it’s Mehraj, tomorrow it could be you,” the post read.

Gujarat industry associations meet CM Patel; welcome Centre’s new GST reforms

TDG NETWORK
GANDHINAGAR

Representatives of several industry associations in Gujarat welcomed the Centre’s new GST reforms, describing them as a step towards simplifying business operations and boosting industrial growth.

According to a release, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the recently implemented Next-Gen GST reforms have been welcomed positively by Gujarat’s business organisations.

In this regard, representatives of various industry associations of the state met Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel in the presence of Industries Minister Balwantsinh Rajput and expressed their gratitude to the Central Government for this initiative of the Prime Minister and the Government of India.

The representatives of the industry associations described these new reforms in the GST framework by the Central Government as a positive and inspiring step for



Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel with Minister Balwantsinh Rajput. ANI

industrial development. They also expressed hope that the new GST framework would simplify daily business operations and create a business-friendly environment with improved logistical ease.

Moreover, they conveyed confidence that these new reforms will accelerate and double the pace of industrial and commercial growth across the country, including Gujarat.

The delegation that met the Chief Minister to express gratitude included representatives from the Federation of Indian Spice Stakeholders, Wadhwan Industries Association, Sanand Industries Association, Federation of Industries of Gujarat, and Ahmedabad Engineering Manufacturers Association.

Indian Army at the forefront of nation’s battle against floods

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Even as large parts of the country continue to reel under devastating floods this year, the Indian Army has once again stood tall in its commitment to safeguard the lives of fellow citizens. Since the onset of the monsoon season in April 2025, Army troops have been relentlessly engaged



Representative Image

in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions across 75 locations nationwide.

With 126 rescue columns mobilised, the Army has

rescued more than 21,500 civilians, extended medical aid to nearly 9,700 people, and delivered over 23,500 kilograms of relief supplies to affected communities, said the army in a release.

To restore connectivity and sustain relief operations, Army engineers have constructed 29 bridges, including one stretching 110 feet, besides strengthening bundhs at 12 locations.

INDIA SET TO EMERGE AMONG WORLD'S TOP THREE ECONOMIES: PIYUSH GOYAL

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Monday said that India will become one of the world's top three economies in the coming two to two-and-a-half years, highlighting the country's rapid economic progress in recent years.

Speaking at the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations of the Engineering Exports Promotion Council (EEPC) at Vigyan Bhawan, Goyal highlighted India's journey from being one of the weakest economies a decade ago to now standing among the top five. "Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance, India has come from being one of the world's five weakest economies in 2014 to become one of the top five economies in 2025. In the coming two to two-



Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal. File Photo

and-a-half years, India will become one of the world's top 3 economies," he said.

The event was attended by distinguished heads of mission from various countries and marked by the presence of the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

The minister spoke about recent economic performance stating that India's GDP grew by 7.8 per cent in the last quarter, which he described as a record. He also projected that by

2047, India will become a 30 trillion-dollar economy.

Goyal credited reforms such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST) for creating new opportunities. "The GST reform is very extensive. With simplification and rate cuts, the country's economy will move forward even more. New job opportunities will increase. People will spend more. We must ensure that the benefits of GST rate cuts reach consumers," he said.

The event was attended by distinguished heads of mission from various countries and marked by the presence of the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

Speaking about EEPC, the minister pointed to the role of engineering exports in the country's growth story. "In 1970, EEPC exported goods worth 10 million dollars. Today, EEPC has reached 116 billion dollars in exports," Goyal said.

He stressed the need for high-quality products to be manufactured and sold within the country, urging people to strengthen their preference for indigenous goods, noting that the world's confidence in India should be met with faith at home. "We must keep the faith that the world shows in India today," Goyal added.

ed.

On sustainability, Goyal said India is committed to playing a responsible role in addressing climate change. "In the big challenge of global climate warming, India acts as a responsible global citizen. India has been among the top 3 in global sustainability efforts," he stated.

Goyal said the country has enough strength to face any challenge.

"No matter how big a challenge becomes, the country has enough strength; it neither fears nor bows down before any challenge," he stated.

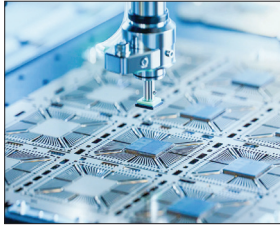
‘India can disrupt Semicon race, lead in post-silicon tech with 2D materials’

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India has the potential to disrupt the semiconductor race and emerge as a leader in post-silicon technologies by leveraging two-dimensional (2D) materials, according to a report released by the Indian government think-tank NITI Aayog.

The report highlighted that the convergence of semiconductor policy and 2D materials research presents an opportunity for comprehensive technological advancement. This convergence, it noted, could allow India to position itself at the forefront of the global semiconductor shift.

NITI Aayog stated, "2D materials research presents an opportunity for comprehensive technological advancement that could provide India an opportunity to disrupt the Semicon race." Explaining the 2D mate-



Representative Photo

rials, the report stated that picture smartphones that fold like paper yet remain unbreakably resilient, or displays so thin they disappear into the surface.

Imagine ultra-efficient CPUs and GPUs that run faster and cooler, drastically cutting energy consumption and extending battery life by days. This is the groundbreaking potential of 2D materials.

2D materials are crystalline substances with a thickness of one to a few atomic layers, typically less than 1 nanometer.

Their atomically thin structure, extending in two dimensions with minimal

thickness in the third, imparts unique electronic, optical, and mechanical properties compared to traditional 3D materials.

The report highlighted that 2D materials are at the core of next-generation semiconductors, memory, quantum devices, flexible electronics, and energy systems.

Ultra-thin 2D transistors can operate at sub-0.3V threshold voltages, delivering 5-10 times lower power dissipation than current FinFETs.

Additionally, 2D-based synaptic devices in high-density neuromorphic arrays can shrink chip area by over 40 per cent without compromising performance.

However, it also cautioned that India's efforts in mono-to-few-layer 2D materials-based technology development remain at a very nascent stage.

Per plate food cost in India moderated in August as inflation moderates

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Costs of home-cooked vegetarian and non-vegetarian thalis declined 7% and 8% year-on-year in August, respectively, in line with moderate commodity prices, according to Crisil Intelligence's latest Roti Rice Rate (RRR) report.

The decline in the cost of vegetarian thali was led by a sharp drop in the prices of onions, potatoes, and pulses.

Prices of potato and onion, according to the report, declined 31% and 37% year-on-year, respectively, on a high base.

"In the year-ago period, potato production had shrunk 5-7% due to blight infestation and weather changes, pushing up the prices. This year the production is estimated to be 3-5% higher. For onion, an 18-20% rise in annual production has led to a fall in prices this year," it has been asserted.



Representative Photo

Prices of pulses declined 14% year-on-year, driven by higher production and stock levels compared with the year-ago period. Vegetable oil prices surged 24% year-on-year due to higher demand at the start of the festival season. Additionally, a 6% year-on-year increase in prices of liquefied petroleum gas cylinders limited the decline in the overall cost of thalis, Crisil argued.

The decline in the cost of non-vegetarian thali was driven by a 10% year-on-year drop in broiler prices, which make up about 50% of the cost.

"Lower vegetable and pulses prices also supported," it added.

However, on a month-on-month basis, the cost of vegetarian and non-vegetarian thalis both rose, 4% and 2%, respectively, in August.

"The rise in the cost of non-vegetarian thali was capped as oversupply of broilers kept their prices stable on-month despite a rise in demand with the conclusion of the Shravan month," it added.

The overall year-on-year moderation in food costs is in sync with the decline in the headline inflation numbers.

India's retail inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), eased sharply to 1.55 per cent in July 2025 on a year-on-year basis, marking the lowest level since June 2017.

India's apparel export outlook revised to negative from stable: ICRA

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The outlook for the Indian apparel export industry has been revised to Negative from Stable by rating agency ICRA, following the upward revision in tariff rates by the US.

The move is expected to adversely impact India's overall apparel exports, with revenues likely to decline in the coming fiscal.

ICRA in a statement on Monday stated, "Lower exports and pressure on pricing to contract industry operating margins by 200-300 bps in FY2026; impact could be steeper for entities with higher concentration on the US market"

According to ICRA, if the



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recently imposed tariffs continue, the revenues of apparel exporters may fall by 6-9 per cent in FY2026, despite support from the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the UK and diversion of supplies to other geographies.

The agency also forecasts a decline in operating profit margins to around 7.5 per cent

in FY2026 from 10 per cent in FY2025, as weaker operating performance in the second half of the fiscal is expected to reduce operational efficiencies.

With lower earnings and higher working capital dependence, credit metrics are also likely to moderate.

ICRA also added that India currently holds a modest

6 per cent share in the US apparel import market. Exporters are expected to work hard to retain their market position, as losing share could make recovery difficult.

The impact of tariffs will vary depending on product categories. For some specifications, an immediate shift of US orders to lower-tariffed countries may not be feasible due to differences in manufacturing capabilities and the time needed to build capacities.

In constant currency terms, India's apparel exports have been largely flat over the past five years, due to subdued demand in key markets and a shift in sourcing to Bangladesh and Vietnam.

Food-processing sector a major beneficiary of GST cuts

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The food-processing sector has been a major beneficiary of the recently announced rationalisation of GST rates, with most products witnessing a decline to a 5 per cent GST slab.

The rationalisation of GST to lower levels provides a variety of stimulants to the sector and encourages a virtuous cycle of economic growth.

On September 22, the first day of Navratri, all changes in GST rates will come into effect.

"The simplified tax structure brings uniformity across food items with reduced number of tax slabs. A stable tax environment will help businesses plan long-term investments, encourage compliance, and drive economic growth," according to a statement from Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

Consumers will witness overall reduced food prices, making staples more afford-

able.

"This in turn stimulates consumer demands, FMCG and packaged food businesses are expected to see an uptick in sales. Additionally, the simplification aids businesses by reducing compliance costs and lowering litigation risk," the ministry added.

The new structure helps correct inverted duty cases -- when inputs were taxed higher than finished products.

The recent GST reform provides immediate relief for strengthening the value chains in the food sector, improving liquidity especially for MSMEs, reduce working capital blockage and promote domestic value addition.

The new structure eliminates classification disputes arising from varying tax rates for similar products.

For example, packaged versus loose paneer or parathas previously had different rates, but now follow a clearer structure and

greatly reduces classification disputes.

"GST rate cuts will result in lower retail prices, which in turn will increase demand for manufactured products including processed food products," the ministry further said. "With increased demand, expected rise in investment and formalisation of industry, more employment opportunities are expected to be generated in the sector and economy as whole."

In a historic move to simplify the Goods and Services Tax (GST), GST Council in its 56th meeting has reduced the GST structure from four slabs (5%, 12%, 18%, 28%) to two main rates - 5% (merit rate) and 18% (standard rate) along with a 40% special rate for sin/luxury goods. These changes come into effect from September 22, 2025.

Sweeping changes have been made to what the government termed the next-generation GST (Goods and Services Tax) rationalisation.

International gold crosses USD 3,600 to touch new high

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Gold futures breached the USD 3,600 per ounce mark on Monday, marking their fresh all-time high, on expectations that the US Federal Reserve will cut the key policy rate.

At 16.06 IST, international gold traded at USD 3,656 per ounce.

Traditionally, rate cuts invariably make safe-haven asset gold lucrative.

"Tariff uncertainties along with firm rate cut expectations continue to provide strong support to Gold," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities.

According to Trivedi, key support for gold is seen at USD 3560, while resistance at USD 3650.

Weak US labour data bolstered expectations of an imminent Federal Reserve rate cut, Kedia Advisory said in a



Representative Image.

note. August payrolls showed fewer job additions than forecast, while unemployment rose to its highest since 2021, raising pressure on the Fed to ease policy.

Gold, internationally, has been continuing with its stellar run.

"The move (rise in gold prices) was driven by weaker-than-expected non-farm payrolls data, which strengthened the case for an imminent rate cut," Axis Securities said.

In August 2025, it closed the month at USD 3,429 per ounce, marking a 3.9 per cent monthly gain, and taking its year-to-date rise to 31.4 per cent, according to World Gold Council data.

India, EU resume trade talks; Qatar FTA framework expected soon

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's trade deal negotiations are set to gain momentum this week with multiple bilateral engagements underway, including fresh rounds with the European Union (EU).

An EU negotiations team has already arrived in New Delhi and formally began talks today, sources said.

According to a government official, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will meet the European Union's Trade Commissioner on Friday to review the ongoing discussions for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Trade talks with New Zealand, Chile, and Peru are "progressing well," a source said.

Talks with Qatar have also

entered an advanced phase with both sides are expected to conclude the terms of reference for a proposed FTA early next month, the sources said.

Sources further indicated that Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal may travel to Qatar in the first week of October, to advance these discussions.

India has over the past 5 years inked several trade deals, that include the India-



Representative Image.

Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and

Partnership Agreement (CECPA) implemented in

2021, the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) in 2022, the India-European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) in 2024, and the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) signed in 2025,

which is yet to come into force.

The India-European Union Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) is expected to be implemented later this year once all parties complete their ratification processes.

Meanwhile, India is in talks for several other agreements, including the India-EU FTA, India-Australia Comprehen-

sive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), India-Sri Lanka Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement, India-Peru FTA, India-Chile CEPA, India-New Zealand FTA, and a bilateral trade agreement with the United States.

Negotiations for a comprehensive trade deal between India and Oman, which commenced in 2023, have been concluded recently.

GST 2.0: PRIME MINISTER'S INDEPENDENCE DAY GIFT

OPINION

R. K. PACHNANDA



On the 15th of August, from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a vision that will redefine India's economic journey. His announcement of GST 2.0 marked not just the launch of a tax reform, but the beginning of a new chapter in India's pursuit of prosperity, equity and self-reliance. For crores of ordinary citizens, small traders, women, farmers and the middle class, this reform is nothing less than a promise of a better tomorrow.

The old GST structure, with its multiple slabs and endless classifications, often left both businesses and consumers inconvenienced. GST 2.0 sweeps away this burden, replacing the patchwork with a simpler, cleaner, and more transparent system. With just two primary slabs—5 percent and 18 percent—more than 99 percent of goods and services are

now covered. Essentials are either exempt or taxed at the lowest slab, ensuring that the aam aadmi, the common man, directly feels the benefit. This bold step will reduce disputes, cut down litigation and hasten the ease of doing business.

The most immediate impact of this reform will be felt in every Indian household. By rationalizing rates, everyday essentials like milk, flour, paneer and groceries have become cheaper. For middle-class families that constantly balance rising prices against stagnant incomes, this is a huge relief. Home-cooked meals will now be more affordable and monthly household budgets can finally stretch further. When the pressure of survival eases, families can breathe a little easier, spend on better nutrition, invest in their children's education and even set aside something for the future. This is the quiet yet powerful promise of GST 2.0—it restores dignity and hope to the daily lives of citizens.

But the benefits go far beyond household savings. GST 2.0 has been crafted as an engine of growth and employment. By simplifying taxes, lowering compliance costs and making the system predictable, the reform gives businesses

the confidence to expand. Experts already estimate that this overhaul could add one to two percentage points to India's GDP in the coming years. As goods become cheaper and consumption rises, factories will hum with activity, markets will thrive and new jobs will open up across sectors. This is not just a tax reform—it is a jobs reform, an opportunity reform and a growth reform rolled into one.

Small businesses and MSMEs, the backbone of India's economy, stand to gain the most. These enterprises have long struggled with endless paperwork, refund delays and the constant fear of misclassification. The old system forced them to waste precious resources on compliance instead of focusing on growth. GST 2.0 changes the game. Refunds will now be faster and system-based, registrations for eligible applicants will be automatic within three days and digital tools will ensure smoother filings. This means no more working capital stuck in queues, no more sleepless nights over paperwork and no more unfair competition due to arbitrary classifications. For the neighbourhood shopkeeper, the small manufacturer and the online seller, this reform is nothing less than liberation.

For those selling on e-commerce platforms, the change is equally dramatic. The two-slab system reduces the need for constant re-tagging, minimizes catalog errors and cuts down penalties for small mistakes. By allowing platforms to standardize taxes



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and auto-populate returns, GST 2.0 frees entrepreneurs to focus on what they do best: creating, selling, and growing. Every rupee saved on compliance can now be reinvested in wages, technology or marketing. For MSMEs, this reform translates into resilience, competitiveness and, most importantly, survival.

The reform also speaks to India's sense of equity. Luxury goods such as

high-end cars, tobacco, and aerated drinks continue to be taxed heavily, while essential items used daily by ordinary families remain affordable. This progressive approach ensures that the burden is shouldered by those who can afford it, while the poor and middle class are shielded. By bridging the tax gap between income and expenditure, GST 2.0 becomes not only an economic reform but also a

social equalizer.

Transparency is another cornerstone. With fewer slabs, invoices will clearly state applicable rates, leaving no room for confusion. Consumers will no longer be puzzled by why one brand of biscuit costs more tax than another just because of minor variations in packaging. Businesses will find it harder to exploit loopholes or indulge in black-market practices. Honest taxpayers will feel

reassured that the system no longer rewards manipulation. Clarity and trust have been placed at the heart of India's tax regime.

Just as importantly, GST 2.0 strengthens the spirit of cooperative federalism. The reform ensures that states and the Centre work in harmony, sharing both responsibilities and rewards. A unified system, powered by technology, will make compliance easier and disputes rarer. With AI-driven tools, automated assessments, and e-invoicing, India's tax network is set to become more efficient, fair and modern. For citizens, this means less harassment and faster resolutions; for businesses, it means an environment where honesty is encouraged.

Ultimately, GST 2.0 is about vision. It is about imagining an India where taxation is not a burden

but a facilitator of growth. It is about empowering the middle class, nurturing small businesses, curbing evasion and attracting global investors with a fair and stable system. For citizens, it promises lower prices, more choices and better opportunities. For entrepreneurs, it offers freedom from red tape and the chance to grow without fear. For the nation, it holds the potential of higher GDP, increased employment and a more resilient economy.

When Prime Minister Modi spoke of GST 2.0 on Independence Day, he was not merely announcing a policy change. He was affirming a vision of an India that is simpler, fairer and more inclusive. This reform will percolate to every kitchen, every small shop, every classroom, and every factory. It will reduce inequality, strengthen governance and restore faith in the system. Most importantly, it is a reform that belongs to the people—it will lighten their burden, fuel their aspiration and build their confidence in the nation's future.

GST 2.0 is not only a tax reform but a turning point, a bold stride towards self-reliance and prosperity. It will be remembered as the reform that made life simpler for citizens while laying the foundation of a stronger, more confident and more self-reliant India.

The author is a former Chairman, Haryana Public Service Commission and Chairman, Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission. His views are personal.

Ram and Krishna Katha contain perpetual nectar

Our youths can learn a great deal from Ramcharitmanas & Shrimad Bhagavad.

OPINION

DR VIJAY DARDA



There is an interesting reference in the mythological beliefs. One day, Maharshi Valmiki asked Narad ji if there existed a person on Earth who was the very embodiment of all virtues, one who could truly be called Maryada Purushotam, the supreme man of honour and righteousness. Narad ji, a perpetual traveller of the three worlds and often hailed as the world's first journalist, instantly uttered the name of Shri Ram of the Ikshvaku dynasty. For millennia, the same Lord Shri Ram has lived not merely as a deity in our hearts, but as an eternal fount of inspiration.

You may be wondering why am I suddenly recall-

ing this reference to Lord Shri Ram and why am I sharing it with you today? The truth is that at this moment in my hometown Yavatmal, eminent scholar and 'kathakar' Shri Morari Babu is narrating the timeless Ram Katha. While I was occupied with the preparations for this significant event, some people approached me with a question that, while understandable, reveals a certain perspective: "You follow Jainism, so why are you, as a leader, organising this narration of the Ramayan?" I recognise the root of such questions. Religion, in its modern form, has been fragmented into so many distinct parts that people have lost sight of the fundamental truth: The core essence of all faiths is a singular and universal one. I respond very simply: Only when you truly grasp the essence of religion, you realise what a follower of Jainism can learn from the story of Lord Shri Ram. It was my mother Veena Devi Darda and later my wife Jyotsna who, having understood the basic

principles of religion, told me that while our ways of worship may differ, the ultimate goal of all religions is the same. The lives of Lord Shri Ram and Lord Shri Krishna serve as boundless sources of inspiration for all of humanity. Therefore, we must organise Ram Katha. Prior to that, we had already organised the Chaturmas of Sadhvi Preeti Sudha ji, and we had experienced how not only Jains but people from many other religions also came in large numbers to listen to her discourses. Later, when we organised the Shrimad Bhagavad Katha of Shri Ramesh Bhai Oza, people from all religions participated enthusiastically. Now, I am witnessing the same enthusiasm and spirit in Shri Morari Babu's Ram Katha as well.

Be it Shri Morari Babu, Shri Ramesh Bhai Oza, Jaya Kishori ji or other such saints, society holds a distinct faith in them -- that they are guiding people towards a better direction. But there are also some individuals who, in the garb of sainthood, perform tricks like magicians and present them as divine powers. At times, politics also exploits such figures for its own gain, but this causes great harm to society. Very few religions have remained untouched by this tendency of creating so-called "miracles". Simi-



Ramcharitmanas and Shrimad Bhagavad contain all the principles of life. There is a need to preserve these principles.

larly, the belief of "we are superior" within religions has also deeply harmed both society and religion. My intention behind organising such events is by no means purely religious. Rather, my purpose is the critical need to instil strong values within society. For any nation, its true

strength lies in its culture. But look at what is happening today. Our younger generation is not being shown the path of culture and values, which are our greatest wealth in true sense. If our identity has survived despite centuries of subjugation, it is mainly because of this robust cul-

ture and these enduring values. After all, Indian culture champions the concept of the entire Earth as one family and speaks of the welfare of every living being in the world.

I have tried to understand, contemplate and analyse nearly all religions. That is why I speak of religious and spiritual harmony. When I listen to Shri Morari Babu, I am inspired by the ideal conduct of Lord Shri Ram. If you read Ramcharitmanas, you will come face to face with the amazing personality of Lord Shri

Ram. He stands the test of science as well -- he had utmost respect for his father's command, which sent him to exile and also boundless reverence for Kaikeyi, the very queen responsible for that exile. What a profound example this is! Gentle, humble, soft-spoken, truthful, intelligent, patient, and at the same time, immensely courageous! Today, society remains troubled by the chains of caste divisions and the oppression of women. Yet, Lord Shri Ram set a powerful example of equality. By eat-

ing the berries offered by Shabari, he showed profound respect for women and shattered the rigid boundaries of caste. Moreover, he built an army with no resources and led it to victory against a warrior as mighty as Ravan. Where else can today's youth find such a powerful lesson in leadership and management?

The same holds true for Lord Shri Krishna. On the battlefield, serving as Arjun's charioteer, he faced the colossal Kaurav army. Though seemingly alone, he masterfully guided the Pandavas to victory -- a profound example of management. Throughout his human life, he endured constant hardships, yet his spirit never wavered and his face never lost its radiant glow. From him, our youths can learn the art of channelling inner strength and cultivating unwavering belief in their own abilities. Shrimad Bhagavad and Ramcharitmanas contain all the principles of life. True saints make us aware of these very principles. I am confident this event, under the guidance of Shri Morari Babu, will succeed in uniting the society as one, away from caste, sectarian and religious differences.

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FROM POONA PACT TO MANDAL PROTESTS: UNRAVELING INDIA'S CASTE QUOTAS AND CENSUS DEBATE

In 1932, Gandhi's hunger strike forced a deal with Ambedkar: they scrapped separate Dalit electorates in exchange for reserved seats, setting the stage for India's caste-based reservations.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Mahatma Gandhi was lying weak in Yerwada Jail, several days into a fast unto death. Outside, frenetic negotiations were underway between Gandhi's emissaries and Dr BR Ambedkar, champion of India's "Depressed Classes" (Dalits). The British government's Communal Award had granted Dalits separate electorates – a move Ambedkar welcomed, but Gandhi vehemently had opposed. Under immense pressure, Ambedkar and Gandhi struck a compromise on September 24, 1932. The resulting Poona Pact averted Gandhi's death and replaced separate electorates with reserved seats for Dalits in joint electorates. It is a seminal moment: an early framework for affirmative action in India, trading independent Dalit political representation for guaranteed representation within the Hindu fold.

Nearly six decades later, Prime Minister V.P. Singh rises in Parliament and announces the implementation of the **Mandal Commission** recommendations, extending government job quotas to "Other Backward Classes" (OBCs). The news explodes like a political bombshell. Protests erupt nationwide; students from upper-caste communities block roads and railways, some resorting to the most extreme form of protest – **self-immolation**. The nation is convulsed by debates over merit versus social justice, unity versus caste

identities. Yet, despite the turmoil, the courts uphold the new OBC reservations, solidifying India's most sweeping affirmative action policy since independence.

These two turning points – the **Poona Pact of 1932** and the **Mandal revolution of 1990** – bookend a complex history of caste-based quotas in India. Together, they set the stage for today's renewed debates over caste census and the very counting of caste in policy.

Balancing the legal milestones, political movements, and social implications of India's quota system, while also comparing global approaches to affirmative action tells a story of ideals and compromises: from colonial-era bargains and postcolonial nation-building to the ongoing quest to measure and remedy historic injustices.

THE POONA PACT OF 1932: SETTING THE STAGE FOR RESERVATIONS

In September 1932, as Gandhi's life hung in the balance, Dr. Ambedkar faced an agonizing choice. The British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's **Communal Award** had granted separate electorates to Dalits, meaning Dalit voters alone would elect their representatives. Ambedkar saw this as essential for empowering a downtrodden community; Gandhi believed it would vivisection Hindu society and permanently segregate "untouchables". When Gandhi launched his prison fast to oppose the Award, public pressure mounted on Ambedkar to relent. Af-

These two turning points – the Poona Pact of 1932 and the Mandal revolution of 1990 – bookend a complex history of caste-based quotas in India. Together, they set the stage for today's renewed debates over caste census and the very counting of caste in policy.

ter intense talks (and Gandhi's dramatic insistence that "separate electorates will create division among Hindus so much that it will lead to bloodshed"), a deal was struck.

The **Poona Pact**, signed on September 24, 1932, discarded separate electorates in favor of **joint electorates with reserved seats for Dalits**. Instead of the 71 seats that Dalits would have elected on their own under the British plan, the Pact reserved **148 seats** for the Depressed Classes in provincial legislatures – **78 more seats** than the Award had allotted. These Dalit candidates would be elected by the general Hindu electorate, but Dalit voters would have a primary election to shortlist candidates – a two-tiered voting process meant as a workaround to ensure Dalits a voice without separate electorates (though the primary election idea was later dropped). The Pact also pledged to end untouchability and earmarked a fair share of educational spending and government jobs for Dalits. In essence, it was India's first blueprint for **affirmative action**: guaranteeing representation and opportunities for an oppressed minority

within the framework of a united electorate.

The Poona Pact was a compromise born of high drama and moral duress. Gandhi's approach, rooted in faith that upper-caste "change of heart" would erase caste inequities, clashed with Ambedkar's insistence that **political power for Dalits was non-negotiable** for true equality. Ambedkar ultimately yielded, fearing that if Dalits were seen as letting Gandhi die, it would provoke backlash against his people. In return, Dalits gained more reserved seats than originally offered, but lost the chance for separate, self-determined leadership. This trade-off had profound consequences. In independent India, the concept of **reserved constituencies** for Scheduled Castes (and Scheduled Tribes) was enshrined in the Constitution, echoing the Pact's framework. Today, a portion of parliamentary and assembly seats (84 of 543 Lok Sabha seats for SCs, for example) are reserved for Dalit candidates. However, as critics point out, Dalit voters often remain a minority in those same constituencies, meaning Dalit representatives still depend on the goodwill of the majority to win. Ambedkar had warned that joint electorates could leave Dalit politicians beholden to the dominant caste electorate, diluting independent Dalit voices. This critique reverberates even today – a legacy of the fraught pact Ambedkar once likened to being "a settlement reached under the coercion of a fast" (as he later bitterly described it).

Yet, the Poona Pact undeniably paved the way for **reservations** as a policy tool. By securing formal representation and pledges of fair treatment for Dalits, it introduced the principle



Maratha Reservation Rally (Navi Mumbai, 2016). (File)

that the state must actively correct historic wrongs. The Pact's spirit would live on in the affirmative action clauses of India's post-independence Constitution, even as Ambedkar himself remained ambivalent about the compromise it forced upon him.

FROM INDEPENDENCE TO MANDAL: THE EXPANSION OF QUOTAS

When India's Constitution took effect in 1950, it incorporated the ethos of affirmative action directly inspired by these earlier struggles. The new republic guaranteed equality but also included provisions empowering the state to make "special provisions" for the advancement of **socially and educationally backward classes** (Article 15(4)), and to reserve posts in public employment for under-represented groups (Article 16(4)). Using these, the Constitution explicitly reserved seats in legislatures, government jobs, and educational institutions for **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** and **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**, who together made up roughly 22.5% of the population. These reservations were intended as a temporary measure for 10 years, but seeing their continued necessity, Parliament has renewed them repeatedly – they remain in force to this day.

Crucially, the Constitution also recognized a category of "Other Backward Classes" (OBCs) – a wide spectrum of castes which were socially and educationally disadvantaged but not part of the SC/ST groups. However, identifying who exactly fell into this nebulous category was easier said than done. In 1953, the first **Backward Classes Commission** headed by Kalelkar (popularly known as the Kaka Kalelkar Commission) delivered a voluminous report listing **2,399 communities as "backward"**, with recommendations for their uplift.

Yet the report's findings were largely shelved; the government felt the criteria were too vague and the political will to act was lacking. Some states, especially in South India, forged ahead with their own backward class quotas – for instance, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka had longstanding reservations for OBCs dating back to pre-independence Justice Party reforms and later state policies. But a coherent nationwide policy for OBCs remained elusive for decades.

By the 1970s, socio-political churn brought the issue of OBC reservations back to the fore. **Rising movements of intermediate castes** and regional parties (often led by leaders from backward communities) began challenging upper-caste dominance in politics. This culminated in 1979 when the Janata Party government of Prime Minister Morarji Desai appointed the **Second Backward Classes Commission** under chairmanship of B.P. Mandal – the commission that would become synonymous with OBC reservations. The **Mandal Commission**, as it came to be known, was tasked with defining criteria for backwardness and recommending measures to uplift OBCs in education and employment.

After extensive surveys and analysis, the Mandal Commission submitted its report in 1980. Its findings provided a statistical underpinning to what many already observed in society: OBCs formed an enormous section of India's population and lagged behind socially and educationally. Using multiple criteria – social stigma, educational attainment, representation in professions, etc. – the Commission identified **3,743 castes as OBC** and **2,108 "depressed backward classes"** (the latter a subset needing especially urgent help). Combining survey data, census figures, and existing state lists, Mandal estimated that

OBCs constituted about 52% of India's population (including around 8% non-Hindu OBC groups), while "forward" (upper) castes were about 17.5%, and SC/ST about 22.5%. This 52% figure from Mandal notably echoed the results of the **1931 caste census** – the last British-era census to count caste, which also found OBCs to be roughly half the population. It was an eerie continuity across time, suggesting that despite social changes, the broad pyramid of caste hierarchy – with a large base of "backward" communities – persisted into independent India.

The Mandal Commission's **primary recommendation** was bold: reserve **27% of seats in central government jobs and educational institutions** for OBCs. (Mandal actually contemplated a higher quota proportionate to the 52% population share of OBCs, but was constrained by a crucial legal principle: the Supreme Court had earlier signaled that **total reservations should not exceed 50%** in order to preserve meritocracy and opportunities for non-reserved categories. With 22.5% already set aside for SC/ST, Mandal's 27% for OBC would exactly hit a 49.5% total, under the cap.) The report also made other suggestions: financial support, educational opportunities, and land reforms to benefit backward classes. But it was the **quotas in jobs and education** that would become a lightning rod.

For nearly a decade, the Mandal report gathered dust as India saw unstable governments and leaders wary of the political risks. That changed in 1990, when V.P. Singh's National Front coalition, sensing a political and social imperative, decided to implement Mandal. **On August 7, 1990, V.P. Singh announced in Parliament that 27% of central government jobs would be reserved for OBCs**, fulfilling Mandal's core recommendation. What followed was

nothing short of a political earthquake.

MANDAL'S AFTERMATH: UPROAR, REFORMS, AND A NEW POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The 1990 decision to implement Mandal's 27% OBC reservations triggered fierce urban protests, especially among "general" category students. Rallies, bandhs and clashes with police became commonplace; the image of 19-year-old Delhi University student **Rajeev Goswami** attempting self-immolation seared itself into public memory. The debate hardened into "merit vs reservation," with critics warning of diluted standards and supporters insisting that merit can't flourish without leveling historic barriers. Politically, Mandal reordered power: sections of upper-caste anger drifted toward the BJP, while **OBC-led parties** and leaders – most visibly **Lalu Prasad Yadav** and **Mulayam Singh Yadav** – rode a wave of backward-caste assertion. Analysts often date the fracturing of Congress's dominance to the twin shocks of **Mandal (caste)** and **Mandir (religion)**. Legally, the Supreme Court's **Indra Sawhney (1992)** judgment upheld the 27% quota, set a **50% ceiling**, created the **creamy-layer** exclusion, and restricted **reservations in promotions**. Over time, millions accessed jobs and education, fostering an OBC middle class even as critiques persisted about the poorest being left behind and benefits being cornered by the better-off.

COUNTING CASTES: THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE CASTE CENSUS DEBATE

India's expansive reservation regime long ran on thin data: after 1951, the Census stopped counting caste (beyond SC/ST), leaving **Mandal** to lean on **1931** figures. A caste component gathered in **SECC 2011** was never nationally released, compounding the deficit. Proponents of a new caste census argue that accurate, disaggregated data are essential to **calibrate quotas, subclassify OBCs**, and assess policies (including EWS). Opponents fear entrenching identities and zero-sum politics. State surveys – most notably **Bihar's 2023** release showing OBC/EBC majorities – have intensified calls for a national exercise. With the Union signaling a caste enumeration in the next census, India appears poised to align its **ambitious equity architecture** with the **evidence** needed to steer it.



2006 Anti-Reservation Protest (Doctors in Delhi). (File)



Patidar Reservation Agitation (Ahmedabad, 2015). (File)

RUNNING IS THE BEST EXERCISE TO STAY FIT: VISHNU TAK

TDG NETWORK

Running is the best exercise to stay fit as compared to other exercises. Running is a very simple and quick-acting exercise. No special technique is required for running, but it is still very important to be careful. This not only controls weight but also the effect of ageing is seen on you late. In today's comfortable lifestyle, people do not have time for exercise. In such a situation, running is the best exercise. Running not only strengthens the muscles, but also keeps the body fit. This is what Vishnu Tak, a runner from Jaipur, says. Vishnu has created a world record by participating in more than 500 online and offline marathons so far.

Vishnu Tak says that he is 57 years old, but regular running has made this age just a number. Vishnu says that he has also participated in about 50 international virtual marathons. Vishnu Tak of Jaipur has started being considered a fitness guru for people. He also gives tips to people to stay healthy. He runs every day to keep himself fit and also makes people aware. Recently Vishnu also participated in Devils Circuit Marathon, which is considered to be the toughest marathon in Asia. This was the 12th season of Devils. In which more than 2000 people participated in fitness. Devils has organized this event in 12 cities in

India so far. In this, all the runners did many difficult trainings like rope way, ice bath, climbing and descending the rope, monkey bars, walking on the body in mud, wall jumping, swimming in water. Vishnu also completed all these trainings successfully.

While explaining the benefits of running, Vishnu said that running reduces the risk of diabetes, arthritis and heart diseases. He told that in the beginning we should not run for a long time. Gradually increase the time of exercise. He told that in the present time we cannot separate stress from modern lifestyle. You may have tried several methods of stress relief in the past. This time try running for a while every day. Tak says that running also relieves stress. Running also keeps weight under control. If you cannot run every day, then run at least 3 days a week. Running uses the excess fat in the body and keeps the body in shape.

Running helps in proper blood circulation and delays the appearance of wrinkles. Workout reduces stress and also brings glow to your skin. Running speeds up the body's metabolism and strengthens the immune system. For a healthy body, it is very important for the immune system to function properly. It is common to have problems like cold and cough with changing weather. But exercise can also relieve you from infec-



tions like cold and cough. Running is a good exercise for people of all ages, so why not adopt this easy exercise to look forever young. However, Vishnu Tak also advised the runners that if they already have any health problem, they should definitely contact a doctor once.

Along with telling the benefits of running, runner Vishnu Tak also said that it is very important to take care of some things before and after running, because adopting the wrong methods for running has a negative impact on our health. Therefore, one should always keep in mind the right steps while running. If you do not pay attention

to the right steps, then many bone-related problems can occur. He told that knee pain while running is common. This pain in the knee is also called runner's knee. There is pain in the heel and toes of the foot along with the knee. Pain occurs due to not using the right steps while running. So let us know in this article what things should be taken care of while running, so that we do not have to face diseases and problems later. He told that keep the knees stable while running and do not take them too high. While running, too much load should not be given to the body first. Walk a little in the beginning. If you run a lot on the

first day, then there will be a lot of load on the leg muscles. Therefore, run lightly, so that there is no pain and strain in the body.

The body should always be warmed up before running. Running without warming up can cause pain in the body muscles. First, run by taking small steps. Eat protein-rich food after running. Not running with the right steps can cause pain in the knees, heels, calves, and hymen muscles. If you are running after a long time, then there can be side pain. Side pain occurs below the stomach. Vishnu says that if running is done in the right way, then it is good for health.

Scrolling into distraction: The impact of reels on working memory



MANSI SONI

In recent years, short-form video content commonly known as "reels" on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts has exploded in popularity. Designed to be fast-paced, engaging, and algorithmically addictive, reels offer instant entertainment with minimal cognitive effort. However, this growing trend has raised concerns among psychologists, educators, and neuroscientists about its potential effects on cognitive functions, particularly attention span and working memory. As millions engage with these platforms daily, it is important to examine whether reels are merely harmless fun or if they are subtly reshaping the way our brains function.

THE SCIENCE OF ATTENTION SPAN AND WORKING MEMORY

Attention span refers to the amount of time a person can concentrate on a task without becoming distracted. Working memory, on the other hand, is the brain's ability to temporarily store and manipulate information to complete cognitive tasks like reasoning, learning, and comprehension. Both are essential for effective learning, productivity, and decision-making.

While attention and working memory are not fixed traits—they can be trained or deteriorated over time—they are sensitive to

environmental stimuli and usage patterns. With the constant influx of digital content, especially in bite-sized formats, our brains are increasingly exposed to rapid shifts in visual and auditory stimuli. This change in consumption habits is believed to influence the brain's attention systems and memory processes.

THE ALLURE OF REELS

Reels are intentionally designed to grab and hold attention in a matter of seconds. Their success lies in the combination of catchy audio, flashy visuals, short duration (typically 15 to 60 seconds), and the reward-based algorithm that tailors content to user preferences. This creates a "dopamine loop," a cycle in which the brain seeks more short bursts of pleasure by consuming more content. Over time, this can lead to compulsive scrolling behaviors akin to behavioral addiction.

The nature of reels also encourages constant novelty-seeking. Unlike traditional videos or articles that require sustained focus, reels condition the mind to expect new, exciting stimuli every few seconds. This may lead to a reduced tolerance for boredom and a lower threshold for cognitive effort, making tasks that require concentration feel tedious or unmanageable.

ATTENTION SPAN: SHRINKING BY THE SCROLL

Several studies suggest that frequent use of short-form video content may be contributing to a decline in attention spans. A 2022 study by the Technical University of Denmark found that the global attention span is narrowing due to the abundance of information and content. The research in-



indicated that as people are exposed to more rapid-fire content, their capacity to maintain focus on a single topic diminishes.

Reels encourage "attentional switching"—rapid shifts of focus from one piece of content to another. This multitasking-like behavior taxes the brain's executive control system, which manages focus, self-regulation, and goal-directed behavior. Over time, this may lead to difficulties in maintaining sustained attention in academic or work settings, reducing overall productivity and task performance.

WORKING MEMORY: A HIDDEN CASUALTY

While attention span is more visibly impacted by reels, working memory also faces subtle but significant consequences. When the brain is constantly bombarded with fragmented, uncontextualized information, it struggles to process and retain meaningful content. Reels often lack narrative depth or continuity, making it harder for the brain to form long-term connections or store information in working memory.

A study published in Nature Communications (2021) revealed that heavy users of



TikTok exhibited reduced brain activity in regions associated with working memory and cognitive control when compared to non-users. This finding supports the hypothesis that habitual exposure to short-form video content can impair the brain's capacity to engage in deep, reflective thinking—a key component of working memory.

Moreover, the constant consumption of shallow content can displace activities that strengthen working memory, such as reading, problem-solving, or engaging in complex discussions.

The brain, like a muscle, strengthens with use. When we stop exercising our working memory through mentally demanding tasks, it can weaken over time.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH

The implications of impaired attention and working memory are far-reaching. In educational settings, students who are accustomed to the high-speed nature of reels may find it difficult to concentrate during lectures, read lengthy texts, or engage in critical thinking exer-

cises. This not only affects academic performance but also diminishes their capacity to absorb and retain new information.

In the workplace, reduced attention span can lead to frequent task-switching, increased errors, and decreased efficiency. Furthermore, poor working memory impairs decision-making and problem-solving skills, which are essential in almost all professional fields.

From a mental health perspective, the constant need for stimulation driven by reels may contribute to increased anxiety, restless-

ness, and even symptoms of ADHD in susceptible individuals. The inability to remain still or focus without external input may lead to frustration, low self-esteem, and a decreased sense of achievement.

CAN THE TREND BE REVERSED?

While the situation may seem dire, cognitive decline is not inevitable. Awareness is the first step toward change. By understanding how reels affect our brain, individuals can take conscious steps to mitigate their impact. This might include:

Digital Detoxing: Taking regular breaks from short-form content to allow the brain to rest and reset.

Mindful Consumption: Setting time limits for apps, avoiding aimless scrolling, and choosing content with educational or meaningful value.

Cognitive Training: Engaging in activities that boost attention and memory, such as reading, puzzles, meditation, or learning a new skill.

Parental Guidance: Educating children and adolescents on healthy digital habits to build resilience against cognitive overstimulation.

The rise of reels and short-form video content represents a paradigm shift in how we consume information and entertainment. While these platforms offer accessibility and creativity, they also pose risks to cognitive health, particularly attention span and working memory. As with any powerful tool, the key lies in moderation and mindful use. By striking a balance between digital engagement and cognitive nourishment, we can ensure that our brains remain agile, attentive, and capable in an age of constant distraction.

The writer is an Assistant Professor of Psychology

ISRAEL BOMBS ANOTHER GAZA CITY HIGH-RISE AS US ADVANCES A NEW CEASEFIRE PROPOSAL

AGENCIES
DEIR AL-BALAH, GAZA STRIP

Israel struck and destroyed another high-rise building in Gaza City on Monday after warning residents to evacuate, part of an offensive aimed at taking over the largest Palestinian city. The military said it was targeting Hamas observation posts and bombs placed around the 12-story office building.

Over the past several days, Israel has destroyed multiple high-rise buildings in Gaza City, accusing Hamas of putting surveillance infrastructure in them. It has ordered people to flee ahead of its ground offensive into the city of some 1 million residents, which experts say is experiencing famine.

U.S. President Donald Trump said that he was giving his “last warning” to Hamas regarding a possible ceasefire, as Arab officials described a new U.S. proposal for the immediate release of all the remaining hostages in exchange for 3,000 Palestinians and a temporary ceasefire.

In Jerusalem, meanwhile, two Palestinian gunmen



The Israeli military said it razed another high-rise building in Gaza City on Sunday, shortly after military spokesperson Avichay Adraee ordered the evacuation of people from Al-Roya Tower, a seven-storey building in a southern Gaza City neighbourhood, and from nearby tents.

opened fire at a bus station, killing six people and wounding 12 in the worst such attack on Israelis in nearly a year. Tensions have soared across Israel and the occupied West Bank in the two years since Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack out of Gaza ignited the war.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar confirmed that Israel had accepted the latest U.S. proposal during a news conference in Hungary and expressed hope it would succeed.

Hamas said in a statement

late Sunday that it was “ready to sit at the negotiating table” regarding the proposal from U.S. Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff. The smaller Islamic Jihad militant group, which also holds hostages, said it too would consider the proposal.

The “last warning” proposal, presented by Witkoff, calls for a negotiated end of the war and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza once the hostages are released and a ceasefire is established, according to officials familiar with the talks.

Israeli Supreme Court rules state failing to properly feed Palestinian prisoners

Tel Aviv : The Israeli Supreme Court, also known as the High Court of Justice, ruled on Sunday (local time) that the state of Israel has not met its legal responsibility to adequately provide food to Palestinian security prisoners, ordering authorities to ensure that inmates receive enough nutrition to meet basic living standards, Times of Israel reported.

According to the Times of Israel, in a two-to-one decision, the court criticised the

current prison conditions, marking a significant blow to the country’s far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, who has advocated for stricter treatment of security prisoners.

Judge Daphne Barak-Erez, writing the majority opinion, stated that evidence presented by both the petitioning organisations and the Israel Prison Service (IPS) raised “serious concerns” about the adequacy of food given to prisoners.

respond within days. He said they will demand a “clear commitment” that the war will end before releasing the hostages.

An Egyptian official said the new proposal, which Arab mediators received from the U.S., was broader than previous ones and would require negotiations over ending the war, the withdrawal of Israeli forces and Israel’s demand that Hamas disarm.

Palestinian gunmen kill 6 people in attack on Jerusalem bus stop

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM

Palestinian attackers opened fire at a bus stop at during the morning rush hour in Jerusalem on Monday, killing six people and wounding another 12, according to Israeli officials.

An Israeli soldier and civilians who were at the scene shot and killed the two attackers, said police, who later arrested a third person in connection with the shooting. Footage of the attack showed dozens of people fleeing from the bus stop at a busy intersection. The windshield of a bus was riddled with bullet holes and belongings were scattered across the street.

The war in Gaza has sparked a surge of violence in Israel and the occupied



Reinforcements arrive to the area and roads are closed as a security precaution following an armed attack at the Ramot Junction, at the entrance to East Jerusalem.

West Bank, with a rise in attacks by Palestinian militants as well as settler violence against Palestinians.

President Mahmoud Abbas, head of the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority, condemned “any targeting of Palestinian and Israeli civilians,” and “denounced all forms

of violence and terrorism, regardless of their source,” according to a statement from his office.

The Palestinian Authority, which administers parts of the West Bank and cooperates with Israel on security matters, has been largely sidelined since the start of the war.

Monday’s shooting — at a major intersection, with a road leading to Jewish settlements in east Jerusalem — was the deadliest in Israel since October 2024.

Hamas hailed the attack without claiming responsibility, calling it a “natural response to the occupation’s crimes against our people.”

Paramedics who responded to the scene said broken glass covered the area, and people wounded lay unconscious on the road and a sidewalk near the bus stop. Israel’s Shin Bet internal security agency said the two attackers were 20- and 21-year-old Palestinians from the West Bank with no prior arrests.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived at the

scene some two hours after the shooting. Netanyahu was supposed to be in court on Monday for his ongoing corruption trial, which was delayed due to the attack. He warned that Israel is “fighting a war on multiple fronts,” including Gaza and the West Bank.

Hundreds of security forces searched for additional attackers or explosives that could have been planted around the area. On Monday afternoon, police said they arrested a resident of east Jerusalem who was connected to the attack.

The Israeli military said it is encircling Palestinian villages on the outskirts of the nearby West Bank city of Ramallah as it steps up defense in response.

President Xi calls for united response by BRICS countries to face Trump’s trade challenges

AGENCIES
BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday called for a unified response by the BRICS countries to trade challenges posed by the US, saying that Washington’s tariff wars severely disrupted the world economy and undermined international trade rules.

Speaking via a video link to the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) leaders’ meeting convened by Brazilian President Lula De Silva, Xi said, “as we speak, transformation unseen in a century is accelerating across the world”.

“Hegemonism, unilateralism, and protectionism are getting more and more rampant. Trade wars and tariff wars waged by some country severely disrupt

Bullying the small: China criticises US over Central America visa restrictions

Beijing : China on Monday criticised the United States of America for imposing visa restrictions on Central American nationals and for accusing the region’s exchanges with China, calling it “yet another example of the US-style diplomacy of “bullying the small.”

A statement by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) spokesper-

son read, “China deplores the US’ groundless attacks, coercive diplomacy, and interference in China’s relations with these countries.” The spokesperson further added, “Weaponizing visas will not scare off the sober-minded. Nor will it hold back the flourishing ties between China and Central American countries.

the world economy and undermine international trade rules,” he said, without directly naming the US or its President Donald Trump, whose steep tariffs against

India, Brazil, China and Russia caused turmoil in the emerging economies.

“At this critical juncture, BRICS countries, standing at the forefront of the Global

South, should act on the BRICS Spirit of openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, jointly defend multilateralism and the multilateral trading system, advance greater BRICS cooperation.” Xi said in his speech released by the Foreign Ministry in Beijing. Describing the BRICS leaders’ meeting as “very relevant”, Xi said, “We should uphold multilateralism to defend international fairness and justice.

.. It provides an important underpinning for world peace and development.”

Also, BRICS countries should actively promote greater democracy in international relations and increase the representation and voice of the Global South countries, he said.

Over 25,000 evacuated as rising floodwaters threaten city in Pakistan’s Punjab Province

AGENCIES
JALALPUR PIRWALA, PAKISTAN

Rescuers backed by troops evacuated more than 25,000 people from a city in Pakistan’s eastern Punjab province overnight as rising rivers threatened to flood the region, officials said Monday.

The emergency rescue operation in Jalalpur Pirwala began late Sunday and continued through the night, said Irfan Ali Kathia, director-general of the Punjab Disaster Management Authority. By Monday morning, about 25,000 residents from high-risk neighborhoods had been moved to safer areas.

The latest evacuations from Jalalpur Pirwala came two days after a rescue boat capsized in floodwaters on



Volunteers evacuate villagers from a flooded area following heavy rains and surging water in rivers, in Muzaffargarh, Pakistan.

the city’s outskirts, killing five people. Fifteen others were rescued after the boat overturned Saturday, local officials said. Ghulam Shabir, a 50-year-old construction worker, said that he moved to higher ground near the city after floodwater

entered his village, inundating homes and farmland. He appealed to the government to expedite rescue work as many people were still stranded in flooded villages. The government has deployed hundreds of boats, and thousands of rescuers

and volunteers for evacuations in flood-hit districts.

The Pakistan Markazi Muslim League, a volunteer group known for being among the first responders in natural disasters, is among those involved in the efforts, with members spread across the country. The group’s spokesman, Taha Muneeb, said that floodwaters had already submerged all the villages surrounding Jalalpur Pirwala and had begun to seep into the city itself.

“Many residents refuse to leave, saying it is better to remain on their rooftops than to sit helpless on the roadside,” he said.

Survivors told reporters that many people remain stranded on rooftops and trees.

China unveils plan to accelerate integration of AI with energy sector

AGENCIES
BEIJING

China on Monday unveiled a new plan to accelerate the integration of artificial intelligence with the energy sector to achieve breakthroughs in key technologies such as data, computing power and algorithms.

The plan was announced even as the new data shows the numbers of AI firms in

the country surged to 5000 from 1400 in the past five years.

Xin Guobin, vice minister of industry and information technology, released the new data at the World Smart Industry Expo in Chongqing, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Monday.

The date reveals the rapid growth of the AI sector in

China which also enabled the country to make rapid strides in e-vehicles.

The plan emphasizes breakthroughs in key technologies such as data, computing power and algorithms, outlining measures to optimize data-sharing mechanisms, establish a deeply integrated mechanism for coordinating computing power and



Representative image

electricity, and drive deeper

integration of AI and soft-

ware in the energy sector.

The plan, jointly issued by the National Development and Reform Commission and the National Energy Administration, sets targets for 2027 to basically establish an innovation system for AI-energy integration and achieve notable breakthroughs in AI-enabled technologies in the energy sector.

China has set up over 40,000 smart factories, 11 national pilot zones for AI innovation and application, as well as 17 national demonstration zones for intelligent connected vehicle testing, the data reveals.

Also China has launched a 60-billion-yuan national AI industry investment fund to set up rules on AI ethics, China-BRICS cen-

tre for AI development and cooperation, and over 240 standards for core AI technologies.

By 2030, China aims for its AI applications in the energy sector to reach a world-leading level overall, with a more advanced mechanism for coordinating computing power and electricity supply, the plan said.



The full moon sets behind Mount Gerizim, Nablus, West Bank.

Houthi drone strikes an Israeli airport in a rare hit

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

A drone fired by Yemen’s Houthi rebels breached Israel’s multilayered air defenses on Sunday and slammed into the country’s southern airport, the Israeli military said, blowing out glass windows, wounding one person and briefly shutting down commercial airspace.

The damage to Ramon Airport appeared limited and flights resumed within hours. The Houthis claimed responsibility for the strike.

The attack follows Israeli strikes on Yemen’s rebel-held capital that killed the Houthi prime minister and other top officials in a major escalation of the nearly 2-year-old conflict between Israel and the Iran-backed militant group in Yemen.

In Gaza City, the Israeli military on Sunday leveled another high-rise tower that housed hundreds of displaced Palestinians and urged people to move south as it intensified its offensive on the city.

Meanwhile, a breakthrough Israeli Supreme Court decision ruled that Israel was not providing Palestinian detainees in its custody with enough food to ensure basic sustenance. It ordered the state to “guarantee basic living conditions in accordance with the law”

for the thousands of Palestinians in its detention facilities.

Sunday’s ruling, made in response to a petition by Israeli human rights groups alleging starvation among Palestinians in the country’s prisons, marked a rare instance of Israeli legal restraint on its own war policies that have drawn indignation and outrage abroad.

After Israel’s killing of Houthi Prime Minister Ahmed al-Rahawi last Thursday, the militants vowed to escalate their attacks targeting Israel and merchant ships navigating the vital Red Sea trade route.

One of several Houthi drones launched from Yemen on Sunday slipped through Israel’s sophisticated defense system and crashed into the passenger terminal at the Ramon International Airport near the resort city of Eilat, the Israeli Airports Authority said, diverting flights over southern Israel and inflicting light shrapnel wounds on a 63-year-old man.

Houthi military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said the group had fired eight drones at Israel to signal that the rebels “will escalate their military operations and not back down from their support for Gaza.” He warned that Israeli airports “are unsafe

and will be continuously targeted.”

The Israeli military said it intercepted three Houthi drones near Israel’s border with Egypt and was investigating why it failed to identify the fourth drone that struck Ramon Airport as a threat.

The Houthis have stepped up their aerial attacks on Israel in recent months, including by deploying warheads with cluster munitions that scatter smaller bomblets over a large area and can evade Israeli air defenses.

Saying that they were acting in solidarity with the Palestinians, the Houthis began firing missiles and drones into Israel after Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023 attack on Israel ignited the Israeli military’s devastating campaign in Gaza. Hamas militants killed 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted over 250 in their assault on southern Israel.

While frequent, the aerial attacks from Yemen have not caused significant damage in Israel.

Before Sunday’s assault, the most damaging Houthi attack was in May, when a Houthi missile struck near Israel’s main Ben Gurion Airport, prompting international airlines to cancel flights to Tel Aviv for months.

CHINA ENVOY SAYS INDIA-CHINA DIRECT FLIGHTS RESUMING SOON

China envoy stresses stronger India-China cooperation, shared future

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

China's Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong, on Monday emphasised the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation, economic ties, and people-to-people exchanges while speaking at the seminar titled "Learning from History to Safeguard the Light of Peace, Joining Hands to Chart a Blueprint for Development" on the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War.

He highlighted that historical ties between China and India form the foundation for continued collaboration in the present and future.

"Direct flights between

COOPERATION

- Xu Feihong stresses resumption of direct flights, deeper people-to-people ties.
- Calls for fair business environment, stronger bilateral trade and investment.
- Pays tribute to India's wartime support, honoring Gandhi, Dr. Kotnis, Dr. Basu.
- Urges India-China cooperation for global peace, multipolar order, and development.



Indian foreign secretary Vikram Misri, left, meets Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi in Beijing. File Photograph: Agencies

our two countries are expected to be resumed shortly. We are ready to enhance exchanges with India across all sectors, including political parties, legislatures, think tanks, media, and youth, to further promote people-to-people bonds," Xu Feihong said, stressing the signifi-

cance of maintaining active engagement across all spheres.

Highlighting economic collaboration, he added, "We welcome more Indian companies to promote their products and invest in China, and we also hope that India could provide a fair, just, and non-

discriminatory business environment for Chinese enterprises," reflecting the mutual benefits of stronger economic ties.

Reflecting on global developments, Xu Feihong said, "Currently, changes unseen in a century are accelerating, unilateralism and acts of bullying

are on the rise, and the world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation. Humanity once again faces a choice between peace and war, dialogue and confrontation, win-win cooperation and zero-sum game. As two ancient Eastern civilisations and major developing countries, China and India should demonstrate a global vision and responsibility as major powers, and make greater contributions to safeguarding world peace, promoting common development, and improving global governance. To this end, first, we should carry forward the great friendship forged during the War of Resistance, and jointly pursue a path of peaceful coexistence between major neighbouring countries."

Ukraine briefs diplomats on Russia's biggest aerial assault

AGENCIES
KYIV, UKRAINE

Senior Ukrainian officials led 60 foreign diplomats on a tour of damaged government offices in the heart of Kyiv on Monday, a day after Russia's largest aerial attack on Ukraine since its all-out invasion began more than three years ago.

Russia's assault on Sunday involved more than 800 drones and decoys and occurred as months of U.S.-led peace efforts appear to be getting nowhere. Four people were killed, including a mother and her infant, as drones hit apartment buildings. A plume of smoke rose from the capital's main government building where top officials have their offices.

It's believed to be the first time a Russian attack has struck the 10-story, Soviet-style building, which was built almost a century ago and has an imposing half-circle facade.

During the tour given to the



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, smoke rises from a fire at the Cabinet of Ministers building after a Russian strike in Kyiv. (File Photo/ Agencies)

diplomats, Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko, Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko showed them burnt-out offices littered with charred debris.

Another deadline by U.S. President Donald Trump, set in August, for the Kremlin to change course or face severe consequences has passed. Trump has shrunk from imposing more sanctions on Russia despite its

onslaught and has blamed both sides in the war for the ongoing fighting, even though Ukraine is defending itself from the full-scale invasion launched by its bigger neighbor on Feb. 24, 2022. Trump said Sunday that he expected to speak with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the next couple of days and acknowledged that the conflict had proved harder to resolve than he anticipated.

Navarro slams India's Russian oil trade, disputes fact-check

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump's senior trade adviser Peter Navarro has once again launched a blistering attack on India's energy trade with Russia, terming its crude imports as "blood money" and accusing India of profiteering from the Ukraine conflict.

On Monday, Navarro, who serves as the White House's Senior Counsellor for Trade and Manufacturing, posted on X that "India didn't buy Russian oil in large quantities before Russia invaded Ukraine. It's blood money and people are dying." He used an expletive to describe the platform itself, calling it "bull****," for being fact checked.

Navarro has been ranting for weeks against India's Russian oil purchases and tariffs. In an earlier post, he claimed: "India highest tariffs costs



White House trade advisor Peter Navarro speaks to members of the media (File photo/Agencies)

U.S. jobs. India buys Russian oil purely to profit/Revenues feed Russia war machine. Ukrainians/Russians die. U.S. taxpayers shell out more. India can't handle truth/spins Leftist American fake news."

When X intervened with community notes, pointing out that India's purchases were legal, aimed at energy

security, and did not violate sanctions, Navarro lashed out at the platform's billionaire owner Elon Musk. He wrote: "Wow. Elon Musk is letting propaganda into people's posts. That crap note below is just that. Crap. India buys Russia oil solely to profiteer. It didn't buy any before Russia invaded Ukraine. Indian govt spin machine moving high tilt. Stop killing Ukrainians. Stop taking American jobs."

The community notes on X repeatedly rebutted Navarro's claims, stressing that India's energy procurement is a sovereign decision and does not breach international law. The notes also underlined what they described as Washington's "double standards," highlighting that the US itself continues to import billions worth of commodities from Russia, including uranium and minerals, even while pressuring India.

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

As Russia continues to escalate its strikes on Ukraine, US President Donald Trump on Sunday (local time) said that he has plans to speak with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in the coming days, as several European leaders are expected to visit the United States for what he described as "very interesting discussions" aimed at resolving the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"Over the next couple of days, we're going to get it done--the Russia-Ukraine situation," Trump said. "We're going to get it done. Have confidence. We will



Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump in 2017. (File photo/ Agencies)

get it done."

Speaking to reporters at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland after returning from the US Open finals, Trump expressed deep dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs related to the conflict but reiterated

ated his belief that peace is within reach.

"We'll see. We have very interesting discussions. European leaders are coming over to our country on Monday or Tuesday, individually, and I think we're going to get that settled. I think we're

going to get it done. We have to," he added.

Trump, who has long touted his personal rapport with Putin, was asked whether the Russian leader's recent actions, including a major weekend assault on Ukraine, had changed his views. In response, Trump emphasised that while he had been "tougher on Russia than anyone", he was deeply troubled by the war.

"Nobody was tougher on Russia than I was," Trump said. "But I'm not happy. I'm not happy about the whole situation. It's interesting--it doesn't affect us. It's not our soldiers. It's a horrible waste of humanity."

Prince Harry visits queen's grave, meeting speculation grows

AGENCIES
LONDON

Prince Harry arrived in the U.K. on Monday leading to speculation about whether he will meet with his father, King Charles III, for the first time in 19 months.

Amid signs of a thaw in the frigid relationship between Harry and the rest of the royal family, British media suggest that the prince's trip to London on Monday's third anniversary of the death of Queen Elizabeth II provides an opening for a long-overdue rapprochement between Charles, 76, and his estranged son. Harry visited the monarch's grave in Windsor to offer his respects and lay flowers.

Harry has had little contact with his father and elder brother, Prince William, since he and his wife, the former Meghan Markle, gave up royal duties and moved to California in 2020. The relationship became even frostier after the



Prince Harry visits late queen's grave as visit fuels speculation about meeting with King Charles.

couple bared their grievances with Buckingham Palace in a tell-all interview with Oprah Winfrey, a Netflix series and Harry's memoir, "Spare."

The last time Harry and Charles met was in February 2024, when the prince flew to London after receiving news that his father had been diagnosed with cancer. Harry spent about 45 minutes with Charles before the king flew to his Sandringham country estate to recu-

perate from his treatment.

Harry was last in London in April, when the Court of Appeal rejected his bid to restore a police protection detail that was canceled after he stopped being a working royal. Charles was on a state visit to Italy at the time, so a meeting was impossible.

That case was itself an impediment to improved relations because it involved Harry criticizing the king's government in the courts. But once it was over, change became possible. Immediately after the case ended, Harry said he would "love reconciliation with my family."

"There's no point in continuing to fight anymore," he told the BBC on the day the court case was resolved. "Life is precious. I don't know how much longer my father has."

Despite that olive branch, Harry struck a combative tone that might torpedo hopes of repairing the family

breach. The prince repeatedly said that the decision to withdraw his security was made at the direction of the royal household in an effort to control him and his wife while putting their safety at risk.

"What I'm struggling to forgive, and what I will probably always struggle to forgive, is the decision that was made in 2020 that affects my every single day and that is knowingly putting me and my family in harm's way," Harry said.

CHANGE OF TONE

But with the lawsuit out of the way, the mood music coming from Charles and Harry's supporters seemed to change. In July, the new team handling Harry and Meghan's communications, headed by Los Angeles-based Meredith Maines, was seen on the balcony of a private members' club in London speaking with Tobyn Andreae, the king's press representative.



Indonesian leader fires ministers of finance and security after deadly protests

AGENCIES
JAKARTA

Indonesia's president announced a Cabinet reshuffle Monday, replacing key economic and security ministers after deadly protests erupted across the country over lawmakers' perks.

The Cabinet shake-up comes as public dissatisfaction rose with President Prabowo Subianto's admin-

istration and parliament's perceived insensitivity over economic hardships.

Five ministers lost their jobs, including Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati, a widely respected technocrat who had served as the executive director of the International Monetary Fund and managing director of the World Bank, and Budi Gunawan, the coordinating minister for politics

and security.

Subianto chose economist Purbaya Yudhi Sadewa, chairman of the Deposit Insurance Corporation, to replace Indrawati, 63, one of Indonesia's longest-serving finance ministers.

Violent protests had gripped Southeast Asia's largest economy, home to more than 280 million people, after reports that all 580 members of the

House of Representatives receive a monthly housing allowance of 50 million rupiah (\$3,075), in addition to their salaries. The allowance, which was introduced last year, is nearly 10 times the minimum wage in The National Commission on Human Rights, known as Komnas HAM, an independent institution, reported that 10 people died during the five-day protests, mostly

because of inhumane approach by security forces in handling the demonstrations. Police reported the death toll at seven. Jakarta.

The protests grew more violent following the death of 21-year-old ride-hailing driver Affan Kurniawan. He was reportedly completing a food delivery order when an armored police car sped through a crowd of demonstrators and caused

him to fall.

Indrawati's house in South Tangerang, just outside Jakarta, was looted on Aug. 31, alongside the homes of a number of lawmakers.

Analysts see the protests as a culmination of public anger over economic problems that the government has not addressed seriously, including widespread layoffs and declining purchas-

ing power.

Calm largely returned after Subianto last week revoked lawmakers' perks and privileges, including the housing allowance, and suspended overseas trips.

Subianto also removed the ministers of cooperatives and the youth and sport, and Abdul Kadir Karding, the minister for migrant workers protection. He sparked controversy after a

photo recently showed him playing dominoes with a former illegal logging suspect.

Indonesian stocks tumbled Monday after Subianto removed Indrawati from his Cabinet. The Jakarta Composite Index closed down 1.28% at 7,766.85, shedding 100.5 points, while the rupiah strengthened 0.75% against the U.S. dollar to 16,309.

RAHMAN TEAMS UP WITH DIANE WARREN, RIKA FOR LATEST TRACK 'EXOTIC'

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

Music maestro AR Rahman has collaborated with acclaimed songwriter Diane Warren and British-Indian artist RIKA for the latest track 'Exotic'.

In a statement Rahman stated, "Producing the track 'Exotic' for a remarkable songwriter like Diane has been a delightful experience. Diane's prolific nature, coupled with her enduring childlike enthusiasm for her craft, is truly inspiring. I genuinely hope you all embrace RIKA, as her incredible energy and captivating vibe are sure to resonate with you."

Taking to X on September 2, the legendary musician opened up about his latest project and shared BTS



moments from the sets, "Step into the making of Exotic A journey where melodies meet across cultures, with the genius of Diane Warren, the spirit of Rika, and a little bit of my world."

Penned by Diane Warren, the track carries her signature emotive lyricism and

timeless melody. Rahman's "production infuses it with his ability to fuse cultures and genres, while RIKA's angelic, multicultural voice gives the song its emotional heartbeat," as per the press release.

RIKA shared her working experience with the

Oscar-winning musician, saying, "Working with A. R. Rahman has been nothing short of an honour. His musical genius is inspiring, and bringing Diane Warren's beautiful words and capturing melody to life under his guidance has been a dream come true. Diane's songwriting has shaped some of the greatest songs in the world, and to be able to lend my voice to her work alongside Rahman sir is beyond anything I could have imagined."

Diane Warren added, "I'm so excited for everyone to hear Exotic!!! AR truly made something unique and brilliant, and combined with the fantastic vocals of new artist RIKA, it is something unlike anything else you've heard. Be prepared to go somewhere Exotic!"



Tamannaah Bhatia poses for her social media. (Instagram)

Border 2: Sonam Bajwa to star opposite Diljit

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

Punjabi actor Sonam Bajwa has joined the cast of 'Border 2', one of the most anticipated films slated for release in January 2026.

The makers on Monday announced that Sonam will be paired opposite Diljit Dosanjh in the upcoming film.

"Welcoming @sonambajwa to the #Border2 family, opposite @diljitdosanjh. A tale where grace and glory unite - releasing in cinemas on January 22, 2026," read a post on the official Instagram handle of T-Series Films.



Directed by Anurag Singh, 'Border 2' also stars Sunny Deol and Varun Dhawan in pivotal roles. Speaking about the se-

quel to one of the most loved Bollywood films, 'Border', producer Bhushan Kumar earlier said, "Border is more than

a film, it's an emotion for every Indian. With Border 2, we aim to carry forward that legacy and bring it to a new generation.

'The Ba***ds of Bollywood' trailer out

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

The trailer of the highly anticipated Aryan Khan's debut directorial 'The Ba***ds of Bollywood' is finally here. Aryan Khan is the son of superstar Shah Rukh Khan.

On the heels of the first preview of the series last month, the fans have been eagerly waiting for the release of its trailer. The movie stars the 'Kill' fame actor Lakshya in the lead role.

The series also stars Raghav Juyal, Anya Singh, Manoj Pahwa, Mona Singh and Vijayant Kohli in the prominent roles, along with a bunch of cameos by Aamir Khan, ace director Rajamouli and Disha Patani.

This seven-episode series follows Aasmaan Singh (Lakshya), an ambitious newcomer with dreams as big as the silver screen. With his loyal best friend Parvaiz (Raghav Juyal) and manager Sanya (Anya Singh) by his side, Aasmaan steps into the world of fame.

The three-minute and twenty-eight-second trailer opens with Lakshya calling himself an actor who is supposed to create scenes after he was accused of creating

chaos with his statements. It was followed by a houseful theatre with Lakshya's movie on the big screen. With the viewer's reactions, it appeared that the actor had made a breakthrough in the film industry, prompting words of appreciation from his mother and father, played by actors Mona Singh and Vijayant Kohli, respectively.



It was followed by the surprising cameos of Disha Patani, Arjun Kapoor, Siddhant Chaturvedi and Rajkumar Rao. The trailer also takes a dig at the paparazzi culture around the cinema industry.

Despite this bunch of cameos, the spotlight was consumed by the Baahubali director Rajamouli and superstar Aamir Khan, who were seen conversing in the video.

In the trailer, Aamir Khan humorously shrugs off Lakshya after the latter chooses dish Vada Pav after he was asked to select one between Idli and Vada Pav.

This humorous scene beautifully symbolised the two successful cinema industries of India--the South movie industry and the Hindi movie industry.

As the trailer progresses,

actor Lakshya finds himself up against his biggest challenge yet, superstar Ajay Talvar, played by Bobby Deol, when he is cast opposite his daughter, Bollywood newcomer Karishma, played by Sahher Bambba, in the movie.

Amid the battle of fame, Lakshya deals with several problems, including his rumoured association with underworld dons, as shown in the trailer.

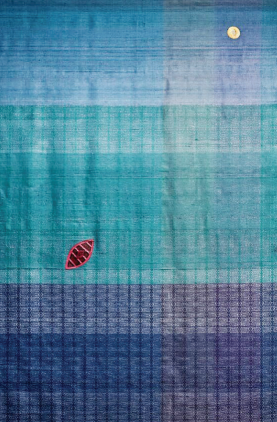
Voyages: The ancient maritime silk route, weaving histories across

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Voyages: The Ancient Maritime Silk Route is an art exhibition that takes inspiration from the historic maritime trade and cultural exchanges between the coastal regions of South India and Southeast Asia, spanning from as early as the 3rd century CE until the 15th century CE. For the artists Gunjan Jain and Suresh Muthukulam, and for curator Jaya Mani, the making of this show has itself been a modern-day voyage of discovery. Free from



the limitations of academic scholarship, their creative imaginations were able to travel unhindered, leading



to a body of work infused with wonder, symbolism, and a sense of magic.

The Pallava empire, which

ruled the southeastern coast of India, unlike many other kingdoms of the subcontinent, did not restrict its people from crossing the seas. This openness later expanded under the Chola dynasty, which left a profound imprint on Southeast Asia through maritime trade, religion, and art. Traders, teachers, priests, and adventurers from South India continued to dominate cultural exchanges in the region until around 1500 CE. Hinduism and Buddhism both spread from India to Southeast Asia over the centuries. Even to-

day, echoes of these connections remain alive in Bali, where Shiva, Vishnu, and Garuda are revered deities. Balinese Brahmins identify themselves as Brahmin-Boudha-Kalinga, while Lord Jagannath of Odisha is remembered in Balinese prayers. The festival of Masakapam Kapesih recalls the homeland of Kalinga, and Odisha's annual Bali Jatra continues to celebrate the maritime journeys once made to Indonesian islands. Kerala, Odisha, and Southeast Asia share many parallels—in their art, textiles,

rituals, and seafaring traditions. Reverence for nature is reflected in their motifs, crafts, and agricultural practices. Textiles, pottery, and woodcarving reveal shared techniques and aesthetics, while garments like the mundu, lungi, and phanek remain common attire across regions. Such cultural and geographical proximities created fertile ground for artistic exchanges, visible even today in enduring traditions. It was the curator's longstanding association with Kerala's mural tradition—especially through four

decades of collaboration with mural master Suresh Muthukulam—that first sparked the idea for this exhibition. Equally, her deep involvement in promoting handwoven textiles and her admiration for the saree led her to textile artist and designer Gunjan Jain, whose acclaimed work with Odisha's weavers under Vriksh Designs bridges craft and cultural storytelling. The collaboration took root in December 2022, when Gunjan visited Kerala. Conversations with Muthu-

kulam revolved around the possibilities of merging mural art and weaving, with maritime voyages emerging as a natural anchor for both. The ocean became their canvas, mythical sea creatures their motifs. A year later in Odisha, Muthukulam immersed himself in the intricacies of handloom weaving, while weavers engaged with the sensibilities of a mural artist. The process was at times exhilarating and at others challenging—language barriers, creative differences, and delays tested patience.

BRAIN PICKING



I am a workaholic. I am very restless, and I am always looking for good work

— DISHA PATANI
(Indian Actress)

Musician Rick Davies passes away at 81

AGENCIES
LOS ANGELES

Musician Rick Davies, co-founder and frontman of the British band Supertramp, passed away on September 5 after a long battle with cancer. He was 81, as per Variety.

The news of his demise was announced by his band Supertramp in an official statement.

"The Supertramp Partnership is very sad to announce the death of the Supertramp founder, Rick Davies, after a long illness. Rick passed away at his home on Long Island on September 5th. We had the privilege of knowing him and playing with him for over fifty years. We offer

our sincere condolences to Sue Davies," the statement read.

Rick Davies was one of the two co-founders, frontmen and chief songwriters of the British band Supertramp, which evolved from a progressive-rock group into an unexpected chart-topping ensemble with the album

'Breakfast in America'. Davies, who wrote and sang such Supertramp hits as "Goodbye Stranger" and "Bloody Well Right," had a deeper and less-distinctive voice than his erstwhile partner, Roger Hodgson, who wrote and sang the band's biggest hit, "The Logical Song."



Obama wins third Emmy for Netflix documentary 'Our Oceans'

AGENCIES
LOS ANGELES

Former US President Barack Obama became a three-time Emmy winner after securing a win at the 76th Creative Arts Emmy Awards held on September 7, as reported by People. Obama earned the award for his narration in Netflix's Our Oceans.



'Our Oceans' is a five-part documentary series that explores the wonders of Earth's oceans. It was presented by Obama, and the series was released on November 20, 2024. Although the former US President was not present in Los Angeles to receive the award, presenter Jordan Klepper accepted it on his behalf.

In the Outstanding Narrator category, Obama competed against Sir David Attenborough (Planet Earth: Asia), Idris Elba (Erased: WW2's Heroes Of Color), Tom Hanks (The Americas), and Phoebe Waller-Bridge (Octopus!). The project, which allowed viewers to experience the "gateways to the unknown," featured the

former president's narration across five episodes, each dedicated to one of the world's oceans. Obama broke down the Pacific Ocean's humpback whales and their migration process and explained how walrus in the Arctic Ocean were coping with climate change, while also making sure to hit the Indian, Southern and Atlan-

PLANT-BASED PROTEIN: BEYOND SOY AND TOFU

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

For years, soybeans and tofu have been the poster children of plant-based protein. They became staples in vegetarian and vegan diets, offering a meat-free alternative packed with protein. But as the demand for plant-based eating grows globally, consumers are asking for more variety, better nutrition, and exciting flavors. This has opened the door to a new wave of protein-rich plants that are moving beyond the soy-and-tofu narrative.

WHY LOOK BEYOND SOY?

Soy is undoubtedly a powerhouse, but it comes with limitations. Some people are allergic to it, while others are concerned about over-processing or the environmental impact of large-scale soybean farming. There's also a need for greater culinary diversity—nobody wants the same soy chunks or tofu stir-fry every day. Exploring alternatives not only adds flavor to our diets but also helps diversify food systems and reduce dependence on one crop.

LENTILS, CHICKPEAS, AND

BEANS: EVERYDAY POWERHOUSES

Legumes are some of the most accessible and versatile plant-based proteins. Lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, and black beans are already staples in Indian and global cuisines. From dals and hummus to bean burritos and curries, these foods pack protein, fiber, and micronutrients. They are also budget-friendly and easy to cook, making them a practical choice for daily meals.

QUINOA AND AMARANTH: ANCIENT GRAINS, MODERN HEROES

Often labeled as “superfoods,” quinoa and amaranth are complete proteins, meaning they contain all nine essential amino acids—something rare in the plant kingdom. Beyond their nutritional profile, these grains are gluten-free and adapt beautifully to salads, porridge, or even as rice alternatives. Their comeback reflects a growing interest in ancient crops that supported civilizations for centuries.

PEA PROTEIN: THE STAR OF MODERN FOOD TECH

Pea protein has become a favorite ingredient in the plant-based food industry.



It is now commonly found in protein powders, energy bars, dairy-free milk, and even meat alternatives like burgers and sausages. Neutral in taste and easy to digest, it has become a go-to for food innovators looking to create protein-rich alternatives without relying on soy.

NUTS AND SEEDS: TINY BUT MIGHTY

Almonds, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, chia, and hemp seeds are small but pack a nutritional punch. They deliver not only protein but also healthy fats, minerals, and antioxidants. Chia puddings, peanut butter,



and hemp smoothies are just a few examples of how these foods are making their way into daily diets. Their versatility makes them perfect for snacking

as well as cooking.

JACKFRUIT, MUSHROOMS, AND BEYOND: WHOLE-FOOD OPTIONS



While jackfruit and mushrooms are not high in protein by themselves, they are gaining popularity as meat substitutes because of their texture. When combined with legumes or grains, they create satisfying meals that feel hearty and nutritious. This approach highlights how plant-based diets are evolving—not just focusing on isolated protein but on wholesome, balanced plates.

THE GLOBAL SHIFT

The demand for diverse plant proteins is fueled by health, ethics, and sustainability. Younger genera-

tions are increasingly embracing flexitarian or fully plant-based diets, and food companies are responding with innovative products. From oat milk to lentil pasta, supermarket shelves are now filled with alternatives that were rare even a decade ago.

THE FUTURE OF PLANT-BASED PROTEIN

Looking ahead, the plant-based protein market will continue to expand. Fermentation technology, lab-grown protein, and hybrid products (a mix of plant and cell-based ingredients) are already being

tested. However, traditional crops—like lentils, pulses, and grains—will remain central to diets because they are accessible and culturally rooted.

The age of relying solely on soy and tofu for plant-based protein is over. With a wide variety of legumes, grains, seeds, and modern innovations, consumers now have endless options to meet their protein needs. This shift not only benefits health but also promotes sustainability and food diversity. In the evolving world of plant-based eating, protein is no longer a limitation—it's an invitation to explore.

The rise of themed restaurants: Dining as an experience

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Dining today is no longer just about satisfying hunger—it's about creating memories. With changing lifestyles and the growing influence of social media, people are seeking experiences that go beyond food. Enter themed restaurants, spaces that blend gastronomy with storytelling, immersing diners in unique worlds. From jungle-inspired interiors to retro Bollywood cafés and even Harry Potter-style wizarding taverns, these venues offer an escape from the ordinary.

WHY THEMED RESTAURANTS APPEAL

Themed restaurants succeed because they cater to multiple human desires: novelty, nostalgia, and social connection. A pirate-themed seafood restaurant or a train-style diner instantly sparks curiosity, making people eager to explore and share the experience. In the Instagram era, visually striking décor, quirky plating, and immersive ambiances add to the restaurant's charm, making it more than just a place to eat—it becomes a destination.

FOOD MEETS STORYTELLING

The appeal of themed dining lies in its ability to weave a narrative. The décor, menu design, staff uniforms, and even background music work together to transport diners into another world. Imagine enjoying a thali inside a Rajasthan haveli setting or sipping coffee in a café designed like a library. Here, food is only one part of the larger performance, carefully curated to match the theme.

POPULAR THEMES IN INDIA AND BEYOND

In India, train-coach dining, Bollywood cafés, and



mythological themes are gaining popularity. Internationally, diners enjoy everything from underwater restaurants with panoramic views of marine life to ice hotels where tables, chairs, and even glasses are carved from ice. Each concept thrives because it delivers something ordinary eateries cannot—a sense of adventure paired with food.

THE SOCIAL MEDIA FACTOR

Platforms like Instagram and TikTok have accelerated the rise of themed restaurants. People love to share photos of neon-lit spaces, quirky walls, or creatively served dishes. For many young diners, these restaurants double up as

lifestyle spaces—perfect for birthdays, dates, and casual outings that demand both taste and ambience.

CHALLENGES BEHIND THE MAGIC

While themed restaurants are exciting, they face unique challenges. Maintaining consistency, keeping themes fresh, and balancing high décor costs with profitability can be tough.

If the food quality doesn't match the atmosphere, the concept risks becoming a one-time gimmick rather than a sustainable venture. Successful restaurants strike the right balance between immersive design and culinary excellence.

THE FUTURE OF EXPERIENTIAL DINING

As customers increasingly seek novelty, themed dining is expected to evolve further. Technology will likely play a big role—with virtual reality dining, projection mapping, and AI-driven customization becoming part of the experience. At its heart, however, the success of a themed restaurant will continue to depend on storytelling, creativity, and, of course, great food.

In a world where experiences matter as much as meals, themed restaurants are redefining the very act of dining—turning it into an adventure that delights the senses and lingers long after the last bite.

Food in the age of AI: How tech predicts your cravings

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Technology has seeped into every corner of our lives, and food is no exception. From online ordering apps to smart refrigerators, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the way we choose, cook, and consume meals. Today, food is not just about taste—it's about personalization, convenience, and prediction. AI is quietly learning our habits and preferences, making dining more intuitive than ever.

HOW AI UNDERSTANDS YOUR TASTE

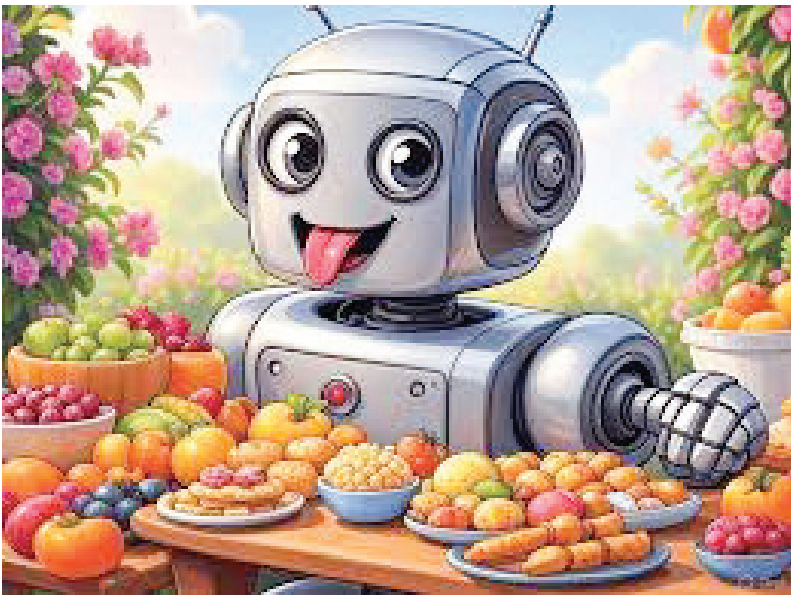
Every time you order food online, browse recipes, or even post about a meal on social media, you leave behind a trail of data. AI systems analyze this information to identify your preferences. For example, if you often order pizza on Friday nights or look up vegan recipes, AI-driven platforms can suggest similar options before you even think about them. Over time, these systems build a food profile unique to you—almost like a digital chef who knows your cravings.

SMART RECOMMENDATIONS ON YOUR PLATE

Food delivery apps already use AI to recommend dishes based on order history, location, and time of day. Beyond this, smart kitchen appliances are stepping in. Refrigerators with built-in sensors can track what's inside and suggest recipes using available ingredients. AI-enabled apps can even warn you when groceries are about to expire, reducing waste while saving money. It's not just about what you want to eat, but also about making your kitchen smarter and more efficient.

PREDICTING CRAVINGS BEFORE THEY HIT

One of the most fascinating aspects of AI in food is predictive analytics. By studying patterns, AI can forecast when you might crave comfort food, caffeine, or a healthy smoothie. For instance, after a long workweek, your food app might prompt you with burger deals, while on a weekday morning, it may push protein-packed breakfast bowls. This predictive ability allows companies to meet your needs before you consciously recognize them.



BEYOND THE CONSUMER: RESTAURANTS & AI

It's not just individuals benefiting from AI—restaurants are leveraging technology too. AI tools help chefs design menus based on customer data, predict ingredient demand, and even optimize delivery routes. Virtual assistants are being trained to recommend wine pairings or explain the story behind a dish. In some kitchens, AI-powered robots are cooking, ensuring consistency and efficiency.

THE FUTURE: HYPER-PERSONALIZED DINING

Imagine walking into a café where the menu on your digital screen changes depending on your mood, health data, and past orders. Or a nutrition app

that syncs with your fitness tracker to recommend meals aligned with your daily calorie needs. AI is driving this future of hyper-personalized dining, making food experiences deeply individual.

STRIKING THE BALANCE

While AI brings exciting possibilities, it also raises concerns about privacy. Sharing food preferences means sharing personal data, and safeguarding it is crucial. As long as technology is balanced with ethics, AI has the potential to revolutionize how we engage with food.

In today's digital world, food is more than just fuel—it's an experience shaped by algorithms and predictions. With AI on our side, the age of craving anticipation has truly begun.

SC turns down Telangana BJP's plea against order quashing defamation case against CM reddy

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday turned down a petition filed by the BJP's Telangana unit challenging the High Court's decision to quash a defamation case against Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy.

The case stemmed from Reddy's remarks during the 2024 Lok Sabha election campaign.

The bench, led by Chief Justice of India B R Gavai and accompanied by Justices K Vinod Chandran and Atul S Chandurkar, declined to interfere, stressing that courts should not be drawn into political disputes.

"We are time and again saying don't use this court for political battles. Dismissed. If you are a politician, then you should have a thick skin," the court remarked.



Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy.

File Photo

BACKGROUND

The controversy traces back to May 2024, when the BJP's Telangana unit, through its general secretary, lodged a complaint alleging that Reddy's campaign speech defamed the party. The complaint accused him of spreading false narratives, including claims that the BJP planned to abolish reservations if elected. According to the complainant, such

statements misled voters and damaged the party's reputation.

The trial court in Hyderabad, in August 2024, had found that the complaint established a prima facie case for offences of defamation under the IPC and Section 125 of the Representation of the People Act, which pertains to promoting hostility between groups during elections.

Reddy challenged the trial court's findings, arguing that political speeches are often exaggerated and should not be construed as defamatory. He contended that the complaint lacked sufficient grounds to initiate legal proceedings. The Telangana High Court agreed, observing that public discourse during elections frequently contains exaggerations and that treating every political

speech as defamation would set an unrealistic precedent. The court further pointed out that the state BJP unit was not authorised by the national leadership to file such a complaint. "Even if this court were to accept that the complainant is a part of the national unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party and may be treated as a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party, the complaint is not maintainable for the lack of authorisation," it noted. Accordingly, the high court dismissed the complaint and quashed the trial court's proceedings.

SC UPHOLDS COURT'S STAND

Court's refusal to entertain the plea reaffirmed its stance against using judicial forums for political skirmishes. By declining to interfere, the bench underscored that politicians must expect and tolerate sharp criticism during elections.

MONEY LAUNDERING CASE: SC SEEKS GUJARAT GOVT, ED'S RESPONSES ON JOURNALIST'S BAIL PLEA

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday sought responses from the Gujarat government and the Enforcement Directorate regarding the bail petition of journalist Mahesh Langa.

Langa is facing allegations of money laundering linked to a large financial fraud,

ipatory bail, then a second FIR is lodged and again anticipatory bail is granted but now he is booked under third FIR for income tax evasion.

There are other things also against him," Sibal said, arguing that the ongoing cases should be seen in the context of their background and complexities.

had rejected his bail application in July, observing that releasing him could hinder the prosecution's case and jeopardize the investigation.

QUESTIONS AROUND JOURNALISTIC INTEGRITY

The Supreme Court's remarks underscore concerns over individu-



Supreme Court of India.

File Photo

and he has challenged the Gujarat High Court's earlier rejection of his bail plea.

A bench composed of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi questioned the credibility of the petitioner, raising concerns about his conduct. The court asked, "What kind of a journalist is he?" Adding, "With due respect, there are some very genuine journalists.

A bench composed of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi questioned the credibility of the petitioner, raising concerns about his conduct. The court asked, "What kind of a journalist is he?" Adding, "With due respect, there are some very genuine journalists.

TIMELINE OF ARRESTS & CHARGES

Langa was first arrested in October 2024 in connection with a GST fraud case. He was later apprehended by the ED in February 2025 in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged financial irregularities.

The money laundering charges originate from two FIRs filed by the Ahmedabad Police, which accused Langa of fraud, criminal misappropriation, cheating, breach of trust, and causing substantial financial loss to several individuals.

The Gujarat High Court

als misusing journalistic credentials to shield themselves from scrutiny. While the bench acknowledged that some journalists uphold integrity, it expressed skepticism about those who exploit the title without adhering to professional standards.

This case raises broader ethical questions about accountability in media practices and the misuse of a journalist's identity in financial crimes.

Court's notice now requires the Gujarat government and the ED to submit their responses, after which the court will decide how to proceed with Langa's bail plea.

DHCBA calls on legal fraternity to aid flood-hit Punjab & other States

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Bar Association (DHCBA) on Monday expressed deep sorrow over the catastrophic floods affecting Punjab and other regions across India.

The association highlighted the extensive loss of life, destruction of property, and disruption to livelihoods caused by the disaster, urging its members and the wider legal community to contribute towards relief efforts.

PUNJAB GRAPPLES WITH SEVERE FLOODING

Punjab continues to reel under the impact of unprecedented flooding, with numerous villages inundated and critical infrastructure damaged. Crops have been destroyed, livestock lost, and several fatalities reported. The floods have also severed connectivity,



File Photo

making rescue and relief operations more difficult. Despite these challenges, authorities remain engaged in providing timely assistance to affected populations.

In its official notice, the DHCBA's Executive Committee extended condolences to families mourning the loss of loved ones. The statement urged collective action, calling on its members to support the relief effort by pro-



viding food, shelter, and medical aid.

"The Executive Committee calls upon all its members to come forward in this moment of crisis

and extend their wholehearted contributions, so that essential assistance by way of food, shelter, and medical aid may be provided to the victims of this tragedy," said Vikram Singh Panwar, Honorary Secretary of DHCBA.

ONGOING CRISES ACROSS MULTIPLE STATES

The appeal comes in the wake of other devastating natural disasters that have struck India in recent weeks. Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Bihar have also been severely affected by floods and landslides, adding to the crisis.

On August 5, 2025, a cloudburst in Dharali village, Uttarakashi district, triggered flash floods that left at least five dead and over 50 missing. The Char Dham Yatra route was also rendered inaccessible, disrupting pilgrim travel. The Indian Army has been actively involved

in relief operations, providing medical aid at its Harsil facility.

DHCBA President N. Hariharan, who had previously expressed solidarity with those impacted by the Uttarakashi disaster, reiterated support for flood victims nationwide. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the people and communities affected by these calamities. Your generosity and support will go a long way in alleviating their suffering," he said.

A CALL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

The DHCBA's appeal is not limited to its own members. The association has encouraged the entire legal fraternity in Delhi to extend their support to relief operations. With multiple states simultaneously facing natural calamities, coordinated efforts and generous contributions are seen as essential to helping the victims rebuild their lives.

Nitish Katara murder case: SC refuses to extend interim bail of Vikas Yadav, asks to move HC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to extend interim bail granted to Vikas Yadav, who is serving a 25-year sentence in the 2002 Nitish Katara murder case.

A bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and Satish Chandra Sharma directed Yadav's counsel to approach the Delhi High Court for either an extension or fresh interim bail.

COUNSEL'S PLEA REJECTED

During the hearing, Yadav's counsel pressed for the apex court to consider extending the interim bail instead of asking him to move the High Court. However, once the bench indicated it was inclined to dismiss the plea, the counsel agreed to approach the High Court.

Last week, the court had extended Yadav's interim bail by one week after he challenged the Delhi High Court's August 22 order declining to prolong his release.

GROUND FOR INTERIM BAIL

Yadav, 54, who has been



Vikas Yadav.

File Photo

behind bars for more than 23 years, had sought interim bail citing two reasons: to look after his ailing mother who had undergone surgery, and to attend his marriage scheduled for September 5.

On April 24, the apex court granted him interim bail to care for his mother, directing that he reside only at his Ghaziabad home.

The court made it clear that he must not contact witnesses in the case, including Neelam Katara, mother of the victim. It also ordered police in Delhi and Uttarakhand to provide security to witnesses and Neelam Katara.

Since then, his interim bail had been extended multiple times until the Delhi High Court rejected further relief.

PENDING ISSUES AND LEGAL HISTORY

Yadav has also filed a plea before the Supreme Court challenging the denial of remission benefits, which remains pending.

In May 2008, a trial court convicted Yadav for the murder of Nitish Katara, a young business executive, ruling that Katara was killed because of his relationship with Bharti Yadav, Vikas's sister.

On October 3, 2016, the Supreme Court upheld jail terms for Vikas and his cousin Vishal Yadav, imposing 25 years of imprisonment without remission.

The court found that they had kidnapped Katara from a marriage party on the night of February 16-17, 2002, before murdering him.

Elgar Parishad case: SC to hear accused bail plea on medical groundson Sep 15

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to take up the bail petition of Mahesh Raut, an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Bhima Koregaon case, citing serious medical concerns.

A bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and Satish Chandra Sharma will hear the matter on September 15, as Raut challenges his continued detention despite being granted bail by the Bombay High Court.

Bail Granted But Stayed By NIA's Request

Earlier, the court allowed Raut's bail petition but stayed the release for a week after the National Investigation Agency intervened. The Supreme Court later extended that stay, keeping him in custody pending further proceedings.

Raut's lawyer informed the court that the activist is



File Photo

suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, a condition that requires specialised treatment unavailable in prison facilities or at the JJ Hospital where he was examined. The lawyer requested that the court consider allowing Raut's release for medical reasons.

"If the prison hospital can file a status report, and we can take him for a medical examination... JJ hospital

doesn't have the facilities for this," the counsel submitted, urging the court to grant bail on humanitarian grounds.

COURT OPEN TO EXPLORING MEDICAL RELIEF

The bench acknowledged the plea but opted for caution, stating that authorities should submit details before deciding. "If the ailment is so serious that it warrants

continuous treatment, then there is no difficulty. Because all of us know that government doctors play it safe. If serious treatment is required, they will not touch it because if anything happens then they will be responsible. So let's just find out, no problem," the bench remarked.

The court asked the authorities to file an affidavit explaining Raut's health condition and adjourned the matter for further hearing next Tuesday.

DURATION OF CUSTODY ALSO CONSIDERED

Raut's counsel pointed out that the activist has spent nearly 7 years in prison. Justice Sundresh responded affirmatively, "No issue at all, we will consider it. Keep next Tuesday."

ELGAR PARISHAD-BHIMA KOREGAON CASE

CARLOS ALCARAZ BEATS RIVAL JANNIK SINNER AT THE U.S. OPEN

AGENCIES
NEW YORK

So maybe the first U.S. Open final between young, elite rivals Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner wasn't as long, riveting and dramatic as their matchup to decide the championship at the French Open. Perhaps it wasn't as seemingly meaningful and plot-driven as their showdown for the Wimbledon trophy.

Still, what the No. 2-seeded Alcaraz's 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over No. 1 Sinner on Sunday did do was significant. Alcaraz reasserted his superiority over the defending champion, wrested away the top spot in the ATP rankings and left tennis fans eager for whenever their next clash will come.

They are the first two men in the sport's history to face each other in three consecutive Grand Slam finals within a single season.

"I'm seeing you more than my family," Alcaraz joked during the trophy ceremony, eliciting a grin from Sinner. "It's great to share the



Jannik Sinner, of Italy, left, and Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, right, hold their trophies after Alcaraz defeated Sinner to win the men's singles final of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Sunday.

court, to share the locker rooms, everything."

This 2-hour, 42-minute win gave Alcaraz, a 22-year-old from Spain, leads over Sinner, a 24-year-old from Italy, of 10-5 in their head-to-head series, 6-4 in total Grand Slam trophies, and 2-1 in U.S. Open championships.

"I give lots of credit to him, because he handled the situation better than I did," said

Sinner, who lamented that his own play was too predictable. "He raised his level when he had to."

The match's start was delayed for about a half-hour while thousands of fans were stuck outside Arthur Ashe Stadium going through extra security because President Donald Trump sat in a sponsor's suite.

Under a closed roof be-

cause of rain earlier in the day, Alcaraz was stronger, faster, more well-equipped for the occasion.

"You were better than me," Sinner said. "I tried my best today. I couldn't do more."

Alcaraz finished with twice as many winners, 42-21, and his coach, 2003 French Open champ Juan Carlos Ferrero, called the performance "perfect."

Alcaraz's view of that assess-

Alcaraz climbs back to number one

New York: Spanish sensation Carlos Alcaraz sealed his spot at the top of the ATP Rankings for the first time since 2023 following his triumph over arch-rival Jannik Sinner in the final of the US Open.

Alcaraz, a six-time major champion now, will kick-start his fifth stint as world number one and his 37th overall week at the top. Alcaraz was ahead of Sinner in ATP Live Rankings (which decides the ATP Finals competitors) at the

tournament start, and now, with a hard-fought 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory on Sunday over the Italian in the final, he has made it to the top of the ATP Rankings as well.

In 2022, Alcaraz defeated Casper Ruud to not only capture his first major title, but also become the youngest number one at the age of 19 years and four months. His rise continued over the years, bringing him several titles and accolades, bringing him back to the top in a winner-takes-

all clash against Sinner on Sunday. His rivalry with the Italian is shaping up to be something that generations would want to watch closely, no matter what.

Sinner, who became the first Italian to clinch the top spot in June 2024, held the spot for 65 successive weeks, with his debut at the top ranking fourth-longest in history, after Roger Federer (237), Jimmy Connors (160) and Lleyton Hewitt (75), as per ATP's official website.

Alcaraz's coach, Juan Carlos Ferrero, was a former world number one himself in 2003, after he reached the US Open final. In that season, he had also clinched his lone Grand Slam title, the French Open.

At 19, Alcaraz became the youngest man to secure the year-end ATP World Number one honour back in 2022, now with a tour-leading 61 wins and seven titles this year, Alcaraz is in position to regain the prestigious honour again.

ment? "He's right. I think I played perfect. ... If I want to beat Jannik, I have to play perfect."

This hard-court matchup followed Alcaraz's victory over Sinner across 5 1/2 hours after erasing a trio of match points on the red clay at Roland-Garros in June, and Sinner's victory over two-time reigning champ Alcaraz on the grass at the All England Club in July.

"The things ... I did well in London," Sinner said, "he

did better today."

Alcaraz took a week off after Wimbledon and then immediately got to work, spending 15 days with Ferrero focusing on one thing and one thing only: beating Sinner.

"I studied that match," Alcaraz said.

During his defeat at Wimbledon, Alcaraz was caught by a camera telling his team in Spanish: "From the back of the court, he's much better than me."

Perhaps that's why Alcaraz was so aggressive Sunday with his sledgehammer of a forehand. Whenever the smallest opening presented itself, Alcaraz barged through with that shot.

Sinner had dropped a total of one service game in his preceding three matches, but Alcaraz broke right away Sunday and five times in all.

These guys have combined to collect the past eight Slam trophies — four each — and

10 of 13. Novak Djokovic, the 24-time major champ eliminated by Alcaraz on Friday, took the other three.

Both Sinner, who had won his past 27 hard-court matches at majors, and Alcaraz offered glimpses Sunday of why they are so good, although it was rare that both were at a peak simultaneously.

An hour and 20 minutes in, it was a set apiece, after Alcaraz ceded one for the first time all tournament.

Sindhu, Lakshya to lead Indian charge at Hong Kong Open 2025

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu is set to lead India's charge at the Hong Kong Open 2025 badminton tournament, starting Tuesday, as per Olympics.com.

For Sindhu, the quarter-final appearance at the BWF World Championships 2025 in Paris last month was her deepest run in any BWF World Tour this year, alongside the season-opening Indian Open.

Sindhu, seeded eighth, will kick-start her campaign at the Hong Kong Open 2025 with a match against Line Christophersen of Denmark, the European Championships silver medalist.

This comes after a mixed run on the BWF Tour,



PV Sindhu is set to lead India's charge at the Hong Kong Open 2025

where Sindhu faced early exits, including four first-round losses and three round-of-16 finishes since her Indian Open success.

Her compatriots Anupama Upadhyaya and Rakshit Ramraj accompany Sindhu in the women's singles main draw, while Rutaparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda are the only Indian duo in the women's doubles section.

Lakshya Sen aims to turn his fortunes around in the men's singles section at the Hong Kong Open 2025. After a promising run to the semifinals at the Paris 2024 Olympics, Sen has struggled to replicate his form this season, with his best results being a quarterfinal appearance at the All England Open in March and a semifinal finish at the Macau Open.

India thrash Singapore 12-0 in Women's Asia Cup

AGENCIES
HANGZHOU

Navneet Kaur and Mumtaz Khan score a hat-tricks as the Indian women's hockey team thrashed Singapore 12-0 in a Pool B match of



Navneet Kaur and Mumtaz Khan score a hat-tricks

the Asia Cup here on Monday. Apart from Navneet (14', 18', 28'), Mumtaz Khan (2', 32', 38), Neha (11',

38') scored a brace, while Neha (11') Lalremsiami (13'), Sharmila Devi (45') and Rutuja Pisal (52') also found the net for India. World number 10 India had also thrashed Thailand 11-0 in

their opening match while holding defending champions Japan to a 2-2 draw last week.

Divyanshi, Ananya clinch U-15 girls' doubles title at WTT Youth Star Contender

AGENCIES
SKOPJE

India's young Divyanshi Bhowmick, partnering with Ananya Muralidharan, won the U-15 Girls' Doubles title at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Youth Star Contender in Skopje on September 7.

The memorable triumph came at the SC Jane Sandanski in Skopje, North Macedonia, where the young pair battled past China's Zhao Wangqi and Liu Ziling in a thrilling five-set encounter.

The Indians edged past their opponents 3-2 (11-8, 7-11, 11-8, 6-11, 14-12), sealing



Divyanshi, partnering with Ananya Muralidharan, won the U-15 Girls' Doubles

a victory for Indian table tennis at the U-15 level, as per a press release from WTT. The Indian contingent also delivered strong results in other categories, finishing as runners-up in both the U-19

and U-15 Boys' Singles events. This performance underlines the growing stature of India in the global youth table tennis circuit, with the next generation already making waves at the highest level.

Young gun Callum Vidler ruled out of Australia A tour of India

AGENCIES
CANBERRA

Back injuries continue to haunt Australia as it stands on the verge of becoming an epidemic among fast bowlers, with Queensland teenager Callum Vidler becoming the latest to join the list, which has ruled them out of Australia A white-ball tour of India and the start of the domestic summer due to a partial stress fracture, according to ESPNcricinfo.

After the Australia ODI and Test, captain Pat Cum-

mins developed a lumbar bone stress in his lower back, and Lance Morris is undergoing back surgery; there were speculations about fast-tracking Vidler. He was in contention to play in the white-ball part of Australia A's tour of India later this month.

He was bolstering his preparations by playing three T20 matches in the T20 Max in Queensland for his club side, Valley. However, it all changed when scans late last week confirmed a partial fracture in his L3 vertebrae.

Indian hockey comes back on track only after recovering from setbacks

COMMENTARY BOX

MANOJ JOSHI

The last five years have been full of ups and downs for Indian hockey. During this period, India finished on the Olympic podium twice and also won a medal in the Pro Hockey League on one occasion, but after that the hockey team fell flat on its face in the European leg of the Pro Hockey League, where it lost seven matches one after the other and could only manage to fin-

ish eighth out of nine teams. India's world ranking, which had reached third place in the world in these years, has now slipped to seventh place. But now once again the hopes of Indian hockey's graph rising have been raised.

It will be called a good sign that India's performance showed a lot of improvement in the Asia Cup. Although it took some time for India to

find the rhythm, but once it caught the rhythm, India never looked back. Be it Malaysia, China or South Korea, all of them fell flat on their faces in front of India. The result of all this was that India succeeded in qualifying for the World Cup Hockey to be held in Belgium and Netherlands next year. This means that now there will be no pressure on India to enter this prestigious tournament in future competitions and India will be able to prepare for it without any pressure.

It is true that in the Asia Cup, apart from India, no team was in the top 10 rank-

ings. Malaysia was ranked 12th and South Korea was ranked 13th and Japan has also surprised good teams from time to time. It has even proved itself by winning the gold medal in hockey in the 2018 Asian Games. Apart from this, China has raised hopes by reaching the final of the Asian Champions Trophy last year. Then it lost to India by just one goal in the final. This time too, it lost to India by a margin of one goal in the league match. But after the league match against South Korea in Super-4, the Indian team found a great rhythm in the next match against Ma-

laysia and by scoring 15 goals in the last three matches including the final, proved that stopping the current hockey team is not only difficult but impossible for the Asian teams at this time.

India scored a total of 39 goals in the Asia Cup and nine goals were scored against it. Among these, our Sarpanch Sahab i.e. Harmanpreet Singh, Abhishek Nain and Sukhjeet Singh scored six goals each while Dilpreet and Jugraj Singh scored four goals each. Apart from this, Mandeep Singh scored three, Shilanand Lakra and Amit Rohidas scored two

goals each and Rajkumar Rai, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Sanjay Rana, Hardik Singh, Manpreet Singh and Rajinder Singh scored one goal each. That means a total of 14 players scored goals in the entire tournament. From this, it can be estimated how many match winners India has. This shows its scoring power. Among these, the number of field goals is the highest. Apart from this, goals were also scored on penalty corners and counter-attacks.

The other good thing about the Indian team is that if the team's plan A does not work, then coach Craig Ful-

ton quickly brings the team to the second plan. If the Chinese defenders kept the Indian forwards under control to a great extent against China, then Fulton adopted the strategy of Plan B against the same Chinese team in the Super-4 match, under which India showed aerial passes and three-D skills. Also, we were successful in the strategy of tricking the opposition with good stickwork in the opponent's D. When the team got into rhythm, its speed also increased, which most teams could not match.

During practice in Bengaluru, the Indian team prac-

ticed on fast turf, which also helped India on the fast turf of most international tournaments, but the turf of Rajgir was slower than this, and it took some time for India to adjust to it. The shocks that the Indian team has received from time to time have been very useful for the team in the past. For example, playing a 2-2 draw with Canada in the Rio Olympics, losing to Malaysia in the penalty shoot-out in the semi-finals of the 2018 Asian Games, losing to Japan in the semi-finals of the 2021 Asian Champions Trophy and drawing with Argentina in the Paris Olympics.