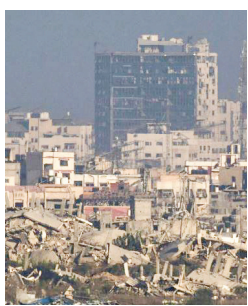




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## INDIA PLEDGES \$680M TO MAURITIUS, INKS 7 PACTS

PM Modi hosts Mauritius PM Ramgoolam as two countries hold bilateral talks in Varanasi

TDG NETWORK  
VARANASI

India and Mauritius on Thursday deepened their ties as India and Mauritius signed seven agreements aimed at expanding bilateral ties in critical sectors including maritime security. Emphasizing that a free and secure Indian Ocean is a shared priority for both nations, India announced a special economic package worth around USD 680 million for Mauritius and

The Prime Minister Modi hosted his Mauritian counterpart, Navinchandra Ramgoolam, at his Parliamentary constituency in Varanasi, highlighting the rich cultural connections between India and Mauritius. Modi described the



PM Modi holds a bilateral meeting with the Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam, in Varanasi on Thursday. ANI

### SECURE INDIAN OCEAN SHARED PRIORITY: PM

- Prime Minister Modi emphasized a free and secure Indian Ocean as a shared priority.
- India will assist Mauritius with infrastructure projects including ports, airports, roads, schools, and hospitals.
- Both countries agreed to work on hydrography cooperation, including joint surveys and navigation charts for Mauritius's exclusive economic zone.

two countries as "not just partners but a family." The Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed India's commitment to strengthening the security of Mauritius's exclusive economic zone and announced plans to facilitate bilateral trade in local currencies following the successful launch of UPI and RuPay cards in Mauritius.

The special economic package will support at least 10 projects in Mauritius, including improvements to key infrastructure such as ports, airports, roads, as well as the establishment of new schools and hospitals. Modi clarified, "This package is not an assistance. It is an investment in our shared future."

The seven agreements signed will enhance cooperation. P3

## Trump ally Kirk shot dead at US university

TDG NETWORK  
UTAH

Right-wing political commentator and conservative activist Charlie Kirk was shot dead on Wednesday while delivering a speech at Utah Valley University, according to *The New York Times*.

A university spokesperson stated that Kirk was about 20 minutes into his presentation when a gunshot was heard from a nearby building. The university issued an alert informing students that "a single shot was fired on campus toward a visiting speaker," and confirmed that a suspect has been taken into custody.

Later US President Donald Trump announced on social media that conservative activist Charlie Kirk has died after he was shot in the neck while speaking at a Utah Valley University event. Trump said that Kirk "was loved and admired by ALL."

In a post on his social media platform Truth Social,



US President Trump with Charlie Kirk. File photo

*The White House wrote in an X post, "In honour of Charlie Kirk, President Trump is ordering all American flags throughout the U.S. to be lowered to Half Mast."*

Trump wrote, "The Great, and even Legendary, Charlie Kirk, is dead. No one understood or had the Heart of the Youth in the United States of America better than Charlie. He was loved and admired by ALL, especially me, and now, he is no longer with us. Melania and my Sympathies go out to his beautiful wife Erika, and family. Charlie, we love you!"

The White House also informed that Trump has ordered that all American flags throughout the United States will be lowered to half-mast.

The White House wrote in an X post, "In honour of Charlie Kirk, President Trump is ordering all American flags throughout the U.S. to be lowered to Half Mast." P3

## Punjab families protest recruitment of youths into Russian Army

TARUNI GANDHI  
CHANDIGARH

Families of several Indian youths, mostly from Punjab, have expressed anger and despair after reports surfaced that young men from the state were being recruited into the Russian army to fight in the ongoing war against Ukraine.

Despite repeated requests from New Delhi urging Moscow to stop such recruitment, at least 15 Punjabi youths are believed to have been drawn into the conflict. Some of them have gone missing, while others are reportedly stranded in Russia.

Jagdeep Singh, whose brother Mandeep is among those untraceable, said the families had been left helpless. "Since July this year, these recruitments have taken place, and the stranded youths have been making frantic calls to the Indian embassy in Russia, but there

## Nepal's Gen-Z looks to amend Constitution while backing Karki

TDG NETWORK  
KATHMANDU

Nepal's Gen-Z leaders are backing Sushila Karki to head an interim government, showcasing their support for her leadership, while looking to dissolve Parliament and amend the country's Constitution amidst ongoing protests.

Karki, Nepal's first female Chief Justice, served from July 2016 to June 2017 and is known for her strong stance against corruption and commitment to judicial independence.

Ojaswi, one of the leaders, underscored the decentralised, leaderless nature of Gen Z's push for change, focusing on building the nation without undermining the Constitution.

"We don't have leaders in Gen-Z, it was something that started overnight...We don't have leaders; we are all Gen-Z, and we are all leaders...Right now, we are trying to dissolve the Parliament." P3



Army personnel stand guard outside the Nepali Rashtrapati Bhawan, which was vandalised and set on fire by Protesters amid the violent protest against the Government over alleged corruption, in Kathmandu on Wednesday. ANI

## Nepal consulate in Kolkata loses touch with Kathmandu

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA

The Nepal Consulate on National Library Avenue in Kolkata is facing its most testing moment in years as escalating unrest in Nepal has left officials here cut off from their superiors in Kathmandu.

Officials at the consulate say they are unable to establish reliable communications

with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kathmandu, fuelling confusion at a time when hundreds of Indians stranded in Nepal are seeking assistance through the consulate.

Security has been tightened around the premises, but the deeper concern for staff remains the safety of families back home. With Nepali television channels off air after

P3

## Farooq barred from meeting Singh, calls it 'assault on democracy'

AJAY JANDYAL  
SRINAGAR

High drama unfolded at the Circuit House here on Thursday after National Conference president and former J&K chief minister Farooq Abdullah was stopped by police from meeting AAP MP Sanjay Singh, who was detained inside the premises to prevent him from protesting against the PSA detention of party MLA Mehraj Malik.

Separated by a locked gate, the two leaders exchanged words with police personnel in full public view. A visibly upset Abdullah called the action a "direct assault" on constitutional values.

"This is the situation here — an elected government in place, but it looks like the strings are being operated by the Lieutenant Governor," Abdullah told reporters, accusing the administration of abusing its authority.

On the other side of the



AAP leader Sanjay Singh is under house arrest by J&K police after a protest against the detention of the party's Doda MLA under PSA. ANI

gate, Singh climbed onto a chair to argue with police. "He's a former Chief Minister! I'm a Member of Parliament! What's the crime? Are you saying two MPs can't even meet?" Singh asked, as Abdullah insisted his visit was only to show solidarity.

Later, speaking to reporters, Abdullah said he was "saddened" by the state of democracy in the region. "There was no stoning, no bombing — only a peaceful protest was planned. Yet, it

P3

## Cong fumes over CRPF letter on Rahul's security protocol breaches

ANAND SINGH  
NEW DELHI

Even as the Central Police Reserve Force (CRPF) wrote to Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge flagging repeated lapses in security protocol during his foreign trips, warning that such breaches could expose him to serious risks, the grand old party hit back asking if the government rattled by his truth as it made public release of the letter.

The Congress fumed after the CRPF wrote to Rahul Gandhi and Kharge flagging 'unscheduled trips' and breaches and violations of security protocol.

According to sources, in a letter to Kharge, CRPF flagged concerns over his security practices.

The force said that despite enjoying Z+ cover with an Advance Security Liaison (ASL) team, Rahul Gandhi has skipped mandatory protective measures on several occasions.

P3



Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi attends the DISHA meeting at Bachat Bhawan, in Raebareilly on Thursday. ANI

## Rahul promises 'explosive' vote theft' evidence

TDG NETWORK  
RAEBARELLI

Congress MP and Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Thursday reiterated his claims of possessing "explosive" evidence of alleged vote theft in recent assembly elections.

Speaking to reporters, Gandhi asserted that vote theft is a proven fact. "We are about to pro-

vide dynamic and explosive evidence. The slogan 'vote chor, gaddi chor' is echoing across the country because it is the truth. Governments are being formed by stealing votes. We guarantee that we will present the proof," he said.

In a press conference on August 7, Gandhi had accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) of direct involvement in large-scale voter

P3

## ECI to hold workshop as it 'battles' misinformation

ABHINANDAN MISHRA  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) will conduct a one-day workshop for Media and Social Media Nodal Officers of Chief Electoral Officers' offices from all 36 States and Union Territories today in New Delhi.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar will inaugurate the workshop in the presence of Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi. The announcement comes at a time when the Commission — and particularly Gyanesh Kumar — has

faced sustained political attack from opposition parties over its handling of electoral processes.

According to Deputy Director P Pawan, the workshop will reinforce that elections in India are held strictly in accordance with the Constitution and will focus on the importance of timely, fact-based communication.

With a recent surge in misinformation targeting electoral processes, he said, the effort is aimed at strengthening the communication ecosystem of state CEO offices so that misleading

P3



A view of first-ever Tri-Service all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition from the Gateway of India, in Mumbai on Thursday. ANI

## PM Modi asses flood situation in Uttarakhand, announces aid

TDG NETWORK  
DEHRADUN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review the flood damage in Uttarakhand.

Uttarakhand Governor Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd.) and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami were also present in the meeting.

Additionally, PM Modi interacted with flood-affected people and personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) as he took stock of



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets with NDRF, SDRF, Aapda Mitra Team, in Dehradun on Thursday. ANI

the rescue and relief work in Uttarakhand.

PM arrived in Dehradun earlier in the day, after concluding his engagements with Mauritian counterpart,

Navinchandra Ramgoolam, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Uttarakhand CM Dhami welcomed him at the Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun.

P3



# FIRST TRIP TO MANIPUR SINCE 2023 VIOLENCE: PM MODI TO UNVEIL RS 8,500 CRORE PROJECTS

TDG NETWORK  
IMPHAL

Nearly two years after ethnic violence broke out in Manipur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit the state on September 13 and unveil projects valued at Rs 8,500 crore, officials said on Thursday.

Opposition parties have been criticising the Prime Minister for not visiting the northeastern state, where clashes between Kuki and Meitei communities have left over 260 people dead and thousands homeless since May 2023.

According to officials, Modi will lay foundation stones for various development projects valued at Rs 7,300 crore from Peace Ground in Churachandpur where Kukis are in the majority.

The Prime Minister will also inaugurate infrastructure projects worth Rs 1,200 crore from the state capital Imphal dominated by the Meiteis, they said.

It was being speculated for the past few days that Modi would club his official visit to neighbouring Mizoram with one in Manipur, but no



PM Modi (File photo)

confirmation was available from either the government or the BJP.

However, on Thursday evening, the government put up a large billboard announcing the PM's programmes at Churachandpur's Peace Ground and at Kangla Fort in the state capital on September 13.

The hoarding came up at Keisampat Juntion, a key location in Imphal, which is also close to the BJP's state headquarters. More such billboards are expected to be put up in the state.

Manipur is under the President's Rule since February, after the resignation of chief minister N Biren Singh.

Earlier in the day, the Manipur government issued an advisory asking the public attending a 'VVIP programme' in Peace Ground on September 13 not to bring "key, pen, water bottle, bag, handkerchief, umbrella, lighter, match box, piece of cloth, any sharp objects or arms and ammunition..A notification that did not mention the Prime Minister's name also advised the public to avoid bringing children below 12 years and sick persons to the venue.Manipur's lone Rajya Sabha MP Leishemba Sana-jaoba described the PM's visit as a "very fortunate" one for the people and the state.

"It's a great fortune that

## Over 40 BJP members resign in Manipur ahead of PM Modi's visit

**Imphal:** At least 43 BJP members on Thursday resigned in Phungyar constituency of Manipur's Ukhrul district, days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to the northeastern state, a party functionary said.

Those who stepped down from the party's Phungyar Mandal in the Naga-majority district include the mandal president, heads of Mahila, Yuva and Kisan morchas, and booth presidents of the constituency.

In a statement, the BJP members said they were "deeply concerned over the present state of affairs

within the party" and highlighted "lack of consultation, inclusiveness, and respect for grassroots leadership" as key reasons behind the step.

"Our loyalty to the party and its ideology has always been unwavering. We reaffirm our commitment to work for the welfare of our community and the people of Manipur," it said.

Reacting to the resignations, the Manipur unit of the BJP claimed that the "individuals in question have been engaging in anti-party activities ever since the 2022 assembly elections".

In a video message, Leishemba also asked all to welcome Modi and not to make any boycott call.

Meanwhile, security measures have been tightened in Imphal and Churachandpur district headquarters town ahead of the Prime Minister's visit, officials said.

# PM visiting Manipur to attend dance event, not to mourn or apologise: Congress

ANAND SINGH  
NEW DELHI

Congress on Thursday took a veiled dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his likely visit to Manipur, almost two and half years of violence saying he is stepping his foot in the north-eastern state not to mourn or apologise but to President over a dance programme.

The Prime Minister is likely to visit Manipur on September 13 In a post on X, Congress leader Pawan Khera, who is also party's social media and publicity department chairman said, "Since the outbreak of violence in Manipur in May 2023, 258 people were killed, 60,000 individuals were displaced, 4,786 houses were burnt, 386 religious sites (churches & temples) were vandalised, women were stripped, paraded naked, and gang-raped." Taking a pot shot at the Prime Minister, Khera, who is also



Congress leader Pawan Khera (File photo)

the Congress Working Committee (CWC) member, party's highest decision making body, said, "864 days after Manipur was set on fire, Narendra Modi will finally set foot in the state on the 13th of September - not to mourn with its people or apologise for his silence and abject failure, but to preside over a dance programme. "Such a shame." The Congress on number of occasions has questioned the Prime Minister for not visiting Manipur since the violence broke there on May 3, 2023.

It has highlighted how Rahul Gandhi had visited the violence hit state and met with the affected families. The party had also highlighted the INDIA bloc member delegation had also visited the state.

The Congress had also slammed the government and the Prime Minister for their failure to control the violence in the northeastern state and had demanded the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Modi is likely to visit Manipur and this will be his first since ethnic clashes between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo communities erupted in May 2023, leaving more than 260 dead and thousands displaced. The Prime Minister is scheduled to attend two public meetings: first at the Peace Ground in the Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district and later near the historic Kangla Fort in Imphal.

## Congress leaders visit Bengal to revamp party, strategize for 2026 Assembly polls

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA

The Congress has launched an intensive organisational drive in West Bengal as senior central leaders arrived in Kolkata on Thursday to chalk out the party's roadmap for the 2026 Assembly elections. The immediate focus is to revive the state unit, strengthen its grassroots structure and prepare a comprehensive electoral strategy at a time when the West Bengal Congress remains caught between shifting political equations.

An important meeting of the Pradesh Congress Political Affairs Committee kicked off in Kolkata today in the presence of All India Congress Committee General Secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal. Senior leaders



Representative image

including Congress Working Committee member Deepa Das Munshi, AICC General Secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir, MPs Shakti Singh Gohil and Pradeep Bhattacharya, along with AICC secretaries Amba Prasad and Asaf Ali Khan took part. State Congress president Subhankar Sarkar presided over proceedings, with central leaders emphasizing that Bengal must gear up organisationally

if the party hopes to remain relevant in the 2026 contest.

"This visit is aimed at accelerating work within the WBPC," Venugopal told functionaries.

As part of the programme, Karnataka MP Nasir Hussain and Congress youth leader Kanhaiya Kumar will also tour Bengal over the next few days. On September 15, they will address a gathering at historic Rammoan Hall in north Kolkata, where sources say several former Left leaders, including Prasenjit Bose, may formally join the Congress. Since assuming charge, Subhankar Sarkar has pushed a broad reshuffle of the organisation, expanding the number of party districts from 28 to 33 in a bid to ease factional conflicts and boost representation.

## US , EU join hands to collaborate in space domain

ADITYA WADHAWAN  
VARANASI

Delegations from the United States and European Union (EU) met at the 13th US-EU Space Dialogue held from September 8-9 in Washington DC. Both the sides have decided to take their collaboration in the space domain to next level.

A roundtable was also held with the industry leaders kn the sidelines of space dialogue. The delegations discussed topics ranging from spaceflight safety and space security concerns to reducing barriers to trade and commerce in the space sector. In the area of commercial space,US and EU delegations recalled the joint statement agreed between President Trump and EU President Ursula von der Leyen on Au-

gust 21, 2025, to pursue fair, balanced, and mutually beneficial trade and investment.

US delegation was led by senior bureau official for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, John Thompson and deputy assistant secretary, Mary Bischooping from the bureau of emerging threats. Senior Official Tom Lersten delivered opening remarks on behalf of the US delegation. The delegation included representatives from the department of State, department of Commerce, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Interior, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, and the White House Office of the National Cyber Director.

## Om Birla inaugurates 11th CPA India region conference in Bengaluru

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The 11th CPA India Region Conference kicks off today in Bengaluru, inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. The three-day event, hosted by the Karnataka Legislature from September 11 to 13, brings together representatives from 31 State Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils across the country.

The conference's theme, "Debates and Discussions in the Houses of Legislature: Building People's Trust, Meeting People's Aspirations," focuses



Speaker Om Birla at 11th CPA India Region Conference in Bengaluru

on enhancing transparency, accountability, and public engagement in legislative processes.

Under the chairmanship of Om Birla, discussions will center on improving the quality of legislative functioning through innovative platforms like PRIDE and PRISM. The event will feature special sessions on digital innovation, research, and legislative training, aiming to strengthen democratic practices and foster inter-legislative collaboration.

Key dignitaries attending include Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha Harivansh, among others.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has apprehended 35 inmates who escaped from various prisons in Nepal in recent days, officials confirmed on Thursday.

Of these, 22 were caught along the India-Nepal border in Uttar Pradesh, 10 in Bihar, and three in West Bengal.

Officials, privy to the development, told ANI that these prisoners were held at different checkpoints along the India-Nepal border.

As per the officials, the num-



bers are still rising as strict vigil is continued at all border entry points.

According to officials, these arrests were made as part of SSB's heightened vigilance after reports emerged of mass prison breaks in Nepal, where

several inmates escaped during recent unrest.

India's border guarding force, the SSB, has been put on alert to prevent fugitives from sneaking into Indian territory and using the porous border to evade law enforcement.

# PM Modi wishes RSS chief Bhagwat on 75th birthday

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended wishes to Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat as he turned 75 on Thursday.

Sharing an X post, PM Modi praised Bhagwat for dedicating his life to strengthening "equality, harmony, and brotherhood" in the country.

He wrote, "Mohan Bhagwat ji has dedicated his entire life to strengthening the spirit of equality, harmony,

and brotherhood, inspired by the mantra of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. On the special occasion of Mohan ji's 75th birthday, who is always ready for the service of Mother India, I have expressed my feelings regarding his inspiring personality. I wish him a long and healthy life."

Mohan Bhagwat became the Sarsanghchalak or the President of RSS in 2009 after holding the post of General Secretary of the organisation from 2000.

According to a blog post by PM Modi, "Bhagwat



PM Modi and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat (X)

became a pracharak in the mid-1970s. In normal life, on hearing the word pracharak, one gets the illusion that he must be a person who does pracharak, but those who know the Sangh know that

the pracharak tradition is the speciality of the Sangh's work. In the last 100 years, thousands of young men and women filled with the inspiration of patriotism have sacrificed their homes and fami-

lies and dedicated their entire lives to the nation through the Sangh Pariwar. Bhagwat ji is also a strong pivot of that great tradition."

Lauding Mohan Bhagwat's work during the anti-Emergency movement, the Prime Minister wrote, "Bhagwat ji took up the responsibility of a pracharak at a time when the then Congress government had imposed emergency on the country. During that period, as a pracharak, Bhagwat ji continuously strengthened the anti-emergency movement. He worked for many

years in the rural and backward areas of Maharashtra, especially in Vidarbha." "Many volunteers still fondly remember Mohan Bhagwat ji's work as the All India Body Chief in the 1990s. During this period, Mohan Bhagwat ji spent precious years of his life in the villages of Bihar and remained dedicated to the work of empowering society. In the year 2000, he became the Sarkaryavah, and here too Bhagwat ji handled every difficult situation with ease and precision with his unique working style.

## Mauritius integral part of India's 'neighbourhood first' policy: Misri

TDG NETWORK  
VARANASI

On the ongoing state visit of Mauritius Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam to India, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri highlighted the significance of the bilateral partnership between the two countries.

Addressing a special media briefing, Misri said, "Mauritius PM Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam is on an eight-day visit to India. Mauritius is an integral part of our 'Neighbourhood First' policy...Mauritius is also an important part of the commitment to the Global South..It is a partnership evolved in diverse areas, and evidence of it can be seen in the number of MoUs signed between India and Mauritius."

The remarks underline India's efforts to strengthen ties with Mauritius across multiple sectors and its broader commitment to fostering cooperation within the Global South, a partnership that Mauritius Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam also acknowledged.

On Thursday, he lauded India's longstanding sup-

port and partnership with Mauritius, stating that the country has "benefited immensely" from India's generous assistance and expertise in various sectors over the years.

Addressing a joint press briefing after the bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ramgoolam highlighted the deep-rooted ties between the two nations and expressed gratitude for India's continued support in areas critical to Mauritius' national development, including health, education, capacity building, renewable energy, infrastructure, and maritime security.

"Over the years, India, through its various governments, has accompanied Mauritius in its journey towards progress... Before our independence, India had a High Commission in Mauritius. Over the years, we have benefited from India's generous assistance and expertise in key sectors of national development, including but not limited to health, education, capacity building, renewable energy, infrastructure and maritime security.

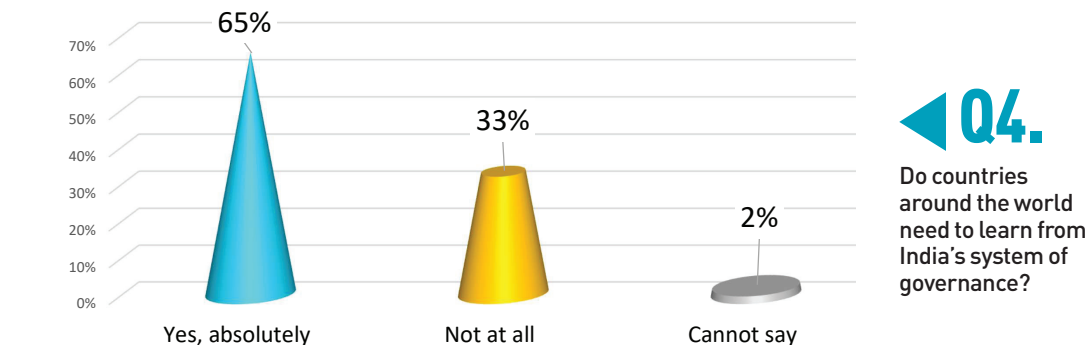
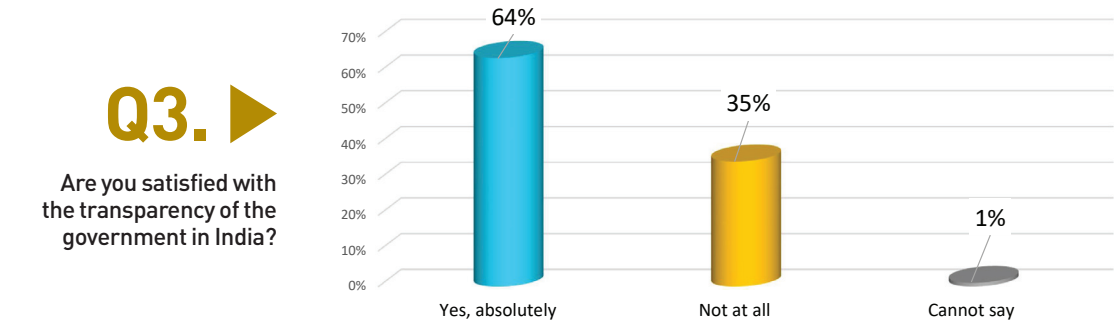
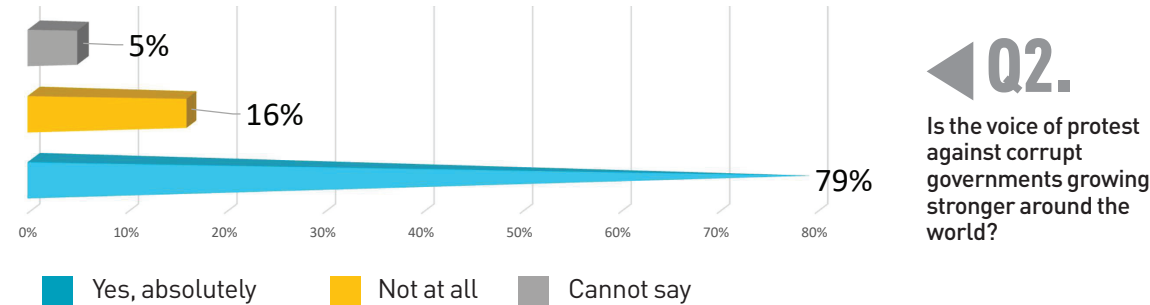
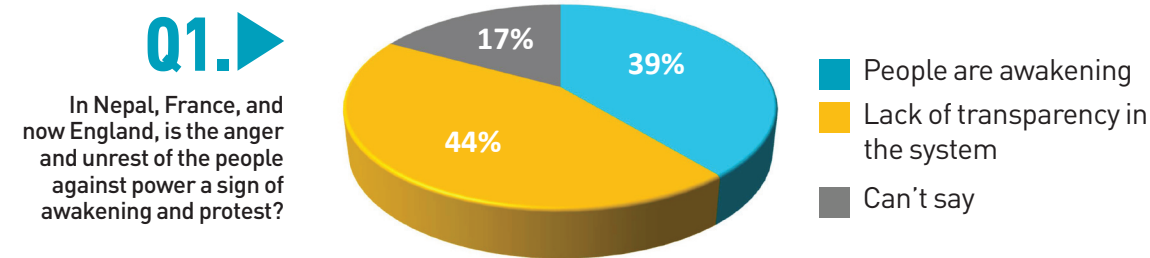


THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON PUBLIC REVOLT AGAINST CORRUPTION

64% of respondents said they are satisfied with the transparency of the Indian government.

The survey highlights rising global unrest against corruption and governance failures. While 79% believe protests against corrupt governments are intensifying, 64% of Indians ex-

press satisfaction with government transparency. At the same time, 65% think the world should learn from India's system, and 76% feel civil wars can erase nations' existence.



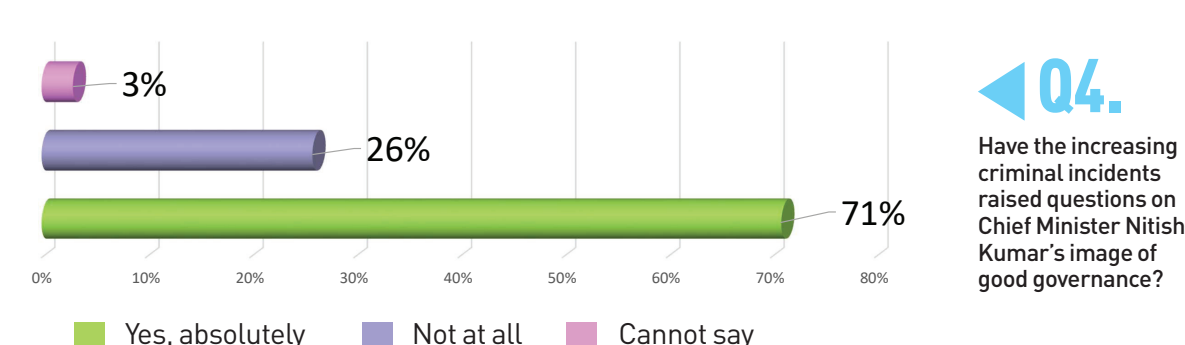
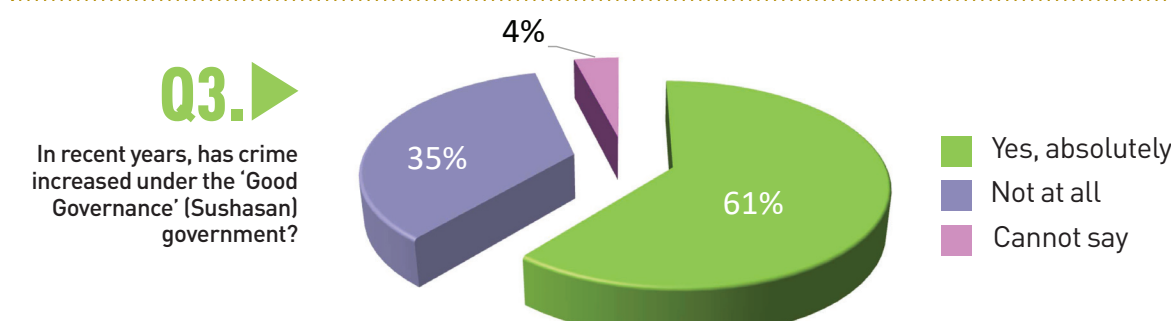
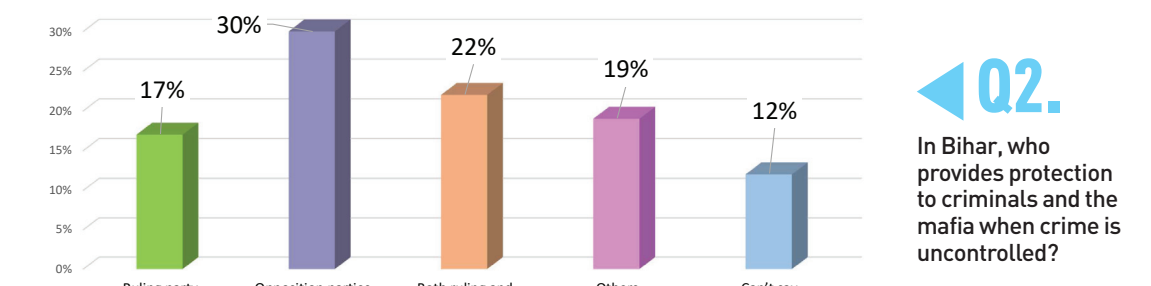
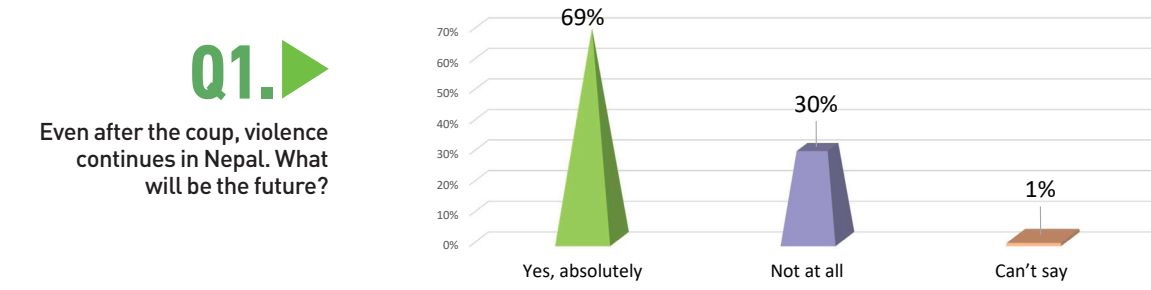
THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON BIHAR'S LAW AND ORDER CRISIS

61% respondents said crime has increased under the "Good Governance" (Sushasan) government.

A recent India News survey on Bihar's law and order crisis shows 69% believe unchecked crime has assumed a political form in the

election year, while 71% feel rising criminal incidents have dented Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's image. Nearly half of respondents said

growing crime will benefit opposition parties in the upcoming elections, reflecting widespread discontent.



Punjab families protest recruitment

CONTINUED FROM P1

has been little response," he said, adding that the situation had pushed families into despair.

On Thursday, Congress MLA Pargat Singh joined relatives of the affected youths at Punjab Congress Bhavan in Chandigarh to highlight the crisis. He criticised Punjab Police for failing to identify and act against local agents accused of luring young men with false promises before sending them to Russia. "The

saddest part is Punjab Police's inability to track down these agents," he said. Pargat Singh added that he had raised the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), but no visible action had followed.

Family members also alleged that compensation for those killed or pensions for those injured in the war were being siphoned off by middlemen.

The Indian government has already taken up the matter with Moscow. The MEA had earlier warned

citizens against joining the Russian military, citing "serious risks and dangers." Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also raised the issue during his visit to Russia last year, pressing for the release of Indians serving in the Russian forces.

With families continuing to demand urgent intervention, the issue has once again brought the focus back on illegal recruitment networks in Punjab that thrive on exploiting the desperation of unemployed youth.

India pledges \$680M to Mauritius, inks 7 pacts

CONTINUED FROM P1

eration in education, power, hydrography, and space research. The most significant agreement concerns hydrography, where both countries will collaborate on joint surveys, navigation charts, and hydrographic data of Mauritius's exclusive economic zones.

Modi stated, "India and Mauritius are two nations, but our dreams and destiny are one." He also congratulated Ramgoolam and the people of Mauritius on the historic Chagos agreement, calling it a "historic victory" for Mauritius's sovereignty. Modi reiterated India's

longstanding support for the decolonization and full recognition of Mauritius's sovereignty, underscoring India's firm stand alongside Mauritius.

In May, the United Kingdom agreed to hand over sovereignty of the Chagos Islands, including the strategically important Diego Garcia atoll, to Mauritius after more than 50 years. Under this agreement, the UK will retain full responsibility for Diego Garcia's security.

During Ramgoolam's state visit to India from September 9 to 16, he remarked that India-Mauritius ties have entered a dynamic and

forward-looking phase. Modi also highlighted close cooperation in maritime security, noting India's role as a first responder and net security provider in the Indian Ocean region. India is currently refitting the Mauritius Coast Guard ship and training 120 Mauritian officers.

Modi emphasized the recently concluded hydrography cooperation agreement, promising joint surveys, navigation charts, and hydrographic data sharing over the next five years. He reiterated Mauritius's importance in India's Neighbourhood First policy and the MAHASAGAR vi-

sion (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Region), which he unveiled during his visit to Mauritius in March.

Additionally, Modi announced the establishment of a new directorate of science and technology in Mauritius and the upcoming launch of Mission Karmayogi training modules there. The Indian Institute of Technology Madras and the Indian Institute of Plantation Management signed agreements with the University of Mauritius to boost research, education, and innovation partnerships.

ECI to hold workshop as it 'battles' misinformation

CONTINUED FROM P1

narratives can be countered with verified information.

ECI officials added that the exercise will build on orientation sessions earlier this year at the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), and help devise forward-looking strategies to ensure voters and stakeholders receive authentic information.

PM Modi asses flood situation

CONTINUED FROM P1

"Upon arriving in Dehradun to review the aerial survey of disaster-affected areas and relief, rescue, and rehabilitation operations, we welcomed the Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji. In this difficult time of natural disaster, his presence among the people of the state reflects his deep sensitivity towards the affected individuals," CM Dhami posted on X.

In several parts of Uttara-

khand, continuous rainfall has triggered ongoing land subsidence. Considering the extent of the damage, the state government has sought Rs 5,702 crore in relief assistance from the Centre. A central team has already visited the affected areas for inspection.

Since the Kedarnath tragedy, this year the state has witnessed the highest number of disasters, causing damage worth crores of rupees. Many villages have been severely affected, with not only loss of human lives

but also livestock casualties, the press note said.

On Wednesday, CM Dhami met with the Inter-Ministerial Team that assessed the damage in the Uttarkashi, Rudrapur, Pauri Garhwal, Chamoli, Bageshwar, and Nainital districts.

The team was led by R. Prasanna, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs. The team shared feedback received from disaster-affected people and praised the relief operations carried out by the state government.

Nepal consulate in Kolkata loses touch

CONTINUED FROM P1

several media houses were ransacked during violent protests, consular officials say their knowledge of the crisis is based largely on fragmented updates provided by personal contacts and Indian media outlets.

"We are constantly receiving calls from families in Bengal and other parts of India whose relatives are stuck in Nepal. But given the circumstances, we can only direct them to the Indian embassy in Kathmandu," a senior official said. "Beyond forward-

ing names and locations to the Ministry with a request note, our hands are tied."

The unrest has already crippled cross-border trade vital to both countries. Nepal, being landlocked, depends heavily on the Kolkata port for cargo movement. With normal customs and immigration services in Nepal suspended, trucks loaded with essential goods, including fuel, medicines, poultry feed and vegetables, have piled up at the West Bengal-Nepal border in Panitanki, Darjeeling

Nepal's Gen-Z looks to amend Constitution

CONTINUED FROM P1

ment...We are not trying to dissolve our Constitution or void our Constitution in any way. Maybe certain changes need to be made in the Constitution for now. But other than that, the Constitution will remain intact because the Constitution needs to be there...While we advance, we should make sure that we do not take any steps that are unlawful, illegal..." she added.

Ojaswi outlined the three key demands of the move-

ment. "...Right now, we need an interim government, for which we have proposed the name of Sushila Karki...We want to choose her because she would help us build this nation...Second, dissolving the current Parliament. Third, maintaining law and order in the country..."

Purushottam Yadav, another Gen-Z leader, supported Sushila Karki, reflecting trust in her leadership, highlighting the initial peaceful intent, and blaming the government for turning it into a revolution.

Trump ally Kirk shot dead

CONTINUED FROM P1

Mast." The FBI Salt Lake City field office has appealed to the public for assistance in identifying a person of interest in connection with the fatal shooting of Charlie Kirk at Utah Valley University.

In a post on X, the bureau stated, "We are asking for the public's help identifying this person of interest in connection with the fatal shooting of Charlie Kirk at Utah Valley University."

Farooq barred from meeting AAP's Singh

CONTINUED FROM P1

was not allowed," he said, adding that police were acting on "orders from above."

The NC chief also questioned Malik's detention under the Public Safety Act, terming it an "overreaction" that risked further unrest in Doda. "Sometimes a person

speaks in anger and later regrets it. Instead of resolving issues through talks, they have locked him up," he said.

"The poor are being crushed, hoteliers are drowning in loans, but instead of focusing on these critical issues, the government is busy in actions that create more trouble," he said.

Cong fumes over CRPF letter

CONTINUED FROM P1

CRPF VVIP Security Chief Sunil June alleged that Rahul Gandhi was not taking his security cover "seriously" as he was mostly travelling abroad "without informing anyone".

The letter also highlighted at least six foreign trips of Rahul Gandhi's in countries like Italy, Vietnam, Dubai, Qatar, London and Malaysia.

It noted that the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha frequently travels overseas for both personal and political reasons.

The source said, it stated that under the "Yellow Book" protocol, high-secu-

rity protectees are required to inform their security wing in advance about all movements, including foreign tours, so that adequate arrangements can be made.

Hitting back, Congress media and publicity department chairperson Pawan Khara said that the timing of the letter and its public release raises disturbing questions as Rahul Gandhi is leading the charge of vote theft.

In a post on X, Khara, who is also a CWC member said, "The timing of the CRPF's letter and its instant public release raise disturbing questions. It comes just as Rahul Gandhi is leading

the charge against the BJP's Vote Chori carried out with the Election Commission's complicity."

Firing salvos at the government, the Congress leader asked, "Is this a veiled attempt to intimidate the Leader of Opposition, who has already announced another imminent disclosure? Is the government rattled by the truth he is about to reveal?"

The Congress leader had in last few months visited several countries and has also been targeting the government over the alleged vote theft by Election Commission in collusion with the BJP.

Rahul promises 'explosive' evidence

CONTINUED FROM P1

fraud, claiming Congress holds "open-and-shut proof" of the alleged theft.

Gandhi shared Congress' research on voting irregularities in the Mahadevapura Assembly constituency in Karnataka, alleging a "vote chori" (vote theft) of 1,00,250

votes. He launched a scathing attack on the BJP and the ECI, alleging collusion between the poll body and the BJP that helped Prime Minister Narendra Modi secure his third term. Gandhi accused the ECI of "choreographing" the elections.

Ahead of upcoming assembly polls, Gandhi led a 16-

day 'Voter Adhikaar Yatra' in Bihar, joined by RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav. The campaign aimed to raise awareness about alleged voter list irregularities, which opposition parties have termed as vote theft. Covering over 1,300 km across 20 districts, the yatra concluded on September 1.



# 144 TELUGU PEOPLE AIRLIFTED FROM NEPAL TO VIZAG, TIRUPATI AMID UNREST: ANDHRA

TDG NETWORK  
AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh IT Minister Nara Lokesh on Thursday said 144 Telugu people were safely airlifted from Kathmandu in a special flight to Visakhapatnam and Tirupati.

According to the Andhra Pradesh government, over 150 Telugu people have been cleared for boarding at the Kathmandu airport, while a group of 12 from Simikot has safely entered India through Nepalganj. “And that’s liftoff! Our special Indigo flight from Kathmandu is en route with 144 Telugu brothers and sisters. Their joy after 36 hours makes it worthwhile,” said Lokesh in a post on X.

He thanked the Real Time Governance Society



Andhra Pradesh IT Minister Nara Lokesh

(RTGS), the Nara Rajadhani Trust (NRT), and Andhra Pradesh Bhavan (in New Delhi) for their tireless support in ensuring the 24x7 helpline remains open to assist the stranded Telugu travelers worldwide.

The state government is coordinating real-time evacuation efforts to bring back stranded Telugu peo-

ple from various regions of unrest-hit Nepal, said a release from TDP.

Simikot passengers have landed in Nepalganj and crossed into India safely.

In Kathmandu, 154 boarding passes have been issued, including 10 people shifted from Pokhara, it said.

The Andhra Pradesh government arranged a

charter plane to transport 10 Telugu passengers from Pokhara to Kathmandu, it said, adding that they (passengers) later joined others at Tribhuvan International Airport, where a special flight arranged by the state was stationed.

The commercial aircraft, which departed from Delhi, has already reached Kathmandu to facilitate onward travel for the stranded citizens to Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada, the release added.

Earlier, 22 Telugu people had crossed into Bihar by bus and reached Motihari, with arrangements in place to bring them to Andhra Pradesh.

The state government said it is working in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy in Kath-

mandu to ensure the safety and smooth evacuation of all stranded Telugu people.

Lokesh directed local MLAs and public representatives to extend a warm welcome to the people arriving at airports, including Visakhapatnam and Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh.

He further instructed officials to ensure proper arrangements are made for their safe travel to their respective hometowns.

The Minister said adequate arrangements are being made to airlift all AP citizens from Nepal to the state by this evening.

The coordinated rescue operation has ensured safe transfers from Simikot, Pokhara, and Kathmandu, with special flights and vehicles arranged to facilitate their return home, the release added.

## Fadnavis slams K’taka govt over St Mary metro station plan, calls it an insult to Shivaji

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday slammed the Congress government in neighbouring Karnataka for its move to rename Shivajinagar metro rail station in Bengaluru after St Mary. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah recently said his government would consider renaming Bengaluru’s Shivajinagar metro station after St Mary following a request made during the annual feast at St Mary’s Basilica. His deputy DK Shivakumar had claimed there is nothing unusual in responding to such community requests. Talking to reporters here, Fadnavis said, “I condemn the Karnataka government’s move to rename Shivajinagar metro station in Bengaluru after St



Devendra Fadnavis (File photo)

Mary. Its an insult to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The Congress has continued its tradition of insulting the Maratha warrior king since the time of Nehru who made comments against Shivaji Maharaj in his book Discovery of India.” Fadnavis said he was praying that the Almighty gives Siddaramaiah sense to not go ahead with such a decision that is based on religion and was against

the Maratha warrior king.

On comments from some Opposition leaders that India too could face civic unrest like the one currently underway in Nepal and earlier seen in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, Fadnavis said the level of the Opposition has sunk.

“You can criticise the government’s programmes and policies but not the society and country,” he asserted.

## KTR slams Congress over alleged sale of group-I posts

RAJ KIRAN BATHULA  
HYDERABAD

BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) on Wednesday came down heavily on the Congress government, alleging large-scale corruption in the recently held Group-I recruitment process. He accused the ruling party of “selling jobs in the open market” and betraying the hopes of lakhs of unemployed youth in Telangana.

KTR said that serious allegations were surfacing from aspirants, who claimed that crores of rupees were collected in exchange for posts. “The Congress government has auctioned off jobs, shattering the dreams of students who spent years preparing for competitive examinations with their parents’ hard-earned money,” he charged.

Referring to the Telangana High Court’s earlier intervention, KTR demanded that the preliminary exami-



BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR)

nation be reconducted in a transparent manner, leaving no room for malpractice. He also called for the constitution of a judicial commission to probe what he described as the “sale of government jobs.”

The BRS leader further sought a special session of the Assembly to deliberate on the issue, stressing that accountability must be fixed on ministers and even the Chief Minister’s Office. “Only a judicial probe can expose those behind this scam and ensure justice for unemployed youth,” he

said.

KTR launched a sharp attack on the Congress leadership, accusing it of incompetence and greed. “By selling jobs, this government has slit the throats of the unemployed,” he remarked. He warned that the youth of Telangana would not forgive such betrayal.

Contrasting the current crisis with the BRS tenure, KTR claimed that recruitment during his party’s rule was conducted in a transparent and credible manner. “Today, the Congress has turned recruitment into a business venture, collecting crores of rupees from desperate job seekers,” he alleged. Finally, KTR reminded the Congress of its pre-poll promise to provide two lakh jobs within one year of coming to power. He demanded that the government place a concrete roadmap before the people and stop deceiving the youth with empty assurances.

## Bastar gets Rs 52,000 cr boost for development, Naxal eradication

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Leading industrialists from across the country have put forward ambitious investment proposals for Bastar. At the Bastar Investor Connect program held today, the state government received proposals exceeding Rs 967 crore. Simultaneously, it has outlined comprehensive development plans worth Rs 52,000 crore for Bastar and its surrounding Naxal-affected regions. These initiatives aim to drive transformative change across key sectors such as mining, healthcare, education, agriculture, and tourism.

According to reports, the majority of development investments in Bastar are being driven by the public sector. NMDC alone is spearheading projects valued at Rs 43,000 crore. Additionally, the Railways have sanctioned investments

worth Rs 5,200 crore, while road infrastructure projects have secured Rs 2,300 crore. A further Rs 200 crore has been allocated for the establishment of a super-specialty hospital. On the private sector front, around Rs 1,000 crore in investments have been proposed, primarily targeting the service sector and MSMEs.

Furthermore, during the Bastar Investor Connect program held on Thursday, industrialists submitted investment proposals worth over Rs 967 crore, which will provide employment to more than 2,100 people. Overall, projects worth nearly Rs 52,000 crore have positioned Bastar as a hub for industrial and socio-economic transformation.

The proposed rail and road projects in Bastar will not only enhance connectivity in remote and difficult-to-reach areas but also boost industrial opportunities.

## ‘Every vote given to BJP will destroy purity of Kerala’: CM Vijayan

TDG NETWORK  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has appealed to the people in the state to understand the implications of supporting BJP here asserting that “every single vote given to the BJP” will destroy the purity of state.

He alleged that the BJP is attempting to change the cultural traditions associated with the state’s iconic Onam festival.

Speaking at an event, Chief Minister Vijayan expressed concern over a photo shown to him, depicting Maha Vishnu, Vamanan, and Mahabali in a way that implies a shift in the traditional narrative of Onam, where Mahabali’s visit is celebrated.

The Chief Minister said, “Last day, there was an event in Ernakulam in which Home Minister Amit Shah participated. We had a very grand Onam during the last week’s celebration. They will change Onam itself. On the Onam day, someone



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan

important came to meet me. I won’t take the name. He showed me a message on his phone. He showed a photo in which Maha Vishnu was there. In front of Maha Vishnu, there’s Vamanan, and Mahabali can be seen at the feet of Vamanan. So it means they want to change Onam during which Mahabali visits.”

Chief Minister Vijayan urged people not to support the BJP.

“They are attempting to change everything that we experience today to the old times. So not just politicians

but every single person in the state should understand that every vote given to the BJP will destroy the purity of Kerala,” he added.

Onam, a festival associated with harvest and the homecoming of King Mahabali in Kerala, is celebrated through various rituals. People thronged temples since early morning for prayers to mark the occasion.

This year, Onam festivities began on August 26, and today Kerala is celebrating Thiruvonam, the concluding day of the festival.

## ‘Due to growing age, he’s making bizarre remarks’: T’gana BJP chief slams Kharge

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP President N Ramchander Rao on Thursday slammed Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge for his remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Speaking to ANI, Rao claimed that Kharge is making “objectionable” remarks due to his growing age.

“Due to growing age and not understanding the current politics, Mallikarjun Kharge is making objectionable and even funny statements. He has forgot-



ten that the Constitution was not safe in the hands of Congress. Let him first take medical treatment and then speak,” Rao told ANI.

Earlier, on Wednesday, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge took a

veiled dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, saying that both of them don’t want to safeguard the Indian Constitution and don’t intend to save democracy.

Speaking to ANI, Kharge, who arrived in Gujarat’s Junagadh on Wednesday noon, said that the opposition’s main aim was to save the constitution and democracy.

“It is common to fight (elections) in a democracy. Our main target is to save the constitution and safeguard democracy. The land where people like Mahatma

Gandhi and Vallabhbhai Patel were born and attained freedom for the country - these two are highly honourable for us. The country is united due to them. However, two other people do not want the constitution to remain safe. They don’t want to save democracy either,” Kharge said.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Boora Narsaiah Goud also slammed Kharge for his remarks.

The BJP leader said that the statement regarding democracy and the constitution is akin to a bad joke because democracy and Congress do not go together.

TDG NETWORK  
RAIPUR

Ten Naxalites, including a top operative of the outlawed movement carrying a reward of Rs 1 crore on his head, were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh’s Gariaband district on Thursday, police said. Modem Balakrishna, a Central Committee Member (CCM) of the proscribed Communist Party of India (Maoist), is among the deceased, an official said.

Balakrishna, also known by his aliases Manoj, Balanna, Ramachander and Bhaskar, was secretary of



Representative image

the Maoists’ Odisha State Committee (OSC) and had joined the movement in early 1980s.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah hailed the security forces for the achievement and said the complete

elimination of Naxalism is certain before March 31 next year.

The gunfight broke out in the forest under Mainpur police station limits when security personnel were out on an anti-Naxalite

operation, Raipur Range Inspector General of Police Amresh Mishra told PTI.

“Personnel belonging to Special Task Force (STF - a unit of the Chhattisgarh police), E-30 (a unit of the district police), CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action - an elite unit of the CRPF) and other state police units are involved in the operation. Intermittent exchange of fire is still underway,” the IGP said.

“Ten Naxalites, including senior cadres, have been gunned down so far. Further details are awaited as the operation is still underway,” he added.

## Gadkari pitches for additional discount to vehicle buyers submitting scrappage certificate

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday urged the automobile industry to consider offering additional discounts to customers who submit a scrappage certificate while buying a new vehicle. The Road Transport and Highway Minister also said that he has requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to give GST relief to those buying a

new vehicle after scrapping their old vehicle.

The minister also hit back at the campaign against the E20 fuel (20 per cent ethanol blended petrol), saying the campaign was politically motivated against him.

“This social media campaign was a paid campaign. It was against ethanol, and it was to target me politically,” he said, speaking here at the annual convention of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

Opposition Congress recently levelled conflict of interest allegations against Gadkari, claiming that he has been “aggressively lobbying” for ethanol production while his two sons are involved in firms that produce ethanol and “benefited” from the government policy.

On the vehicle scrappage policy, Gadkari said it was a “win-win” for both industry and the government, as this could help the private sector



Union Minister Nitin Gadkari also with the availability of scrap metals, which are im-

ported.

The automobile industry is “still not fully listening to me” on this, the minister said, adding that it is for the benefit of the industry.

“If you will give some discount to those who will scrap the vehicle, to buy a new vehicle, then your turnover will increase a lot,” he said, adding, “The government will also get GST. And the pollution of the country will be reduced. So you should definitely contribute

to this.”

The minister asked the industry to consider offering “good discounts” to those buying a new vehicle after submitting a scrap certificate of the old vehicle.

He said that at present, an average of 16,830 vehicles are being scrapped monthly, and the private sector has invested Rs 2,700 crore.

“The steel scrap that we import into our country is 60 lakh tonnes. And apart from this, the very impor-

tant metals, due to which there is a shortage, which you have to bring from outside, can also get from scrapping,” he said. Gadkari added that only 6 per cent of aluminium has been made available through imports.

“If all vehicles are scrapped, then through GST, the new additional vehicles that people will buy will benefit the state governments and the Indian government by Rs 40,000 crore,” he said.

The automobile industry will also benefit from the additional demand which will be created after scrapping.

“So, looking at both these win-win situations, if you support the scrapping certificate in some of the incentives, then I think it will take our country and this industry forward, and your production cost will be reduced,” he said.

Moreover, scraps will be recycled, creating 70 lakh additional jobs.



# COURT GRANTS 12-DAY CUSTODY IN ISIS-LINKED TERROR MODULE CASE

Delhi Police uncovers ISIS-linked module, five arrested with explosives, weapons.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Patiala House Court on Thursday granted 12-day police custody of Ashhar Danish, Kamran Qureshi in the ISIS terror module case.


Earlier in the day, five terrorists, including Ashhar Danish, Sufiyan Abubakar Khan, Aaftab Ansari, Huzaifa Yaman and Kamran Qureshi, were presented in front of the Patiala House Court.

The Delhi Police Special Cell has uncovered Pakistani links to a terror module and arrested a total of five people on Thursday, confirmed Pramod Singh Kushwaha, Additional CP of the Special Cell. He said that eleven people were picked up, of whom five have been arrested.

Among the people who have been arrested, one is from Jharkhand, two from Delhi, who were basically residents of Mumbai, one is from Telangana, and one is from Rajgarh in Madhya

KEY DETAILS

- Patiala House Court grants 12-day custody of Ashhar Danish, Kamran Qureshi
- Police recover explosives, weapons, acids, laptops and incriminating drawings from accused
- Pakistani handler directed module to form Khilafat-style group, plan jihad operations
- All five arrested aged 20–26, from Jharkhand, Delhi, MP, Telangana



Accused being produced in court. ANI

Pradesh.

At a press conference held in Delhi today, Kushwaha said, “Sulphur powder, Sulphuric acid, nitric acid, sodium bicarbonate, pH weighing checker, ball bearings and equipment which can be used for making an IED, wires, motherboards, laptops and mobile phones, plus weapons and cartridges have been found from them.”

According to Kushwaha,

the Pakistani handler tasked with them was to adopt a Khilafat model. Their plan was two-fold. First, they had to form a Khilafat-style group. They have their own team, which is called Lashkar, and after that, they had to do Jihad, Ghazwa-e-Hind type, on the basis of their distorted concept of understanding of Islam. Plus, some targeted killings were to be tasked to them.

“They had to acquire a

place and prepare a team of many people. The leader of the team had an ID Ghazwa Leader, and he kept his code name as CEO. The central character in this was Ashhar Danish, a resident of Ranchi,” Kushwaha said.

Regarding the identities of the accused, all five arrested individuals are young boys, aged between 20 and 26 years. Kushwaha said that Danish is from Jharkhand; major recovery has been

made from him. He was in touch with the handler of Pakistan, and he had connected the whole group. He had this Ghazwa leader ID, and he was called the CEO.”

“The other character with him was Aftab Ansari. He lives near Mumbai and is a resident of the Thane district. His task was targeted killing. For which he had acquired weapons from somewhere, and when he was about to return from Delhi after acquiring weapons, he and his associate, Sufiyan Abubakar, were arrested,” he added.

One of their associates, Kamran Qureshi, was arrested in Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh, and a fifth man, Huzaifa, was arrested in Nizamabad, Telangana.

“This was a homegrown operation. So, acquiring weapons, including making IEDs, even cartridges, they were told to prepare on their own. Some incriminating drawings have also been found by them...,” Kushwaha added.



The water level of the Yamuna River has fallen below the danger mark. ANI

## Yamuna water level drops below danger mark, easing flood concerns in Delhi

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The water level of the Yamuna River has fallen below the danger mark, bringing relief for people living in low-lying areas of Delhi.

Visuals from the ITO Chhath Ghat and Loha Pul showed the river flowing below 205 meters on Thursday morning.

Earlier on Wednesday, the river had remained close to the danger mark in the early hours, raising concerns among residents and authorities.

The danger level 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.

In Agra, the water level of the Yamuna River around the Taj Mahal area rose significantly on Tuesday following heavy rainfall in the region.

Earlier in the week, the

water level in Delhi had dropped below the danger mark in the early hours of Monday, bringing respite after several days of flood concerns.

Officials said the situation in the capital is gradually improving, though low-lying areas remain under watch.

Last week, heavy rainfall had pushed the Ya-

munna above the danger mark, 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.

## Delhi seeks Haryana’s help after Mungeshpur drain breach

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has requested assistance from Haryana to help drain floodwater from Jharoda Kalan and parts of Najafgarh after a major breach in the Mungeshpur drain inundated the area.

The 50-foot breach occurred on Tuesday evening, sending nearly five feet of water into Geetanjali Enclave and nearby areas of Jharoda Kalan village near Baba Haridass Nagar in Dwarka. Nearly 2,000 residents were evacuated and shifted to temporary shelters at Baba Haridas Temple and an MCD school in Jharoda.

Officials said the breach was repaired in coordination with Haryana authorities, but floodwater



Major breach in the Mungeshpur drain inundated city parts. ANI

remains in several pockets. “We are pumping out water using submersible pumps, but the process is slow. We have asked the Haryana government to provide additional manpower and equipment to speed up the operation. Waiting for the sun to dry the water naturally would take far too long,” an official said.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) criticised the gov-

ernment over the flooding, alleging that homes and crops were destroyed, and demanded immediate compensation for the affected families. Meanwhile, officials confirmed that the Chief Minister’s Office has initiated the process of providing relief, directing district magistrates of all 11 revenue districts to submit reports on crop and property losses caused by the flooding.

## Delhi Govt plans more events to boost travel and business

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government is planning to organise more events to promote business and leisure travel, Tourism Minister Kapil Mishra said on Thursday.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the three-day Business, Leisure, Travel and MICE (BLTM) exhibition at the India International Convention & Expo Centre (IICC), Mishra said such platforms strengthen relations, help discover new markets and enhance cooperation within the travel and tourism sector. “We are planning to orga-



Representational Image

nise more such events in the coming days. It is really a big platform where we can collaborate with different states and nations and share multiple bonds,” he added.

Around 800 exhibitors

and 15,000 trade buyers from 15 countries are participating in the BLTM, which seeks to encourage collaboration across the business and leisure travel sectors.

International partici-

*Around 800 exhibitors and 15,000 trade buyers from 15 countries are participating in the BLTM, which seeks to encourage collaboration across the business and leisure travel sectors.*

pants also highlighted India’s growing importance as a travel market. Amruta Bangera, Director of Marketing at the Israel Ministry of Tourism, described India as a “big market” with significant trade and investment potential. Florian Sengtschmid, CEO of Azerbaijan Tourism

Board, said BLTM was the “perfect platform” for tapping into the Indian market, while Krishantha Fernando, General Manager of Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, said Indian tourist numbers to Sri Lanka already stand at 230,000 and could rise to over 500,000.

## Court grants bail to accused in ATM break cum dacoity case

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi’s Saket District court has recently granted bail to an accused in an ATM break cum dacoity case. It is alleged that the ATM was broken from Govind Puri and taken to Bulandshahr. The accused had provided a stolen car to other accused persons to carry ATM machine.

Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Vipin Kharb granted bail to Ravikant alias Pankaj, noting that the other two accused are on bail and he has been in judicial custody since June 2, 2025.

“Considering that the accused/applicant was arrested on the disclosure statement of co-accused persons and till now nothing incriminating has been recovered from him, and he is in JC for more than 3 months, applicant/accused Ravikant alias Pankaj

is admitted to bail, subject to furnishing personal bond in the sum of Rs. 30,000 with one surety in the like amount to the satisfaction of Ld. MM/Link MM/Duty MM,” ASJ Kharb ordered on September 9.

As per the Delhi Police reply, co-accused Farman and Ashif were arrested, and a car with a fake number plate was recovered at their instance. The number plate was manipulated by co-accused Farman. CCTV footage was also obtained by the police.

Co-accused Ashif, Suraj, Raja, Deepak and Ravi hatched a conspiracy to break the ATM, and the accused provided the stolen vehicle along with a duplicate number plate. After committing the theft, they distributed the cash of Rs 3.71 lakhs among themselves, police alleged.

## Centre clears Rs 38-crore road project in Madanpur Khadar

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Centre has approved the construction of a 4.5-km road linking Aali Vihar to Mathura Road, fulfilling a long-pending demand of residents of the Madanpur Khadar area, Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways and East Delhi MP Harsh Malhotra said on Thursday.

Malhotra said the propos-



Representational Image

al, submitted by the Delhi government, was recently cleared by the ministry. The road will be built on land belonging to the Uttar Pradesh irrigation department.

He added that the project

will include a 400-metre stretch from Aali Vihar to Lal Shiv Mandir, a 1.70-km stretch from Lal Shiv Mandir to Road No. 13A, and a 2.4-km section from Pocket D Sarita Vihar to Aali Village and Mathura Road.

The Uttar Pradesh irrigation department will execute the project at an estimated cost of Rs 38 crore under the Central Road Infrastructure Fund, Malhotra said.

## Over 200 Air India passengers deplaned after AC failure

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

More than 200 passengers on a Singapore-bound Air India flight had to deboard after sitting inside the aircraft for nearly two hours without air conditioning at the Delhi airport.

Flight AI2380, operated with a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, was scheduled to depart around 11 pm on Wednesday but faced delays due to technical issues. According to a PTI journalist onboard, the aircraft’s air conditioning system and electric supply were not functioning.

Passengers remained inside the aircraft for nearly two hours before being asked to deboard and return to the terminal building. The crew, however, did not provide any specific expla-



Representational Image

*Flight AI2380, operated with a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, was scheduled to depart around 11 pm on Wednesday but faced delays due to technical issues.*

nation for the deplaning. Air India has not issued a statement on the incident. Meanwhile, video clips circulating on social media

showed passengers fanning themselves with newspapers and magazines as they waited inside the grounded aircraft.

## Delhi Metro launches in-app UPI ticketing with BHIM

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In a major step towards digital convenience and cashless commuting, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Thursday launched “DMRC Pay powered by BHIM”, a native UPI-based payment system integrated within the Delhi Metro Sarthi app. The feature, developed in partnership with NPCI BHIM Services Limited (NBSL), enables commuters to buy



DMRC launching DMRC Pay powered by BHIM

tickets swiftly and securely with a single click, eliminating external gateways.

The integration, supported by BHIM Vega, allows commuters to register UPI

IDs, link bank accounts or RuPay cards, and complete payments directly inside the DMRC app. With this rollout, DMRC has become the first public sector entity to implement next-generation UPI solutions aimed at high-frequency use cases like metro travel.

DMRC Managing Director Vikas Kumar said the initiative simplifies ticketing and reflects the corporation’s commitment to digital mobility. “One-click, in-app UPI

payments will not only save time but also streamline the entire experience,” he said.

NBSL MD & CEO Lalitha Nataraj added that the partnership aims to embed UPI into everyday commuting. “By enabling in-app, one-click payments through BHIM Vega, we’re proud to support public transport systems in becoming faster, smarter, and more digitally empowered,” she said.

Alongside UPI ticketing, the Delhi Metro Sarthi app

now supports several new features:

Ticket booking for the Jai Hind Sound and Light Show at Red Fort, with two daily shows and no extra convenience fee.

Integrated ticketing with Noida Metro (NMRC), ensuring smoother journey planning across networks.

DTC bus ticketing via ONDC, offering passengers a single platform for DMRC, DTC, NCRTC, and NMRC tickets.



## BIHAR ELECTION 2025

## GOYAL CONFIDENT NDA WILL WIN BIHAR ELECTIONS

Union Minister Piyush Goyal said under Bihar CM Nitish Kumar's leadership the NDA will return to power in Bihar

TDG NETWORK  
PATNA

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday exuded confidence that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) will again form the government in Bihar under the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Speaking to reporters, Piyush Goyal said that the double-engine government of the alliance is working to give Bihar a bright future.

"I feel very proud of seeing the development in Bihar and the enthusiasm among the youth of the state. The way PM Modi at the Centre and Nitish Kumar in the state, by the way of a double engine govt, are working to give a

## HAILS DOUBLE ENGINE GOVT IN BIHAR

- He praised the "double-engine government" of Modi and Nitish Kumar.
- Goyal condemned the opposition's remarks against PM Modi's late mother.
- He also highlighted that recent GST reforms will boost the economy.
- The minister's comments come ahead of the Bihar elections later this year.



Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal ANI

bright future to the state...I am sure after witnessing the development in the state, a BJP-NDA govt, in the leadership of Nitish Kumar, will be formed again," Piyush Goyal said.

Earlier in the day, Piyush Goyal addressed a press conference in Patna, where he targeted the opposition over derogatory

remarks against PM Modi and his late mother at a rally in Darbhanga during Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar.

"The Opposition is looking for a reason to defeat us. I strongly condemn Rahul Gandhi for abusing PM Modi's mother. I want to tell Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi Yadav that no matter how

much you speak or abuse, the people of Bihar won't be misled; the people of Bihar are intelligent," he said.

Goyal further said that under the leadership of Nitish and PM Modi, the NDA government is ready to serve Bihar, and with full confidence. "The NDA will take Bihar to new heights," he added.

Moreover, Piyush Goyal also praised the new GST reforms, saying that as things become cheaper, demand will increase, and this will lead to a boost in the business industry.

"Recently, the Central government have done the work of making almost every daily item cheaper by making a big change in GST. Toothpaste, oil, clothes, watches, shoes, and stationery for school-going children all have become cheaper...Making many things available at 0% GST," he said.

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.

## Nitish has become 'Bhishma Pitamah' of corruption: RJD

TDG NETWORK  
PATNA

Calling Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar as the "Bhishma Pitamah" of corruption, Leader of Opposition in Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Yadav said on Thursday that the public "will take revenge" in the upcoming elections for mismanaging the state, including for alleged increased crime, corruption, and sheltering criminals.

"Crime is increasing in Bihar, The Chief Minister and deputy CMs are sheltering criminals. There is not even a single day when criminal activities are not taking place in the state. Corruption has increased in Bihar. Nitish Kumar has become the 'Bhishma Pitamah' of corruption, In collusion with the retired officials, they are looting Bihar and the public will take revenge in the coming elections," Rashtriya Janata Dal leader told reporters in Patna.

Amid the possibility of carrying out a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls across the country, the RJD leader further thanked the Supreme Court for allowing Aadhaar



Leader of Opposition in Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Yadav ANI

card to be included as a valid ID. He said that they are not against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) itself but rather the way it has been carried out.

"I thank the Supreme Court for allowing Aadhaar as an Identity Document for the SIR. This is a big victory for us. We are not against the SIR but are against the process by which SIR is being carried out," he added.

Earlier on September 10, the Election Commission (EC) held a conference of Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all States and Union Territories, and assessed the preparedness for the nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls. This

was the third Conference of Chief Electoral Officers this year. The conference was inaugurated by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, in the presence of Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

A presentation on the strategies, constraints and best practices adopted was made by the CEO of Bihar so that the CEOs of the rest of the country learn from their experiences, said EC in a press note.

To ensure that there is a uniform implementation of the Commission's initiative to ensure that no polling station has over 1,200 electors, the status of rationalisation of polling stations was also reviewed.

## No assistance by BJP-Nitish government: Tej Pratap

TDG NETWORK  
PATNA

Ahead of the forthcoming assembly elections, Former Bihar Environment Minister Tej Pratap Yadav on Thursday raised the issue of flooding in several areas in the Vaishali district of the state, saying that the Nitish Kumar-led double-engine government failed to provide assistance.

The expelled Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader also took a subtle dig at his younger brother, Tejashwi Yadav, who is the leader of Opposition in Bihar Assembly as he visited the latter's constituency to take stock of the situation.

"Various panchayats under Vidupur block in Raghopur assembly constituency of Vaishali district have been fully affected by floods. Most panchayats and villages in this assembly constituency have been submerged due to floods, but no assistance of any

kind is being provided by the BJP Nitish government, nor by the MP and MLA of this area," Yadav, who recently launched Janshakti Janata Dal, posted on X.

"When the local people of the Raghopur area informed me about their problems, I could not hold back, and I met the flood-affected families and provided them with relief materials and medical assistance," he added.

Further criticising the Bihar government as being "incompetent", Tej Pratap Yadav suggested that leaders come and meet the

flood victims in the area.

"The government and leaders are not even able to meet the people of Bihar affected by floods, let alone provide relief materials and other medical assistance. This time, we have to uproot and throw away such an incompetent government. Only then can migration from Bihar and disasters like floods be stopped," he added.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Piyush Goyal today targeted the opposition in Bihar, saying that they have completely failed, and no matter how much Con-

gress leader Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi speak or abuse, the people of Bihar won't be misled.

Speaking at a press conference in Patna, Goyal said, "The Opposition is looking for a reason to defeat us. I strongly condemn Rahul Gandhi for abusing PM Modi's mother. I want to tell Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi Yadav that no matter how much you speak or abuse, the people of Bihar won't be misled; the people of Bihar are intelligent."

The row began after a viral video purportedly showed derogatory remarks against PM Modi and his late mother at a rally in Darbhanga during Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar. The Darbhanga Police had arrested the accused person, and an investigation is underway.

Goyal further said that under the leadership of Nitish and PM Modi, the NDA government is ready

to serve Bihar, and with full confidence. "The NDA will take Bihar to new heights," he added.

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

While the NDA, comprising the BJP, JD(U), and LJP, aims to continue its tenure in Bihar, the INDIA bloc, comprising the RJD, Congress, and left parties, seeks to oust Nitish Kumar.

In the current Bihar Assembly of 243 members, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) consists of 131, with the BJP having 80 MLAs, JD(U)-45, HAM(S)-4, with the support of 2 Independent Candidates.

The Opposition's INDIA Bloc has a strength of 111 members with RJD leading with 77 MLAs, Congress-19, CPI(ML)-11, CPI(M)-2 and CPI-2.

## Centre gifted major road and rail projects to Bihar: BJP

TDG NETWORK  
DARBHANGA

BJP Bihar Unit President Dilip Jaiswal on Thursday praised the Central government's decision to approve two key development projects in Bihar. Jaiswal said that the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has today given Bihar the gift of a road and rail route.

Speaking to the reporters, the BJP president said, "Today, the Central Government has given two big gifts to Bihar. One for road and one for rail route... The Government of India has today given Rs 4,447 crore to Bihar for the construction of the road. And secondly, a 177-kilometre double-lane railway track will be built at a total cost

of 3,169, and for that, the government led by Narendra Modi Ji has today given Bihar the gift of road and rail route."

Jaiswal further praised PM Modi and CM Nitish Kumar, saying, "Today PM Modi and CM Nitish Kumar have decided to fulfil the dream of Bihar's development. They are working towards it," he added.



BJP Bihar Unit President Dilip Jaiswal ANI

Earlier, in a major boost to infrastructure and connectivity, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, today approved the doubling of the Bhagalpur - Dumka - Rampurhat single railway line Section (177 km) in Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal with a total cost of Rs 3,169 crore (approx.).

The enhanced line capacity will improve mobility, providing enhanced efficiency and service reliability for Indian Railways. The multi-tracking proposal will ease operations and reduce congestion, providing the much-needed infrastructural development on the busiest sections across Indian Railways.

## Railways deploy parcel vans to transport Kashmir fruits

ASHIQ MIR  
SRINAGAR

In a major step to rescue Kashmir's horticulture sector from mounting losses, the Indian Railways has deployed two dedicated parcel vans to transport fresh apples from the Valley to Jammu and Delhi. The initiative was rolled out on Thursday from Budgam Railway Station, amid continued disruption on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway (NH-44) due to landslides and heavy rains.



the Indian Railways has deployed two dedicated parcel vans to transport fresh apples from the Valley ANI

Railway officials confirmed that the first two vans left Budgam in the morning—one bound for Adarsh Nagar station in Delhi and the other for Jammu—carrying large consignments of premium

Kashmiri apples.

"This step ensures that the Valley's produce doesn't rot due to transport blockages. It's a timely move to support fruit growers," said a senior railway official stationed at Budgam.

For weeks, thousands of fruit-laden trucks remained stranded or returned midway due to road closures, risking massive wastage. Growers across Shopian, Anantnag, and Pulwama had raised alarms over potential economic losses.

## We want peace in Nepal, have Roti-Beti relation with them: BJP's Thakur

TDG NETWORK  
CHANDIGARH

Amid the ongoing unrest in Nepal for the past several days, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Anurag Thakur on Thursday advocated for "peace" in Nepal, asserting that India has a "Roti-Beti" and trade relations with the neighbouring country.

The BJP leader stressed that the Government of India had been taking all necessary measures to "evacuate" and "save Indian nationals" in the neighbouring country.

Speaking to mediapersons in Chandigarh, Thakur said, "The Government of India is taking all appropriate measures to evacuate and save Indian nationals. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is sharing details on this from time to time. We want peace in Nepal, and that there should be no loss of life or property. We have a 'Roti-Beti' relation with Nepal; we have trade relations. In a way, they are a part of our family."

Meanwhile, 31 people have been killed and over 1000 injured in clashes with se-



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Anurag Thakur ANI

curity forces during the anti-corruption demonstrations across the country, The Kathmandu Post reported.

The protests began on September 8, 2025, in Kathmandu and other major cities, including Pokhara, Butwal, and Birgunj, following the government's imposition of a ban on major social media platforms, citing concerns over tax revenue and cybersecurity.

The Gen Z-led movement, which initially began as a peaceful protest, has seen moments of violence and

chaos, which the leaders blame on political infiltrators.

Protesters have been demanding an end to "institutionalised corruption and favouritism" in governance. They want the government to be more accountable and transparent in its decision-making processes.

Earlier in the day, Nepal President Ram Chandra Paudel appealed to maintain peace, asserting that he is making "every effort" to find a way out of the current situation.

## CISF expands mental health support for personnel

ABHINANDAN MISHRA  
NEW DELHI

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) on Wednesday renewed its partnership with Mpower, a mental health initiative of the Aditya Birla Education Trust (ABET), by extending the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for another three years.

The extension builds on the success of Project Mann, launched in November 2024, which has provided structured mental health support to CISF personnel and their families. Over the past year, more than 75,000 beneficiaries have availed professional services under the program, contributing to a decline in suicide rates within the force—now reported to be below the national average.

The renewed MoU was signed by Parveen Sheikh, President, Mpower, and Sudha Senthil, Vice President, Sanrakshika. Currently, 23 counselors and clinical psychologists serve across 13 CISF sectors. With the new agreement,



Representational Image

the number will rise to 30, and services will expand to eight additional cities including Patna, Ahmedabad, Prayagraj, Bhopal/Indore, Jammu, Chandigarh, Jaipur, and Cochin.

The initiative has been credited with reducing stigma around mental health, encouraging early help-seeking behavior, and improving emotional resilience among personnel. It has also helped cut absenteeism, burnout, and long-term psychological stress.

Highlighting the importance of the program, CISF Director General R.S. Bhatti said, "The well-being of our personnel is paramount to maintaining operational excellence.

## SC reserves verdict on Governors' powers over Bills

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved its decision on the Presidential reference filed by the President of India Droupadi Murmu, seeking the top court's opinion over various constitutional questions, pertinently, whether courts can impose timelines on the



Representational Image

Governor and the President to grant their assent to bills passed by the State legislature.

After having heard submissions from the Union government, the States sup-

porting the Presidential reference and the States challenging it, extensively for ten days, a five-judge (Constitutional) bench led by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) B.R. Gavai today concluded the hearing.

"It has been a very enlightening debate, thank you very much, everyone", the CJI said as the bench reserved the judgment.



# INDIA'S WHOLESALE INFLATION LIKELY TURN POSITIVE IN AUGUST, SAYS UBI

WPI rebounded in August after two months of contraction.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Wholesale inflation in India likely turned positive in August 2025, rising to 0.45 per cent year-on-year after recording a contraction of -0.58 per cent in July, according to a report by Union Bank of India (UBI).

The report highlighted that the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) bounced back after touching a recent low in July, supported by broad-based gains across food, fuel, and core segments.

The shift also reflected the fading impact of a high base, with WPI at 1.25 per cent in August 2024 compared to 2.10 per cent in July 2024.

The report stated, "Wholesale Price Index (WPI), in our opinion, turned positive in August '25 after making a recent low of -0.58 per cent in July '25"

The report expected that the food inflation, which had been in deflation for the past two months, returned



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## UBI REPORT ON WPI INFLATION

- Wholesale Price Index rose to 0.45% in August, reversing July's -0.58%.
- Food inflation turned positive at 0.21% after two months of deflation.
- Core inflation strengthened to 1.69%, while fuel inflation improved slightly.
- External volatility, weather disruptions and GST reforms seen influencing inflation trends.

to positive territory in August. It is expected to be at a three-month high of 0.21 per cent against -2.14 per cent in July.

The rise in food prices was broad-based, with almost all sub-segments witnessing a sequential strengthening.

Core inflation also picked up momentum, rising to 1.69 per cent in August from 1.20 per cent in July. Similarly, fuel inflation showed

# GST reforms to boost auto manufacturing

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Government of India has taken a significant step to boost the automobile industry through rationalisation of GST rates across various vehicle categories and components.

An analysis by the Press Information Bureau (PIB) added that the move aligns with broader policy objectives under flagship initiatives like Make in India, Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, and the National Logistics Policy, all aimed at strengthening domestic manufacturing, modernising infrastructure, and encouraging innovation.

The new GST rate cuts cover a wide range of vehicles including two-wheelers (up to 350cc), buses, small to luxury cars, tractors (under 1800cc), and auto parts. By lowering taxes, the government aims to make vehicles more affordable, thereby stimulating demand and supporting manufacturers and ancillary industries such as tyres, batteries, glass, steel, plastics, and electronics.

This increase in vehicle sales is expected to create a multiplier effect, benefiting



Representational Image

micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) throughout the supply chain.

India's automobile sector supports over 3.5 crore jobs directly and indirectly, spanning manufacturing, sales, financing, and maintenance.

The GST cuts will boost employment not only in formal sectors like dealerships, logistics, and financing but also in informal segments such as drivers, mechanics, and small garages.

Additionally, with more credit-driven vehicle purchases anticipated, retail loan growth is expected to rise, improving asset quality and driving financial inclusion in semi-urban India.

Focusing on specific vehicle segments, the GST reduction

on two-wheelers from 28 per cent to 18 per cent will lower prices for bikes, benefiting youth, professionals, farmers, and gig workers by reducing costs and EMIs. Similarly, small cars in the affordable segment will become more accessible, especially in smaller towns where these vehicles dominate.

The GST cut on large cars simplifies taxation by removing the additional cess, making them more affordable while providing full input tax credit (ITC) benefits.

Tractors and commercial goods vehicles (CGVs) also see significant rate reductions, with tractors under 1800cc dropping from 12 per cent to 5 per cent, and CGVs from 28 per cent to 18 per cent.

# Hospitals to boost IT spending

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

IT innovation budgets in Indian hospitals are set to rise by 20-25 per cent over the next 2-3 years, with nearly half of healthcare providers already allocating 20-50 per cent of their spends to digital innovation, reveals the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)- EY Health-Tech Survey 2025.

The report, launched at the CII Hospital Tech 2025 Summit, highlights how automation in patient experience, clinical outcomes, and data-driven decision making is taking center stage.

Titled "Unleashing digital momentum to shape the future of healthcare - enabling automation to enforcing transformation", the report also flags the barriers of legacy systems, workforce readiness, and patient-centric delivery that hospitals must overcome to become future-ready.



Representational Image

When it comes to prioritizing digital investments, healthcare providers are directing budgets where they see long-term capability gains. Six in ten hospitals plan to invest in IT capability building, followed by BI tools and data lakes (50 per cent). Hardware upgrades and critical application enhancements fall lower on the priority list (40 per cent), while medium-priority areas include data management and cybersecurity.

Healthcare providers are also leaning into AI with a clear focus on enhancing

visibility of clinical data and generating meaningful insights to assist doctors.

Top priorities include AI for clinical documentation and data analysis (72 per cent), decision support systems (64 per cent) and imaging (60 per cent).

This reflects a pragmatic approach where CIOs are choosing to invest in high-impact applications that enhance data visibility for clinicians, providers and patients, strengthen everyday clinical decision-making thereby improving clinical outcomes.

# GST reform: Fiscal target still achievable

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India is likely to meet its fiscal deficit target of 4.4 per cent of GDP in FY26 despite anticipated revenue loss from the implementation of GST 2.0, according to a report by CareEdge Ratings.

The report noted that while the rationalisation of GST is expected to result in a revenue shortfall, the government's fiscal consolidation path remains achievable. CareEdge projected that the fiscal deficit for FY26 will be contained at the budgeted level of 4.4 per cent of GDP.

As per the report, the rationalisation of GST has been estimated to cause a net revenue shortfall of around 0.1 per cent of GDP for the current fiscal year.

However, the report highlighted that this shortfall is

expected to be cushioned by the higher dividend transfer from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The higher inflow from the central bank is likely to provide crucial support to government finances at a time when tax collections face pressure. It stated "We expect the net revenue shortfall from GST rationalization..... to be cushioned by the higher RBI dividend transfer".

The report noted that higher RBI dividend transfers and the government's focus on expenditure management will play a key role in keeping the deficit within the budgeted limits.

The report also said that while GST rationalisation could reduce collections in the short term, it is expected to improve the buoyancy of tax revenues in the medium to long term.

# GST, festive season to boost bank credit: Naina Lal Kidwai

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Sluggish bank credit growth as compared to last year in India signals weak capital expenditure and low demand, highlighting cautious business sentiment and subdued consumer activity across key economic sectors, noted Naina Lal Kidwai, Chairperson of the Board and Senior Advisor, Rothschild and Co India Pvt Ltd.

"Bank credit growth has been slow and that's an indication of both the lacklustre capital expenditure environment and demand being low," she told ANI in an interview on the side lines of FICCI LEADS event in New Delhi.

However, Kidwai added that the upcoming festive demand and the latest reforms in the goods and services tax (GST) would lift the senti-



Naina Lal Kidwai ANI

ments.

According to the RBI data, bank credit grew at 12.1 per cent during the financial year 2024-25, which is slower than the 16.3 per cent recorded in 2023-24.

"The good news is that with the GST reforms and the festive season is coming up that there is very strong sense of excitement that the demand will come back," she said.

"When the demand will come up capacities that are sitting free will be utilised and when they will be used

the companies will begin to spending more on Capex. So the start of the cycle to address the issue of demand becomes very critical and that is exactly what the government and the ministry of finance has set on course with the GST reforms," she added.

Speaking on sustainable finance, Naina Lal Kidwai said that India is doing very well in terms of achieving targets set particularly in renewable energy area.

"But the key issue now has to be how we can bring finance to work for the sectors that need that support because trillions of dollars that is required to make us climate resilient at for enabling the adaptability. For that credit enhancement is needed, which means that we de-risk new investments in a way that it crowds finance into the sector.

# Jefferies adds 9 Indian stocks to 'Buy List'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Jefferies, in its India Equity Strategy buy list, has made fresh inclusion of nine major players from across the sectors.

The American multinational investment bank and financial services company added, "Fresh inclusion to Buys are Reliance, Coforge, Siemens Energy, Adani Ports, AWL Agri, Sun Pharma, Mankind and GMR Airports."

In its report, Jefferies added that the Reliance Industries (Mcap: USD 214 billion) is expected to achieve double-digit



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EBITDA growth in FY26, driven by three main factors: a tariff hike in Jio ahead of its IPO, strong growth in Retail supported by GST cuts during the festive season, and

healthy profitability in its Oil-to-Chemicals (O2C) segment, which is up 15 per cent year-on-year so far in the Financial Year 2026 (FY26).

Over FY27-28, value is ex-

pected to emerge in its FMCG, data center, and New Energy businesses, with data centers and New Energy currently seen as option value despite strong growth potential.

The company is projected to deliver an 11 per cent consolidated EBITDA CAGR from FY25 to FY28, with Jio growing at 22 per cent CAGR due to two tariff hikes planned in FY26 and FY27, and Retail growing at 14 per cent CAGR driven by store expansion and same-store sales growth.

Currently, the stock is trading below its long-term average valuation, reflecting

# 102 new Indian fishery units can now export to EU countries: Piyush Goyal

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The European Union (EU) has listed 102 new Indian fishery establishments for export from India to EU member countries.

In a post on X, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Piyush Goyal, on Thursday, said, "102 new Indian fishery units can now export to the European Union member countries. This development will help our fisherfolk in coastal



Representational Image

states expand markets, make better profits, boost jobs & give further impetus to our seafood exports."

This significant develop-

ment for India's seafood industry reflects the growing confidence in India's food safety and quality assurance systems and marks a major step forward in enhancing market access for Indian seafood products, especially aquaculture shrimps and Cephalopods (squid, cuttlefish and octopus), as per a release by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

This decision follows a series of meetings in the

EU and New Delhi, in which Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and Senior Officials of the Department of Commerce participated, resulting in confidence in India's robust official control mechanisms, as implemented by the Export Inspection Council (EIC). Indian seafood exports meet stringent international standards, particularly those laid down by the EU, the release stated.

# Green fuels and sustainability defining India's mobility transition: Hyundai MD

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The shift towards green fuels and sustainable mobility is shaping the future of India's auto industry, Hyundai Motor India's Managing Director Unsoo Kim said on Thursday.

Speaking at the 65th SIAM Annual Convention, Kim highlighted that Hyundai continues to develop solutions across engine systems.

"We continue to lead innovation across all propulsion platforms, internal combustion engines, electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel-cell technology, and flex-fuel solutions, serving both mass-market consumers and logistics needs," he said.

Kim cited global examples of how hydrogen and electrification are already reshaping logistics and public transport. He pointed to the XCIENT Fuel Cell trucks in North America, which sup-

port operations at Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant America under the HTWO Logistics initiative. Powered by on-site hydrogen production and refuelling, these trucks handle nearly half of the plant's logistics requirements.

Outlining Hyundai's strategy in India, Kim highlighted five focus areas: sustainable technology, developing a holistic EV ecosystem, policy alignment, public-private partnerships, and



Unsoo Kim ANI

sustainability. He pointed to Hyundai's Chennai plant, which is on track to achieve

*Kim said that India has the right scale and skills to co-develop future mobility solutions.*

the RE100 benchmark by the end of this year.

Beyond road transport, he added that Hyundai is also working on urban air mobility and micro-mobility concepts for last-mile connectivity.

Kim said that India has the right scale and skills to co-develop future mobility solutions. He commended government initiatives such as FAME, Production Linked Incentives, and PM Gati Shakti, which, he said, have laid a strong foundation for sustainable mobility.

"Bharat occupies a unique and strategic position in this global transformation," Kim remarked, adding that the sector is becoming a

key driver of self-reliance under the Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat frameworks.

He also welcomed the recent Goods and Services Tax (GST) reforms, calling them a "landmark initiative" that would energise the automotive sector and boost both urban and rural demand.

Kim urged collaboration between global and Indian players to accelerate the transition. "The road

ahead may be complex, but it is rich with promise. This is the moment for global collaboration and local innovation," he said.

Concluding his address, Kim reiterated Hyundai Motor India's commitment to India's mobility transition and quoted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's words: "India's time is now. We have the opportunity to lead the world in a way that is sustainable, inclusive, and transformative."



# NEPAL CRISIS: A RESULT OF FAILURE OF GOVERNANCE, CORRUPTION, AND VIOLATION OF RIGHTS

## OPINION

BANDHAN KUMAR VERMA

The recent political and social turmoil in Nepal is not merely a consequence of public discontent; it is a human tragedy born from broken promises. What started as frustration over a government ban on social media has quickly spiraled into a national cry for justice a movement that's challenging the very foundations of accountability and citizens' rights.

Nepal's transition to a federal democratic republic in 2015 was supposed to be a new dawn, promising justice and freedom for all. But years of political infighting, frequent shifts in power, and a gaping void in leadership have left people feeling betrayed. The current crisis isn't a sudden event; it's the inevitable result of letting fundamental problems fester for far too long.

The constitutional promise of stability has been shattered by a constant cycle of political chaos. Since the monarchy's abolition in 2008, Nepal has had over a dozen governments, with administrations averaging just over a year in power. This is more than just political instability; it's a profound failure of governance. The frequent changes have prevented long-term policy implementation, stalled critical infrastructure projects, and

created a bureaucratic inertia that has stifled economic progress. For example, key initiatives like the Nijgadh International Airport have languished in bureaucratic limbo, costing the country valuable time and resources. This political churn has led many citizens, particularly the youth, to question whether the democratic system they fought for is truly working for them.

While the social media ban was the spark, the real fire is fueled by systemic corruption. We've all seen the stories: public funds being mismanaged, contracts for big projects mysteriously stalling, and government officials living lavishly while millions struggle. It's a constant slap in the face and a violation of the Civil Service Act, 1993 and the Public Procurement Act, 2063(2007), which mandate transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct for government officials. The discontent has been amplified by a series of high-profile scandals that have made headlines and gone viral on social media. One of the most egregious examples is the Bhutanese refugee scam, where government officials were allegedly involved in a scheme to illegally sell "refugee" status to Nepalis seeking to go abroad, essentially turning a humanitarian issue into

a corrupt money-making enterprise. There have also been allegations of embezzlement related to the Pokhara airport and other development projects. You see it in the images and videos that circulate online of politicians' families living extravagant lives. It's not hard to understand why people get so angry. When they see their leaders benefiting from a broken system, while they're left with rising costs and no jobs, it feels personal. And instead of addressing this anger, the government tried to shut down the very platforms where people were speaking out. It was a counterproductive move that backfired spectacularly. At its heart, this crisis is about whether the government respects the basic rights guaranteed to its own people. Nepal's Constitution protects freedom of expression, privacy, and equality through Article 17 (freedom of opinion and expression), Article 28 (right to privacy), and Article 18 (equality before the law). By imposing a blanket ban on social media, the government has directly trampled on these protections. The government's legal justification for the ban that platforms like Facebook and YouTube failed to register locally is widely seen as a flimsy pretext for censorship. The move effectively crippled a digital ecosystem that has become a primary channel for education, business, and social activism.

It's not just a domestic issue, either. Nepal is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which obligates the govern-



A view of the Parliament building, which was set on fire amid the violent protest over alleged corruption, in Kathmandu on Wednesday. ANI

*The government's legal justification for the ban that platforms like Facebook and YouTube failed to register locally is widely seen as a flimsy pretext for censorship. The move effectively crippled a digital ecosystem that has become a primary channel for education, business, and social activism.*

ment to protect freedom of expression and assembly. Reports from human rights groups and journalists document police using tear gas, rubber bullets, and even live rounds against peaceful crowds. With at least 19 people killed and hundreds injured, the government's response has not only deep-

ened public mistrust but has also fueled the unrest. The current crisis in Nepal isn't an isolated event. It's part of a worrying pattern across South Asia. We saw it in Sri Lanka in 2022, where an economic collapse led to mass protests that toppled a government. Then again in Bangladesh

in 2024, as student-led demonstrations against job quotas quickly escalated into a wider movement that forced a leader to flee. In each case, a proximate trigger an economic collapse, a job policy, a social media ban lit a fuse for deeper, long-simmering discontent over corruption and a lack of accountability. These youth-led movements are sending a powerful message to their governments: they won't tolerate a state that serves itself at the expense of its people. International human rights bodies have also criticized the government's actions, urging Nepal to restore communication freedoms and engage in meaningful dialogue with citizens. Nepal's

leaders now have a choice: continue with heavy-handed policies that will only cause more division, or start to rebuild trust through genuine dialogue and transparency. Restoring stability will take more than just political speeches. It will require lifting these restrictions, conducting independent investigations into corruption scandals, and ensuring our state institutions work for the people—not for a select few. The crisis in Nepal is a stark, undeniable example of what happens when corruption and a blatant disregard for fundamental rights take over. It's a clear and powerful testament to how a vacuum in leadership can lead to national in-

stability. For other nations, the events in Nepal offer a crucial lesson: true stability isn't built by silencing people but on a foundation of transparent governance and the unwavering protection of civil liberties. The youth-led movement here isn't just about frustration; it is a beacon of hope for a rights-driven society. The choices made today will not only determine Nepal's future but will be watched closely by others, serving as either a cautionary tale or a model for democratic resilience.

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## Peace through Arsenal: A hopeless hope

## OPINION

P M GURUBASAVRAJ AND NAVNEET SHARMA

*The most disadvantageous peace is better than the most just war.*

—Desiderius Erasmus  
However, the most popular notion of peace is the absence of violence or war. This is the primary dictionary definition, which leads to a perspective: since there cannot be a universe agreeable to a universal notion of peace, 'others' can be deterred only from waging war, and this deterrence can be achieved only if 'we' become more powerful than they. We must have a huge arsenal of weapons that can instill fear in the 'other'. The understanding that the arsenal of weapons alone can bring in and maintain peace is one that leads to 9/11 and 26/11 attacks, suggesting that these, in the long run, would either establish peace or at least deter the 'other'.

The world's vast arsenal of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) paints a troubling picture of a planet more prepared for conflict than for peace. This reality is deeply connected to the legacy of the 9/11 at-

tacks and the simultaneous rise of nationalist violence across the globe, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of fear, militarization, and insecurity. Updated data from the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) in June 2025 reveals that nine countries together hold approximately 12,241 nuclear warheads. Of these, nearly 9,614 are maintained in active military stockpiles, ready to be deployed by missiles, submarines, ships, and aircraft. The overwhelming majority of this destructive capability rests with just two nations—Russia and the United States—who collectively control about 87 percent of the total inventory and 83 percent of the stockpiled warheads available for immediate military use. Other nuclear-armed states, including China, France, the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea, maintain far smaller but still significant stockpiles, with India's arsenal increasing from 172 warheads in 2024 to 180 in 2025, reflecting a steady

modernization of its deterrent force.

The vast scale of these arsenals exists in a world whose security priorities were profoundly reshaped by the 9/11 attacks. That event shifted global thinking away from traditional state-centered conflicts and toward the alarming possibility of non-state actors obtaining WMDs. India has long criticized the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) for failing to address this risk, noting the emergence of terrorist groups that openly seek access to nuclear materials as well as the exposure of a global black market in nuclear technology. What had once been a theoretical concern became, after 9/11, a central driver of security policy. The fear that terrorist networks could acquire nuclear weapons or biological agents—similar to the plague-infected fleas used by Japan's Unit 731 during World War II—justified pre-emptive wars, sweeping surveillance programs, and global campaigns to secure fissile materials. Ironically, this same fear reinforced the belief that large state arsenals were necessary as ultimate deterrents against stateless threats.

While 9/11 reshaped the rationale behind WMD strategies, it is the resurgence of nationalism that is now shaping who arms themselves and how much



they invest. Ukraine provides the most direct example: as a result of Russia's war of aggression, Ukraine became the world's largest importer of major arms between 2020 and 2024, while overall European arms imports increased by 155 percent in the same period. In South Asia, the nearly identical nuclear stockpiles of India and Pakistan highlight how nuclear weapons have become symbols of sovereignty and national security, leaving little room for meaningful disarmament. Nationalism also plays out domestically; for instance, the United States, second only to Yemen in allowing firearm ownership without licenses, reflects a

nationalist and individualist ethos that resists government oversight—mirroring the resistance of states to binding international arms treaties.

In this fractured landscape, India's position stands out as both principled and pragmatic. Having ratified the Biological Weapons Convention in 1974 and the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1996, India has consistently opposed the use of such indiscriminate weapons. The same year it ratified the BWC, India conducted its first nuclear test, "Smiling Buddha," reflecting its commitment to global disarmament and its pursuit of strategic security. India,

however, has refused to sign the NPT or the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), arguing that both treaties are discriminatory. Its critique is threefold: the failure of nuclear powers to pursue genuine disarmament, the creation of permanent divisions between nuclear "haves" and "have-nots," and the imposition of intrusive safeguards on non-nuclear states while nuclear-armed states enjoy voluntary measures. Regarding the TPNW, India has made it clear that it does not consider the treaty binding, maintaining instead that only a universal and non-discriminatory framework can achieve

true disarmament. Yet, such a framework appears increasingly unattainable in a world fractured by nationalism.

The global situation thus reveals a dangerous feedback loop. Nationalist conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine, create profound insecurity. That insecurity drives both conventional and nuclear arms races, as seen in Europe's surge in imports and the India-Pakistan nuclear rivalry. The proliferation of these weapons intensifies fears that they may eventually fall into the hands of non-state actors, a haunting lesson of the 9/11 era. These fears, in turn, justify further militarization and the main-

tenance of massive WMD stockpiles, which only worsen nationalist rivalries and global divisions. The 12,241 nuclear warheads in existence today are not mere statistics; they represent a world caught between the legacies of terrorism and nationalism, where the most destructive tools ever created remain deeply embedded in the identity and security calculations of the modern nation-state.

In such a scenario, imagining or re-imagining that these weapons will bring peace will be more than illusory. The most destructive weapons will somehow bring and maintain peace is an argument that neither Oppenheimer nor Gandhi can believe. Nuclear deterrence can prevent possible conflict or war is not a proven historical argument. The question that 'security for who?' and from 'whom' persists; the question of peace and war should be studied from a different vantage point than from a Western-CIS-hetero, gender exclusive stance. The battle for a world free from nuclear weapons or any weapons begins with internalising peace as a value, and then only this ideal can be achieved and sustained.

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Women gather fallen mahua beneath family-claimed trees on public forest land—customary, heritable rights that shape seasonal incomes and ritual life. Credit: Village Square.

*From Bastar to Meghalaya, customary tree claims link culture and ecology, proving ownership can protect forests better than fences.*

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In many Indian forests, a peculiar form of property right exists: the land may be state-owned, but certain trees on that land are **customarily “owned” by local tribal families or communities**. Under this traditional system, individuals or clans hold rights to specific trees – for fruits, flowers, resin, or other products – even though they have no title to the soil. *For example, in the forests of Bastar (Central India), the Teta family “owns” five mahua trees on public land, a privilege allotted to their ancestors generations ago.* These tree rights are **heritable and exclusive**: each tree “belongs” to a particular family, and others generally do not harvest its produce without permission. This separation of tree and land ownership raises intriguing questions about the nature of such rights, the rules that govern them, and how they have evolved. Despite their **socio-cultural and ecological significance**, scholarly attention to these customary tree tenure systems has been limited. To understand how these practices came to coexist with modern laws, one must trace their **historical roots, the disruptions of colonial rule, and the gradual recognition (or omission) of these rights in contemporary legal frameworks**.

#### CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF TREE TENURE

Across indigenous communities of India, **trees have long been entwined with social identity, livelihood, and spirituality**. Many tribal societies evolved elaborate customary norms determining who may use which trees’ products. These norms often differ fundamentally from formal land owner-

ship. In some communities, **planting a tree establishes ownership** – the tree belongs to the person or family that planted or nurtured it. In others, rights are claimed by first use: among certain Central Indian tribes, for instance, the first person to tap a wild resin tree for gum gains a customary claim over that tree thereafter (a practice documented by recent researchers). Trees can thus be treated as **inherited property**, even though the land is communal or government-owned. Local customs govern how tree rights are created, **inherited, exchanged, or shared** within the community. Anthropologists have observed that customary tree tenure takes various forms – some trees are held by **individuals or households**, some are **jointly owned** by extended families, and others are regarded as **collective village property** (such as sacred groves or clan trees).

The **cultural meaning** attached to these trees reinforces their tenure. For many tribes, certain trees are revered as life-givers and ancestors. The Gond people of central India, for example, tell of their first ancestor being born under a *mahua* tree. Not surprisingly, *mahua* is considered a “tree of life” – its flowers and seeds are crucial for food, drink, and medicine, and it features in rituals and songs. Such trees are **never felled** casually; as one account notes, “a *mahua* tree is never chopped down but passed on to the next generation”, reflecting the deep time depth of these ownership claims. Customary rules often forbid cutting or harming productive trees, focusing instead on **sustainable harvesting** of fruits, flowers, leaves or gum to ensure the resource endures. In some Northeastern tribes, certain fruit trees or bamboo clumps are designated by custom for

communal use (anyone may harvest them), while other valuable trees are recognized as **private property of particular families**. The result is a mosaic of tenure within the forest: one tree might be “owned” by a family, the next is free for all, and another is taboo or sacred to an entire village.

These indigenous systems of tree tenure are underpinned by social institutions and knowledge. Customary councils or elders often adjudicate disputes – for example, if a tree’s ownership is contested or if branches spread into another’s domain. Norms govern **inheritance** (tree rights typically pass to sons or daughters, or may be part of dowry in some cultures), as well as **management duties** (the owning family must care for the tree, perform rituals, prevent over-exploitation, etc.). Such practices foster community cohesion and link people to specific trees through generations. Recent research in Jharkhand finds that these traditions can strengthen familial ties and even increase economically valuable tree species in village commons. In short, **customary tree ownership goes beyond mere possession** – it embodies social relations, spiritual values, and conservation ethics. As Fortmann (1985) observed and later studies affirm, **tree tenure is often distinct from land tenure**, influenced by factors like kinship, religion, gender, and ecological knowledge.

#### COLONIAL RULE AND THE EROSION OF CUSTOMARY RIGHTS

The advent of British colonial governance in the 19th century marked a **turning point for forest ownership** in the subcontinent. Colonial authorities were primarily interested in timber and revenue, and they systematically asserted state control over forests, largely disregarding indigenous tenure systems. The Indian Forest Acts of 1878 and 1927 vested ownership of forest land (and by extension all trees on it) in the government, nullifying or restricting local rights. Under the 1927 Act, forests were classified as *Reserved* or *Protected*, and traditional use of trees became a state-sanctioned privilege rather than a right. This legal regime **made no provision for the concept of a community or individual “owning” trees on public forest land** – the law simply did not recognize separate tree tenure, leaving the question “*Who owns the trees?*” unanswered in formal terms. All timber, fruits, and other forest produce were ostensibly the property of the Crown, except for limited usufruct rights (e.g. to collect dead wood or minor produce) that could be granted or taken away by officials.

The impact on tribal communities was profound. **Customary tree rights were often criminalized or curtailed**. Practices like shifting cultivation, orchard tending in forests, or tapping trees for gum conflicted with



Village women embrace a pine to halt felling—an iconic challenge to state/commercial control and a claim to community stewardship of trees. Credit: Right Livelihood.

## FROM CUSTOM TO LAW: TRIBAL OWNERSHIP OF FOREST TREES

colonial rules and were either banned or taxed. In Central India, the British reservation of forests directly interfered with the collection of staple foods and forest brews. Archival records and oral histories from Bastar (in today’s Chhattisgarh) reveal that the **1905 proposal to reserve two-thirds of Bastar’s forests and ban traditional usage ignited deep resentment**. Local people saw it as a violation of their “inalienable right” to the forest’s bounty. By 1910, this anger exploded into the Bhumkal Rebellion of Bastar – a tribal uprising in which mango leaves and mahua flowers (symbols of the forest) were circulated as calls to revolt. The revolt, led by figures like Gunda Dhur, specifically protested the loss of customary forest access. British reports noted that **tribals were enraged by policies like the reservation of forests and the monopoly on liquor** that outlawed home-brewing of *mahua*, considered a sacred gift of the gods. Indeed, colonial excise rules prohibiting indigenous brewing of mahua liquor struck at a religious and economic lifeline, intensifying the backlash.

Smaller acts of resistance and adaptation occurred throughout forest communities under colonial rule. Some groups sought to **secretly maintain their tree claims** – for instance, by surreptitiously tapping resin or collecting fruit at night to avoid forest guards. Others petitioned authorities for concessions. The British did introduce the concept of *nistar* (limited concession for villagers to take specified forest produce for subsistence), but these were a far cry from recognizing customary ownership. Essentially, colonial forestry treated forests as **state property to be managed for timber extraction or revenue**, with local communities seen as squatters or laborers. Customary law was not entirely erased – many communities quietly kept their traditions alive in the shadows of the law – but it was **driven underground or weakened**.

#### LEGAL RECOGNITION AND ONGOING CHALLENGES

From the late 20th century, India began—slowly—to involve forest communities in governance. The National Forest Policy (1988) marked a turn from revenue to ecology and people’s participation, leading to Joint Forest Management (JFM) in the 1990s. JFM gave villages a say in protection and a share of minor produce, but it did **not** confer ownership over land or trees. Still, it acknowledged that locals have a stake in forests.

By the time of India’s independence in 1947, decades of state-centric forest manage-

ment had left a legacy of alienation. Tribal populations had been displaced from many forests and their customary rights undermined. The new Indian government initially continued a similar policy – the Indian Forest Act 1927 remained in force, and forests were a centrally regulated resource. In the early decades after independence, **tribal communities still had no formal recognition of their tree tenure practices**. This led to persistent tensions and occasional flashpoints. Some of the landmark protests in independent India echoed the themes of colonial times: the famous **Chipko Movement of the 1970s** in the Himalayan foothills saw village women literally hugging trees to prevent them from being felled by commercial contractors. Their slogan “Forests for local benefits!” underscored the claim that these trees were *theirs* to protect and use, not the state’s to auction. Similarly, the **Appiko Movement in the Western Ghats (Karnataka) in the 1980s** was a direct response to logging in ancestral forests; local communities, drawing on tribal and peasant traditions, campaigned to save their trees from government-sanctioned felling. These movements – along with others like the Narmada Bachao Andolan and various tribal agitations – highlighted that **the colonial paradigm of exclusive state ownership was untenable** in a democratic India. They set the stage for reforms to reclaim community stewardship of forests.

injustice by recognizing individual cultivation rights and **Community Forest Resource (CFR)** rights, allowing communities to protect, regenerate, and manage forests. FRA also admits “other traditional rights,” but it notably **does not explicitly codify customary ownership of trees** detached from land title. In practice, CFR implies collective rights to trees within the titled area, and individual pattas carry rights to trees on that plot. Yet the common situation where a family claims a specific fruit or resin tree on public forest land remains **legally grey**. FRA strengthens access to habitat and non-timber forest produce, but exclusive family claims to particular trees on state land are not clearly validated.

Even so, FRA and allied measures—especially PESA (1996), which empowers Gram Sabhas in Scheduled Areas—have enabled communities to reassert control. Many villages now map resource zones, record which clans use which patches, and craft local rules that tacitly honor tree allotments. In the Northeast, where Sixth Schedule and Article 371 protections long sustained community and clan ownership, FRA’s role is narrower: the priority is documenting custom and reinforcing rules amid new pressures.

Counter-currents exist. The 2023 amendment to the Forest (Conservation) Act narrowed the legal definition of “forest,” worrying critics that more areas could be diverted without Gram Sabha oversight, weakening community governance. The broader tension among conservation statutes, development demands, and tribal rights persists. One path forward is clearer recognition of **customary tree tenure**, which aligns incentives: when people feel secure in benefits from “their” trees, they tend to conserve them; when custom is ignored, conflict and over-extraction follow.

#### REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

**Central India** (Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha) shows this most vividly. Surveys record **tens of thousands** of trees claimed under custom—Santhal households

alone list many thousands in Jharkhand; Sahariyas in Madhya Pradesh claim large numbers of *salai* resin trees. Rules emphasize inheritance and first-claimer rights. *Mahua* trees function as heirlooms: families clear and guard the floor beneath “their” trees; those without trees help harvest for a negotiated share. Among Sahariyas, first tapping establishes a continuing claim, with most productive trees held by families and passed down. Ritual respect for species like *sal* reinforces stewardship. No surprise this stewardship has seen fierce struggles over “*jal, jan-gal, zameen*.”

**Northeast India** presents a different legal ecology. In Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Mizoram, most forests are community or clan-owned under constitutional safeguards; “public forest land” is relatively limited outside reserves. With jhum cultivation, families often spare or plant trees that remain theirs across cycles; planted betelnut or orange trees confer inheritable rights. In places like the Pnar region, custom governs tenure entirely—some trees are communal, others privately held—with no parallel statutory tree tenure. Sacred groves exemplify collective, ritualized claims.

In the **Western Ghats**, colonial teak extraction and plantation regimes suppressed customary tenure more than elsewhere, yet practices endured. Maharashtra’s tribal belts long recognized family claims over wild mango, jackfruit, or toddy palms. The **Appiko** movement (1983) reasserted community rights against commercial felling. The **Soligas** at B.R. Hills (2011) secured CFR within a wildlife reserve, formalizing customary governance; the **Kadar** still identify family honey trees and pools. Across the Ghats, village “temple trees” and commons persist under local norms.

Everywhere, where custom holds, conservation incentives strengthen; where it frays, market pressures can drive over-harvest. The test now is giving these living institutions clear, enabling recognition.



Resin-yielding salai illustrates Sahariya “first-tapper” and inherited claims on individual trees—customary tenure that governs valuable non-timber produce. Credit: Atlas Obscura.



Under customary tenure, owners and helpers share mahua yields—reinforcing social safety nets and incentivizing long-term care of heirloom trees. Credit: People’s Archive of Rural India (PARI).



# COINS USED IN ANCIENT RAJASTHAN DURING THE KINGS' RULE

TDG NETWORK  
JAIPUR

Rajasthan, the land of kings, warriors, and grand forts, has a rich history of commerce and governance that is intricately tied to its numismatic legacy. The coins used in ancient Rajasthan offer not just economic insights but also cultural, political, and artistic glimpses into the region's glorious past. From the early tribal republics and Mahajanapadas to the mighty Rajput kingdoms and the influence of Muslim rulers, the coins of Rajasthan evolved significantly over centuries. This article explores the types, significance, and evolution of coins used during the rule of various dynasties in ancient Rajasthan.

## EARLY COINAGE IN RAJASTHAN (600 BCE – 300 CE)

The earliest coins found in Rajasthan date back to the Mahajanapada period (600–300 BCE), when parts of eastern Rajasthan were under the rule of powerful republics like Matsya and Surasena. The coins from this era were primarily punch-marked coins made of silver, which were also common across much of northern India.

These coins had multiple symbols punched onto them using small stamps. The marks often included geometric designs, the sun, trees, animals, and religious symbols. These were not issued by individual kings but by local authorities or merchants' guilds and served as stan-

dardized mediums of exchange.

## COINS OF THE MAURYA AND POST-MAURYA PERIODS

During the Mauryan Empire (322–185 BCE), Rajasthan became a part of the imperial economic network. The Mauryan silver punch-marked coins were used widely and continued the earlier tradition but with more uniformity and central control.

After the fall of the Mauryas, Rajasthan saw the emergence of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian influences in the northwestern regions. Coins from this period show Hellenistic features—portraits of kings on one side and Greek inscriptions. These coins, typically made of silver and copper, entered Rajasthan through trade and conquest.

## GUPTA PERIOD AND REGIONAL KINGDOMS (320–600 CE)

The Gupta dynasty brought a golden age of coinage. Though their direct control over Rajasthan was limited, their coins influenced regional issues. Gupta coins were primarily gold (called dinars) and featured elaborate images of kings, deities like Lakshmi and Garuda, and Sanskrit inscriptions in Brahmi script.

In Rajasthan, regional dynasties like the Vatsagulma, Maitrakas, and others began issuing their own coins, mostly in copper and silver, imitating Gupta styles. These coins symbolized royal authority and were often inscribed with names and titles of kings,



British India, Princely States, Bundi, Silver Rupee, Dated 1922-1932 Ce, Reads George V Emperor, Km18.2, Ef, A Lot Of (4) Coins



Rajasthan Coinage- Mughal coin

sometimes accompanied by religious icons.

## RAJPUT COINAGE (7TH-13TH CENTURY CE)

The Rajput era marks a significant phase in Rajasthan's numismatic history. Rajput kingdoms such as the Chauhans of Ajmer, Guhilots of Mewar, Rathores of Marwar, and Chandelas of Jalore issued their own coins that reflected both their political power and regional identities.

## MATERIALS AND DESIGNS

Most Rajput coins were made of copper and silver, and occasionally of billon (an alloy of silver and base metals). The designs often included:

- Deities: Shiva, Lakshmi, or Vishnu.
- Royal symbols: Lions, sunbursts, or dynastic emblems.
- Scripts: Inscriptions were generally in Nagari or Brahmi, indicating the issuer's name or religious phrases like Sri Mahalakshmi or



Sri Rama.

## FAMOUS EXAMPLES:

Chahamanas of Ajmer: Issued coins with images of a bull (symbolizing Shiva) and a horseman, which were later adopted by the Delhi Sultanate.

Guhilots of Mewar: Their coins depicted the sun, reflecting their Suryavanshi lineage (solar dynasty).

Rathores of Marwar: Favored coins with the image of a trident and sun, symbolizing Shaivite influence and divine kingship.



## INFLUENCE OF MUSLIM RULERS AND SULTANATES (13TH-16TH CENTURY)

With the advent of the Delhi Sultanate, and later the Mughals, many parts of Rajasthan came under their control or influence. However, Rajput states often retained autonomy and continued to issue localized coins.

The Sultanate brought with it Islamic coinage traditions—featuring Arabic or Persian inscriptions, calligraphic designs, and religious

phrases like La ilaha illallah. Gold, silver, and copper coins were issued, often standardized by weight and metal purity.

Interestingly, even Rajput rulers who entered into alliances with Muslim rulers began issuing coins that reflected syncretic designs—combining Persian inscriptions with traditional Hindu symbols.

## MUGHAL PERIOD AND INTEGRATION (16TH-18TH CENTURY)

During the Mughal era, coins from Rajasthan saw further standardization. Mughal emperors like Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan introduced beautifully crafted coins with calligraphic artistry. The coins were minted in imperial mints, some located within Rajasthan, like Ajmer and Udaipur.

Akbar's Din-i-Ilahi coins were particularly notable, sometimes bearing inscriptions in both Persian and Sanskrit. Akbar allowed some Rajput rulers to continue issuing their own coinage as vassals, especially those loyal to the Mughal court.

Coins from this period were mostly silver rupees and copper dams, with weights and values strictly regulated.

## POST-MUGHAL AND PRINCELY STATE COINS (18TH-20TH CENTURY)

After the decline of Mughal authority, Rajasthan saw a resurgence of local coinage under the Marathas and British-era princely states. Major Rajput states like

Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Udaipur began minting their own coins under the authority granted by the British. These coins were often bilingual, with Nagari or Urdu on one side and Persian or English on the other.

Materials included copper, silver, and rarely gold, and designs combined local emblems, royal crests, and religious motifs. For example: Jaipur coins sometimes bore the image of a sun with rays, symbolizing the Suryavanshi clan.

Jodhpur coins featured tridents and sunbursts, with inscriptions like Shri Jodhpur Rajya.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF ANCIENT COINS IN RAJASTHAN

Coins from ancient Rajasthan offer valuable historical data:

Political history: Revealing ruling dynasties, alliances, and vassalage.

Economic history: Indicating trade networks, market systems, and metal availability.

Art and religion: Reflecting deities, beliefs, and royal patronage of the arts.

Language and scripts: Tracing linguistic evolution through Brahmi, Nagari, Persian, and Arabic inscriptions.

The coinage of ancient Rajasthan is more than just monetary—it's a legacy of kingship, culture, and continuity. Each coin carries the mark of its era, telling stories of power, devotion, trade, and identity. Today, these coins are treasured by historians, archaeologists, and collectors alike, as windows into the royal soul of Rajasthan.

# The Royal Game: A history of Polo in Rajasthan

TDG NETWORK  
JAIPUR

Polo, often called the "Sport of Kings," holds a prestigious and time-honored place in the royal traditions of Rajasthan. This gallant game, blending athleticism, strategy, and equestrian skill, has long been associated with the warrior aristocracy of India especially the Rajputs.

In Rajasthan, polo is not merely a sport but a reflection of royal culture, martial heritage, and elite leisure.

The history of polo in Rajasthan is as vibrant and regal as the state itself. From its roots in ancient cavalry drills to the majestic polo grounds of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur, polo has evolved into a symbol of grace, power, and enduring legacy.

## ANCIENT ORIGINS OF POLO

While polo's global origins are traced back to Persia around the 6th century BCE, the sport made its way to India through Central Asian invasions and was embraced by various dynasties. In India, especially in the northern and north-western regions like Rajasthan, the game gained popularity among kings and warriors, who adapted it to suit their martial lifestyles.

In Rajasthan, the Rajput kings and nobles, known for their horse-riding prowess and valor, adopted polo not only as a recreational activity but also as a form of cavalry training. Polo sharpened their coordination, team spirit, and battlefield tactics—all vital skills for a warrior class.



## POLO AND THE RAJPUT COURTS

During the medieval period, Rajasthan's major kingdoms—including Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Udaipur—established polo as a favored pastime of the royal courts. Rajput rulers, who were patrons of culture and sport, built dedicated polo grounds within their



palace complexes or near fortresses.

Polo matches were often held during festivals, state celebrations, or royal visits. The games were not only contests of skill but grand spectacles, attended by nobles, courtiers, and foreign dignitaries. These events reinforced the power and prestige of the ruling

houses.

For example, Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner and Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur were legendary polo players who popularized the sport on a global level in the 19th and 20th centuries. Their enthusiasm for polo transcended regional boundaries and brought international recognition to Rajasthan as a center of elite equestrian culture.

British influence and institutionalization of polo

The arrival of the British in India during the colonial era gave polo a new institutional framework. British army officers, who encountered the sport in Manipur and northern India, embraced it and established formal polo clubs. Rajasthan, with its royal legacy and equestrian culture, became a natural hub for these developments.

Polo clubs were established in cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Bikaner, with both British and Indian nobility participating. The game began to follow codified rules and organized tournaments were held. It was during this time that Rajasthan's princes began touring abroad, playing



polo in England and other parts of Europe.

Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur was especially notable for his international polo career. He led the Jaipur Polo Team, which gained fame across Europe and America. His team won several international tournaments in the 1930s and 1940s, placing Indian polo on the global map. Jaipur, under his leadership, became synonymous with polo excellence.

## JODHPUR: THE BIRTHPLACE OF MODERN INDIAN POLO

Jodhpur holds a unique place in the history of polo in Rajasthan. Known as the birthplace of modern Indian polo, it was here that the game found a structured and enthusiastic following among the Marwar royals. Maharaja Umaid Singh of

Jodhpur and later his son Hanwant Singh were deeply involved in promoting the sport.

Jodhpur also played a significant role in shaping polo fashion and equipment. The popular Jodhpur breeches—tight-fitting trousers for riding—originated from here and became iconic in the polo world.

The Jodhpur Polo and Equestrian Institute, established later, has continued the tradition by training new generations of polo players and hosting national and international tournaments.

## POST-INDEPENDENCE REVIVAL AND CONTINUITY

After India's independence in 1947 and the integration of princely states into the Indian Union, many royal privileges were abolished. As a result, polo witnessed

a decline for some time. However, the sport did not vanish. Thanks to efforts by former royals, polo enthusiasts, and the Indian Army, it was revived in the 1970s and 1980s.

Today, Rajasthan continues to be a proud host of some of the finest polo events in India. Cities like Jaipur and Jodhpur organize annual polo tournaments that attract international players and tourists. Events like the Jaipur Polo Season, Jodhpur Polo Season, and the Maharaja Gaj Singh Cup are highlights of the polo calendar.

## CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND LEGACY

Polo in Rajasthan is more than a sport—it's a cultural statement. It reflects the valor, nobility, and elegance that define the Rajputana identity. The sight of royals mounted on galloping horses against the backdrop of sandstone forts and palaces is a timeless image of Rajasthan's regal spirit.

The state's polo heritage is also preserved in museums, royal stables, and historic grounds. Polo memorabilia, trophies, and photographs adorn the palaces of Jaipur and Jodhpur, keeping the legacy alive for future generations.

The history of polo in Rajasthan is deeply intertwined with its royal past and warrior ethos. From ancient battlefields to modern polo grounds, the game has remained a powerful symbol of discipline, pride, and tradition. Even today, the thundering hooves on the green polo fields of Rajasthan echo with the spirit of the kings who once ruled this majestic land.



# NETANYAHU ‘KILLED ANY HOPE’ OF GAZA HOSTAGES RELEASE WITH STRIKE ON DOHA: QATAR PM

AGENCIES  
DOHA, QATAR

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu “killed any hope” of releasing hostages still held in the Gaza Strip after Israel attacked Hamas leaders in Doha, Qatar’s prime minister said ahead of appearing at the United Nations on Thursday.

The comments from Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani underscored the wider anger among Gulf Arab countries over Tuesday’s strike that killed at least six people.

“I was meeting one of the hostages’ families the morning of the attack,” Sheikh Mohammed told CNN in an interview aired late Wednesday. “They are counting on this (ceasefire) mediation. They have no other hope for that.”

He added: “I think that what Netanyahu has done (Tuesday), he just killed any hope for those hostages.”

Sheikh Mohammed was expected to attend a U.N. Security Council meeting later Thursday, part of a diplomatic push by Qatar after the strike. Qatar also said it



Buildings that were destroyed during the Israeli ground and air operations stand in the northern Gaza Strip as seen from southern Israel.

was organizing an Arab-Islamic summit next week in Doha to discuss the attack.

The Security Council has expressed “deep concern” over the strike without mentioning Israel and emphasized “de-escalation.” It also conveyed its solidarity with Qatar and the “vital role” the country played in mediating peace efforts in recent years.

The attack on the territory of a U.S. ally alarmed countries in the Mideast and beyond and risked upending talks aimed at ending the

war and freeing hostages still held by Hamas in Gaza.

Sheikh Mohammed’s remarks came as thousands of Palestinians continued to flee Gaza City ahead of Israel’s impending offensive there. The numbers leaving the city have grown in recent days, though many have refused because they say they no longer have the strength or money to relocate.

The operation is aimed at taking over the largest Palestinian city, which is already devastated from

earlier raids and experiencing famine. The offensive, in its early stages, has deepened Israel’s already unprecedented global isolation, which intensified further this week following the strike on Qatar.

Hamas said Tuesday that its senior leaders survived the Doha strike but that five lower-level members were killed, including the son of Khalil al-Hayya — Hamas’ top negotiator — as well as three bodyguards and the head of al-Hayya’s office.

Hamas, which has some-

times only confirmed the assassination of its leaders months later, offered no immediate proof that al-Hayya and other senior figures had survived.

Qatar on Thursday held a funeral for the five Hamas members and a Qatari security officer who were killed in the attack. Qatar’s ruling emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani attended the service.

Qatar and Egypt, whose foreign minister traveled to Doha on Thursday, have been key mediators in trying to halt the war in Gaza. Qatar has hosted Hamas’ political leadership for years in Doha, in part over a request by the U.S. to encourage negotiations.

There was no immediate reaction to Sheikh Mohammed’s remarks from Netanyahu, whose government has engaged in wars across the region since Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, assault on Israel.

However, Netanyahu has continued to defend the strikes and threatened further action against Qatar a day after U.S. President Donald Trump had sought to ease tensions between the

## Strike on Qatar shows limits of Israel’s elusive quest to vanquish Hamas

AGENCIES  
JERUSALEM

Israel’s attack on Hamas’ top leaders as they weighed a new ceasefire proposal in Qatar was the latest in a series of shocking and unprecedented measures it has taken to vanquish the militant group — all of which have so far failed.

Hamas says its top leaders survived Tuesday’s strike, but it has offered no proof and has been tight-lipped after past assassinations. But even if the strike did succeed, it wouldn’t spell the end of Hamas, which has survived two years of war and still holds around 20 living hostages in the Gaza Strip.

Nor is there any reason to believe that Israel’s latest offensive, aimed at taking over Gaza City, will bring about the “total victory” that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly promised since Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, attack ignited the war.

That’s in part because of Hamas’ ability to melt into the population and resurface later.

But it’s also because Israel’s stated goal of not only defeating Hamas, but disarming it and ensuring it never reconstitutes itself — appears to many, including former top Israeli security officials — to be a recipe for endless war and occupation.

Nearly all of Hamas’ top leaders in Gaza and thousands of its fighters have been killed in one of the deadliest and most destructive military campaigns since World War II. It has few if any longer range rockets, its government barely exists and its police have mostly vanished. Iran and its other regional allies have also suffered heavy blows.

But Hamas still has thousands of fighters, according to the Israeli military — including some recruited during the war. It has retained some popular support. And it has the hostages.

Israel’s tactical gains have meanwhile come at an enormous cost to Palestinian civilians, with tens of thousands killed, vast areas destroyed and famine in Gaza City. They have also left Israel more isolated than ever on the world stage, and the strike on Qatar has deepened the sense, even among friendly Arab coun-



Palestinians attend a protest against the war and Hamas in Beit Lahiya, northern Gaza Strip

## UN employee released in wake of Israeli strikes in Yemen, Jordan says

**SANAA, Yemen :** A United Nations employee was released from detention by Houthi rebels in Yemen’s capital city and was on her way home to Jordan, the Jordanian foreign ministry said on Thursday.

The freeing of Lana Shukri Katar, the deputy director of UNICEF, was announced at a time of high tensions in Yemen and the larger region. Israeli strikes on Yemen on Wednesday killed at least 35 people and wounded more than 130 others.

Katar was one of at least 19 U.N. staffers who were detained on Aug. 31 when the Iranian-backed Houthi rebel group raided their offices in the capital city of Sanaa.

The Houthis have not

given a reason for taking the UN staffers hostage. But the raids were the latest in a long-running Houthi crackdown on the U.N. and other international organizations as well as diplomats working in rebel-held areas.

In 2024, they detained at least 11 UN employees and days later said they had arrested suspected members of an espionage network. The United Nations has denied those allegations.

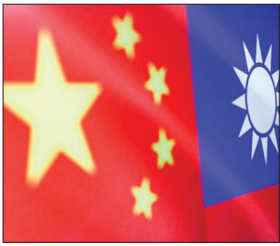
The raids on offices of the United Nations’ food, health and children’s agencies in Sanaa followed Israel’s killing of Houthi Prime Minister Ahmed al-Rahawi and several Cabinet ministers in an airstrike the week before.

## Taiwan’s president warns China’s expansion threatens global stability

AGENCIES  
TAIPEI

Taiwanese President William Lai has cautioned that China’s growing military power and diplomatic influence are a global threat, not just a concern for Taiwan. Lai said Taiwan would work closely with democratic allies to safeguard peace in the Indo-Pacific through deterrence and strength, as cited by the Taipei Times.

According to the Taipei Times, Lai stated that Beijing is deliberately working to reshape the global order, citing its Belt and Road Initiative, the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, and efforts to internationalise the yuan as part of a strategy to replace the rules-based system led by democratic nations. He warned that China’s increasing



**Representative image** military activity, including drills around Taiwan, joint exercises with Russia, and deployments beyond the first island chain, reflects ambitions that extend well beyond Taiwan.

“Even if Taiwan were surrendered to China, it would only fuel further expansion,” Lai said, emphasising that the Taiwan Strait’s stability is critical to global security and trade, with goods worth over USD 2.5 trillion passing through annually.

According to the Taipei Times, Lai highlighted Tai-

wan’s importance in global supply chains, particularly semiconductors, ICT, and electronic components, stressing that the island is an essential partner to the international community rather than dependent on it. He also urged China to embrace dialogue, respect Taiwan’s sovereignty, and avoid confrontation, but insisted that peace cannot be achieved by submitting to Beijing’s demands.

Lai stated plans to raise Taiwan’s defence spending to 3.32 per cent of GDP next year, to reach 5 per cent by 2030, demonstrating Taiwan’s resolve to protect itself and contribute to regional security. The president also highlighted efforts to diversify trade, citing agreements with Southeast Asia, Japan, and the US to reduce eco-

## China-US like two giant ships moving forward together: Wang Yi

AGENCIES  
BEIJING

In a significant phone conversation on Wednesday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, emphasising the need for China and the US to navigate their complex relationship carefully.

Wang Yi likened the two nations to “giant ships” that must move forward together without deviating from their courses or losing speed. Lin Jian, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, shared details of the telephonic conversation between Wang and Rubio. In a post on X, Lin said that the Chinese Foreign Minister stressed adhering to the strategic guidance of the two

heads of state and implementing their consensus.

Wang also raised concern over US actions and opposed recent comments and actions seen as undermining China’s rights and interfering in internal affairs. Wang Yi urged U.S. caution on Taiwan, a core Chinese interest.

Sharing a statement on Thursday in a post on X, Lin Jian informed, “Wang Yi said that to ensure that the two giant ships of China and the US move forward together without deviating from their courses or losing speed, it is necessary to adhere unswervingly to the strategic guidance of the two heads of state and to fully implement the important consensus reached by the two heads of state.

## Korean workers detained in immigration raid bound for Atlanta and flight back home

AGENCIES  
ATLANTA

More than 300 South Korean workers detained in an immigration raid at a Georgia battery plant last week headed to Atlanta on Thursday and a flight home.

South Korea’s Foreign Ministry confirmed they were due arrive in South Korea late Friday afternoon. The developments came the same day South Korean President Lee Jae Myung called for improvements in the U.S. visa system as he spoke about the Sept. 4 immigration raid that

resulted in the arrest of more than 300 South Korean workers at at Hyundai’s sprawling auto plant west of Savannah.

The Foreign Ministry said U.S. authorities have released the 330 detainees — 316 of them Koreans — and that they were being transported by buses to Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson airport. The group includes 10 Chinese nationals, three Japanese nationals and one Indonesian.

The flight is back on track after an earlier departure had been canceled for an unspecified reason. Here are some



**Representative image** things to know about the raid and its aftermath: The Korean Air Boeing 747-8i departed from Seoul for the U.S. to bring back the detained Korean workers and landed in Atlanta. The workers were

being held at an immigration detention center in Folkston, in southeast Georgia, near the state line with Florida. It’s a 285-mile (460-kilometer) drive from there to Atlanta. South Korean officials said

they were negotiating with the U.S. to win “voluntary” departures for the workers, rather than deportations, which could make them ineligible to return to the U.S. for up to 10 years.

During a visit to Washington, South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun met with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and told him that his people were left with “big pains and shocks” because the video of the workers’ arrests was publicly disclosed, the ministry said in a statement.



The burnt-out Singha Durbar office complex that housed the prime minister’s office and other ministries. It was destroyed during Monday’s deadly anti-corruption protests triggered by a social media ban, which was later lifted, Kathmandu, Nepal.

## Muslim countries need to unite to stop Israeli aggression: Pak PM in Qatar

AGENCIES  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday urged Muslim countries to unite against Israeli aggression as he met the Qatari emir and expressed solidarity following Tel Aviv’s recent attacks targeting residential areas in Doha.

Shehbaz Sharif, who travelled to Qatar on a day-long visit, held a very warm and cordial meeting with Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, according to

an official statement.

“Israel’s brazen aggression in the Middle East must be stopped, and the Ummah needed unity among its ranks in the face of Israeli provocations,” Sharif said.

He conveyed Pakistan’s strongest condemnation of the Israeli attack of September 9, calling it a blatant and flagrant violation of Qatar’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, the statement said.

He said that the “ leadership and people of Pakistan were deeply disturbed by this

attack against the brotherly State of Qatar, which constituted a serious breach of international law,” the statement added.

Sharif appreciated Qatar’s responsible, constructive and mediatory role in efforts to bring peace in Gaza, and stressed that such acts of Israeli aggression were clearly meant to undermine regional stability and threaten ongoing diplomatic and humanitarian efforts, it added.

While reaffirming the historic, fraternal bonds be-

tween Pakistan and Qatar, Sharif stated that the two countries had proudly stood with each other through thick and thin.

It was in this spirit of brotherhood that Pakistan stood shoulder to shoulder with the Emir, the Royal Family of Qatar and with the brotherly people of Qatar during this challenging time, the statement said.

Sharif assured the Qatari leadership of Pakistan’s full solidarity and support in the face of this unjustified provo-

cation.

He also conveyed deep sympathies on the loss of precious lives in this attack by Israel and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Sharif said that at Qatar’s request, Pakistan had requested an emergency session of the UN Security Council to discuss the recent developments in the Middle East.

He also welcomed Qatar’s decision to host an Extraordinary Arab-Islamic Summit on September 15, and

said Pakistan had indicated its willingness to the OIC to co-sponsor and co-convene this Summit.

The Emir thanked the Prime Minister for his thoughtful gesture of visiting Doha to express his solidarity with Qatar at this time, it said.

Both leaders agreed to maintain close coordination in promoting regional peace, upholding international law and supporting the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, it added.

This visit reaffirmed the

deep-rooted brotherly ties between Pakistan and Qatar and their shared commitment to peace and stability in the region, the statement said.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, according to the Foreign Office (FO).

The visit was ‘a gesture of solidarity and regional unity, following the recent Israeli cowardly airstrikes targeting residential areas in Doha,’ the

FO said.

“The visit underscores Pakistan’s unwavering support for the security and sovereignty of Qatar and its commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East,” the FO added.

Pakistan has close ties with Qatar and has already condemned the air strikes by Israel. It was not clear if the visit was limited to solidarity or if the two sides discussed some possibility of defence cooperation to bolster the security of Qatar.



# POLAND IMPOSES TOTAL FLIGHT BAN

Poland restricted eastern airspace for three months after Russian drone incursions.

AGENCIES  
POLAND

Poland has restricted the airspace in the east of the country for the next three months following Russia's drone breach of the NATO member. A day after Warsaw said it shot down Russian drones which flew into Polish airspace during an overnight bombardment of Ukraine on Wednesday, Poland's Air Navigation Services Agency (PANS) announced restriction measures would come into effect from Thursday.

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski accused Moscow of deliberately violating sovereign airspace after Russian drones crossed into the NATO country before being shot down. This was the first time a member of the alliance had engaged Russian military assets over its territory, and the largest drone breach of NATO airspace.

Russian officials have denied wrongdoing, but



Delayed flights are seen on monitors at the international airport in Warsaw, on September 10, 2025. AGENCIES File Photo

the move to restrict airspace along the east of Poland illustrates how tensions have spiked on NATO's eastern flank and the security risk posed by the drones and missiles Moscow launches toward Ukraine.

After a day of concerned responses globally about the implications of Russian drones breaching a NATO member, PANS issued a statement on Thursday that airspace in the eastern part of the country would be restricted

It said that at the request of Poland's armed forces, air traffic restrictions would be in place

until midnight December 9 in the eastern part of the country known as restricted zone EP RI29. It posted a map of the region affected, which runs from Poland's northeastern border with Lithuania, south along Belarus toward Ukraine and Slovakia.

The restrictions would apply between sunset and sunrise, except for military aircraft. The statement said that between sunrise and sunset, the no-fly zone would apply except for manned aircraft which had filed a flight plan and had a transponder switched on.

Russian drones and missiles are usually launched

overnight and NATO allies have accused Moscow of sending manned aircraft or turning transponders off to buzz allied airspace. The group Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) told Newsweek that since the start of the war, there had been at least 50 airspace violations of countries on Ukraine's western borders, mainly crashes involving stray Russian and Ukrainian drones and missiles.

But before Wednesday, only four incidents had occurred in Poland during the war, with Romanian and Moldova most affected, although stray drones were detected in Latvia in September 2024 and fellow NATO members Lithuania and Estonia in July and August this year, ACLED said. Electronic warfare systems used by both sides to take drones off course and an escalating air war may increase the danger of direct military engagement between Russia and NATO, ACLED senior analyst Nichita Gurcov said.

## Poland says UN will hold emergency meeting

AGENCIES  
WARSAW

Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian foreign ministers say act was deliberate and coordinated as Trump offers little support Poland said the UN security council would hold an emergency meeting over an incursion into the country by Russian drones on Wednesday as allies disputed whether it was a deliberate attack on Poland by Russia and Donald Trump offered little in the way of public support.

Poland's foreign minister, Radoslaw Sikorski, told local radio Poland planned to use the security council meeting to "draw the world's attention to this unprecedented Russian drone attack on a member of the UN, EU and Nato".

He added that Polish authorities had no doubt the act was deliberate. "Nineteen violations of our airspace, several dozen drones identified, a few shot down,

the action lasting seven hours, the whole night - so we cannot say it was an accident," he said.

Sikorski and his Ukrainian and Lithuanian counterparts issued a statement calling the incursion a "deliberate and coordinated attack" and an "unprecedented provocation". However, Alexis Grynkeiwich, Nato's supreme allied commander Europe, said at a briefing on Thursday that it was still unclear whether the incursion was deliberate. "We do not yet know if this was an intentional act or an unintentional act," he said. He added that he had "low confidence" in Poland's claims about the number of drones.

"I would not be able to tell you with any confidence today that it was 20 or that it was 10.

We just have to get into the technical details to figure that out, to brief the crews that were up see what they saw," he said.

## Zelenskyy supports tariffs on nations trading with Russia

AGENCIES  
KYIV

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said that it is the "right idea" to impose tariffs on countries making deals with Russia, without naming India.

"I think the idea to put tariffs on the countries who continue to make deals with Russia.... I think this is right idea," Zelenskyy said in an interview aired on ABC News' "This Week" on Sunday.

Zelenskyy was asked if he thinks that the plan to put sanctions backfired when he saw pictures of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin.

US President Donald Trump has doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a whopping 50 per cent, including a 25 per cent additional duties for In-



File Photo of Zelenskyy

dia's purchase of Russian crude oil.

India described the US action as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable".

Zelenskyy had dialed PM Modi on August 30, two days ahead of Modi's meeting with President Putin on the sidelines of the SCO summit in Tianjin.

He conveyed his readiness for a meeting with the top leadership of Russia and added that the end of the war must begin with an immediate ceasefire.

An Indian readout released after the call said Modi reaffirmed India's "steadfast and consistent position" for a peaceful settlement of the Ukraine conflict and support for efforts aimed at the earliest restoration of peace.

## Trump's India envoy nominee Sergio Gor calls ties vital

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON, DC

Sergio Gor, President Donald Trump's close aide and nominee for the post of US Ambassador to India, underscored the vital importance of the US-India relationship during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday (local time), emphasising that India is "one of the most important relationships our nation has in the world."

During his confirmation hearing, he also laid out a comprehensive strategy for advancing this critical partnership, highlighting its significance not only for bilateral ties but also for global stability and prosperity.

"India is a strategic partner whose trajectory will shape the region and beyond," Gor stated in his opening remarks. He de-



Donald Trump, close aide Sergio Gor envoy to India (File Photo)

scribed India's geographic position, economic growth, and military capabilities as central to regional stability and global prosperity.

"Under President Donald Trump's strong leadership, I'm committed to advancing America's interests in this important partnership. India's geographic position, economic growth and military capabilities make it a corner stone of regional

stability and a critical part of promoting prosperity and advancing the security interest that are nations shared," he said.

"As Secretary Rubio noted, India is one of the most important relationships our nation has in the world. If confirmed as ambassador, I will work to deliver on the presidential agenda and advance US interests by increasing our defense

cooperation, ensuring fair and beneficial trade, deepening energy security and furthering technology. If confirmed, I will prioritize deepening defense and security cooperation with India," he added.

One of the key priorities Gor highlighted was deepening defence and security cooperation with India. "This includes expanding joint military exercises, advancing co-development and co-production of defence systems and concluding critical defence sales. These efforts will enhance collaboration between our forces, while supporting American defence manufacturers and making America more prosperous," Gor said.

Gor also spoke about the immense opportunities for the US in India, particularly in sectors such as artificial

intelligence, pharmaceuticals, and critical minerals.

"India's population of over 1.4 billion and its rapidly growing middle class present immense opportunities for America. From artificial intelligence to pharmaceuticals to critical minerals, the potential for collaboration is vast. However, in the past, India's protectionist policies and regulatory barriers have prevented us from fully realising this partnership," he said.

"I will work to advance trade that is fair, reciprocal, and beneficial to American workers and businesses," Gor pledged. He also vowed to advocate for reforms that would make Indian markets more accessible and transparent.

"I will advocate for reforms that will make India's markets more accessible and transparent.

## Immigrant detainees transferred to former prison in Tennessee

AGENCIES  
MEMPHIS

Immigrant detainees have started arriving at a former Tennessee prison that's been turned into a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center, the facility's operator said. CoreCivic Inc.

said late Wednesday that it has begun receiving detainees at the West Tennessee Detention Facility in the rural town of Mason, located about 40 miles (60 kilometers) northeast of Memphis. The arrivals come after Mason officials approved agreements with ICE and CoreCivic on Aug. 12, despite loud objections from upset residents and activists during a contentious public meeting.

*Department of Justice to stop renewing contracts with certain detention facilities.*

For years, the prison served as an important economic engine for Mason. It was closed in 2021 after President Joe Biden ordered the U.S.

Department of Justice to stop renewing contracts with certain detention facilities. President Donald Trump reversed that order in January. The contracts were approved amid a push by Trump for mass deportations of immigrants.

Trump has touted a detention facility in the

Florida Everglades dubbed "Alligator Alcatraz," where allegations of mistreatment of detainees have drawn lawsuits from civil rights advocates and environmental groups. Opponents of the Tennessee detention center, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, have expressed concerns that detainees could be subjected to abuse and neglect. Mason Mayor Eddie Noeman has said the ICE facility will bring jobs and economic development to the town, which has struggled with financial problems and needs infrastructure improvements. The ICE facility is expected to create nearly 240 new jobs, including positions for detention officers at a pay rate of \$26.50 per hour, according to CoreCivic.

FLARE



Flares are fired by Israeli forces over Gaza (File Photo/ Agencies)

## US marks 24th anniversary of 9/11 terror attacks

AGENCIES  
NEW YORK

Nearly a quarter century has passed since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, but for many, the emotions of the day remain raw as ever.

On Thursday, America marked the 24th anniversary of the deadly attacks with solemn ceremonies in New York, at the Pentagon and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

The commemorations were punctuated by moments of silence, the tolling of bells and the reading of the names of the nearly 3,000 killed. "I wasn't born when it happened, but it was really an important day in America," she said. "It's kind of the last time we all stuck together, and that matters." The 9/11 anniversary, often promoted as a day of national



Sam Pulia places flags on names inscribed in the 9/11 Memorial before the start of a ceremony in New York. (File Photo/Agencies)

unity, came during a time of increased politician tension. The assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk at a Utah college a day earlier prompted additional security measures at ground zero, where FBI Director Kash Patel was among the dignitaries in attendance. Vice President JD Vance and his wife, second lady

Usha Vance, had planned to attend but instead are set to visit with Kirk's family on Thursday in Salt Lake City, according to a person familiar with Vance's plans, but not authorized to speak about them publicly. Many in the crowd at ground zero held up photos of lost loved ones as a moment of silence marked

the exact time when the first hijacked plane struck the iconic twin towers. Loved ones then read aloud the names of the victims, with many giving personal remembrances, well wishes and updates on their lives. Zoe Doyle, daughter of Frank Joseph Doyle, said her family created a non-profit in his honor that's built schools in South Africa and is feeding and educating thousands of children. Manuel DaMota Jr. said he remembers his father and namesake, Manuel DaMota, not just with grief, but with gratitude for the example he set. "In a world filled with division and conflict, I do my best to honor my father by choosing connection, empathy and hope," he said. Melissa Pullis, whose husband Edward Pullis died in

the towers, said this year is more difficult than others because two of the couple's three children are getting married. "You can't walk your princess down the aisle," she said through tears. "You are missed every day.

We will always say your name, and we will always fight for justice." At the Pentagon in Virginia, the 184 service members and civilians killed when hijackers steered a jetliner into the headquarters of the U.S. military were honored in a ceremony attended by President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump. The president, in his remarks, recounted moments from that day, including snippets of conversations from passengers who were aboard the hijacked airplanes.

## Belarus frees 52 prisoners as US eases sanctions

AGENCIES  
VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

Belarus freed 52 political prisoners on Thursday as part of a deal brokered by the United States, which lifted some sanctions on the country's national airline.

It was another sign of a possible rapprochement between Washington and Minsk, a close ally of Rus-

sia that has faced Western isolation for years. U.S. President Donald Trump and Belarus' Alexander Lukashenko spoke on the phone last month, and the American leader even suggested a face-to-face meeting could be in the works.

That would be a big win for Lukashenko, who has ruled his nation of 9.5 million with an iron fist for

more than three decades. His country has been repeatedly sanctioned by Western countries both for its crackdown on human rights and allowing Moscow to use its territory in the invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

But for more than a year, Lukashenko has sought to mend ties with the West in the hopes of easing the



Envoy John Coale says the United States wants to reopen its embassy in Belarus. Photo: Agencies File Photo

sanctions. He has regularly released prisoners as a way to win favor, including freeing Siarhei Tsikhanouski, a key dissident and the husband of exiled opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, in June.

The concession from the U.S. came a day after Poland denounced an incursion of Russian drones into its territory — some from

Belarus — in what Western officials called an act of aggression. NATO jets were scrambled and shot some of the drones down.

Trump, whose country is the major military power in NATO, offered an ambiguous initial response to the incursion, posting on his Truth Social platform: "What's with Russia violating Poland's airspace

with drones? Here we go!" Some sanctions on Belarus national carrier, Belavia, were relaxed in light of prisoner releases so far, according to a U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private diplomatic conversations. That will allow the airline to repair and buy parts for its planes, including Boeing aircraft.



# ARYAN KHAN MAKES HIS SINGING DEBUT WITH 'TENU KI PATA'

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

The third song titled 'Tenu Ki Pata' has been released from Aryan Khan directorial 'The Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood.' With the vocals of Diljit Dosanjh and Ujwal Gupta, the song also marks the first-ever singing appearance of Aryan Khan, who lent his voice for selective parts.

Picturised mainly on the character of Manoj Pahwa inside Aryan's stylised world, the high-octane track seamlessly blends bold beats, infectious rhythms, and an attitude that offers a glimpse into the chaos, ambition, and edge that define the narrative. Singer Badshah also makes an appearance in the music



video, clashing with Pahwa. "It's the kind of song that brings adrenaline and attitude in equal measure," the makers said, as per the press release.

The song has been composed, arranged, and produced by Ujwal Gupta, with lyrics by Kumaar. While the makers have already released two songs, including

'Badli Si Hawa Hai' and 'Tu Pehli Tu Aakhri', the third single shows a shift in the vibe by blending Dosanjh's Punjabi essence with modern production.

Released under the label T-Series, 'Tenu Ki Pata' continues to push the musical storytelling of the series forward, adding a bold and vibrant layer that lingers with audiences long after the song ends.

The song arrives days after the official trailer of 'The Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood' was released. The trailer opens with an insight into the intense narrative, packed with action, drama, romance, comedy and a lot of starry cameos, taking audiences into the raw world of Bollywood.

## Akshay Kumar warns fans against tobacco at 'Jolly LLB 3' event

AGENCIES  
KANPUR

The much-awaited trailer of 'Jolly LLB 3' was launched in Kanpur on Wednesday, where Akshay Kumar, Arshad Warsi, and Saurabh Shukla came together for the grand event. During the press conference, Akshay Kumar made headlines not just for the film but also for his strong message about staying away from tobacco.

When asked by a reporter about his experience playing a character from Kanpur and whether he noticed the city's association with gutka (tobacco), Akshay gave a direct response:



"Balki gutka nahi khana chahiye" (Tobacco should not be consumed), he said. The journalist tried to interrupt him, but the actor, known for his quick wit,

replied with humor, "Interview mera hai ya tumhara? Main bol raha hoon, gutka nahi khana chahiye, that's it." ("Is this my interview or yours? I'm saying, one

should not eat gutka.") His reply quickly went viral on social media. The trailer of 'Jolly LLB 3' gives a glimpse of the courtroom clash between Akshay Kumar and Arshad Warsi, with Saurabh Shukla returning as Judge Tripathi.

The film brings back the essence of the popular franchise, with two Jollies fighting to prove who the 'real' one is. The three-minute-six-second trailer showcases constant arguments between the two lawyers, while Judge Tripathi, played by Saurabh Shukla, struggles to maintain control of his courtroom.

## Manoj Bajpayee earns praise from colleagues

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Actor Manoj Bajpayee was left in a moment of confusion after filmmaker Anurag Kashyap and stars Vijay Varma and Jaideep Ahlawat ended up touching his feet at an event.

The celebrities were present at the screening of Bajpayee's upcoming film, 'Jugnuma'.

The moment in question was captured at the entrance of the venue where guests posed for the media. As soon as Manoj Bajpayee took to the stage and joined Kashyap along with Vijay and Jaideep, the trio tricked him by touching his feet.

Anurag Kashyap even appeared bowing and almost touching his head to the actor's feet. A visibly embarrassed Bajpayee stopped them from doing the stunt while also trying to free himself from the situation, prompting a moment of laughter.

For the event, Manoj Bajpayee was dressed in a brown jacket and trousers, which he paired with a printed shirt, while Vijay



Varma and Jaideep Ahlawat were seen in a combination of black and denim.

Many other celebrities also attended the film's screening, including Shriya Pilgaonkar, Piyush Mishra, Sayani Gupta, and Kritika Kamra. The trailer for Manoj Bajpayee starrer 'Jugnuma (The Fable)' was unveiled in August. Directed by Ram Reddy, it is produced by Pratap Reddy, Sunmin Park, Raam Reddy, and Juhi Agarwal.

Anurag Kashyap, along

with Guneet Monga Kapoor, Achin Jain, J Ethan Park, and Ranjan Singh, serve as executive producers. Set in the late 80s, 'Jugnuma' follows Dev (Bajpayee), who discovers mysteriously burnt trees in his sprawling estate of fruit orchards nestled in the Indian Himalayas.

Despite all efforts, more fires break out, leading him to see himself and his family for who they truly are, according to the press note shared by the makers.

## Amazon MX, Sony TV Partner for Rise and Fall

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Amazon MX Player, Amazon's free streaming service, has taken a giant stride in entertaining audiences across India by extending its distribution network, in a landmark partnership with Sony Entertainment Television for its latest reality series - Rise and Fall. In a first-of-its-kind distribution collaboration, India's largest free video streaming service has taken the lead in bringing high-quality reality content to audiences at unprecedented

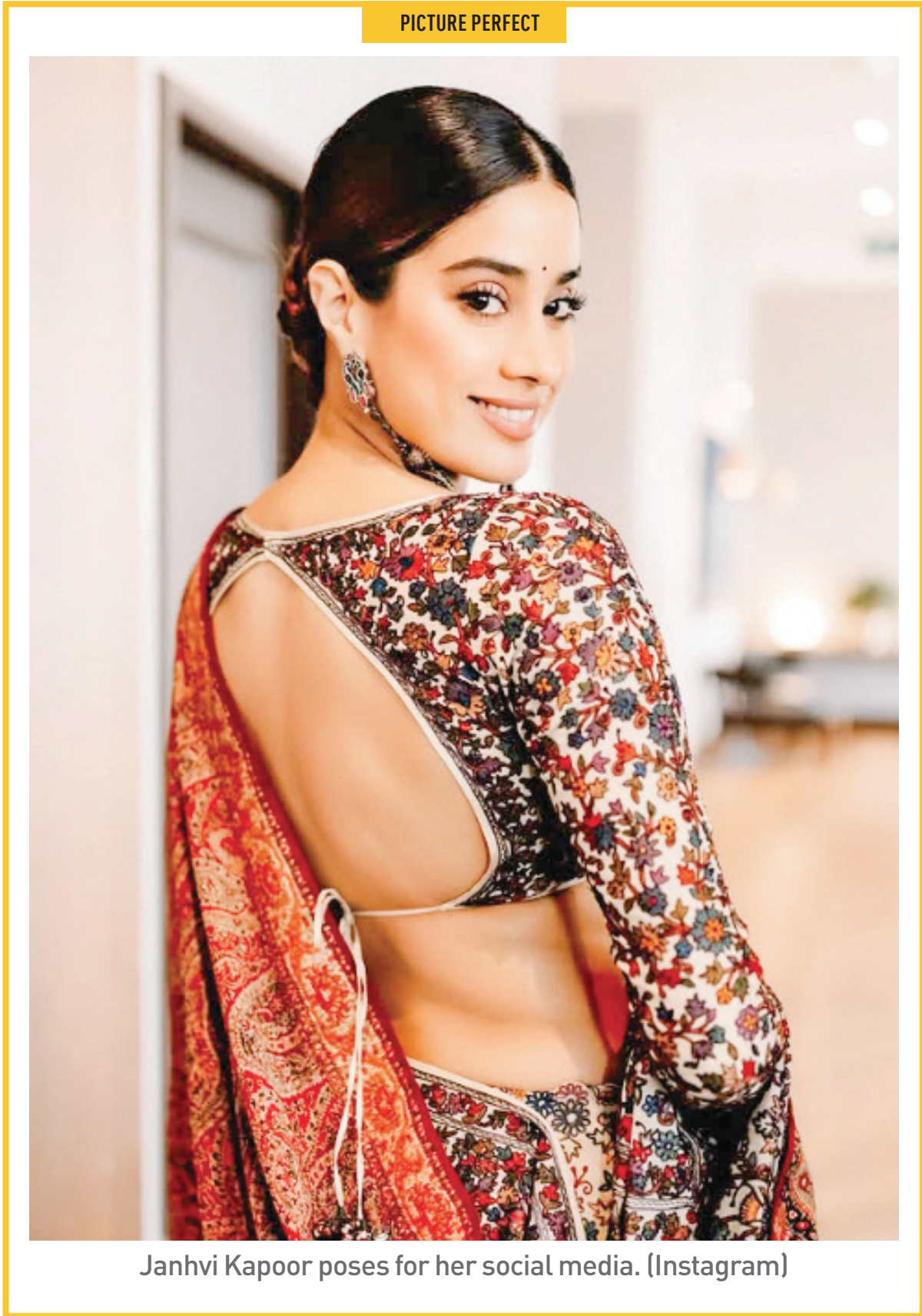


ed scale — with a leading television network joining forces to extend this reach further across broadcast and digital mediums.

By combining Amazon MX Player's nationwide

accessibility in the digital ecosystem and Sony Entertainment Television's deep-rooted and massive reach in Indian households, Rise and Fall is set to reach millions of viewers across metros, Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities across the nation. Hosted by the charismatic Ashneer Grover, Rise and Fall is the most-watched show in its launch week, as per Ormax Media ratings. The show features 15 celebrity contestants from diverse walks of life, including television, music, sports, films, and digital entertainment. Inside a towering structure split be-

tween extremes—the lavish penthouse of the 'Rulers' and the bare-basics basement of the 'Workers', contestants must navigate power, privilege, and survival. With roles constantly shifting between the haves and the have-nots, every day is a test of ambition, leadership, and strategy. Speaking on the collaboration, Amogh Dush, Director & Head of Content, Amazon MX Player, shared, "This partnership between Amazon MX Player and Sony Entertainment Television is truly a first-of-its-kind in India.



Janhvi Kapoor poses for her social media. (Instagram)

### BRAIN PICKING



Every woman is beautiful in her own way and I don't know why people have norms and ideas on how beauty is perceived.  
—DIANA PENTY  
(Indian Actress)

## James Gunn reveals clues about 'Superman' sequel

AGENCIES  
LOS ANGELES

The "Man of Steel" is set to fly again; however, this time, he won't be the only focus. According to The Hollywood Reporter, James Gunn has revealed new details about the follow-up to his summer blockbuster, titled 'Man of Tomorrow', which is expected to begin filming in April 2026.

As per the outlet, Gunn, in a recent interview, explained that the story will not just centre on Superman, played by David Corenswet, but will also give major importance to Lex Luthor, played by Nicholas Hoult.

"It is a story about Lex Luthor and Superman having to work together to a cer-

tain degree against a much, much bigger threat," Gunn said. "And it's more complicated than that. It's as much a Lex movie as it is a Superman movie. I relate to the character of Lex, sadly."

The writer-director also shared that he has completed most of the script.



"Although I am creating the Superman sequel that we're starting to shoot in April or so... I'm done writing that for the most part," Gunn said.

Gunn later teased the future of his self-titled 'Superman Saga' in a conversation with The Hollywood Reporter at the 'Peacemaker' season two premiere.

He said, "I've already finished the treatment for the next story in what I'll call the 'Superman Saga.' The treatment is done, which means a very, very worked-out treatment. I'm working on that and hopefully going into production on that not too far away from today."

'Man of Tomorrow' is scheduled to release in theatres on July 9, 2027.

## Siddharth joins Freida Pinto in upcoming series 'Unaccustomed Earth'

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Actor Siddharth, who is known for starring in 'Rang De Basanti' and 'Bommarililu', has joined the cast of the upcoming series 'Unaccustomed Earth', which also features 'Slumdog Millionaire' fame Freida Pinto.

The series is based on Jhumpa Lahiri's award-



winning collection of short stories.

The eight-episode drama is set to explore love, desire, and belonging within a tight-knit Indian American community.

Produced by John Wells and Madhuri Shekar, the series is set in the immigrant hamlet of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The official logline for the show states

that "Unaccustomed Earth" invites you into the elite and insular Indian-American community of Cambridge, Massachusetts. It follows a star-crossed romance between a devoted wife, Parul Chaudhury (Pinto), and her long-lost love -- and the scandalous affair that ensues."

Siddharth will play Amit Mukherjee, Pinto's

character's star-crossed love. Amit is portrayed as a warm-hearted Bengali American, raised in Cambridge, who openly expresses his emotions and is always there for friends and family, even at personal cost. Despite his reliability in moments of crisis, Amit struggles with stability in both his personal and professional life.

## Rajinikanth appreciates Sivakarthikeyan's 'Madharaasi'

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Superstar Rajinikanth is all praise for Sivakarthikeyan starrer 'Madharaasi', sending a heartfelt appreciation to the actor. Directed by AR Murugadoss, 'Madharaasi' features Sivakarthikeyan in the lead alongside Rukmini Vasanth, Vidyut Jammwal, Biju Menon, Shabeer Kallarakkal, and Vikranth.

Nearly a week after its release, Sivakarthikeyan received a heartwarming message from Rajinikanth. Taking to his social media



handles, the actor shared his delight and expressed love and admiration for the superstar.

Referring to Rajinikanth as his "idol" and "Thalaivar", Sivakarthikeyan quoted Rajinikanth telling him, "My god, excellent! Enna perfor-

mance! Enna actions! Super super SK! Enakku romba pudichirundhadhu. Action hero aagiteenga. God bless, God bless."

"Heartfelt wishes from my #Thalaivar, along with his trademark laugh. Love you Thalaivaaaaa," he concluded.

'Madharaasi' opened in theatres on September 5, marking the first collaboration between AR Murugadoss and Sivakarthikeyan. The cinematography is handled by Sudeep Elamon, and the music score is from Anirudh Ravichander.

He debuted with the famous

Why This Kolaveri Di, and went on to compose music for blockbuster films like Beast, Vikram, Jailer, Jawan, Leo, and Indian 2, just to name a few, amongst his notable work in a couple of years.

The film's trailer was unveiled in August, promising an action-packed drama. It opened to offer a glimpse into the illegal smuggling of local firearms into the city, prompting a police chase.

Sivakarthikeyan quickly takes centre stage as a man with a medical condition, seeking to protect his girlfriend.



# WHY MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z ARE DRIVING THE DEMAND FOR GREEN SALADS



SURENDRA SINGH RAWAT

The culinary landscape has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, with healthy eating taking center stage and green salads emerging as a key symbol of wellness. Once considered merely a side dish or a dieting option, salads are now being embraced as a primary meal choice. Millennials and Gen Z—two of the most influential and trend-setting consumer groups—are leading this shift, redefining what it means to eat healthily, sustainably, and consciously. Their preferences are reshaping the food industry, prompting restaurants, cafes, and food brands to innovate in response to a growing demand for fresh, nutritious, and versatile meals.

**HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS AND NUTRITIONAL AWARENESS**  
One of the most compelling reasons for the surge



in green salad consumption among Millennials and Gen Z is their heightened awareness of health and nutrition. Unlike previous generations, these young consumers prioritize foods that promote long-term well-being rather than simply satisfy hunger. Green salads, packed with leafy greens, vegetables, seeds, nuts, and fresh dressings, provide an abundance of essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. For a generation that researches the health impact of every meal, salads are a simple yet effective way to boost immunity, improve digestion, and maintain overall wellness. This focus on functional nutrition has turned salads from a

*One of the most compelling reasons for the surge in green salad consumption among Millennials and Gen Z is their heightened awareness of health and nutrition. Unlike previous generations, these young consumers prioritize foods that promote long-term well-being rather than simply satisfy hunger.*

diet-friendly side dish into a sought-after meal in its own right.

**PLANT-BASED PREFERENCES AND SUSTAINABILITY**  
The rise of plant-based eating is another driving factor behind the popularity

of green salads. Millennials and Gen Z are increasingly adopting diets that emphasize plant-forward options for health, ethical, and environmental reasons. Salads, featuring a diverse range of fresh vegetables, legumes, nuts, and grains, align perfectly

with this lifestyle choice. Moreover, these generations are deeply concerned about the environmental footprint of their diets. Reducing meat consumption and incorporating more plant-based foods is seen as a tangible way to support sustainability. Green salads allow consumers to make choices that are not only good for their health but also responsible in terms of ecological impact, further reinforcing their appeal.

**CONVENIENCE AND CUSTOMIZATION**  
Modern life demands meals that are both convenient and flexible. Green salads satisfy these requirements, offering quick, portable, and customizable options.

Many restaurants, cafes, and meal delivery services now feature salad bars or “build-your-own” salad concepts, allowing individuals to tailor meals according to taste, dietary restrictions, or nutritional needs. Millennials and Gen Z value personalization in their food choices, and the ability to add ingredients like kale, quinoa, avocado, or chickpeas empowers them to design meals that reflect both preference and lifestyle. This level of control transforms a simple salad into a highly satisfying dining experience.

**MENTAL WELL-BEING AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES**  
Beyond physical health,

young consumers increasingly view food as a key component of mental well-being. Research shows that balanced nutrition, including leafy greens and fresh vegetables, can positively impact mood, cognitive function, and energy levels. Millennials and Gen Z often approach eating as an act of self-care, integrating nutrient-rich foods like salads into their daily routines as part of a broader wellness strategy. By choosing green salads, they reinforce a holistic approach to health that encompasses both body and mind, turning food into an intentional and value-driven choice.

The growing demand for green salads reflects broader societal shifts championed by Millennials and Gen Z. Their focus on health, sustainability, convenience, customization, and mental well-being has transformed salads from a supplementary dish into a primary meal choice. For restaurants, cafes, and food brands, this represents an opportunity to innovate, diversify menus, and cater to the preferences of these influential generations. As Millennials and Gen Z continue to shape culinary trends, green salads are poised to remain a cornerstone of healthy, conscious, and modern dining for years to come.

*Written by Surenendra Singh Rawat, Executive Chef at India Palace Restaurant Wheaton, US*

## What to Eat in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Trimesters of Pregnancy

**TDG NETWORK**  
Pregnancy is a transformative journey that requires mindful eating to support both the mother and the growing baby. Each trimester comes with unique nutritional needs, and understanding them can make the experience healthier and smoother. Here's a trimester-wise guide to what you should eat during pregnancy.

**\*\*\*First Trimester (Weeks 1-12): Laying the Foundation\*\*\***  
The early weeks are crucial for the baby's neural tube development, which later forms the brain and spinal cord. Morning sickness is common, so smaller, nutrient-dense meals work best.

**\*\*\*Key Nutrients:\*\*\***  
**\*\*\*Folic Acid:\*\*\*** Vital for preventing birth defects. Include spinach, broccoli, beans, oranges, and fortified cereals.  
**\*\*\*Vitamin B6:\*\*\*** Helps reduce nausea. Bananas, nuts, and whole grains are good choices.  
**\*\*\*Iron:\*\*\*** Supports blood production. Add lentils, green leafy vegetables, and lean meats.  
**\*\*\*Protein:\*\*\*** Essential for cell growth. Opt for eggs, dairy, pulses, and tofu.  
**\*\*\*Foods to Include:\*\*\***  
\* Whole grains like oats and brown rice  
\* Fresh fruits, especially citrus and berries  
\* Dairy products for calcium  
\* Light, hydrating soups and smoothies  
**\*\*\*Tip:\*\*\*** Eat small, frequent meals and keep dry snacks like crackers handy to manage nausea.

**\*\*\*Second Trimester (Weeks 13-27): Growth and**

**Strength\*\*\***  
By now, nausea often reduces, appetite improves, and the baby starts growing rapidly. This is the time to focus on nutrient-rich, energy-boosting foods.

**\*\*\*Key Nutrients:\*\*\***  
**\*\*\*Calcium & Vitamin D:\*\*\*** For strong bones and teeth. Include milk, yogurt, cheese, ragi, sesame seeds, and fortified foods.  
**\*\*\*Iron & Vitamin C:\*\*\*** To prevent anemia and boost absorption. Pair leafy greens or legumes with citrus fruits.  
**\*\*\*Omega-3 Fatty Acids:\*\*\*** Aid brain and eye development. Include walnuts, flaxseeds, and fish like salmon (if non-vegetarian).  
**\*\*\*Magnesium:\*\*\*** Supports muscle and nerve function. Nuts, seeds, and whole grains are rich sources.  
**\*\*\*Foods to Include:\*\*\***  
\* Whole fruits like guava, apple, and pear  
\* Colorful vegetables such as carrots, spinach, and bell peppers  
\* Protein-rich foods: dals, chicken, paneer, and chickpeas  
\* Healthy fats from avocados, nuts, and seeds  
**\*\*\*Tip:\*\*\*** Include a mix of protein, healthy fats, and fiber in each meal to maintain energy levels.

**\*\*\*Third Trimester (Weeks 28-40): Preparing for Birth\*\*\***  
The final stretch focuses on the baby's weight gain, brain development, and preparing the mother's body for delivery. Digestion may slow down, so light but nutrient-dense meals help.

**\*\*\*Key Nutrients:\*\*\***  
**\*\*\*Protein:\*\*\*** Still a must-have for baby's growth. Eggs, lean meat, sprouts, and legumes are excellent.

**\*\*\*Fiber:\*\*\*** Helps prevent constipation, common in late pregnancy. Go for whole grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables.  
**\*\*\*Vitamin K:\*\*\*** Important for blood clotting during delivery. Found in spinach, kale, and broccoli.  
**\*\*\*Complex Carbohydrates:\*\*\*** Provide sustained energy. Brown rice, oats, and quinoa are good options.  
**\*\*\*Foods to Include:\*\*\***  
\* Fresh fruits like papaya (ripe), kiwi, and pomegranate  
\* Steamed or lightly cooked vegetables  
\* Herbal teas like ginger or chamomile (in moderation)  
\* Calcium-rich foods such as almonds and dairy  
  
**\*\*\*Tip:\*\*\*** Eat smaller, more frequent meals to ease heartburn and discomfort. Stay hydrated with water, coconut water, and soups.  
**\*\*\*General Guidelines Throughout Pregnancy\*\*\***  
\* Avoid raw or undercooked meats, unpasteurized dairy, and high-mercury fish.  
\* Limit caffeine and sugary, processed foods.  
\* Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.  
\* Consult your doctor before taking supplements or making major diet changes.

**\*\*\*Conclusion\*\*\***  
Pregnancy nutrition isn't about eating more—it's about eating right. From folate-rich foods in the first trimester to protein-packed meals in the third, every stage has its unique needs. A balanced, varied diet not only supports the baby's growth but also keeps the mother strong and energized for the beautiful journey ahead.

## At the cinnamon kitchen, we aim to reimagine dessert so well, you'll forget it's also healthy.

PRIYASHA SALUJA

Here, we try to give every seasonal fruit its moment. Because eating seasonally isn't just better for your body—it's how food stays fresh, flavourful, and nutrient-rich. Mangoes in the summer. Strawberries in winter. Cherries in the monsoon. We let the produce guide the menu.

This monsoon, we've been a little obsessed with cherries. Cherries have always felt like edible jewels to me. They're tart, sweet, just a little high-maintenance; and when they're in season, they deserve the spotlight.

This year's cherries have been extra juicy and full of character, so we built a whole menu around them: cherry-chocolate millet cake, cherry tarts... and this mousse, which might just be my favourite. It's a rich **plant-based chocolate mousse**, layered with sticky cherries and soft crumbled cake.

No gluten. No dairy. No



refined sugar.

Just comfort, flavour, and a little monsoon magic in every spoon.

**What You'll Need (Serves 4)**

**For the mousse:**

- 1 cup vegan sugar-free dark chocolate, chopped
- 2 cups full-fat coconut milk
- 1.5 cups coconut cream (chilled and thick)
- 1 tsp cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp xylitol or your preferred plant-based sweetener. You can also use dates, khandsari or coconut sugar, as per dietary preference.

- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- A pinch of Himalayan pink salt

**For the Cherry Compote:**

- 1.5 cups fresh cherries, pitted and halved
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp xylitol or other sweetener of choice (optional, depending on how tart your cherries are)

**For layering:**

- ½ cup cherries (fresh, stewed, or slightly smashed—go with your vibe)
- ½ cup vegan chocolate cake crumbs (leftover cake, brownie bits, cookie crumble or anything

dangerously chocolatey)

- Toppings: roasted almonds, cacao nibs, or dark chocolate shavings

**Method**

**1. Start with the Cherry Compote**

In a pan, cook cherries with lemon juice on medium heat for 5-6 minutes until they start to break down. Add xylitol if needed. Let it reduce slightly, then remove from heat and cool completely. You can use freshly cut cherries also, if you like them as it is!

**2. Make the Mousse**

In a double boiler or over low heat, melt the sugar-free dark chocolate. Whisk in the chilled coconut cream, cocoa powder, xylitol, vanilla extract, and a pinch of Himalayan pink salt. Blend if needed for a smooth texture. Set aside to cool slightly.

**3. Layer It Like You Mean It**

- Start with a thick spoonful of mousse in your jar

- Freeze for 5-10 minutes (this helps it set for the next layer)
- Add a spoonful of crumbled chocolate cake + cherries
- Repeat the mousse-cake-cherry situation
- Top it off with whatever you fancy—roasted almonds, chocolate curls, or a dramatic cherry on top

**4. Chill**

Refrigerate for 45-60 mins (if you can wait that long).

**How to Enjoy**

Serve chilled. Best paired with a strong black coffee or calming herbal tea. For extra indulgence, swirl in a spoonful of **TCK's Natural Peanut Butter**—it adds an earthy richness that complements the mousse beautifully.

Store in the refrigerator in airtight jars. Stays fresh for **up to 4 days** (but we doubt it'll last that long).

**Pictures:**

**Cherry Chocolate Mousse Jar**

## EDAMAME SEEKH KEBAB WITH APPLE PACHDI

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

**INGREDIENTS FOR KEBAB:**

- Edamame Beans – 100 g
- Fresh Beans – 25 g
- Broccoli – 25 g
- Frozen Green Peas – 25 g
- Boiled Potato – 20 g
- Malai Paneer – 20 g
- Cashew Nuts – 10 g
- Ginger-Garlic Paste – 5 g
- Green Chilli Paste – 4 g
- Jeera Powder – 4 g
- Garam Masala – 2 g
- Salt – 3 g
- Black Salt – 2 g



Refined Oil – 10 ml  
Truffle Oil – 3 ml

**METHOD FOR SEEKH:**

- Heat oil in a pan. Sauté cumin seeds, green chilli, and ginger-garlic paste.
- Add green peas; cook until moisture evaporates. Add broccoli, beans, and edamame; cook briefly and let cool.
- Blend or mash the mixture. Add grated paneer, mashed potato, cashew powder, garam masala,

- and both salts. Mix well.
- Shape onto skewers like seekh kebabs and roast in a tandoor until charred and smoky.
- Drizzle with truffle oil before serving.

**APPLE PACHDI:**

Mix hung curd with chopped green apple, mint, raisins, cardamom powder, lemon juice, sugar, and salt. Serve chilled with the kebabs.

*(The recipe is shared by Anardana)*



# Voter List Forgery: Delhi Court dismisses criminal complaint against Sonia Gandhi

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Thursday dismissed a plea seeking registration of a First Information Report against Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, who was accused of fraudulently getting her name included in the electoral rolls in 1980—three years before acquiring Indian citizenship. The court ruled that the allegations lacked merit.

## DETAILS OF THE CASE

The plea was filed by Vikas Tripathi, who sought criminal action against Sonia Gandhi, claiming that she used forged documents to get her name

added to the voter list in New Delhi constituency before being a citizen of India. The petition alleged that Gandhi's name was included in 1980, removed in 1982, and reinstated in 1983 after she obtained citizenship.

The case was heard by Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Vaibhav Chaurasiya at the Rouse Avenue Courts. The judge reserved the order earlier and delivered the verdict on Thursday. A detailed copy of the order is awaited.

## ARGUMENTS BY THE PETITIONER

Senior advocate Pawan Narang, representing Tripathi, argued that the first condition for being a registered



File Photo

*Senior advocate Pawan Narang, representing Tripathi, argued that the first condition for being a registered voter is that a person must be a citizen of India. He explained:*

voter is that a person must be a citizen of India. He explained:

“First you have to satisfy you are a citizen of India... that is the first threshold. After being a citizen, another threshold is proof of residence.”

Narang further pointed out that in 1980, documentation like PAN or Aadhaar was not used, and citizen-

ship was verified through documents such as a passport or ration card.

He questioned why Gandhi's name was deleted from the electoral roll in 1982, stating, “Only 2 names were deleted at that time—one was Sanjay Gandhi's, as he had passed away in 1981, and the other was Sonia Gandhi's. Why was her name

deleted? Because certain false documents were found, and it caused an uproar.”

According to him, Gandhi's name was reinstated in 1983 after she became an Indian citizen, but the irregularity in the earlier listing raised suspicion and warranted an investigation.

## COURT'S OBSERVATION

The court, however, rejected the plea, finding no basis for proceeding with an FIR. It observed that the case lacked sufficient grounds and that the allegations were speculative in nature.

No representation was made on behalf of Sonia Gandhi during the hearing.

## “What Is The Urgency?” SC rejects urgent listing of plea against India-Pakistan cricket match

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to entertain an urgent plea seeking cancellation of the upcoming cricket match between India and Pakistan in the 2025 Asia Cup.

The matter was listed before a bench comprising Justices J. K. Maheshwari and Vijay Bishnoi after a lawyer sought expedited hearing. The India-Pakistan match is scheduled for September 14 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium as part of the Asia Cup.

The bench, however, questioned the urgency and expressed its unwillingness to intervene. “What is the urgency? It's a match, let it be. Match is this Sunday, what can be done?” the bench remarked during the hearing. When the lawyer argued that the petition would lose relevance if not listed by Friday, the judges responded, “Match is this Sunday? What can we do about that? Let it be. Match should go on.”



File Photo

*The bench, however, questioned the urgency and expressed its unwillingness to intervene. “What is the urgency? It's a match, let it be. Match is this Sunday, what can be done?” the bench remarked during the hearing.*

The plea, filed by 4 law students led by Urvashi Jain, argued that holding a cricket match with Pakistan after recent terrorist incidents sends an inappropriate message.

The petition specifically pointed to the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor, stating that these events, which resulted in civilian deaths and endangered soldiers,

make it insensitive to organize a sporting event with Pakistan at this time.

According to the petitioners, “Cricket between nations is meant to show harmony and friendship. But after the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor, when our people died and our soldiers risked everything, playing with Pakistan sent the opposite message that while our soldiers are sacrificing their lives, we are celebrating

sports with the same country sheltering terrorists (sic).”

The plea further highlighted the emotional impact such a match could have on the families of the victims. “It can also hurt the sentiments of the families of the victims who lost their lives in the hand of the Pakistani terrorist. The dignity of the nation and security of citizens come before entertainment.”

## Concerns Over National Interest

The petition also raised broader concerns, describing the match as “detrimental to the national interests” and harmful to the morale of the armed forces and the country's citizens. It argued that the timing of the event undermines the sacrifices made by security forces and the grief endured by affected families.

Despite the petition's plea, the top court declined to entertain the matter urgently, effectively allowing the match to proceed as planned.

## RAJASTHAN HC STAYS CHEATING CASE AGAINST SHAH RUKH KHAN, DEEPIKA PADUKONE

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

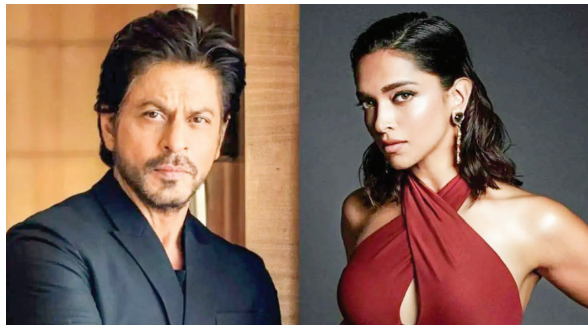
The Rajasthan High Court recently stayed the investigation into Bollywood stars Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone in a cheating case linked to the sale of a defective Hyundai car.

The stay also covers Hyundai Motor India's top executives, Unsoo Kim (Managing Director) and Tarun Garg (Chief Operating Officer), who were named in the complaint.

## BACKGROUND

The case stems from a complaint by a resident of Bharatpur who purchased a Hyundai Alcazar in June 2022 from an authorised dealership. After driving the vehicle for nearly 67,000 kilometres, the owner reportedly encountered repeated technical and manufacturing faults. Despite multiple requests for a replacement or refund, the consumer claimed that Hyundai's response was unsatisfactory.

Frustrated with the company's handling of the matter, the buyer filed a criminal complaint. A magistrate



Social Media

court subsequently directed the police to register a first information report (FIR), citing offences under cheating and criminal conspiracy provisions.

## PETITIONERS ARGUE LACK OF CONNECTION

The petitioners – Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, Kim, and Garg – contested their inclusion in the case, arguing that the allegations against them were “absolutely arbitrary and malicious.” They asserted that the complaint did not reveal any cognisable offence committed by them.

“It was stated that the petitioners have no connection or nexus with the sale of the vehicle in question and do not deal with consumer

complaints for repairing or manufacturing defects in the sold car,” the court record noted.

The petitioners contended that their roles did not involve consumer grievances or defect management and that implicating them in the FIR was unjustified.

## COURT GRANTS STAY & ADVISES MEDIATION

After reviewing the matter, Justice Sudesh Bansal issued notices to both the police and the complainant and granted a stay on the ongoing investigation. The stay ensures that no coercive steps are taken against the petitioners while the court examines the case further.

## Farmers' Protest Remark: SC to hear actor Kangana's plea for Quashing Defamation Case on September 12

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is set to hear on September 12 the plea filed by Bollywood actor and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut, challenging the Punjab and Haryana High Court's refusal to quash a defamation case filed against her.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta will consider the matter, which stems from remarks allegedly made by the actor during the 2020–21 farmer protests.

## Background

The case relates to a retweet posted by Ranaut during the farmer protests against the now-repealed farm laws. In the retweet, she allegedly compared a protester from Punjab to Bilkis Bano, the elderly woman associated with the Shaheen Bagh protests, which gained international attention after being featured in Time magazine.

The complaint was lodged in 2021 by Mahinder Kaur, a 73-year-old protester from Bahadurgarh Jandian village in Punjab's Bathinda district. Kaur claimed that the tweet falsely and mali-



Social Media

ciously tarnished her reputation by associating her with an unrelated protest. She stated that despite her age, she had actively participated in demonstrations and sit-ins since the start of the agitation but had no connection with the woman from Shaheen Bagh.

According to her complaint, the tweet amounted to “false imputations and defamatory remarks” that damaged her dignity and lowered her esteem in the eyes of others.

## Court's Decision To Dismiss Plea

Ranaut had filed the plea under Section 482 of the erstwhile CrPC seeking to quash both the complaint and the subsequent trial court's summons issued under Sections 499/500 of the IPC (now repealed).

The Punjab and Haryana High Court dismissed her plea on August 1, holding that the complaint was not mala fide. The judges observed,

“There are specific allegations against the petitioner who is a celebrity, that false and defamatory imputations by her in the retweet have dented the respondent's reputation and lowered her in her own estimation, as also in the eyes of others. Therefore, filing of the complaint to vindicate her rights cannot be termed mala fide.”

The court further noted that the magistrate had carefully considered the material on record and recorded satisfaction that a prima facie case under Section 499 IPC was made out.

## Arguments Raised By Kangana's Counsel

Kangana's legal team contended that the trial court lacked jurisdiction. They argued that after recording preliminary evidence, the magistrate called for a report from Twitter Communications India Private Limited (TCIPL) but failed to receive it before issuing summons.

The defense also argued that Ranaut had no intention to harm the complainant's reputation.

However, Justice Dahiya, delivering the High Court's order, observed,

“Non-receipt of report by TCIPL as to whether the alleged retweet has been made by the petitioner cannot be a ground to divest the Magistrate of jurisdiction under Section 202 CrPC.”

The court explained that TCIPL was neither the owner nor in control of twitter.com and merely engaged in research and marketing, making its report irrelevant to the jurisdiction issue.

## Court's Upcoming Consideration

With the High Court having dismissed her plea, Kangana has now approached the Supreme Court seeking relief.

## BHOPAL'S '90-DEGREE' BRIDGE ACTUALLY TURNS 118-119°, EXPERT TELLS HIGH COURT

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

An expert assessment has clarified that the controversial sharp turn on the Bhopal rail overbridge is not a “90-degree” bend as widely circulated in memes and social media, but instead measures between 118–119 degrees, the Madhya Pradesh High Court has been recently informed.

The revelation has prompted the state government to seek additional time from the court to reconsider its decision to blacklist the construction firm involved.

## EXPERT REPORT SUBMITTED TO COURT

The report, prepared by a professor from the Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal, was submitted before the division bench of Chief Justice Sanjeev Sachdev and Justice Vinay Saraf. It states that the bend in the bridge is far less sharp than portrayed and does not justify accusations of gross negligence solely based on the angle.

Following the submission of the report, the



Representative Image

Madhya Pradesh government requested time to review its earlier action against M/s Puneet Chadha, the company responsible for constructing the overbridge in the Aishbagh area of Bhopal. The court accepted the request and scheduled the next hearing for September 17, also directing that copies of the expert report be shared with all parties.

## CASE BACKGROUND

The petitioner, M/s Puneet Chadha, had been blacklisted by the government after public outrage over the flyover's sharp turn. The company approached the High Court seeking relief, arguing that the action was taken without giving it a chance to present its case. It asserted that the bridge's design fol-

lowed the General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) issued by the government and was completed under proper supervision.

The company claimed that the GAD was later amended between 2023 and 2024, and the final construction complied with revised guidelines. It further argued that the allegations of faulty design were based solely on the report of an investigative committee and lacked procedural fairness.

## COMMITTEE FINDINGS & GOVERNMENT ACTION

The government had constituted a five-member committee to examine the issue after images of the bend went viral online, sparking ridicule and concerns over

safety. The committee identified coordination lapses between the state government and the railways and pointed out that the overpass pillars were not installed at the prescribed distance. Additionally, the committee noted that the railway line passing under the bend might have contributed to design complications.

Earlier, on June 28, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced that seven PWD engineers were suspended, and a departmental inquiry was ordered against a retired superintendent engineer. The construction agency and design consultant were blacklisted, and a separate committee was tasked with proposing improvements to the overbridge.

The court earlier directed the petitioner to deposit Rs 1 lakh toward expert assessment fees, with the Municipal Corporation of Bhopal providing necessary resources. It had noted that if the petitioner's claim regarding the angle proved correct, the fee could be reimbursed and no strict action should be pursued against the firm.



# LAKSHYA SEN, SATWIK-CHIRAG ADVANCE TO HONG KONG OPEN QUARTERFINALS

AGENCIES  
HONG KONG

Indian men's singles shuttler Lakshya Sen and men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty won their respective encounters in the Round of 16 and stormed into the quarterfinals of the Hong Kong Open 2025 badminton tournament on Thursday.

India's top-ranked singles player and world No. 20 Lakshya Sen beat HS Prannoy, 34th in the men's singles badminton rankings, 15-21, 21-18, 21-10 in an hour and eight minutes, as reported by Olympics.com.

Competing at the Hong Kong Coliseum, Lakshya Sen made a sluggish start, allowing HS Prannoy to dictate terms and pocket the opening game. Lakshya, the Paris 2024 semi-finalist, began the second game slowly too, trailing 11-9 at the break before clawing back to 13-11.



Lakshya Sen, Satwik-Chirag (File Photo)

Though Prannoy edged ahead at 18-17 again, Lakshya earned four straight points to snatch the game and force a decider. The decider followed a familiar script with Lakshya Sen starting cautiously before finding his rhythm to lead 11-8 at the interval.

He then conceded only

two more points en route to wrapping up the match with ease and earning his sixth win in nine meetings against Prannoy. In the men's doubles pre-quarterfinals, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also rallied from a game down to beat Thailand's Peeratchai Sukphun

and Pakkapon Teerarat-sakul 18-21, 21-15, 21-11 in an hour and three minutes, according to Olympics.com.

Despite trailing 11-7 at the interval and later slipping to 16-10, Satwik and Chirag clawed their way back to 18-18 only for the Thai duo to pick up three straight points and snatch the opening

## HONG KONG OPEN 2025 BADMINTON: DAY 3 INDIA RESULTS

### Men's singles:

Lakshya Sen beat HS Prannoy 15-21, 21-18, 21-10

### Men's doubles:

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty bt Peeratchai Sukphun-Pakkapon Teerarat-sakul (THA) 18-21, 21-15, 21-11.

game. In the second game, Satwik and Chirag kept the Thai duo in check, never allowing them more than a point's lead before edging 11-10 ahead at the interval. The Indian badminton players then stepped up the intensity, racing to seven game points and forcing a decider.

In the decider, the Indians stamped their authority by opening up a commanding lead before sealing victory and booking their place in the quarter-finals of the BWF Super 500 tournament.

## ICC announces all-female match officials panel for Women's World Cup

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

The ICC have announced that the upcoming ICC Women's Cricket World Cup will feature an all-female group of umpires and match officials for the first time in the history of the tournament, as per the ICC website.

While three recent events - the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and the two most recent ICC Women's T20 World Cups - have featured all-female match official panels, this is the first time in the history of the Women's World Cup that the feat will be achieved. The group of 14 umpires includes the trio of Claire Polosak, Jacqueline Williams and Sue Redfern that will be appearing at their third Women's World Cup, while Lauren Agen-



Claire Polosak and Sue Redfern. Courtesy: Agencies

bag and Kim Cotton will be at their second World Cup after they were the officiating umpires when Australia won their unprecedented seventh title in New Zealand in 2022. The match referee panel of four includes Trudy Anderson, Shandre Fritz, GS Lakshmi, and Michell Pereira, who will all bring varying levels of experience in the role to the 13th edition of the Women's World Cup that will be held in

India and Sri Lanka from September 30. ICC Chairman Jay Shah believes the all-female panel is a historic moment for women's cricket and thinks it will help lead to many more success stories around the world in the future. "This marks a defining moment in the journey of women's cricket, one that we hope will pave the way for many more trailblazing stories across all facets of the sport.

## World Athletics Championships in Tokyo promise thrilling contests

RUPINDER SINGH  
TOKYO

With line-ups finalized, the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo this September are set to deliver some of the most exciting contests in recent memory. Even the heats look fiercely competitive, with more than a dozen athletes in each event capable of winning gold.

For India, all eyes will be on the men's javelin throw. Germany's Julian Weber impressed with two 91m-plus throws at the Diamond League final in Zurich, while Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem has returned fit after a long layoff following his remarkable Paris Olympics performance. India's challenge will be led by Sachin Yadav, Rohit Yadav, and Yashwant Singh, with

fans marking September 17 for the qualifying round and September 18 for the final.

The men's 800m promises another thriller, with 15 competitors having clocked under 1:43. Such depth raises hopes that David Rudisha's legendary world record of 1:40.91 could be under threat. In the 400m hurdles, Karsten Warholm, Rai Benjamin, and Alison dos Santos headline what is expected to be one of the most electrifying finals.

Pole vault star Mondo Duplantis of Sweden, who has already broken the world record 11 times, remains unmissable. With contests of this calibre across the board, athletics fans are in for a treat—time, perhaps, to set cricket aside and enjoy world-class track and field at its best.

## World Boxing: Pooja Rani, Jaismine secure India medals

AGENCIES  
LIVERPOOL

Two-time Asian champion Pooja Rani and World Boxing Cup Astana gold medalist Jaismine Lamboria registered contrasting wins to assure two more medals for India in the World Boxing Championships in Liverpool, according to a release from BFI.

Pooja Rani got the better of Poland's Emilia Koterska 3:2 in the women's 80 kg quarterfinals while Jaismine dominated Under-22 Asian champion Mama-jonova Khumorabonu of Uzbekistan 5:0 to reach the



Pooja Rani File Photo

Women's 57kg semi-final. India has fielded a 20-member contingent at the inaugural World Championships being held under the aegis of the World Boxing, a recently formed international governing body for boxing, and is hoping for a good

showing in both men's and women's events.

World Boxing Cup Astana gold medalist Nupur was the first Indian to be assured of a medal when she reached the women's 80+kg quarterfinals on Wednesday. Two more Indian boxes

-- Meenakshi (women's 48kg) and Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (men's 50kg) -- are a win away from assuring themselves a medal and will be playing their quarterfinals on Friday.

In a keenly contested women's 80kg bout, Pooja Rani banked on her experience to tackle the speed and energy of her much-younger opponent.

The Polish boxer was slightly ahead in the contest after the opening round, but Pooja Rani dominated the second to take control and then maintained a cautious game plan to assure herself a semifinal berth.



## Asia Cup: Morkel praises Indian bowlers' clutch performance

AGENCIES  
DUBAI

India's bowling coach Morne Morkel lauded the team's bowlers for their impressive performance against the UAE in their Asia Cup opener, stating that their focused preparation ahead of the match paid off.

thought that leading into the game, our preparation was very focused. I think that is one thing that we did exceptionally well."

A four-wicket haul from Kuldeep Yadav (4/7) and a fine spell from Shivam Dube (3/7) bundled out the UAE for just 57 runs in 13.1 overs, with openers Alishan

of energy, bring a bit of body language, when we have the ball in our hands, and yeah, we nailed the first half," he concluded.

Abhishek Sharma and vice-captain Shubman Gill unleashed destruction right from ball one, enabling India to chase down the total in just 4.3 overs, a grand



Kuldeep Yadav of India celebrates with team mates after dismissing Muhammad Waseem of UAE during the Asia Cup (File Photo)

India flexed their muscles, mercilessly outclassing the UAE in a nine-wicket win on their home soil, while chasing just 58 runs during their Asia Cup campaign opener at Dubai on Tuesday.

In a video posted by BCCI on X, Morkel said, "Yeah, a very solid start by the boys with the ball tonight. We haven't played a lot of wide-ball cricket for a while, so I

Sharafu (22) and skipper Muhammed Waseem (19) being the only ones to touch double figures.

Morkel revealed that his pre-match conversation with the players centred on finding their rhythm, bringing high energy, and projecting a strong body language.

"I think that is our conversation going into the game, was to find our feet, put a lot

total of just 27 balls. Yadav soared past former frontline spinner Ravichandran Ashwin's T20I wickets tally after his scorching four-wicket haul. He moved past Axar Patel and Ashwin's tally of 72 wickets each and now boasts 73 scalps in 41 matches at 13.39. In the ninth over, he truly put his masterclass on exhibition and carved his name in history.

## Sachin Tendulkar not in contention for BCCI President

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI:



Sachin Tendulkar not in contention for BCCI President (ANI Photo)

SRT Sports Management Pvt Ltd on Friday dismissed circulating reports suggesting that India's legendary batter Sachin Tendulkar is being considered for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president position.

"It has come to our attention that certain reports and rumours have been circulating regarding Mr. Sachin Tendulkar being considered, or nominated, for the position of President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). We wish to categorically state that no such development has taken place. We urge all concerned to refrain

stitution, any office bearer has to leave the position after crossing the age of 70. The Board of Control for Cricket in India will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) before the end of September. In the upcoming AGM, there are high speculations that the next presidential candidacy will be discussed. When reports of Binny's departure started to surface on social media in June, vice-president Rajeev Shukla emerged as the top candidate for the role. Sources said that Shukla, who is going to turn 66 next week, would assume the president's role on an interim basis.

Sources also indicated that in the upcoming AGM, Shukla could stand for the

post of full-time president in the elections. However, at that time, Shukla denied the reports and classified them as "useless talks". For Shukla, taking over the position on an interim basis is a procedural matter; there is nothing more to it. "These are useless talks. When one spot is about to get vacant, the person next in line gets the interim charge before the election.

It is a procedural thing," Shukla told.

Roger was elected as the 36th president of BCCI in October 2022, replacing ex-Indian skipper Sourav Ganguly, who completed his three-year tenure. Notably, Binny was the only candidate to have filed a nomination for the top post.

## Asia Cup: Bangladesh bowlers restrict Hong Kong to 143

AGENCIES  
ABU DHABI

Exceptional performers from Bangladesh bowlers Taskin Ahmed, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, and Rishad Hossain restricted the Hong Kong Cricket Team to a total of 143 runs for the loss of seven wickets in their 20 overs in the third match of the ongoing Asia Cup 2025 at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Thursday. Bangladesh need 144 runs

in their 20 overs in order to win the match.

Earlier in the match, Bangladesh skipper Liton Das won the toss and elected to bowl first. After losing the toss, Hong Kong batters Zeeshan Ali and Anshuman Rath came out in the middle to open the innings.

The Hong Kong side didn't have the start that they wanted as they lost the wicket of Anshuman (4) when the team score was just seven runs. He was dismissed by right-arm seamer



Taskin Ahmed in the second over of the innings.

Following the opener's dismissal, right-hand batter

Babar Hayat (14) came out to bat. At the score of 30 in the fifth over, Hayat was sent back to the pavillion on the bowling of right-arm pacer Tanzim Hasan Sakib.

After Hayat's wicket, right-hand batter Nizakat Khan came in the middle to bat. The Hong Kong Cricket Team touched the 50-run mark on the second ball of the ninth over as Zeeshan Ali slammed a six on the bowling of leg-spinner Rishad Hossain.

At the score of 71, Hong

BRIEF SCORES:
Hong Kong 143/7 in 20 overs (Nizakat Khan 42, Zeeshan Ali 30; Tanzim Hasan Sakib 2/21) vs Bangladesh.

Kong lost their third wicket as Zeeshan Ali (30) was sent back to the dressing room on the bowling of Tanzim Hasan Sakib. After the fall of the third wicket, captain Yasmin Murtaza came to bat for his side.

The Hong Kong side com-

pleted the 100-run mark on the penultimate ball of the 15th over as Murtaza smashed a six on the bowling of off-spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz.

At the score of 117 in the 18th over, Murtaza was dismissed through a run-out, which was done by Rishad Hossain (fielder) and Mustafizur Rehman (bowler).

In the 19th over at a score of 134, Rishad Hossain dismissed two Hong Kong batters on the last two balls of the over; first it was Nizakat

Khan (42), and then it was Kinchit Shah (0).

On the second ball of the 20th over, Taskin Ahmed dismissed Aizaz Khan (5). In the last over, a total of nine runs were scored, which took the Hong Kong side to a total of 143/7 in their 20 overs.

For Bangladesh, two wickets each were scalped by Taskin Ahmed (2/38), Tanzim Hasan Shakib (2/21), and Rishad Hossain (2/31) in their respective bowling spells of four overs.