

Delhi-NCR turns into a fortress: High alert at borders ahead of protests

CJP denied permission for protest at Jantar Mantar; Delhi Police imposes prohibitory orders

New Delhi
The Delhi Police has denied permission for the proposed protest by the 'Cockroach Janata Party' (CJP) at Jantar Mantar. The police cited the failure to adhere to the prescribed timeline and rule violations during a previous protest as reasons for this decision. Meanwhile, prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) have been imposed in the area to maintain peace and law and order. According to Nupur Prasad, Joint Commissioner of Police (New Delhi Range), the Delhi Police received an application seeking permission to hold the protest at Jantar Mantar on October



7. The prescribed procedure could not be followed because the application was submitted just three days prior to the proposed protest date; police regulations require such applications to be filed at least 10 days in advance. The police also cited rule violations during a previous CJP protest as a key reason for denying permission.

However, the information provided by the police did not include specific details regarding the nature of the past violations or the events associated with them. Joint Commissioner Nupur Prasad stated that prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the BNSS were imposed due to apprehensions regarding potential unrest and a breakdown of law and order in the

The SC expressed concern over the closure of 57 metro stations in Delhi

New Delhi
The Supreme Court has expressed concern over the closure of 57 metro stations in Delhi ahead of a protest scheduled for October 10 against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. A bench led by Justice Surya Kant directed the Central Government to ensure that train services to Delhi are not completely halted and that Delhi Metro stations are not shut down prior to tomorrow's protest. The Court asked the government to allow rail and metro services to continue in a regulated manner so that the general public does not face any inconvenience. During the hearing, the Court remarked



that completely shutting down services—specifically the closure of 57 metro stations—amounts to infringing upon citizens' rights. The Court stated that whatever decision authorities make regarding the operation of rail and metro trains must be widely publicized to avoid inconvenience to the public. It noted that the protest was cited as the reason for the orders to suspend railway services.

Jantar Mantar area.

Skill training institutes are no less than IITs and IIMs: Modi

.Modi interacted with representatives of the Indian team

New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated on Friday that the importance of skill training institutes is in no way inferior to that of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). He urged the youth to continuously learn new skills and upgrade their capabilities in line with evolving technologies. Modi interacted with representatives of the Indian team that participated in the 48th WorldSkills Competition held in Shanghai, at his residence at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg. He congratulated the participants for representing India on the international stage and



encouraged them to become ambassadors for skill development within the country. The Prime Minister remarked that practical skills are just as important as academic degrees.

He asked the youth to develop skills that meet the demands of the international market and to keep pace with emerging technologies. Modi stated that the youth, the government, and training institutes must work together to

transform India into a global hub for skilled human resources. He urged the participants to share the experiences and suggestions gained during the competition with the government so that the country's skill training ecosystem could be further improved. The participants shared their experiences of adapting to new equipment, software, technical systems, and work processes during the competition.

Despite the lies spread by 'INDI' alliance, the BJP continues to win elections: Shah



New Delhi
Despite the lies and disinformation spread by Rahul Gandhi and the 'INDI' alliance, the BJP continues to win elections: Amit Shah. New Delhi, October 09 (HS): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and the opposition 'INDI' alliance of spreading lies, confusion, and disinformation, stating that despite this, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) continues to win elections under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He described the victories of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in by-

elections in West Bengal, Assam, and Puducherry, as well as in recent local body elections in Rajasthan and Tripura, as a sign of the public's rejection of the opposition alliance. In a post on the social media platform 'X', Shah stated that the results of these elections demonstrate that the public has completely rejected the 'INDI' alliance. He claimed that the public support for the BJP under Prime Minister Modi's leadership remains steadfast. The Home Minister also accused opposition parties of questioning institutions after facing electoral defeat.



Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was addressing a human rangoli creation event held under the 'Seva ke Rang - Rashtra ke Sang' program at the TT Nagar Stadium in Bhopal on Friday

Our Aim Is Awareness, Not Fines: Agnimitra

Hooghly: With the aim of making cities in West Bengal clean, beautiful, and safe, a system of imposing fines on those who litter public places was strictly implemented starting Tuesday. However, State Urban Development Minister Agnimitra Paul clarified that the government's objective is not to collect revenue through fines but to foster awareness about cleanliness among the public. Under the new system, a fine of 100 will be imposed for spitting on roads.

In the by-elections for five Assembly seats, the NDA won three; TVK won Two

New Delhi
The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and regional parties have achieved success in by-elections held for one Lok Sabha seat and five Assembly seats across three states and one Union Territory. The BJP registered victories by large margins in the Nandigram and Rejinagar Assembly constituencies of West Bengal. In Tamil Nadu's Dharapuram Assembly constituency, TVK candidate Satyabhama P. emerged victorious, while K. Maragatham Kumaravel of the TVK is leading in the Madhuranthakam seat, according to available



vote-counting data. In Puducherry's Tattanchavadi constituency, Ashok Anand—a candidate from the ruling NR Congress, a constituent of the BJP-led NDA—secured a win. Meanwhile, in Assam's Nagaon Lok Sabha constituency, the BJP's Debasish Sharma has established a decisive lead of over 1.66 lakh

votes. According to the Election Commission, BJP candidate Hasirani Rath won the Nandigram Assembly seat in West Bengal by a margin of 1,22,753 votes. Following 15 rounds of counting, she defeated her nearest rival by a significant margin. In the Rejinagar Assembly constituency,

Ambulance services across the country to be standardized

New Delhi
Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Jagat Prakash Nadda released the 'National Ambulance Service Operational Guidelines-2026' on Monday. The objective of these guidelines is to make ambulance services across the country uniform, modern, and more effective, ensuring that every citizen has access to timely, safe, and high-quality emergency medical transport. For the first time, a national framework has

been created under these new guidelines to govern the operation, monitoring, and quality of ambulance services across all states and Union Territories. This framework covers aspects such as ambulance categories, deployment based on population, essential equipment and medicines, trained Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), infection control, vehicle maintenance quality monitoring, and grievance redressal.

INDIA bloc submits memorandum to President regarding SIR and Election Commission's functioning

New Delhi
Amid the ongoing political controversy regarding the Election Commission's functioning and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, the INDIA bloc intensified its protest on Friday by meeting President Droupadi Murmu and submitting a memorandum. Leaders of the opposition alliance presented their questions and concerns regarding the electoral process to the President. Prior to this, a meeting of the



alliance's MPs and senior leaders was held in the Central Hall of Parliament to discuss future strategy. Several key opposition figures played an active role in these developments, including Congress

President Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, and

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Trinamool Congress's Abhishek Banerjee also participated in this political activity. The presence of the alliance leaders underscored the opposition's unified strategy on this issue. They allege that a large number of voters' names were removed from the electoral rolls during the SIR process, raising questions about the right to vote. The alliance has demanded the resignation of the

Chief Election Commissioner, the cancellation of the SIR process, and the restoration of the names of eligible voters who were removed.

Opposition leaders also demanded that voting in elections be conducted using ballot papers instead of EVMs. After meeting the President, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi stated that the President had asked for evidence to support the allegations of irregularities in the elections.

India does not permit a monopoly in any sector: Jyotiraditya Scindia

New Delhi
Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia stated on Friday that India does not permit monopolies in any sector. He noted that three companies have already received licenses for satellite communication services. These companies can commence operations once they fulfill security requirements and meet prescribed standards. Scindia made these remarks during a press conference at the 10th edition of the India Mobile Congress (IMC)



held at Yashobhoomi, New Delhi, while responding to a question regarding the services of Starlink, a company owned by US industrialist Elon Musk. He pointed out that while there is much talk about one "particular" company, the reality is

that three companies have secured satellite communication (Satcom) licenses and can begin operations after individually meeting security conditions and set targets. Scindia identified the license holders as Musk's Starlink, Reliance Jio's satellite service arm Jio Satcom, and the Bharti-backed Eutelsat OneWeb. He added that Amazon's Kuiper has also shown interest in the sector and will have to undergo the prescribed process.

Industrial Land Allottees To Get Greater Operational Flexibility, Boosting Investment and Employment

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Sachin Malik

Lucknow: With the objective of Promoting industrial investment in Uttar Pradesh and Ensuring better Utilisation of industrial land, a Provision has been introduced under the State industrial investment Policies to Enhance operational flexibility for industrial land allottees. Under this Provision, Eligible affiliated units will be able to operate, expand and diversify their activities on allotted industrial land through regulated co-location and sub-lease arrangements. This is expected to accelerate the implementation of industrial Projects and the commencement of Production. The Proposal was approved at a Cabinet meeting Chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday. Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi said that under the Proposed arrangement, the leasehold rights of the original allottee will remain unchanged. Eligible affiliated units having a minimum equity Stake of 51 Percent and managerial control will be allowed to avail themselves of Co-location or Sub-leasing facilities, Subject to Prescribed conditions. A uniform fee and rent Structure has also been Proposed to ensure transparency and Systematic implementation of the Arrangement. According to the Policy, Permission will be Granted by the concerned industrial development authority or agency through a Standardised application Process, appropriate due diligence and the Prescribed approval Procedure. The Sub-lease deed will be executed as a tripartite agreement among the concerned authority or agency, the original allottee and the Sub-lessee. Separate Permission will not be required for activities approved by the Council of Ministers. However, Prior approval from the Industrial Development Department will be mandatory if any new or additional activity is Proposed after the land has been Allotted. The Primary objective of the Policy is to ensure the maximum and effective Utilisation of industrial land, Provide operational convenience to investors and accelerate the Process from the establishment of industrial Projects to the commencement of Production. The facility will enable affiliated units to operate within the same allotted Premises, Subject to Prescribed conditions, making Phased expansion and diversification easier. This is expected to Strengthen investor confidence and Give fresh impetus to industrial activities across the State. Effective implementation of the Policy is expected to Generate new direct and indirect Employment opportunities, increase industrial Production and Provide additional revenue to the State in the form of taxes, GST and various fees. Furthermore, faster commissioning of industrial Projects will help ensure better utilisation of investments and Stimulate Economic activity across Uttar Pradesh.

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Sachin Malik

Lucknow: Urban Development and Energy Minister A.K. Sharma, While briefing the media after the Cabinet meeting, announced that an Integrated City Bus Terminal and Commercial Complex would be developed on approximately seven acres of land at P-4 Parking in Vrindavan Yojana, Lucknow, at an Estimated cost of ₹265 Crore under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Model. The Project will help Strengthen the Urban



transport System, improve traffic management and Provide better facilities for Passengers. Minister Sharma Stated that Electric buses would be operated in 18 cities

across Uttar Pradesh under the Gross Cost Contract (GCC) model. These cities include Agra, Aligarh, Ayodhya, Bareilly, Firozabad, Ghaziabad, Gorakhpur, Jhansi,

Kanpur, Lucknow, Mathura-Vrindavan, Meerut, Moradabad, Prayagraj, Shahjahanpur, Saharanpur, Varanasi, and Noida (Jewar). Under this arrangement,

the contract will remain Effective for 12 years from the commencement of commercial operations, while tariffs and user Charges will be determined by the Government. The Urban Development Minister further explained that municipalities and Nagar Panchayats located outside the Jurisdiction of development authorities often face Problems such as unplanned Urban Growth and unauthorized construction due to the absence of applicable building construction and development bylaws. To address

these issues, the Uttar Pradesh Municipalities Act, 1916, will be amended to empower municipalities with authority over land use, master Plans, building Permits and development control. In addition, the Building Construction and Development Bylaws, 2025, applicable to development authorities, will also be implemented in municipalities and Nagar Panchayats. These measures will Promote Planned urban development and Pave the way for improved urban amenities for Citizens.

AAP Party Holds Massive Protest Demanding Removal and Arrest of Chief Election Commissioner

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Sachin Malik

Lucknow: At the call of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Uttar Pradesh In-Charge and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, Party office-bearers and workers Staged a massive Protest on Friday at the Swasthya Bhawan intersection in Lucknow, demanding the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar from office and his Arrest. The Protest was held against What the Party described as vote theft, institutional arbitrariness and large-Scale irregularities in Electoral rolls, alleging that the Election Commission had compro-



mised its impartiality. Carrying Placards and banners, AAP workers raised Strong Slogans, including “Vote Thieves, Vacate Your Seats” and “Save Democracy,” Echoing across the Area. A heavy Police Presence was deployed at the site, and barricades were erected to Prevent the Protesters from

moving forward. This led to heated exchanges between the Police and demonstrators for some time. The Police Subsequently detained the Protesters and sent them to Eco Garden. Leading the Protest, Delhi MLA and AAP Uttar Pradesh Co-In-Charge Vishesh Ravi referred to a report Published in The

Indian Express and launched a direct attack on the Chief Election Commissioner. He said that allegations repeatedly raised by the opposition had now been Substantiated by the Election commissioners themselves. He alleged that 14 objections raised by other commissioners over a Period of 10 months had been disregarded and that arbitrary decisions had been imposed without Consensus. Ravi said that, under the rules, the Statutory authority to add or delete names from Electoral rolls rests solely with Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) and Sub-

Divisional Magistrates (SDM). He alleged that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar had unconstitutionally assumed these Powers. He further Claimed that confusion had been created by invoking the Supreme Court in connection with Changes to Form 6. He also alleged that a conspiracy to delete the names of 1.6 Million voters in West Bengal had been Exposed. Ravi said that by Excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI) from the Selection committee, the central Government had turned an independent constitutional

institution, which is expected to function impartially, into an instrument of Political Power. Addressing the Gathering, Ayodhya region President Vinay Patel said that the impartiality of the Election Commission had, in his view, completely collapsed during Gyanesh Kumar tenure and that democracy had been openly Undermined. Referring to figures, he alleged that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) campaign conducted Under Kumar Supervision had deprived crores of legitimate voters across the country of their Voting Rights.

Free Foodgrains To Be Distributed at Fair Price Shops from October 10 to 25

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Sachin Malik

Gautam Buddh Nagar: In accordance with the State Government directives, foodgrains for October 2026 will be distributed under the National Food Security Act, 2013, across Gautam Buddh Nagar district from October 10 to 25. District Supply Officer Nilesh Utpal informed that wheat and rice will be distributed free of cost to Antyodaya and eligible household ration cardholders during the Stipulated Period. He Stated that Antyodaya ration cardholders will receive 21 Kg of Wheat and 14 Kg of rice Per card, amounting to a total of 35 kg of Foodgrains. Eligible household ration card-

holders will receive 3 kg of Wheat and 2 kg of rice Per unit listed on their ration cards, totalling 5 kg of foodgrains Per unit, free of cost. Distribution will take Place at fair Price Shops during the Prescribed dates from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM, through E-POS machines after Aadhaar Authentication. The District Supply Officer further Stated that under the One Nation One Ration Card Scheme, migrant ration Cardholders from other districts of Uttar Pradesh and other States can also obtain foodgrains from any fair Price Shop in the district through the Portability facility. To monitor the distribution Process, the designated nodal

officers will Physically verify the Stock available at the Shops and ensure distribution in their Presence. The final date for foodgrain distribution is October 25, 2026. Beneficiaries who are unable to obtain their foodgrains through Aadhaar authentication on that day will be able to receive them free of cost through mobile OTP verification. The distribution receipt Generated by the E-POS machine will Show the Price of Wheat, rice and wherever applicable, Jowar, maize and bajra as zero, depending on the foodgrains distributed. Fair Price Shop dealers will Provide the receipt to the respective Beneficiaries. He directed the concerned officials

and fair Price Shop dealers to ensure the Smooth functioning of the distribution system and make certain that no Eligible beneficiary is deprived of their entitled foodgrains. He also appealed to all ration cardholders to collect their foodgrains from their respective fair Price Shops within the Stipulated Period. In case of any difficulty in obtaining foodgrains, beneficiaries may contact the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of their respective tehsil, the District Supply Officer, the Regional Food Officer or the Supply Inspector. Complaints can also be registered through the toll-free helpline Numbers 1967 and 1800-1800-150.

Hindi Resonates on the Global Stage, ‘Global South’ Shows Strong Support at UN Event

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Geeta Chaudhary

New York: A high-level parliamentary delegation led by Indian MP C.P. Joshi actively Participated in the annual ‘Hindi Day 2026’ Programme at the UN. Permanent representatives and diplomats from Andorra, Jamaica, Fiji, Guyana, the Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Qatar, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago also Shared their views at the Event. It is worth noting that the Government of India is Pursuing the ‘Hindi at the UN’ initiative to secure the inclusion of Hindi among the United Nations’ official languages. The Primary

Parliamentary delegation led by C.P. Joshi had Participated in the annual ‘Hindi Day 2026’ Programme at the UN. Permanent representatives and diplomats from Andorra, Jamaica, Fiji, Guyana, the Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Qatar, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago also Shared their views at the Event. It is worth noting that the Government of India is Pursuing the ‘Hindi at the UN’ initiative to secure the inclusion of Hindi among the United Nations’ official languages. The Primary

objective of the Programme was not merely to celebrate the occasion but also to bring friendly countries together on a common diplomatic Platform. Accordingly, Permanent representatives from several of India friendly nations and countries of the Global South were specially invited. They expressed support for Hindi role in Global dialogue and highlighted its relevance on the international Stage. Alongside its diplomatic engagement in New York, India also reiterated its commitment to human rights at

the United Nations in Geneva. The 63rd regular session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), which continued for a month, has concluded. As an active member of the Council, India reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to Protecting the rights, dignity and respect of People worldwide, without discrimination or double Standards. India also called for Greater accountability on the Part of Global institutions in Safeguarding the human rights of victims of Terrorism.

Food Safety Department Collects Seven Samples Ahead of Navratri, Seizes Suspected Substandard Products

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Sachin Malik

Gautam Buddh Nagar: In view of the upcoming Sharadiya Navratri festival, officials of the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department are conducting raids at food establishments on the directions of the District Magistrate to ensure that residents are supplied with Pure and Safe food and beverages. Samples of various food Products are being collect-

ed for laboratory Testing. Assistant Commissioner of Food, Grade-II, Sarvesh Mishra, said that on Friday, a team Comprising Food Safety Officers Mukesh Kumar and Vijay Bahadur Patel Collected one sample of Cow Ghee from the manufacturing unit of Cerelec Private Limited in Ecotech-3, one sample of fasting flour from Sonu Kirana Store in Chipiyana Buzurg, Greater Noida West and one sample of Groundnuts from

Lala Jai Singh Kirana Store in Chipiyana Buzurg. Approximately 40 kg of Groundnuts were seized from the latter Establishment as their Quality appeared Unsatisfactory during Preliminary Inspection. Another team, comprising Food Safety Officers O.P. Singh and Ravindra Nath Verma, Collected one sample of Groundnuts from Vikas Trading Company in Pathwari, Greater Noida



West. Approximately 50 kg of Groundnuts were

also seized as their Quality appeared Questionable during the initial Inspection. Similarly, a team led by Food Safety Officer Amar Bahadur Saroj collected samples of sabudana (sago) and Ghee from RM Noida Hypermarket in Sector 104, Noida. Approximately 24.5 litres of Ghee and 33 kg of Sabudana were seized as the Products appeared Potentially adulterated and misbranded during

Preliminary Inspection. A team comprising Food Safety Officers Vishal Kumar Gupta and Ritu Saxena also collected one sample of Groundnuts from Balaji Kirana Store in Greater Noida West. All food business operators have been Strictly instructed to Purchase food Products only from licensed or registered suppliers in accordance with the Food Safety and Standards Act. They have also been directed to

obtain Purchase invoices and Check manufacturing dates, batch numbers and other relevant details before accepting and Selling food Products to Consumers. Assistant Commissioner Sarvesh Mishra further Stated that similar inspection drives would continue under the District Magistrate directions to ensure that residents receive safe and Wholesome food and beverages that meet Prescribed Standards.

Model Building Regulations-2026 to Be Implemented In Industrial Development Authorities

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Sachin Malik

Lucknow: In a Significant Step towards Simplifying, ensuring transparency and Streamlining the Process of building construction and Plot map approvals under industrial development authorities in Uttar Pradesh, the State Cabinet, Chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, approved the Proposal to implement Model Building Regulations-2026 in Uttar Pradesh industrial development authorities at a meeting held at Lok Bhavan on Friday. Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Minister Nand

Gopal Gupta Nandi said the decision is expected to Promote Planned urban development, construction activities, the real Estate sector, and Private investment in the State. Minister Nandi explained that, in line with the target of taking the State Economy to one trillion dollars, this initiative is considered an important Step towards ensuring better utilisation of available land in industrial and urban areas and creating an investment-friendly environment. Through this initiative, efforts have been made to Simplify and Streamline the Procedures for approving

building and Plot maps, thereby Providing Greater convenience to industries, investors, real Estate entrepreneurs, and the General Public. **Model Prepared After Studying Building Regulations of Six States** To Prepare the Model Building Regulations-2026, building regulations in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi, Maharashtra, Odisha and Tamil Nadu were Studied. Based on a comparative assessment of the Provisions implemented in these States, a model has been developed to meet the specific requirements of industrial develop-

ment authorities in Uttar Pradesh. The objective is to establish better coordination among building construction rules and make the approval Process more Efficient. **Investment to Be Encouraged Across Manufacturing, IT, Healthcare and Other Sectors** The implementation of the Model Building Regulations is expected to help encourage Private investment in Sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, information technology (IT), IT-enabled services (ITES), logistics, healthcare, education, and real Estate. Increased invest-

ment in these sectors could lead to the expansion of industrial activities, the creation of new employment opportunities, and the Strengthening of the Urban Economy. Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi said that demand for developed land is also increasing alongside the expansion of industrial and urban infrastructure Projects in the State. In this context, ensuring the maximum and Planned utilisation of land is essential. The Model Building Regulations could Prove instrumental in

achieving this objective. They may also encourage residential, commercial and other Permitted construction activities within the Jurisdictions of industrial development Authorities. **Focus on Ease of Doing Business and Citizen Convenience** Minister Nandi Stated that a key objective of the new system is to make the Process of obtaining building and Plot map approvals more convenient for citizens and investors. Simplified and transparent Procedures will bring Greater Clarity to construction-related approvals and make it easier for entre-

preneurs to Plan their Projects. The initiative also emphasises increasing the availability of Quality residential units in urban areas. Encouraging residential and other construction activities could help accelerate urban Development. **Initiative to Give a New Direction to Industrial Development** Minister Nandi said that the Uttar Pradesh Government is focusing on improving infrastructure facilities and regulatory Procedures to attract investment, expand the industrial base and develop modern urban centres across the State. The approval of the

Model Building Regulations-2026 is Part of this broader Effort. Their effective implementation is expected to Streamline construction-related Procedures in areas Governed by industrial development authorities and help create a favourable environment for Investment. Overall, the Model Building Regulations-2026 aim not only to simplify the approval of building maps but also to ensure better land utilisation, Promote Private investment, expand access to Quality residential facilities and accelerate the Planned industrial and urban development of Uttar Pradesh.

Akhilesh Yadav Should Contest Elections from Mathura or Lucknow: Dr. Rajeshwar Singh



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Sachin Malik

Lucknow: Sarojini Nagar MLA Dr. Rajeshwar Singh took a dig at Samajwadi Party national President Akhilesh Yadav, saying that instead of Challenging others to contest elections, the SP Chief Should enter the Electoral fray himself and Prove his Political Strength.

Dr. Rajeshwar Singh said that Akhilesh Yadav is often seen Challenging others to contest Elections, sometimes from Ayodhya and sometimes from other constituencies. He said that Akhilesh Should contest Elections from Mathura, the sacred birthplace of Lord Krishna or Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, to demonstrate his Political Strength. Lucknow is the city where Akhilesh Yadav spends much of his time. Contesting Elections from the State capital would therefore Give him an opportunity to Prove his Political acceptability and Public Support. He said that in 2022, the People of Uttar Pradesh entrusted Akhilesh Yadav with the responsibility of Leader of the Opposition. While discharging this responsibility, he Should remain actively engaged in Uttar Pradesh and address the concerns of the People rather than spending more time on Politics outside the State. Dr. Rajeshwar Singh said that Challenging others in Politics is easy, but winning Public trust, ensuring accountability on issues of Public interest and fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to a leader with complete dedication are the true hallmarks of leadership. The SP Chief Should Channel his Political energy towards resolving People Problems by remaining among the People of Uttar Pradesh rather than engaging in Political Rhetoric.

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Sachin Malik

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said that Energy is the cornerstone of a State economic Progress, industrial expansion, agricultural development and Public Welfare. For a vast and rapidly developing State like Uttar Pradesh, the availability of uninterrupted, Quality, accessible and affordable Electricity is extremely important. A robust energy System not only accelerates industrial Growth but also Plays a decisive role in attracting investment, creating new employment opportunities and improving the Standard of living of the common People. Addressing the Uttar Pradesh Energy Summit-2026, organised on Friday by the Associated



Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), a Prestigious industry and trade organisation, the Deputy Chief Minister Shared his views on the immense Potential of the State energy sector, the development of modern energy infrastructure, emerging investment opportunities and the need for better coordination between the Government

and industry to ensure Sustainable and inclusive Growth. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said that building a Strong infrastructure base in the energy sector is essential to establishing Uttar Pradesh as a leading centre of development, innovation and Self-Reliance. Ensuring adequate energy supplies to industries, while Providing better Electricity facilities in accordance with the

needs of ordinary citizens, remains among the Government Priorities. By creating a favourable environment for investment in the energy sector, the state can Give fresh impetus to its industrial capacity and Generate more employment opportunities for its Youth. He said that, considering the current Challenges and future requirements of the energy sector, Promoting solar Power and other renewable energy sources alongside conventional energy resources is the need of the hour. Greater use of modern technology, improved energy efficiency and a balance between development and environmental Protection are essential. These efforts will help meet the State energy requirements more effectively while also accelerating Progress

towards sustainable development Goals. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said that Uttar Pradesh has immense Potential for Growth in the energy sector. To translate this Potential into tangible achievements, the Government, industry representatives, investors and technical experts must work together with a Shared vision. Through collective Participation, innovation and forward-looking Strategies, the State can reach new heights in the energy Sector. He added that a Strong energy infrastructure would not only Strengthen the State economy but also Provide fresh direction to agriculture, industry, the services sector and rural Development. He said that initiatives Promoting modern technology, investment

and innovation in the energy sector would Play a Significant role in taking Uttar Pradesh to new economic heights. With the commitment to making the State energy-rich under the vision of "An Energetic Uttar Pradesh, a Strong Foundation for a Self-Reliant India," the State would make an important contribution towards achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat 2047.Improved electricity availability increases business Productivity, Strengthens investor confidence and ensures that the benefits of development reach a broader section of Society. Chief Minister Advisor Avanish Kumar Awasthi, ASSOCHAM Uttar Pradesh Regional Director Rajiv Dixit, Sauradeep Guha and other dignitaries were Present at the Programme.

Fortis Shalimar Bagh Performs First Successful Heart Transplant In North and West Delhi

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Sushma Rani

Delhi: Doctors at Fortis Hospital Shalimar Bagh have Successfully Performed a heart transplant on 47-Year-old Chanchal Yadav, Who was Suffering from advanced heart failure. The Procedure is being described as the first Successful heart transplant in North and West Delhi. The Patient condition had continued to deteriorate despite medical treatment, leaving heart transplantation as the only viable life-saving option.The donor heart was transported from



PGIMS Rohtak Haryana to Fortis Shalimar Bagh through a Green corridor created with the support of the Haryana and Delhi Police. The 95-kilometre Journey was completed in Just 63 minutes, ensuring that the organ reached the

hospital within the critical time window required for Transplantation. The Process involved coordination among the hospital administration, transplant coordinators, the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation

(NOTTO), the State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (SOTTO) and the traffic Police of both States. The transplant was Performed Successfully by a multi-disciplinary team led by Dr Dinesh Kumar Mittal,

Senior Director and Head of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery at Fortis Hospital Shalimar Bagh. Dr Mittal said heart transplantation is a time-sensitive Procedure in which every minute matters. Careful Planning and Coordination among the organ retrieval, surgical, anaesthesia, Perfusion and critical care teams were crucial to the success of the operation.Dr Naresh Kumar Goyal, Principal Director and Head of Cardiology and the Heart Failure Programme, said the Patient was Suffering from advanced heart fail-

ure and had not responded adequately to medical treatment. Heart transplantation was the most effective option to improve his Quality of life.Following the Procedure, Yadav expressed Gratitude to the hospital team and the donor family, Whose decision to donate the organ Gave him a new lease of life. The hospital management also acknowledged the contribution of the Police forces and organ donation agencies in ensuring the timely transportation of the donor Heart.

Interactive Orientation Programme to Familiarize Newly Enrolled Volunteers In BHU

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Anand Singh

Varanasi: The National Service Scheme (NSS) Unit BHU, Faculty of Commerce organized an interactive orientation Programme to familiarize newly enrolled volunteers with the objectives, values and activities of NSS and to encourage them to work collectively towards building a community dedicated to serving Society.The Programme commenced with a Welcome address by the Programme Officer, Dr. Vandana Srivastava, Who Welcomed the volunteers and encouraged them to

actively Participate in NSS activities. This was followed by a Presentation introducing the National Service Scheme, its objectives and the activities that the Volunteers would undertake together. The Presentation emphasized the importance of teamwork, Social responsibility and collective efforts in contributing to the welfare of Society.To make the session engaging and informative, an interactive Quiz on NSS was conducted to capture the Volunteers' interest and familiarize them with the Scheme core values and

objectives. The volunteers Participated enthusiastically in the Quiz, making the session lively and Interactive. The Programme Officer Provided Guidance and motivation to the Volunteers, encouraging them to remain attentive, enthusiastic and committed to Participating in NSS activities. The volunteers were also Guided through the registration Process on the My Bharat Portal with the help of a Video Presentation, familiarizing them with the digital registration Procedure.The Programme also featured few Group activities

designed to develop observation, critical thinking, teamwork and communication Skills.The orientation Programme Provided an engaging Platform for Volunteers to learn about NSS, interact with one another and understand the importance of Collective Participation in social Service. The activities encouraged them to think critically, communicate confidently and work together with a Shared commitment to Serving society, in keeping with the spirit and motto of NSS, "Not Me But You.

SP leader Zeeshan Ansari meets Shankaracharya Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati

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Ajit Pandey

Varanasi: Prominent Muslim leader and worker of the Samajwadi Party, Zeeshan Ansari, had a courtesy meeting with the revered Jyotish Peeth Shankaracharya Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati. During this, Zeeshan Ansari fully Supported Shankaracharya campaign to declare Gau Mata as 'Rashtra Mata' and on this occasion also Presented him a Memento of Gau Mata. During the meeting, there was a Positive discussion between the two on various issues related to the current social situation of the country, mutual harmony and Public interest. Zeeshan Ansari received bless-



ings from Shankaracharya and appreciated his Guidance for Promoting brotherhood and Peace in the Society. Supporting Shankaracharya cow Protection campaign, SP leader Zeeshan Ansari Presented a symbol/ memento of Gau Mata as a mark of

respect and discussed Strengthening the Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb, mutual brotherhood and harmony. Earlier also, Zeeshan Ansari had written a letter to the Prime Minister with his own blood to Get Gau Mata declared as Rashtra Mata, along with a dis-

ussion on a visionary approach regarding the Problems of the common People and their Solutions. The SP leader took blessings from Swami Avimukteshwaranand for the Peace, Prosperity and Progress of the Country.On this occasion, Shankaracharya Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati said that all sections of the society Should work together for the Progress, Peace and Protection of cultural values of the country. Love, harmony and respect are the real Strength of any Society.This meeting was concluded in a completely Positive and cordial atmosphere, Which is being seen as an important Step of social harmony and dialogue in the Region.

Mission Africa: Jaishankar Arrives In Ethiopia After Ghana and Cote d Ivoire

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Geeta Chaudhary

Addis Ababa: External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met his Ethiopian counterpart, Gedion Timothewos Hessebon, in Addis Ababa and held extensive discussions on Strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. The meeting was a key Part of Dr. Jaishankar official visit to Ghana, Cote d' Ivoire and Ethiopia from

October 6 to 10.During the meeting, the two leaders reviewed all major aspects of bilateral cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to taking the Strategic Partnership to new heights in areas such as trade, investment, healthcare and capacity building. Dr. Jaishankar will also Chair the Regional Heads of Mission Conference during his Visit.In a Post on 'X', the External Affairs

Minister wrote that the India-Ethiopia Strategic Partnership is based on Shared Perspectives, common Goals and historical 'South-South' Solidarity. He said the two sides held extensive discussions on Strengthening bilateral ties, covering trade, investment, development Projects, infrastructure, maritime affairs, security, technology and Culture. He added that they also

exchanged views on Global developments, multilateral cooperation and ways to Strengthen the India-African Union Partnership. Dr. Jaishankar visit highlights India deep-rooted and Steadily Growing historical ties with the African continent. Before arriving in Ethiopia, the External Affairs Minister held high-level bilateral meetings with the leadership of Cote d' Ivoire

during the second leg of his tour. During the first leg of the visit to Ghana, several important memorandums of understanding (MOU) were signed to Strengthen institutional Cooperation between the two Countries. India active engagement with all three countries reflects its diplomatic efforts to emerge as a reliable Global Partner in Africa infrastructure development, digital

transformation and defence Sectors. During his meeting in Abidjan with Cote d' Ivoire Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Niale Kaba, Dr. Jaishankar discussed ways to further Strengthen trade, investment, infrastructure, agriculture, healthcare and People-to-People Ties. He also held discussions with Vice-President and Defence Minister Tene

Birahima Ouattara on the Growing defence Partnership between the two countries, Which is based on mutual trust, capacity building and Shared interests. The two leaders explored opportunities to expand cooperation in defence and counterterrorism, including through training, capacity building and enhanced institutional Exchanges. The External Affairs Minister also met Cote

d' Ivoire President Alassane Ouattara and conveyed Personal Greetings from President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.In a Statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said that Dr. Jaishankar visit reflects India commitment to deepening its Partnership with Africa and will further Strengthen the country Solidarity with the Global South.

Cows Need Respect, Not Charity: Acharya Manish

touchwithworld.com

Sushma Rani

Delhi: Dedicated to the spirit of reverence, service, respect and Protection of Mother Cow, the Gopremi Seva Sangh organized a Grand Chhappan Bhog at the Shri Radha Krishna Gaushala. Hundreds of Cow devotees, Social workers and dignitaries Participated in this Event, filled with reverence and Devotion. At the event, Acharya



Manish Hari Stated that cow service Should not be limited to mere Donations, Rather, it is essential to awaken a

sense of respect and compassion for Mother Cow in society. He said, "Cows need respect, not Charity. Mother Cow is

an integral Part of our culture, faith and way of life. It is the need of the hour to Promote cow service as a social

responsibility and a Service-related tradition."During the Program, the call for Mother Cow to be honored as the Mother of the Nation was also Prominently raised. Speakers Stated that Society must unite and make Positive and meaningful efforts to Protect, Promote and honor Mother Cow. Sister Savita Kataria also Participated in the Program. The entire team

of Shri Ram Sena created such a spiritual atmosphere with their Soulful hymns and devotional Performances that the devotees Present were Mesmerized. Special Guests Naveen Goyal, Dr. D.P. Goyal and Councilor Mahavir Yadav also Praised the service Projects being run by the Cow Preference Service Association and Stated, "We will always be at the forefront of service with

You." Social worker Satpal Raghav, social worker Satish Tayal, Anupam Gupta from the Rashtriya Gau Raksha Vahini Gau Seva Association and Dr. Rakesh Jain, Rajesh Gupta, Rajesh Bansal, Vipin Mangala and Anshul Goyal along with many other dignitaries, Participated in the Program.The Cow Preference Service Association Stated that the organization objec-

tive is to serve the mother cow and to Strengthen the spirit of service, respect, Protection and compassion in Society. Through events like Chhappan Bhog, efforts are being made to connect more and more People in society with cow service and transform it into a comprehensive social Campaign. The Program concluded with a Pledge of devotion and dedication towards Mother Cow.



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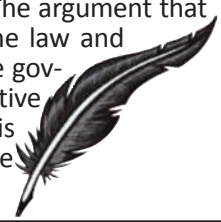
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Punjab govt must take
Centre into confidence on
new anti-sacrilege bill

The Aam Aadmi Party-led Punjab government has tabled the Punjab Prevention of Offences Against Holy Scripture(s) Bill, 2025 which was discussed in the Assembly on Tuesday amidst ruckus and then referred to a select committee. It might take about six months for the committee to send the bill back to the Assembly for clearing and then to the governor for approval. If the bill is referred to the Union government, then it would be another year before it finally becomes an Act. Earlier governments — the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coalition government and the Congress government headed by Captain Amarinder Singh — had also brought similar bills which were found to be insufficient to meet the demands of the situation and hence junked. The new anti-sacrilege bill is said to have taken note of the shortcomings of the earlier bills and is hence more comprehensive, secular, and sufficiently stringent to be a deterrent for sacrilege offences considered very serious in the state. Meanwhile, 42-year-old Gurjeet Singh Khalsa, supposedly a non-political activist, has been staging a protest on top of a BSNL mobile tower in Punjab's Samana since October 2024 demanding an anti-sacrilege law. Though not widely reported in the mainstream media, such protests should be handled deftly by the government, lest it rakes up discontents of the past. In fact, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), under Sections 298, 299, and 300, already provides stringent punishments for religious offences. Punjab government as well as the activists who are protesting for a new law against sacrilege of religious texts are of the view that the provisions of the current Union laws are not stringent enough. Incidentally, the bill inadvertently equates the Bhagavad Gita with the holy books of other faiths, which may trigger a controversy. The bill could be amended to also include other religious texts considered holy by a vast majority of Hindus and/or be worded appropriately to capture the essence of all holy books of all faiths without naming any of them. Needless to say, the issue is a complex one. Going by the text of the present bill, albeit a short one, there are sufficient indications to suggest that adequate care has been taken to make the acts of sacrilege a serious offence inviting harsh punishments. But it is not clear why these provisions could not be added to the existing Sections of the BNS. After all, the BNS is an all-India law that applies equally to all states and all faiths. The AAP-led Punjab government appears to have not consulted the Union government or had any discussions with the Union Law Ministry on this issue. What should be of concern are the possibilities of other states following suit and enacting separate laws to suit the political environment of respective states citing the Punjab bill as a precedent. In a federal setup, the Constitution allows states to enact sufficient laws to maintain law and order and preserve religious harmony through stringent punishments for offences involving religious practices, texts, icons, and symbols. There have been instances of religious books being vandalised, places of worship desecrated, and statues of widely revered socio-political leaders popular among certain communities damaged. Another aspect of concern should be the misuse of any law, however sincere the intentions of the lawmakers might be. The anti-sacrilege bill may have good intentions, but there is hardly any guarantee that such a law will not become a tool for miscreants wanting to drive a wedge between communities and followers of different faiths in the state. In a politically volatile border state where religious fault lines have been exploited by extreme elements bent on hurting the unity and integrity of the country, the state government needs to be extra vigilant and take the Union government into confidence at every stage. The argument that such laws will strengthen the law and order machinery of the state government and act as an effective deterrent against crimes is understandable. But in a state which witnessed



Prof. R.K. Uppal
[PhD, D.Litt.]
Giddarbaha, Muktsar, Punjab

India's higher education system is expanding rapidly, but behind the impressive growth in the number of universities, colleges, courses and enrolments lies a disturbing reality: many highly qualified faculty members are working under intense pressure for salaries that do not reflect their education, experience, responsibilities or contribution. The situation is particularly serious in several private universities, where teachers with PhDs, NET qualifications, post-doctoral experience and decades of academic expertise may find themselves underpaid, overworked and treated more as employees for institutional targets than as professionals responsible for educating the next generation. A university cannot become a centre of excellence by exploiting the very people who create academic excellence. Faculty members are not ordinary service providers. They are teachers, researchers, mentors, curriculum developers, academic leaders and intellectual contributors. A professor may spend years obtaining a post-graduate degree, PhD, research experience and publications. Many have invested significant personal and financial resources in building their academic careers. Yet, in some institutions, their professional qualifications



are not adequately reflected in their compensation. The problem becomes even more concerning when highly qualified faculty are assigned responsibilities far beyond teaching. Faculty members may be expected to participate in admissions, counseling, student mobilization, events, promotional activities, documentation, accreditation work, examination duties, research targets and administrative assignments. Teaching and research can become secondary to institutional performance pressures. The exploitation of faculty also has consequences for students. Students need teachers who are motivated, intellectually engaged and available for mentorship. When faculty members are overloaded with administrative and non-academic responsibilities, the time available for classroom preparation, research guidance and individual student support decreases. Ultimately, students pay the price for an unhealthy academic environment. "India needs universities that value knowledge rather than merely counting enrolments, publications and revenues. Highly qualified faculty should be regarded as intellectual capital, not inexpensive labour. Brilliant minds deserve fair recognition, fair salaries and professional dignity. End academic exploitation. If India wants world-class universities, it must first create world-class

working conditions for the people who teach research and build them." The situation is particularly problematic for young PhD holders. Many spend years completing doctoral research with the expectation that their qualifications will lead to respectable academic careers. After obtaining their PhDs, they may enter institutions offering salaries that are disproportionately low compared with their qualifications and responsibilities. Some accept such positions because academic employment opportunities are limited. This can create a cycle in which highly educated professionals become economically vulnerable. The answer is not to attack private universities as a whole. Private institutions have made important contributions to expanding higher education, creating infrastructure and introducing new programmes. The real issue is responsible governance. A university that charges students substantial fees while paying its highly qualified academic workforce inadequately must seriously examine its priorities. There must be greater transparency in faculty recruitment and compensation. Institutions should clearly define salary structures according to qualifications, experience, workload and responsibilities. PhD holders, NET-qualified teachers, professors and experienced academic leaders should receive compen-

sation that reflects their professional value. Faculty evaluation should also be based primarily on academic performance rather than arbitrary managerial targets. Quality teaching, meaningful research, innovation, mentoring, patents, publications and community engagement should matter more than simply meeting admission or revenue targets. India also needs stronger implementation of existing norms concerning faculty qualifications, workload and service conditions. Regulatory bodies and university authorities should ensure that institutions claiming academic excellence maintain appropriate faculty strength and provide reasonable professional conditions. Another important issue is job security. Academic freedom cannot flourish when teachers constantly fear arbitrary termination. A professor who believes that questioning management decisions may threaten employment is unlikely to develop an environment of open intellectual debate. Universities should establish transparent grievance-redressal mechanisms and fair employment practices. Research should receive special attention. India wants to become a knowledge economy and compete globally in science, technology, management, economics and social sciences. This cannot happen through a "publish or perish" culture alone. Researchers require time, funding, laboratories, databases, academic collaboration and intellectual freedom. If faculty members are overloaded with non-academic work, research quality will inevitably suffer. The government, regulators and university managements must therefore recognise that faculty welfare is directly connected with educational quality. Better salaries should not be viewed simply as expenditure. They are an investment in human capital. There is also a need for greater professional

dignity. A professor should not be treated as an admission agent, sales executive or fundraising employee. Faculty members may contribute to institutional development, but their central identity must remain academic. Universities should respect their expertise and provide opportunities for intellectual growth. The future of Indian higher education depends on attracting and retaining brilliant minds. If talented researchers and teachers remain underpaid, stressed and insecure, many will leave academia, move abroad or shift to other professions. India cannot afford such a loss at a time when it seeks to become a global knowledge power. The message is simple: do not build universities by weakening the people who make universities meaningful. A truly successful university is one where students receive quality education, researchers receive support, and faculty members receive fair compensation and professional respect. Infrastructure can be constructed quickly; academic excellence cannot. Academic reputation is built over decades through the commitment of teachers and researchers. India needs universities that value knowledge rather than merely counting enrolments, publications and revenues. Highly qualified faculty should be regarded as intellectual capital, not inexpensive labour. Brilliant minds deserve fair recognition, fair salaries and professional dignity. End academic exploitation. If India wants world-class universities, it must first create world-class working conditions for the people who teach research and build them. (The author is the Principal of GGS College of Management and Technology, Giddarbaha (Punjab), and a Research Professor at the Indian Institute of Finance, New Delhi)

India's solar ambition needs financial vision –
ISA must move from commitments to execution

As the world confronts the realities of climate change and energy insecurity, solar energy presents itself not merely as a technological solution but as a transformative geopolitical and developmental strategy. The International Solar Alliance is uniquely positioned to catalyse this transformation. But to succeed, it must go beyond declarations. It must now design and implement financial architectures capable of supporting its ambitions. The potential of solar energy is undeniable. It is modular, scalable, and increasingly cost-effective. Yet, for the nations most abundant in sunlight, finance remains a key constraint. The International Energy Agency estimates that clean energy investments in emerging economies must rise from \$770 billion in 2022 to over \$2.2 trillion annually by 2030. A significant portion of this must be allocated to solar energy. However, the fiscal realities of many countries—either still recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, burdened by debt, or struggling to cope with press-

ing social needs—limit the ability of governments to invest at scale. India's experience illustrates this well. Despite policy successes in solar deployment, the government's ability to directly invest in grid infrastructure or generation assets is capped by fiscal deficit targets and debt ceilings. Even green bonds, while helpful, are bound by ring-fenced rules and are limited in scale. Public financing, therefore, can only act as a catalytic lever—it cannot be the backbone. Turning to the private sector, we find both potential and limitations. Many solar developers operate on highly leveraged balance sheets, and with rising global interest rates, the space for fresh capital is narrowing. Moreover, risks such as currency volatility, regulatory uncertainty, and weak transmission infrastructure dampen investor appetite, especially in frontier markets. Private capital is crucial but requires structured entry points, credible exit mechanisms, and active risk mitigation to be effective.

Trump's sanctions have failed to deter
Russia. Now the West faces a dilemma

Last week, Russia once again pulled the nuclear weapon threat out of its sleeves, two days after US President Donald Trump — following his meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte — threatened to impose 100 per cent secondary tariffs on Moscow if it doesn't reach a deal with Kyiv in 50 days. Trump also confirmed that "top-of-the-line" weapons, including the Patriot missile defence system and batteries, would be sent to Ukraine in an operation coordinated by NATO members. Russia's newly updated nuclear doctrine apparently allows Moscow to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear weapon state that is supported by a nuclear one, unsettling deterrence dynamics in Europe. Though Trump's about-turn on the Russia-Ukraine war might bring some sigh of relief in Kyiv, Moscow's counter-threats echo a Biden-era tit-for-tat escalation when Washington's no-holds-barred support for Ukraine's war efforts was met with Moscow's nuclear threats. The question is: will Trump's threats be enough to affect any change in Russia's behaviour? Or will such threats be counter-productive, embolden Putin's hand, and give him more ammunition to project a Russia reclaiming its lost status of parity with the US and standing up to the combined might of the Western alliance? Sanctions are meant to bite, and not just bark. They are coercive economic tools that the US and its Western allies have often used as a default policy to punish adversaries. However, do they really affect consequential changes in a country's behaviour as expected? In the case of Russia, sanctions have won tactical gains, but have failed to achieve the desired strategic goals. US-led Western sanctions have hit Russia since 2014, when the latter annexed Crimea from Ukraine after the Maidan Square event. Though Russia has seen rising inflation, labour shortage, and devaluation of its currency, the sanctions

have had too little impact to make Moscow kowtow. On the contrary, the Central Bank of the Russian Federation has kept the key rate at 21.5 percent per annum, indicating that inflation and economic growth are relatively stable under the current circumstances. The Russian stock exchange market has also continued to grow despite Trump's warnings. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has forecasted Russia's growth rate in 2025 at 1.5 per cent while the Russian Economic Development Ministry has kept it at 2.5 per cent. This month, the US Senate tabled additional sanctions on Russia, calling them a 'sledgehammer'. Sanctions on Russia will also impact countries that trade with Russia in oil, gas, uranium, and other products. Such secondary sanctions on third countries are reportedly proposed to touch 500 per cent. Some US lawmakers are even hinting at the US, together with its European allies, accessing frozen Russian assets, including the \$5 billion located in the US, to dent Russia's warfighting resources and utilise the money in Ukraine's reconstruction. This would be an unprecedented move as no US president has ever taken the central bank assets of a foreign country that the US is not at war with. However, secondary sanctions have not been too successful either, with Russia, through its 'shadow fleet', exporting energy to the other countries, including China, Turkey, UAE, Belarus, and Armenia. Moreover, partner countries of the US such as Turkey, UAE, and Armenia have not participated in sanctions, creating an enforcement gap, helping Russia maintain access to sanctioned goods and continue its economic activities. A report, published by the Kyiv School of Economics, estimated that the shadow fleet transports about 70 per cent of Russia's seaborne exports, and in the first nine months of 2024, earned Russia an extra \$8bn in oil sales.

Critical minerals are the new oil.
India can't afford to depend on China

Critical minerals have now become instruments of geopolitical bargaining and means to assert domestic autonomy and security. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Argentina and meeting with Chilean President, Gabriel Boric, the two legs of the lithium triangle, on the sidelines of the recently held BRICS summit in Brazil, were strategically aimed at exploring cooperation and engagement on critical minerals. At the Summit, Modi warned against the weaponization of critical minerals and stressed the need to work together to make supply chains secure and reliable.

Other global leaders have also echoed similar concerns at the G20, Quad, and BRICS summits, and have discussed collaborating to secure and diversify critical mineral supply chains. Currently, India is heavily dependent on imports for critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, and rare earth elements (REE). Much of this supply comes through re-export channels, which creates a third-level dependency while exposing us to potential supply shocks and strategic coercion. Mineral security is no longer just an economic concern but a national security imperative, underpinning the country's

ambitions in clean energy, defence self-reliance, and advanced manufacturing. Globally, China holds roughly 62 per cent of lithium refining capacity, 33 per cent for nickel, 77 per cent for cobalt, 87 per cent for graphite, and 76 per cent for REEs, according to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2025. This underscores China's overwhelming dominance in supply chains, even though it does not host most raw material reserves. Compared to 2023, India's lithium imports from China surged by roughly 921 per cent in 2024, while

graphite imports rose 85 per cent between 2022 and 2024 and Nickel imports jumped 137 per cent in 2024. Such dominance gives Beijing an asymmetric leverage over supply chains vital to clean-tech sectors and key defence applications, including advanced electronics, missile systems, and communication technologies. As a result, securing reliable access to critical minerals has become a strategic vulnerability for India's ambitions in developing a robust clean tech and defence ecosystem. The implications of this centrality are intrinsically geopolitical. Recent export restriction.

Youth Sober and Strong Will Carry Banner of “Viksit Bharat 2047,” Say Kashiyana Foundation.

[touchwithworld.com](#)**Pankaj Nath**

Assam: The vision of “Viksit Bharat 2047” outlined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will depend heavily on the Country Youth and a drug-free Generation is Essential to achieving that Goal, said Sumit Singh and the Kashiyana Foundation, Who are working in Partnership with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Addressing the need for large-scale Prevention and rehabilitation, the Foundation and Singh Emphasized that Substance abuse destroys individual lives, Shatters families and undermines national Productivity and Youthful Energy. They argued that only drug-free Youth can drive India toward comprehensive development and Self-Reliance by 2047. Sumit Singh, Who has



served since 2020 as a member of the National Committee on Drug-Free Initiatives and Rehabilitation, has Played a Pivotal role in Strengthening Grassroots outreach. The Kashiyana Foundation launched an extensive Public campaign across 28 States to build a mass movement for Sobriety. Their 65-day “Drug-Free Journey” covered 22,000 Kilometers and reportedly reached more

than five crore Youths through face-to-face Events, institutional meetings and community Gatherings. The campaign engaged Schools, Colleges, universities and rural communities. Rather than limiting activities to warnings about Substance harms, field teams listened to Young People Problems and encouraged Participation in Positive, constructive activities. That approach, organizers say,

increased Youth trust and engagement. Kashiyana Foundation work also extended beyond India borders. The organization hosted Programs for the Indian diaspora and interacted with Global Youth audiences, highlighting that Substance misuse is a transnational Challenge that benefits from international cooperation. The Foundation has contributed Practical, humane recommendations to Policymaking, drawing on field experience to make Government rehabilitation Programs more accessible to marginalized Groups. Experts associated with the campaign Stress that drug rehabilitation requires more than Clinical treatment, it must combine education, employment opportunities, mental-health support and community-based interventions. Kashiyana Foundation Multi-Pronged Strategy

reflects that consensus. “2047 will be achievable only if our Youth remain free from drugs and Channel their energy into nation-building,” Singh said, calling on citizens, Civil society and Government at all levels to treat the mission as a Shared responsibility. The Foundation urged adoption of its community-led models across the country, arguing that local ownership and tailored interventions will be critical to success. “If today Young People say ‘No’ to drugs and ‘Yes’ to life,” then the Story of Viksit Bharat 2047 can be Written,” the Kashiyana Foundation declared. Organizers say they will continue community outreach, Policy advocacy and international Collaboration to sustain momentum for a drug-free Generation and support India long-term Development Goals.

Lawyers Take Out Symbolic funeral Procession of CEC Gyanesh Kumar

[touchwithworld.com](#)**Anand Singh**

Varanasi: Lawyers took out a Symbolic funeral Procession of CEC Gyanesh Kumar amid Shouting Slogans against him on Friday in Varanasi. They demanded resignation of CEC, Cancellation of SIR Process and Nowonwards the upcoming Elections on Ballot Paper instead of EVM. They Questioned the Silence of Gyanesh Kumar asserting he must come forward and Clear his Position over the issue. He must Give reply and tell under Whose Pressure he had done the work and till When he will remain Silent. They said If he didnt Speak then the People of this country will Understand EC as a biased Institution.

Virtual Hearings Scheduled for Friday at Rouse Avenue and Patiala House Courts

New Delhi: The impact of the protest planned for October 10 in Delhi by the 'Kakroach Janata Party'—demanding the resignation of Central Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over allegations of vote theft—is already being felt in the functioning of Delhi's lower courts. The Delhi High Court has ordered virtual hearings at the Rouse Avenue Court and Patiala House Court. This directive was issued via a notification released by the High Court today. The High Court's notification further states that in the remaining five lower courts of Delhi, no adverse orders should be passed if a litigant or their counsel fails to appear. The Court directed that if a matter is urgent, a near-future date for the hearing should be fixed instead. Additionally, the High Court ordered that accused persons currently in jail be produced via video conferencing for criminal cases. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court heard a petition today challenging the cancellation of services at 57 Delhi Metro stations and the suspension of several trains to and from New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin railway stations. A bench led by Justice Surya Kant clarified that while Metro and rail operations can be regulated based on prevailing circumstances.

From Diabetes Awareness to Prevention: UPDACON Takes the Lead.

[TOUCHWITHWORLD.COM](#)**SHOBIT SHUKLA**

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh Diabetes Association (UPDA) in Collaboration with Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences (Dr. RMLIMS), organized diabetes education and awareness Programmes under UPDACON-2026. At the institute Academic Block auditorium, nursing Students were educated about diabetes Prevention, early detection, treatment and Patient care. A separate awareness session was held for the General Public at the Urban Health Training Centre (UHTC), Ujariyawan, highlighting diabetes Symptoms, regular blood Glucose testing, balanced nutrition and the importance of Physical activity. The Programme was attended by former UPDA President Prof. (Dr.) Narsingh Verma,



President-Elect Dr. Nanak Saran and UPDACON-2026 Organizing Secretary Dr. Abhishek Arun. The event was organized under the Patronage of Dr. RMLIMS Director Prof. (Dr.) C.M. Singh, with the Co-Patronage of the institute Dean Prof. (Dr.) Rajan Bhatnagar, Chief Medical Superintendent Prof. (Dr.) Vikram Singh and Executive Registrar Prof. (Dr.) Subrat Chandra. Prof. (Dr.) Shiv Kumar Mughal, Principal of the College of Nursing and Organizing Chairperson, Welcomed the

Guests, While Prof. (Dr.) Narsingh Verma Presented the Programme outline. Prof. Nipin Kalal, Vice-Principal of the College of Nursing, Served as Organizing Co-Chairperson and Associate Professor Dr. Ranjana Verma was the Organizing Co-Secretary.

Dr. Shivam Verma, Assistant Professor in the Department of Physiology and Assistant Medical Superintendent, Dr. RMLIMS, delivered a lecture titled The Diabetes Blueprint: Essential Education for

Nursing Students. He discussed diabetes management and the Role of nursing Professionals in Patient counselling and care. The community awareness session at UHTC, Ujariyawan, was attended by Dr. Rashmi Kumari, UHTC In-Charge and Professor (Junior Grade), Associate Professor Dr. Milli Sengar and Dr. Shikhar Singh, Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Medicine. Participants were informed about the importance of timely Screening and treatment to Prevent serious diabetes-related complications. Through these initiatives, UPDA reaffirmed its commitment to Strengthening diabetes education among healthcare Professionals and expanding Public awareness. The Press release was issued by Dr. Ajay Tiwari, Media In-Charge, UPDACON-2026.

MIB launches portal for create in India Challenge Season 2 proposals

New Delhi

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has invited proposals from industry associations, organisations, and institutions in the Media and Entertainment (M&E) sector for designing and executing industry-led challenges under the second season of the create in India Challenge (CIC), a flagship initiative of the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2027. The Ministry has launched a unified online portal for submission of proposals, selection of challenges and executing entities through a transparent and merit-based process. Interested entities can submit their proposals by July 31, 2026,

through the official portal. The initiative aims to promote creativity, innovation, and skill development among youth by identifying and nurturing talent across diverse segments of the Media and Entertainment ecosystem. The selected challenges will culminate in the showcasing of winners and their achievements at 'CreatoSphere' during WAVES 2027. For CIC Season 2, more than 50 industry-led challenges are proposed, with special emphasis on emerging and technology-driven areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital and Social Media, Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Extended Reality (XR), Augmented Reality (AR).

PM announces Rs 2 lakh ex-gratia for families of victims in Bengal boat mishap

New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday condoled the deaths caused by a boat capsizing in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district and announced ex-gratia assistance from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the families of the deceased as well as those injured in the tragedy. In a post on social media platform X, the Prime Minister said the loss of lives was deeply distressing and extended his sympathies to the bereaved families while wishing a speedy recovery to those injured.

"The loss of lives due to the capsizing of a boat in the South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal is deeply painful. My thoughts are with the bereaved families in this hour of grief. May the injured recover at the earliest," Modi said. The Prime Minister also announced financial assistance from the PMNRF, stating that the next of kin of each deceased would receive Rs. 2 lakh, while every injured person would be provided Rs. 50,000. "An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each

deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000," he said. The accident took place in South 24 Parganas. Nine bodies have been recovered and six fishermen remain missing after a fishing trawler capsized in the Bay of Bengal. The district is marked by an extensive network of rivers, creeks and waterways where boats serve as a crucial means of transport for local residents. Rescue and relief operations are underway, while authorities are investigating the circumstances that led to the capsizing.

ITDC, SCOPE and LBSNAA launch AI governance summit for public sector leaders

New Delhi

A three-day summit on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in governance began in New Delhi on Monday, bringing together senior government officials and public sector executives to discuss the adoption of AI in administration and public service delivery. The 'AI Champions for Digital Governance' summit, being held from July 13 to 15 at Hotel Samrat, has been organised by the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) in collaboration with the

Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) and the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA). According to the organisers, the programme is aligned with the Centre's IndiaAI Mission and aims to build AI capabilities among public sector organisations. The inaugural session was attended by Capacity Building Commission Chairperson S Radha Chauhan, Tourism and Culture Secretary Vivek Aggarwal.

Bittu defends ban on ‘Sutlej’, says objection is to alleged misrepresentation

New Delhi

Minister of State for Railways and Food Processing Industries Ravneet Singh Bittu on Monday defended the government's decision to oppose the release of the film Sutlej, asserting that the objection was not directed against human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khrala or his legacy but against what he described as “false narratives” and factual inaccuracies portrayed in the film. Addressing a press conference on the controversy surrounding the film on Monday, Bittu said attempts were being made repeatedly to create divi-



sions in Punjab by projecting misleading narratives about the state's past. He stressed that the government's stand was aimed at protecting Punjab's social harmony and preserving the long-standing bond between Hindus and Sikhs. Highlighting the shared cultural and religious traditions of the two communities, the Minister said, “Do rang Guru da – ek Hola, ek Holi,” referring

to the common heritage that binds Punjab's communities together. Bittu alleged that external forces, along with certain elements within the country, were attempting to promote divisive narratives and disturb communal harmony in Punjab. He asserted that such attempts would not be allowed to succeed. During the interaction, the Minister displayed photographs of prominent Sikh personalities alongside images of individuals associated with militancy, stating that the purpose was to underline the difference between Sikh icons and those involved in violence.

Yogi Cabinet Approves 39 Proposals, Gives Fresh Momentum To ‘Viksit Uttar Pradesh’ Vision

[touchwithworld.com](#)**Sachin Malik**

Lucknow: At the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at Lok Bhawan on Friday, the Cabinet approved 39 Proposals related to development, industrial investment, agriculture, Employment, technology, and Public Welfare. Along with several key

decisions, the Cabinet reiterated its resolve to accelerate the State Progress toward the Goals of 'Viksit Uttar Pradesh' and 'Viksit Bharat@2047'. Cabinet approved naming the Noida International Airport at Jewar after Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It also approved renaming Bhadohi as Sant Ravidas Nagar Bhadohi.

Taking a major Step in technology and innovation, the Cabinet approved Establishing the Uttar Pradesh Artificial Intelligence Mission (UP-AIM). Alongside this, the Cabinet also approved the Uttar Pradesh Startup Procurement Scheme-2026 to Promote the State Startup Ecosystem. The Government aims to

encourage innovation and entrepreneurship by Giving State Startups opportunities in Government Procurement. In the agriculture sector, the Cabinet approved the Proposal to formulate the Paddy Procurement Policy for Kharif Marketing Year 2026-27. This will ensure the upcoming Paddy Procurement

Process follows the Prescribed Policy. In an important decision related to women and Child development, the Cabinet also approved a Proposal to Provide one additional Saree to Anganwadi workers and Helpers. Meanwhile, the Cabinet decided to implement the Model Building Regulations-2026 for Industrial Development

Authorities, making construction and development in industrial areas more organized and Standardized. The Cabinet also approved the Proposal to implement the Uttar Pradesh Interest Waiver Scheme-2026. In addition, the Cabinet approved widening State Highway No. 84 in Mainpuri to a four-lane Road.

ED conducts raids in Cyber Fraud money laundering case,seizes Rs 3.35 cr crypto assets

New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Chennai Zonal Office, on Monday said it conducted search operations at 19 locations across Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Srinagar as part of an ongoing money laundering probe linked to online investment fraud and fake "Work From Home" scams. The searches were carried out at 16 locations in Tamil Nadu, two in Kerala and one in Srinagar under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The investigation stems from two FIRs registered by the

Tamil Nadu Police and the Telangana Police for offences punishable under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023/Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860 and the Information Technology Act, 2000, which are scheduled offences under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The investigation revealed that unidentified cyber fraudsters induced innocent victims to invest money through fake online investment platforms and fraudulent "Work From Home" schemes

Sitharaman calls upon banks to further intensify outreach to NRI diaspora, introduce innovative deposit products

New Delhi
Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday called upon banks to further intensify outreach to the NRI diaspora, introduce innovative deposit products and sustain the momentum of mobilisation during the remaining period of the schemes. Sitharaman interacted with Managing Directors (MDs) and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and Public Financial Institutions (PFIs) on the Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) [FCNR(B)] deposits, External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) and Overseas Foreign Currency Borrowings (OFCBs) swap initiatives in New

Delhi. The Secretaries of the Department of Financial Services, the Department of Economic Affairs and the Department of Revenue, the Chief Economic Advisor, the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and other senior officers also attended the interaction. During the interaction, the MDs and CEOs of the PSBs and PFIs apprised the union Finance Minister of the progress under the RBI's swap facility schemes for FCNR(B) deposits, ECBs and OFCBs. It was noted that these initiatives have received an encouraging response from the Indian diaspora abroad, with healthy interest across FCNR(B), ECBs and OFCBs. The MDs further informed



that banks are offering attractive returns on FCNR(B) deposits, including on five-year deposits, supported by the suspension of the interest rate ceiling on fresh FCNR(B) deposits under the scheme. The MDs and CEOs stated that there has been significant interest from NRIs residing in Singapore, Hong Kong, the West Asia, the United Kingdom, the United States and other overseas jurisdictions. The MDs and CEOs outlined their plans to capitalise on the positive sentiment and accelerate deposit mobilisation during the remainder of

the scheme period. They expressed confidence that ECB mobilisations would gather stronger traction during the third quarter of current FY (October-December 2026). The PSBs also informed that they have put in place customised outreach strategies, including digital channels, to engage with the non-resident Indian (NRI) diaspora and enhance deposit mobilisation. They further noted that FCNR(B) deposit mobilisation has shown a clear accelerating trend, supported by attractive returns being offered by banks. The banks also informed during the interaction that the International Banking Units (IBUs) at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), GIFT City, Gujarat, are being utilised to lever-

age fund mobilisation from multiple jurisdictions, including the United Kingdom, the United States, the West Asia, Hong Kong, Singapore and Southeast Asia. Smt. Sitharaman also exhorted the banks to maximise utilisation of financial services and institutional infrastructure available at GIFT City. During the discussion, the RBI Deputy Governor assured that the central bank is actively supporting banks and financial institutions in mobilising deposits and facilitating eligible borrowings. It was also noted that the robust daily reporting framework instituted by the RBI has enabled transparent, real-time monitoring of progress across participating institutions.

Will repeal Goa's controversial land conversion provision if voted to power: AAP

New Delhi
The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Monday said it would repeal the controversial Section 39A of the Goa Town and Country Planning Act within a month of coming to power in the state, alleging that the provision has been misused to facilitate large-scale land conversion in favour of private developers. Addressing protesters from Goa's Carapur village at Jantar Mantar here, AAP leader and Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Atishi accused the BJP-led Goa government of using the provision to hand over land, forests and water resources to builders at the expense of local communities and the environment.



She said villagers from Carapur had been protesting for the past 100 days against an alleged illegal mega project, but claimed that the state government had ignored their concerns. Atishi further alleged that a BJP minister who approved the land conversion proposal had links to the land in question. She urged Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to clarify whether his government stood with the people of Goa or with what she described as the

"land mafias." Promising action if AAP forms the next government in Goa, Atishi said the party would repeal Section 39A within a month of assuming office and revoke all approvals granted under the provision, including those related to the alleged mega projects. AAP leader and Burari MLA Sanjeev Jha described the Carapur residents' protest as a fight to protect their land and rights.

Delhi Congress alleges rising dengue, malaria risk after rains

New Delhi
Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav on Friday criticised the BJP government and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) over waterlogging, garbage accumulation, and the increasing threat of mosquito-borne diseases following heavy rainfall in the national capital. Yadav alleged that stagnant water and uncollected garbage have significantly increased the risk of dengue and malaria, while the BJP's "triple-engine government" is preoccupied with strengthening its numbers in the MCD by engineering defections

from the opposition. He said several parts of Delhi witnessed flood-like conditions after the rains, with waterlogging on roads, construction sites, and residential colonies. According to him, stagnant water, along with garbage clogging drains and sewers, has created ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes. The Delhi Congress chief alleged that the MCD has failed to fulfil its primary responsibility of maintaining sanitation and ensuring proper drainage, causing inconvenience to residents across the city.

A free eye surgery camp organized at the Divyang Kendra with the assistance of social worker Sajjan Kumar Garg.

Hisar

A free eye operation camp was organised at the Disabled Rehabilitation and Health Centre with a spirit of service. Organised with the cooperation of Mahalaxmi Property owner Sajjan Kumar Garg, experienced and trained doctors of the Disabled Centre operated on the eyes of needy elderly people and medicines were also made available free of cost as far as possible. Elderly people suffering from cataracts benefited from this camp. Staff members including Sajjan Kumar Garg, CA Ramniwas Agarwal, Mangeram Gupta and Surendra Kuchhal were



present during this. Bhavip Haryana Bharat Vikas Foundation Disabled Rehabilitation Centre's President Dr. Roshanlal Goyal, Executive President CA Ramniwas Agarwal and Secretary Mangeram

Gupta said that with the help of social workers, eye check-up camps and eye operation camps are regularly organized in the Disabled Centre. In this series, a free eye operation camp was organized with the help.

Corps of Signals Dare Devils create world record at Atal Tunnel during 'Wheels of Valour: Sanchar

New Delhi
The Indian Army's Corps of Signals 'Dare Devils' scripted history by creating a World Record at the Atal Tunnel, Rohtang, during the "Wheels of Valour: Sanchar Shakti" Motorcycle Expedition 2026, with 10 riders performing on just two motorcycles and covering the 9.8-kilometre tunnel in 9 minutes and 47.97 seconds at an altitude of 10,075 feet. Dedicated to Kargil Vijay Divas, the record-breaking feat showcased exceptional skill, precision, coordination, and the indomitable spirit of the Indian Army. The achievement was the



defining highlight of the historic national expedition that celebrated the legacy of the Corps of Signals while paying tribute to India's fallen heroes. The expedition, which was flagged off on June 22 by Lieutenant General Vivek Dogra, Signals Officer-in-Chief and Colonel Commandant, Corps of Signals, brought together

the elite Corps of Signals Dare Devils and Signallers in a display of courage, endurance, and military professionalism across some of the country's most challenging terrains. Following the world record achievement, the expedition team ventured into the high Himalayas and successfully negotiated the formidable

Shinkun La Pass at an altitude of 16,580 feet before culminating the journey at the Kargil War Memorial, Dras. At Dras, amid the mountains that witnessed one of India's finest military victories during Operation Vijay, the riders paid solemn homage to the heroes of the Kargil War and reaffirmed the Indian Army's enduring commitment to Duty, Honour and Selfless Service. During the expedition, the team also honoured the nation's immortal martyrs at the Hussainiwala and Palampur War Memorials and interacted with NCC cadets, students, veterans, and local communities.

AAP suspending three women councilors shows Kejriwal is anti-women: Kapoor

New Delhi
Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor on Thursday said that the Aam Aadmi Party, by suspending its three women councilors, including Sultana Abad, has once again demonstrated that Arvind Kejriwal is anti-women. Kapoor alleged that the AAP chief compelled the three councillors to quit AAP merely for questioning him and Saurabh Bhardwaj over the "paralysis"

of the Municipal Corporation between 2022 and 2025, and perhaps for choosing the development of their wards over party dictates. He further said that Kejriwal had allegedly forced Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal out of the party for raising questions. The Delhi BJP spokesperson also alleged that, earlier, the AAP chief had similarly compelled prominent women leaders like Kiran

Bedi, Shazia Ilmi, Richa Pandey and others to leave his party for asserting their rights and expressing independent views. Meanwhile, last week the Indraprastha Vikas Party, that had emerged after 16 municipal councilors parted ways from AAP last year, formally merged with the BJP with its councilors, which has further strengthened the saffron party in the civic body.

He said that when AAP ruled the Municipal Corporation in 2023, it had turned out to be a dark chapter, alleging that no development work was undertaken and the administration remained confined to political statements. The developments in AAP are in contrast to the BJP which is committed to women's empowerment and strengthening development at the ward level, he added.

Viral divorce rumour around General Dwivedi and his wife triggers Army fact check

New Delhi
The Indian Army has rejected as false and baseless a social media claim alleging that Sunita Dwivedi, wife of former Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi, has filed for divorce over an alleged extramarital affair. The Army's fact-checking handle on X, MythbusterXX, termed the claim a fabricated narrative being circulated by Pakistan-based propaganda accounts to target senior Indian military leadership through personal and defamatory allegations. The false claim surfaced

after several posts circulated on social media platforms, including one by an account named Baba Thoka, alleging that Sunita Dwivedi had sought divorce after discovering an alleged relationship between General and his stenographer Anita Yadav. "Ex Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi's wife Mrs Sunita Dwivedi has filed for divorce after she discovered her husband is having an affair with his stenographer. Anita Yadav," the fake claim read. Rejecting the allegations, the Indian Army stated that the claim

Delhi BJP chief welcomes conviction of Tahir Hussain in IB officer murder, demands Kejriwal's public apology

New Delhi
Delhi BJP president Harsh Malhotra on Monday welcomed the conviction of former Aam Aadmi Party Municipal Councillor Tahir Hussain in connection with the murder of an Intelligence Bureau officer Ankit Sharma in the midst of the riots in North-East Delhi in 2020. Malhotra has alleged that the Aam Aadmi Party had a strong bond with several anti-national activists and this has been exposed time and again in the actions of Tahir Hussain back in the 2020 North-East Delhi riots. In the context of Hussain's conviction, he



demanding a public apology from AAP Supremo Arvind Kejriwal for associating with anti-national elements. He said that, Khalid Saifi, who is another accused in 2020 riots, too has worked with team Arvind Kejriwal during the India against corruption days. The Delhi BJP chief hit out at the previous AAP govern-

ment in Delhi, alleging that it was too soft on cases against the accused persons regarding Delhi riots till the year 2023, before being pulled up by the Delhi High Court. He alleged that similarly Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan, time and again has been accused of inciting mobs of particular community between 2015 to

2024, especially during the anti-CAA agitation held in the Okhla area. The Delhi BJP president has said that the party has repeatedly accused Kejriwal for patronising leaders like Tahir Hussain, Amanatullah Khan, Khalid Saifi and others, and now after Tahir Hussain's conviction for the young IB officer's murder, the state unit of the BJP demands a public apology from Kejriwal. Meanwhile, Delhi Minister Manjinder Singh in his reaction on the development said that Hussain had orchestrated the riots in North East Delhi.

Jadhav urges Delhi CM to plant medicinal plants in proposed eight forests

New Delhi
Ayush Minister Pratap Rao Jadhav has urged Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta to include 20 per cent medicinal plants in the proposed eight theme-based forests being developed under the city's massive plantation drive rolled out recently, according to officials from the Ministry. The minister made his request in a letter written to the Delhi CM, wherein he stated that at least 20 per cent of the plantation in the proposed eight forests be devoted to medicinal plant species, or that a mini-

mum of two forests be developed as dedicated Medicinal Forests (Aushadhi Vans). On Tuesday (July 7), Delhi rolled out its campaign to plant 70 lakh saplings, using a science-backed approach, across the city during 2026-27. The project also included a plan to develop eight theme-based forests — Panchavati Van, Nakshatra Van, Bel Van, Ritu Van, Rishi Van, Tirthankar Van, Vaman Vriksh Van, and Kurani Vatika. Welcoming the Delhi CM's move.

Piyush Goyal to lead India's biggest-ever business delegation to Japan



New Delhi
Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead a more than 200-member Indian business delegation to Japan from 24-27, marking the country's largest-ever business delegation to Japan as New Delhi looks to deepen trade, investment and industrial cooperation with Tokyo. The four-day visit will cover Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka, with representatives from sectors including manufacturing, semiconductors, automobiles, steel, clean energy, financial services, healthcare and start-ups. The visit comes as India and Japan seek to expand economic engagement and strengthen their Special

Strategic and Global Partnership, particularly in technology-intensive and high-value manufacturing sectors. In Tokyo, Goyal is scheduled to meet senior executives from leading Japanese industrial groups. He will also participate in a roundtable with Keidanren, Japan's leading business federation representing more than 1,500 companies. According to the statement released by the Commerce Ministry, discussions in the Japanese capital will focus on emerging areas such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence and start-ups. The minister is also expected to engage with foreign institutional investors to discuss investment opportunities

in India. Goyal will hold bilateral talks with Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Akazawa Ryosei and meet senior Japanese government and parliamentary representatives. He is also scheduled to interact with members of the Indian diaspora. The delegation will next travel to Nagoya, a major manufacturing centre in central Japan. Goyal will participate in a business roadshow organised in partnership with the Central Japan Economic Federation and the Nagoya Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Nagoya leg will include meetings with Aichi Prefecture officials and Japanese companies.

India-US trade deal almost done in Principle; legal, technical details being finalised: US Envoy Gor

New Delhi
The proposed trade agreement between India and the United States is close to being finalised in principle, with negotiators now focused on resolving the remaining legal and technical details, US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said. Speaking at a media interaction in New Delhi, Gor indicated that the two countries had broadly agreed on the key elements of the pact. The remaining task, he said, involves refining and restructuring portions of the agreement's

text before it can be formally concluded. Gor attributed the delay in wrapping up the deal primarily to the complexity of the legal and technical language involved in finalising the agreement. The ambassador also commented on a proposal in the US Congress that could lead to tariffs of as much as 100pc on countries importing Russian oil. Gor stressed that the proposal was being advanced by lawmakers across party lines and was not an initiative being pushed by the

White House. He noted that President Donald Trump has not publicly advocated the measure. The proposed legislation could have implications for India given its purchases of Russian crude. Gor, however, said Trump's broader priority remained ending the Russia-Ukraine war, describing the resolution of the conflict as a critical objective for the US President. He further underlined the importance of the relationship between Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in strengthening bilateral ties.

SAIL profits rose by 138pc in Q1FY27

New Delhi
Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) reported strong profitability in Q1FY27 with net profit rising by 138pc to Rs 1,636 crore compared to Rs 685 crore of the corresponding period last year (CPLY). According to SAIL, revenue from operations rose to Rs 26,246 crore in Q1FY27 compared to Rs

25,921 crore of the same period of the previous fiscal. In Q1FY27, Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) stood at Rs 4,356 crore. In the first quarter of the current fiscal, SAIL moderated volumes compared to last year by advancing certain scheduled repairs and maintenance during this quarter. This step was

necessitated due to geopolitical volatility that disrupted global supply chains. Sharing his reaction on results, Dr Ashok Kumar Panda, Chairman and Managing Director of SAIL, said, "Amid global uncertainties, the domestic steel industry demonstrated resilience backed by sustained demand in domestic steel consumption."

GST relief boosts financial confidence, 63pc Indians feel more optimistic about future goals: Report

New Delhi
Financial confidence among Indian consumers has strengthened amid GST reforms, greater access to affordable credit and rising adoption of digital financial tools, according to the fourth edition of Home Credit India's annual The Great Indian Wallet 2026 study. The report, themed 'From Tax Relief to Tangible Choices – How India's Wallets Are Being Reshaped', found that the Financial Well-Being Index rose to 40 points in 2026, up from 34 points last year and the highest level recorded since the study began in 2023. The improvement was driven primarily by stronger savings

and investment trends. Overall, 85pc of respondents said they were confident about achieving their personal financial goals over the next five years, while 87pc remained hopeful that their broader financial situation would improve. The study highlighted the impact of GST-related price changes on household finances. Half of the respondents said managing household expenses had become less stressful, while 47pc said dealing with unexpected expenses had become easier following the reforms. The changes have also boosted financial confidence, with 63pc of respondents saying they feel more confident about achieving their future financial

goals. Credit and EMIs are also gaining acceptance for planned purchases. Around 62pc of respondents said they feel more confident using credit or EMIs for important purchases, with the proportion rising to 64pc among Gen Z respondents. Affordable credit and digital tools emerged as key enablers of financial progress, with 82pc of respondents identifying them as making it easier to achieve financial goals. Gen Z emerged as the strongest saving generation, with 58pc reporting that they save, compared with 53pc of Millennials and 44pc of Gen X. The report also found that 46pc of respon-

dents saw their savings increase in 2026, while 44pc reported an increase in investments, suggesting a gradual shift from short-term consumption towards wealth creation. The financial contribution of different generations to household expenses also varied. Gen X contributed an average of 70pc of household expenses, followed by Millennials at 68pc and Gen Z at 57pc. Homeownership emerged as the leading long-term financial aspiration, with 31pc of respondents saying they want to buy a house over the next five years. The aspiration was particularly strong among women, with 40pc expressing plans to purchase a home.

CARE withdraws negative ratings, Adani Infra A 'Debt-Free' company

Mumbai
Jaiprakash Associates Ltd, which has been renamed as Adani Infrastructure Integrated Solutions Limited after the Adani Group purchased it for Rs 14,500 Crore from the bankrupt Jaypee Group, has been declared a "debt-free" company after CARE Ratings Ltd withdrew Jaiprakash Associates Ltd's negative rating on its non-convertible debentures (NCDs), with immediate effect. However, Adani Infrastructure Integrated Solutions Limited, which was earlier known as Jaiprakash Associates Ltd, remains

delisted from the stock market. Credit rating company CARE Ratings Ltd has stated in its latest report that the primary reason for withdrawal of the negative rating was the successful implementation of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd's resolution plan. According to the debt resolution plan approved by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Jaiprakash Associates Ltd, which is now called Adani Infrastructure Integrated Solutions Limited, has fully repaid all its bank obligations and debt instruments.

The company owes no more outstanding dues and has received a 'No Dues' certificate from its lenders, CARE Ratings Ltd mentioned in its report. "The (negative) ratings assigned to the bank facilities and non-convertible debentures (NCD) issue of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (now renamed as Adani Infrastructure Integrated Solutions Limited) have been withdrawn with immediate effect. JAL has been able to successfully implement the resolution plan approved by the National Company Law Tribunal.

Private sector activity expands at slowest pace in over three years

New Delhi
The private sector activity in India expanded at its slowest pace in more than three years in July. This is due to the growth in output and new orders moderated, while inflationary pressures intensified, according to the HSBC Flash India PMI released by S&P Global. The HSBC Flash India Composite PMI Output Index fell to 54.3 in July from 57.1 in June, marking the weakest expansion in private sector activity since March 2022. It said the slowdown is due to increasingly challenging market conditions, competitive pressures, order cancellations, reduced client enquiries and shortages of key raw materials. New orders continued to grow but at their weakest pace in nearly four-and-a-half years. The moderation was driven



by the services sector, with the Services PMI Business Activity Index declining to 53.1 from 57.4, its weakest reading in 53 months. Manufacturing showed relatively better resilience, with the Manufacturing PMI Output Index rising to 57.0 from 56.3, although the headline Manufacturing PMI eased to 53.9 from 54.2. "Renewed tensions in the Middle East have once again resulted in firms building buffers to manage the uncertainties around the longevity of the supply-side shock. Finished goods and input inven-

tories increased alongside a pick-up in purchasing volumes. Both output and new export orders rose, even as the overall manufacturing growth eased slightly. Price pressures firmed, with output charge inflation gathering pace and signalling a renewed push to protect margins," said Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC. Export orders strengthened across both sectors, with manufacturers recording the stronger improvement. At the composite level, international sales rose at the fastest pace since March.

Karnataka chip park to open by Dec

Bengaluru
Karnataka is set to sharpen its lead in India's semiconductor race, with the state's 200-acre Semiconductor Park at KWIN City near Bengaluru slated to become operational by December, a move expected to accelerate investments, create

high-skilled jobs and strengthen the country's chip manufacturing ambitions. Announcing the development on Thursday, Karnataka Industries Minister MB Patil said the park will serve as a dedicated hub for semiconductor, packaging, testing and advanced electron-

ics manufacturing, providing an integrated ecosystem for companies across the semiconductor value chain. The announcement comes at a time when India is aggressively pursuing self-reliance in semiconductor manufacturing and seeking to reduce dependence on imports

through infrastructure development and policy incentives. Patil said Karnataka has already approved investments worth Rs 23,000 crore in the semiconductor and advanced Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) sectors over the past two years.

J.C. Flowers ARC commits scholarships for 30 ISB students over three years

Hyderabad
The Indian School of Business (ISB) on Friday announced a three-year scholarship commitment from J.C. Flowers Asset Reconstruction Private Limited (JCF ARC) to support 30 students enrolled in its Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) and Post Graduate Programme in Management for Young Leaders (PGP YL). The J.C. Flowers ARC Scholarships, launched during the



last academic year through the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, will contin-

ue over the next two academic years, the school said in a release here. Under the pro-

gramme, five students each from the PGP and PGP YL will receive 100 per cent tuition fee waivers every year. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was exchanged between JCF ARC Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Rahul Gupta and ISB Dean Prof. Madan Pillutla in the presence of senior officials from both organisations. Speaking on the occasion, Rahul Gupta said the scholarship

initiative reflected the company's commitment to supporting talented students with leadership potential by removing financial barriers to world-class management education. Prof Madan thanked JCF ARC for its support and said the scholarships would enable deserving students from the PGP and PGP YL programmes to benefit from ISB's academic ecosystem without financial constraints.

Zelensky details Fedorov dispute as Ukraine faces wartime political

Kyiv President Volodymyr Zelensky on Sunday revealed new details about the dispute that preceded the dismissal of former Defense Minister Mykhailo Fedorov, saying tensions between Fedorov and Ukraine's military leadership had become impossible to manage. Zelensky said a serious disagreement developed between Fedorov and Commander-in-Chief Oleksandr Syrskyi over the division of responsibilities between the Defense Ministry and the military command. "There cannot be a conflict at this level between the leaders," Zelensky said. According to Zelensky, he previously instructed Fedorov to abandon a proposed restructuring that would have created what the president described as a "Ministry of War." Zelensky said the plan risked placing



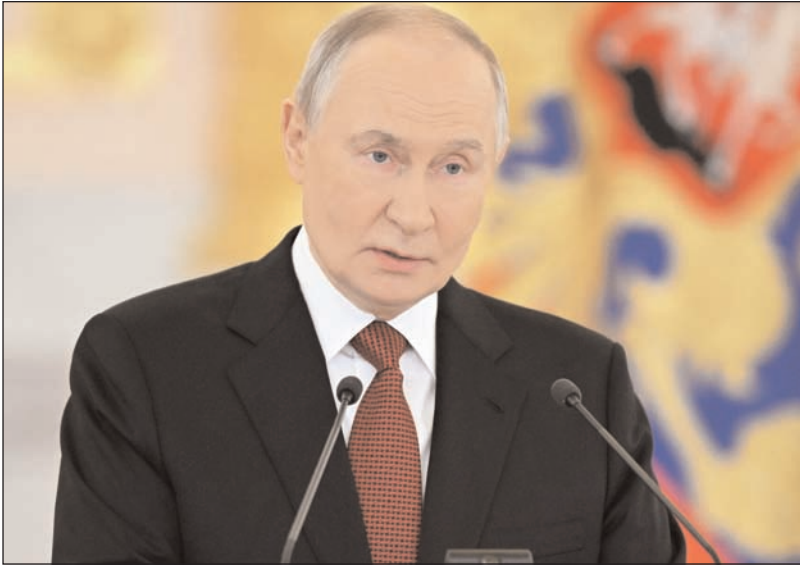
too much authority over the military command structure under the defense minister. Fedorov initially accepted Zelensky's position but later pursued similar changes through other means, the president said. Syrskyi, meanwhile, responded by developing what Zelensky described as his own bureaucratic structure. The disagreement eventually became so severe that the two officials stopped communicating directly. Zelensky said he gave them an opportunity to

resolve their differences themselves, but they failed to meet. Fedorov was subsequently dismissed as defense minister in July. The political dispute comes as Ukraine faces major financial and military challenges ahead of the winter. Zelensky said the Defense Ministry has a budget shortfall of about \$27 billion, including money needed for military salaries, compensation to families of fallen soldiers and weapons procurement. He said Ukraine also needs billions of dol-

lars in advance to prepare for early 2027. He is seeking to accelerate European funding for Ukraine, including about €30 billion in expected European funds tied to legislation. In a social media post on X, Zelensky also warned that Russia could produce as many as 1,300 ballistic missiles a year, compared with an estimated current stockpile of 600-630 missiles. He said Ukraine is seeking additional air-defense capabilities, including more Patriot missiles.

Tusk's Nord Stream position is driven by economic interests: Russian President Vladimir Putin

Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Sunday that he understands Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk's position on the Nord Stream pipeline dispute, arguing that Warsaw's stance is largely driven by economic considerations. Putin said he had known Tusk for years, including during the period when plans for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline were being developed and construction was underway. "The motives are very simple — economic expediency," Putin told Russian state television journalist Pavel Zarubin. Putin was responding to Tusk's recent comments concerning the 2022 sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines. Tusk said Germany should not prosecute those suspected of involvement in the attacks and argued that responsibility should instead be directed toward those who built the pipeline. Putin linked Poland's position to the loss of transit revenues that followed the decision to route Nord Stream 2 beneath the Baltic Sea rather than through Polish territory.



He said an alternative plan had initially envisaged a second gas pipeline running through Poland alongside the existing Yamal-Europe gas route. "Even the construction workers have already installed the required facilities there," Putin said. Russia ultimately chose an undersea route through the Baltic Sea, according to Putin, because Moscow wanted to reduce the risks associated with transit. He argued that the decision reduced Poland's potential revenue from the transit of Russian

gas. Putin's remarks come amid continuing controversy over the Nord Stream explosions, which damaged the pipelines in September 2022. The incident has remained the subject of competing allegations and investigations in Europe. The dispute has also become politically sensitive as European countries continue to debate the legacy of their dependence on Russian energy and the consequences of the Nord Stream project.

Kazakhstan holds first election for unicameral Kurultay



Astana Kazakhstan is holding its first election for the 145-member unicameral Kurultay, marking a major transformation of the country's parliamentary system. Voting began at 7 am local time at 10,423 polling stations across Kazakhstan and abroad, with 12,605,788 registered voters eligible to cast ballots, according to the Central Election Commission. The Kurultay will replace the country's previous bicameral parliament, consisting of the Mazhilis and Senate. Seven political parties are competing for the 145 seats: Adilet, Respublika, Baytaq, Ak Zhol, Auyl (Village), the National Social Democratic Party of Kazakhstan and the People's Party of Kazakhstan. Voters can also select the "against all" option. The election is being monitored by 777 international observers from 42 countries and 13

international organizations. A delegation from Türkiye, including members of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and the Supreme Election Board (YSK), is observing the vote in Astana. YSK Chairman Serdar Mutta, who heads the delegation, said observers had witnessed a calm and orderly voting process. The delegation visited a polling station at the Kazakh National University of Arts, where it received information from election officials and spoke with voters. "We are witnessing an extremely calm and well-attended election," Mutta told Anadolu Agency, adding that there had been no disturbances at the polling station visited by the delegation. Mutta described the vote as significant because it is Kazakhstan's first parliamentary election under the new unicameral system.

Iran rapidly rebuilding sites damaged in war with US-Israel, satellite images reveal

Tehran Iran has reportedly managed to rebuild a significant amount of its military infrastructure damaged in its recent war with the US and Israel, the Wall Street Journal reported based on satellite imagery which revealed either the total or otherwise significant restoration of damaged sites ranging from bridges, weapons depots and missile bases. The pace of Tehran's reconstruction could help explain how Tehran has continued its heavy military operations against the US after the collapse of the ceasefire. According to the report, satellite



images showed that an access road leading to an Iranian missile base near Kangavar in western Iran was heavily damaged by joint air strikes in early March. Nonetheless, within weeks, a newly paved road could be seen which had managed to restore access to the facility despite efforts to block its entrance.

Additional satellite imagery indicated that reconstruction work was also underway at the IRGC-linked port of Bandar Anzali. Israel had previously said that it conducted strikes back in March and inflicted massive damage on the port, an IRGC command centre and an adjoining shipyard. Similarly, the out-

let also reported reconstruction activity at a missile production facility near Tehran, with satellite imagery showing repair work continuing in recent weeks. According to WSJ, Israeli military officials cited the images as evidence that the aerial campaign launched on February 28 had not achieved all of its strategic objectives. One Israeli official told the newspaper that concentrating exclusively on military infrastructure, rather than expanding strikes to include broader regime institutions, may have caused greater long-term damage.

Houthi state they don't seek to block Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, say blockade only against Saudi



Sanaa Yemen-based Houthi militia on Friday clarified that it was not seeking to shut the Bab el-Mandeb Strait to international shipping, insisting that its newly announced maritime blockade was aimed solely at Saudi Arabia. Abdusalam, the group's chief negotiator, said all reports suggesting the strategic waterway had been closed or would

be closed were false. "There is no closure of Bab el-Mandab as some are suggesting," Abdusalam wrote on X, adding that the Houthi's actions were "limited to a maritime blockade that only affects the Saudi side." The statement came just days after the Islamist group announced a maritime blockade against Riyadh and claimed responsibility.

New UK prime minister rules out snap general election

Moscow New UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham announced that he did not intend to hold a snap general election. The transfer of power from outgoing Prime Minister Keir Starmer to Burnham took place on Monday. Reform UK leader Nigel Farage called for a general election amid Burnham's announcement of his intention to

implement "the biggest changes" to the country's politics and economy in 40 years. "We live in a parliamentary democracy. There was a manifesto in 2024. I'm sticking to that manifesto. I'm bringing forward my version but it is still within that manifesto. I just think that we need to focus on making the country work," Burnham said in an interview.

Beijing, Moscow must not allow Japan's rearmament: Chinese Foreign Minister

Beijing China and Russia must defend the results of victory in World War II and prevent Japan's rearmament, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said. "(China and Russia) must strengthen strategic coordination, defend the results of victory in World War II, and under no cir-

cumstances allow Japan's rearmament," the Chinese Foreign Ministry quoted the top Chinese diplomat as saying on Saturday. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Wang Yi met in Kyrgyzstan on Friday. The Chinese authorities have repeatedly stated that Japan had recently been

accelerating its remilitarisation process by deploying offensive weapons and launching offensive missiles outside its territory. Beijing and Tokyo have been experiencing a cooling in relations since Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's November 2025 remarks that an unforeseen situation

involving Taiwan, if accompanied by the use of warships and military force, could be considered an existential crisis. This led to the cancellation of flights from China to Japan, a decline in tourism, and Beijing's imposition of restrictions on the supply of dual-use goods to Japan.

Oil companies' "excessive profits" are linked to price hikes caused by the US-Israeli war on Iran

Six EU Finance Ministers renew call for bloc-wide excess profit tax on oil companies

Brussels Finance ministers from six European union countries have renewed calls for a bloc-wide excess profit tax on oil companies, arguing that soaring fuel prices and the wider cost-of-living crisis require coordinated action across the EU. Oil companies' "excessive profits" are linked to price hikes caused by the US-Israeli war on Iran, several media outlets reported, citing a joint letter from the countries' finance ministers. Finance ministers from Germany, Italy, Austria,



Poland and Portugal, along with Spain's economy minister, sent a joint letter to Ireland's finance minister, whose country currently holds the rotating EU Council presidency. The ministers

urged that an EU-wide levy be placed on the agenda for the bloc's next meeting of finance chiefs in Dublin. "We are experiencing one of the biggest supply shocks in decades," the

ministers said, warning that rising energy costs were fueling growing public discontent. The ministers said oil companies are benefiting from strong profitability and refinery margins that have risen faster than crude oil prices. They argued that existing government measures have not been enough to permanently reduce or stabilize energy prices for households and businesses. The group called for "an EU-wide framework to tax excess profits," drawing on the temporary measure intro-

duced in 2022 after energy prices surged following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Under such a system, companies could face additional taxation on profits considered unusually high because of external market conditions rather than increased efficiency or investment. The finance ministers also called for lessons from the 2022 windfall tax to be used to improve the taxation of profits earned abroad by multinational oil companies. They said this could help prevent companies from shifting earnings

between countries to avoid national-level levies, as per Euronews. They also urged the European Commission to publish its study of refinery margins as soon as possible, saying the findings could help determine whether refineries are taking advantage of elevated energy prices at the expense of consumers and businesses. The renewed push comes as high fuel prices continue to pressure European households and businesses, while major oil companies.

SpaceX successfully conducts 13th test launch of Starship spacecraft

Washington After a series of delays due to inclement weather and an automatic abort at launch, SpaceX successfully completed the 13th test launch of the Starship super-heavy rocket from the Starbase spaceport in Texas, according to a live broadcast of the launch. The Starship rocket lifted off at 22:51 GMT on Friday (4:21 AM IST on Saturday). The upper stage of SpaceX's Starship spacecraft completed a controlled descent and soft splashdown in the Indian Ocean during its 13th test flight. The spacecraft

touched down gently at 23:57 GMT Friday (5:27 AM IST on Saturday). During the flight, which lasted just over an hour, the spacecraft, according to SpaceX, was scheduled to complete several key tasks: launch 20 Starlink V3 test satellites into suborbital trajectories, re-ignite one of the Raptor engines in outer space, and test new heat shield control methods. The launch of the 13th Starship mission was postponed three times. The first launch attempt was canceled at the last minute as the automatic countdown stopped.

BRIEFS

BCCI CALLS FOR JOINT STAKEHOLDER MEET AHEAD OF IPL SEASON

THE Indian cricket board has called for a joint stakeholder meeting here on October 15, as the Indian Premier League approaches its landmark 20th season next year.

The BCCI has invited all key stakeholders of the IPL, which includes the franchise owners and their chief executive officers, the state associations which have hosted IPL matches, and the broadcasters for the meeting ahead of the 2027 season.

The board intends to review the issues and learnings from the previous IPL seasons while also addressing any concerns during the meeting in Mumbai, according to a BCCI source.

Planning and discussion with the key stakeholders on organising the 2027 IPL is also on the agenda of the BCCI in the meeting.

At the conclusion of its Annual General Meeting last month here, the BCCI had announced that its general body took a unanimous call to celebrate the completion of two decades of the IPL in a "grand way".

PAK NAME SQUAD FOR HONG KONG SIXES

DEFENDING champions Pakistan have announced a seven-member squad for the Hong Kong Sixes, with the six-time champions set to face India on October 30 in one of the tournament's marquee clashes.

Their title-winning ambitions will lead Pakistan as they look to retain the crown they secured last year by defeating Kuwait by 43 runs in the final. Muhammad Abbas Afridi, who starred in the 2025 final with a blistering 52 off just 11 balls, has been named captain.

Pakistan squad: Mohammad Abbas Afridi (captain), Abdul Samad, Ahmed Daniyal, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Khawaja Nafay, Muhammad Shahzad and Saad Masood.

ITALY'S BEN MANENTI JOINS MELBOURNE RENEGADES

ITALY all-rounder Ben Manenti has landed a two-year contract with Melbourne Renegades for the upcoming Big Bash League (BBL) season.

Manenti, who previously had brief BBL spells with Sydney Sixers and Adelaide Strikers, inked the deal on the back of a breakout year across international and domestic cricket. The 29-year-old off-spinner and hard-hitting batter was Italy's star performer during their maiden Men's T20 World Cup appearance in February by finishing as their highest run-scorer with 138 runs in three innings and second-highest wicket-taker with five scalps.

SCHUTT IS THIRD AUSSIE TO COMPLETE 150 ODI WICKETS

AUSTRALIA fast bowler Megan Schutt achieved a significant milestone as she completed 150 wickets in ODI cricket during the first ODI against Bangladesh women at the Allan Border Field in Brisbane.

Schutt has become just the third Australian to reach the elusive mark, joining legendary all-rounder Ellyse Perry (166 wickets) and former tearaway pacer Cathryn Fitzpatrick (180) on the list.

Coming into the first ODI of the three-match series against Bangladesh, the 33-year-old Australian needed two wickets to reach the mark and she got there when she took the wicket of Sarmin Sultana in the third over after taking out Fargana Hoque on the first ball of the series.

Schutt produced a jaffa on the first ball of the series as she nicked out Hoque on the first ball after the Aussies opted to bowl first.

(Agencies)

West Indies' captain and opener Shai Hope smashed 102 unbeaten runs off 45 deliveries to win the 2nd of five T20Is against India in Ranchi. (PTI)



RANCHI, Oct 9 (PTI)

SKIPPER Shai Hope's unbeaten 102, an ensemble of genius and power, helped the West Indies gatecrash India's party with a stunning six-wicket win in the second T20I in Ranchi, on Friday.

The five-match series is now level at 1-1 after the Windies pulled off the highest T20I chase against India, which was also the overall second highest chase in the format.

Set a record 250-run target, West Indies rode on Hope's knock, which came off 45 balls

(6x4, 9x6), to reach home.

There was substantial support for the Bajan cricketer from Sherfane Rutherford (84, 37b; 7x4, 7x6) and Romario Shepherd (34, 13b) as WI overhauled the target in 18.3 overs.

For India, Sanju Samson roared back to form with a blistering 82 before Shreyas Iyer and Tilak Varma's rapid knocks powered them to 249-5.

The Windies' chase did not start on a bright note as Mayank Yadav clocked 140-plus regularly to strike twice in successive deliveries, removing Kamil

Hope hammers India

Shai hits 102 runs in Windies' 6-wicket win; level series 1-1

Pooran and Shimron Hetmyer.

But Hope and Rutherford tore into India's spin attack, which struggled to grip the ball under heavy dew.

Hope, who struck back-to-back centuries in the preceding ODI series before scoring a fifty in the first T20I, continued his rich vein of form with a 24-ball half-century.



India's Sanju Samson contributed with 82 runs against West Indies during their second of five T20I of the series in Ranchi on Friday. (PTI)

He capped the chase by launching Axar Patel over the ropes for his second T20I century. Rutherford matched Hope's aggression with a 24-ball fifty, as the pair added 120 runs in just 54 balls to revive the chase.

Rutherford was dropped on 38 when Mayank spilled a straight-forward chance off Kuldeep Yadav.

The pair brought up a 100-run alliance off just 43 balls, with Hope and Rutherford clearing the ropes with ease.

Shepherd then provided the late flourish, as West Indies plundered 41 runs across the 17th and 18th overs to seal the victory. Earlier, after four straight low scores, Samson smashed a 21-ball fifty, his ninth in T20Is, to set the tone for Indian innings in an

entertaining 97-run partnership (43b) with Ishan Kishan.

It eventually led the hosts to their highest-ever T20I total against the West Indies.

The duo powered India to 139-1 in 11 overs at a run-rate of over 12, with Kishan contributing a 22-ball 43.

However, off-spinner Roston Chase, returning to the attack in the middle overs broke the stand, with two wickets in successive overs.

Kishan and Shivam Dube (7) were bowled while attempting to play across the line. The move to promote Dube to No. 4 failed as he struggled to get going and fell after consuming 10 balls.

Samson's thrilling knock ended in the 15th over, with his ramp shot over deep backward point

going straight to Kamil Pooran.

India lost three wickets for 23 runs in the middle overs but skipper Shreyas Iyer, fresh from his maiden T20I century at Lucknow, carried his form into this match.

Iyer counter-attacked with effortless shots in his 18-ball 40, while Tilak remained unbeaten on 44 (18b).

Tilak also crossed 5,000 T20 runs and kept the pressure on the West Indies with crisp, well-placed boundaries in their 83-run partnership that came off just 32 balls.

India followed the same template with Abhishek Sharma getting into his zone early.

He charged at everything as the hosts raced forward at over 10 runs an over after being asked to bat.

INDIA INNINGS					WEST INDIES INNINGS				
	R	B	4	6		R	B	4	6
A Sharma c Motie b Chase	20	12	2	1	S Hope Not Out	102	45	6	9
S Samson c Pooran b Springer	82	41	9	4	Pooran c sub (Bishnoi) b Mayank	4	2	1	0
I Kishan b Chase	43	22	6	2	S Hetmyer b Mayank	0	1	0	0
S Dube b Chase	7	10	1	0	R Powell b Mayank	24	13	4	1
S Iyer c Hetmyer b Springer	40	18	3	3	Rutherford c Samson b Kuldeep	84	37	7	7
T Varma Not Out	44	18	3	3	R Shepherd Not Out	34	13	3	3
N Dhir Not Out	4	1	1	0	Extras: (w 4)	4			
Extras: (lb 1, nb 2, w 6)	9								
TOTAL: (5 wickets, 20 overs)	249				TOTAL: (4 wickets, 18.3 overs)	252			
FoWs: 1-42, 2-139, 3-158, 4-162, 5-245.					Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-5, 3-58, 4-178.				
Bowling: Hosein 3-0-46-0, Shepherd 3.4-0-47-0, Chase 4-0-24-3, Motie 2-0-21-0, Joseph 3-0-39-0, Springer 4-0-64-2, Powell 0.2-0-7-0.					Bowling: Mayank 3-0-36-3, Singh 4-0-45-0, Patel 3.3-0-63-0, Dube 2-0-30-0, Kuldeep 4-0-53-1, Dhir 2-0-25-0.				

Jadeja named in Saurashtra squad

RAJKOT, Oct 9 (PTI)

INDIA all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja will turn out for Saurashtra in their opening match of the 2026-27 Ranji Trophy season against Chhattisgarh, with Jaydev Unadkat retaining the captaincy as the two-time champions seek to make a fresh start.

RANJI TROPHY

Jadeja featured in two matches, taking two wickets without getting an opportunity to bat, and will look to gaining valuable red-ball match practice ahead of India's two-Test tour of New Zealand next month.

The Wellington Test is scheduled for November 19-23, followed by the second match in Christchurch from November 27 to December 1.

The 92nd edition of India's

premier domestic First-Class competition gets underway on October 11, with Saurashtra, who exited from the tournament in its early stages last year, drawn in Elite Group B alongside Andhra, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Hyderabad, Karnataka, Punjab and Tripura.

Saurashtra, who lifted the Ranji Trophy under Unadkat in 2019-20 and 2022-23, have retained 14 players from their previous season's squad, with pacer Neel Pandya and all-rounder Arth Yadav the new additions.

SAURASHTRA SQUAD

Jaydev Unadkat (captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Harvik Desai (wk), Arpit Vasavada, Chirag Jani, Prerak Mankad, Jay Gohil, Chetan Sakariya, Ankur Panwar, Sammar Gajjar, Parth Bhut, Vishvarajsinh Jadeja, Hetvik Kotak, Neel Pandya, Arth Yadav, Tarang Gohel.



Padikkal, Sudharsan, Gaikwad disappoint

India A succumb to Australia A by 69 runs, lose series

PUDUCHERRY, Oct 9 (PTI)

JOSH Philippe and Sam Konstas hit aggressive half-centuries and pacer Spencer Johnson struck crucial blows as Australia A beat India A by 69 runs in the second one-day match in Puducherry, on Friday.

With this win, Australia A also took an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

But along with the series defeat, the hosts will also be disappointed with the second straight failure of India batters Devdutt Padikkal, Sai Sudharsan and Ruturaj Gaikwad.

Rajat Patidar made an 82-ball 67 but India A's chase folded at



India A opener Sai Sudharsan only managed 13 runs.

206 with a little over four overs remaining.

Philippe's innings was very

well-paced, atoning for his cheap dismissal in the first match.

Philippe reached his fifty off 53 balls when he pulled pacer Yash Thakur for a boundary.

At the other end, Konstas was relatively more sedate, even though he had pulled six off pacer Arshad Khan early in his knock.

Konstas touched fifty in 69 balls. But the pair could not stay on for a bigger score as Philippe fell to Sindhu and Konstas to Arshad.

Australia A were 168 for three in 30 overs at that point. But India kept on striking at regular intervals to restrict the tourists to 107 runs in the final 20 overs while plucking the remaining seven

wickets.

That target was not an imposing one but India A were hurt by the early departures of Padikkal (1), Gaikwad (12) and Sudharsan (13).

It meant that India A were 30 for three in the ninth over with a rather inexperienced line-up following.

Brief scores AUS A: 275 all out in 49.5 overs (Josh Philippe 58, Sam Konstas 67; Arshad Khan 3-56) beat IND A: 206 all out in 45.2 overs (Rajat Patidar 67, Anukul Roy 34 not out; S Johnson 3-35) by 69 runs.

Ex-NZ Test opener Raval retires

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (IANS)

FORMER New Zealand Test opener Jeet Raval has announced his retirement from all professional cricket, Northern Districts Cricket said. After a distinguished career that produced more than 10,000 First-Class runs for Auckland, Central Districts and finally Northern Districts; national titles in every format; and 24 Test caps for New Zealand, "Raval said the time is right to step away" for the game he loves.

Raval's retirement leaves big shoes to fill as captain of the Northern Districts Plunket Shield team. Only three players in history have scored more Plunket Shield runs than Raval.

He has amassed 8216 runs in the competition since his debut for Auckland in the 2008-09 season.



The Ahmedabad-born batter began his career with Auckland after emerging out of Avondale College - where he'd been in the school First XI alongside another handy cricketer, his life-long friend Ajaz Patel.

He played 24 Test matches for the New Zealand, scoring over 1000 runs at an average of 30 including fifties and a century. He also has one Test wicket; Australian captain Pat Cummins probably still has nightmares about being clean bowled by a Jeet Raval leg spinner.

After 12 seasons of First-Class cricket with Auckland and Central Districts, Jeet Raval saw the light in 2020 and made the move to Northern Districts. He played over 130 games for ND across the three formats, many of them as captain.

Australia struggle as Nortje, Jansen make mark

Visitors slump to 187 for 6 on Day One against South Africa in Durban

DURBAN, Oct 9 (AP)

BAD light stopped play 24.4 overs early with Australia struggling at 187-6 on Day One of the first Test against South Africa at the Kingsmead Oval on Friday.

Matt Renshaw scored 46 not out to spare Australia's blushes after they had plunged to 124-6. He and Pat Cummins put on an unbeaten 63 for the seventh wicket. Earlier, Australia won the toss and opted to bat in the first game of the three-match World Test Championship series.

Wiaan Mulder picked up two wickets and Marco Jansen claimed one to reduce the tour-

ing team to 24-2 early on.

Travis Head was first to go, caught behind off Mulder for 9.

Nic Maddinson, who recently recovered from testicular cancer, was back for Australia for the first time since 2016. He opened the innings with Head and faced 33 deliveries without scoring before being bowled by Jansen.

Steve Smith then put on 60 with Marcus Labuschagne for the third wicket. Just before the lunch, Mulder trapped Labuschagne lbw for 37. The batter reviewed but the decision stayed in the bowler's favour on umpire's call. Smith was then caught for 25 at gully off Jansen



South Africa's Marco Jansen (C) celebrates taking a wicket against Australia on Day One of their first Test in Durban. (PTI)

from the third ball after lunch. Renshaw helped Australia cross the 100 mark before Anrich Nortje struck twice in the 42nd over.

Alex Carey was caught at second slip for 14. South Africa had a lone review remaining, but they chanced it and Beau Webster was adjudged caught behind for 4.

Brief scores AUSTRALIA: 187 for 6 in 65.2 overs (Matt Renshaw 46*, Marnus Labuschagne 37, Pat Cummins 33*; Wiaan Mulder 2-31) vs SOUTH AFRICA.

Chahal backs Man United to bounce back

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (ANI)

INDIA leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal remains optimistic about Manchester United's prospects, backing his boyhood club to surprise critics as they look to regaining momentum in the Premier League following the international break.

A passionate Manchester United supporter, Chahal recently watched the Manchester Derby live at Old Trafford. Speaking to 'JioStar', he reflected on his lifelong association with the club, the emotions of watching one of English football's fiercest rivalries from the stands and why he continues to believe in the team, as per a release.

Chahal said following Manchester United has been a part of his life since childhood, with watching big games alongside friends adding to the experience of being a football fan.

"Manchester United has been a childhood love for me, so the Premier League is something I genuinely enjoy following whenever I get the time. One of my favourite things is getting my friends together, sitting with them and watching a big United game, there is always so much emotion and banter!" he said.

Manchester United will face Tottenham Hotspur in their next Premier League fixture on Saturday, as Chahal hopes his boyhood club can build momentum following the international break.





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Lively & Baldoni legal battle settled

Blake Lively and Justin Baldoni settle feud over *It Ends With Us* production, avoiding trial and reputational fallout in Hollywood

Actors Blake Lively and Justin Baldoni have agreed to end their legal feud over the acrimonious production of their 2024 film *It Ends With Us*, averting a trial that threatened to further tarnish their reputations and expose the dark side of Hollywood moviemaking. The co-stars turned courtroom adversaries settled the civil case on Monday, two weeks before they were to go to trial in New York on Lively's claims that Baldoni conspired with publicists to preemptively destroy her reputation after she privately accused him of sexually harassing her on the movie set. "Raising awareness, and making a meaningful impact in the lives of domestic violence survivors — and all survivors — is a goal that we stand behind," Lively and Baldoni said in a joint statement issued through their lawyers.

"It is our sincere hope that this brings closure and allows all involved to move forward constructively and in peace, including a respectful environment on-line." The terms of the settlement were not disclosed. Lively, 38, sued Baldoni, 42, and his production company, Wayfarer Studios, at the end of 2024. Weeks later, Baldoni sued Lively, accusing her, her husband — *Deadpool* actor Ryan Reynolds — and their publicist of defamation and extortion.

Baldoni, who directed the dark romantic drama and starred in it with Lively, had denied harassing her or orchestrating a smear campaign.



Photo: Instagram_@blakelively



Photo: Instagram_@justinbaldoni

Irrfan's *The Last Tenant* debuts on YouTube

The film, which was completed in 2000, was released on the YouTube page of The Salt Inc



Sarthak Dasgupta's film *The Last Tenant*, starring Irrfan Khan and Vidya Balan (Photo: X) Photo: Instagram

The *Last Tenant*, a movie featuring Irrfan Khan long before he became one of India's most versatile stars but remained unreleased, has finally been made available on YouTube by its makers. The film, which was completed in 2000, was released on the YouTube page of The Salt Inc as a tribute to Irrfan Khan on his sixth death anniversary on April 29.

Written and directed by Sarthak Dasgupta, the 43-minute movie featured Irrfan Khan alongside Vidya Balan, who was famous at the time for featuring in the TV show *Hum Paanch*.

"Some films aren't lost. They wait. In the year 2000, a young filmmaker, with no budget, no guarantees, and only a vision gathered two extraordinary souls and made something quietly magical. That filmmaker was Sarthak Dasgupta.

"Those two souls were Irrfan Khan and Vidya Balan, before the world truly knew their names. The film was thought to be gone forever. The footage, lost. The memory, alive only in those who lived it. Until now," read the caption on the YouTube page of the movie.

Did You Know?



Poster of the *Raja Shivaji*

Riteish says cast took no fee for historical epic *Raja Shivaji*

Actor-director Riteish Deshmukh has revealed that none of the actors charged a fee for his historical film *Raja Shivaji*, which released on May 1 and has made a strong start at the box office, earning 33 crore in its first three days.

Calling it a tribute to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Deshmukh said the entire team worked "free for Maharaj", stressing their commitment to presenting the story without compromising on history.

He added that the film was in development for over three years and aims to introduce younger audiences to the legacy of the Maratha king.

The film features a star-studded cast, including Salman Khan in a



'Easier when you work with friends'

Rakul Preet Singh reunites with Ayushmann Khurrana and director Mudassar Aziz for *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do*

Actress Rakul Preet Singh has spoken about reuniting with actor Ayushmann Khurrana and director Mudassar Aziz for *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do* and said it's just easier when working with friends.

Rakul first worked with Ayushmann in the medical comedy-drama titled *Doctor G* in 2022. The film, which also stars Shefali Shah, revolves around Ayushmann's character Uday, a struggling medical student interested in orthopaedics but ends up becoming a gynaecologist.



Photo: Instagram

The actress worked with Aziz in the 2025 film *Mere Husband Ki Biwi*, which featured actors Arjun Kapoor and Bhumi Pednekar. The film told the story of a divorced man, Ankur, who gets a second chance at love when his college crush re-enters his life. However, chaos ensues when his amnesiac former wife also returns.

Talking about working with the two again, she explained how the comfort shaped her experience on set. Rakul said in a statement: "I think what felt different this time reuniting was that there was an ease of working because obviously it's not your first time and you know the way an actor or a director approaches the film and their scenes and I think that comfort and ease really helps in having a good time on set so absolutely yes familiarity does change your approach of as it makes it simpler and more fun and you know you're already friendly with everybody, so I think it's just easier when you work with friends."

Alongside Rakul, the film also stars Sara Ali Khan, and Wamiqa Gabbi in key roles. The film is set in Prayagraj, where a wedding takes a chaotic turn when one decision leads to a chain of misunderstandings and comedic suspicion.

Gulshan Kumar, B R Chopra and T-Series present, a T-Series Films and B R Studios Production, *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do*, directed by Mudassar Aziz, produced by Bhushan Kumar, Renu Ravi Chopra, and Krishan Kumar and creatively produced by Juno Chopra. The film will release on May 15, 2026.



India's Best Dancer Season 5 returns

Sony Pictures Networks India has announced the return of its popular dance reality show *India's Best Dancer for Season 5*, celebrating the theme *India Wala Dance* with an iconic judging panel.

Actors Jaaved Jaaferi and Karisma Kapoor, along with choreographers Geeta Kapur and Terence Lewis, will serve as judges, while Haash Limbachiyaa returns as host.

The new season will highlight diverse dance forms blending Bollywood styles with popular music, focusing on talent, individuality, and expression. Contestants from across the country will present their interpretation of *India Wala Dance*, with performances judged on skill, originality, and emotional depth.

The show is set to premiere on May 9, 2026, and will air every weekend at 9:30 PM on Sony Entertainment Television and Sony LIV.

Malayalam actor Santhosh Nair dies

Malayalam actor Santhosh K Nair died in a tragic road accident in Kerala's Adoor on Tuesday morning. The actor was travelling with his wife, Rajalakshmi, when their Innova car reportedly collided with a parcel truck on the MC Road near Puthussery. According to reports, the accident took place around 6:30 am near Adoor Enath. The car in which the actor was travelling is said to have lost control before crashing into the truck. Following the collision, Santhosh was rushed to Adoor Life Line Hospital for treatment. However, he later succumbed to his injuries.



Photo: Instagram_@varundvn

Armaan Malik's Gold House Gala debut

Singer Armaan Malik is set to make his debut at the prestigious Gold House Gala in Los Angeles on May 9, where he will attend as a special guest.

The gala, known for bringing together influential voices from Asian and Pacific Islander communities, celebrates excellence across entertainment, business, and culture. Malik's presence highlights the growing global recognition of Indian artists, particularly in the music industry.

In previous years, prominent Indian figures like Karan Johar have been associated with the event, while global icon Priyanka Chopra Jonas has also been honoured, underlining India's expanding influence on the international stage.

Malik has steadily moved beyond Bollywood, exploring international music and releasing English tracks, which have helped him build a strong global fanbase. His debut at the gala marks another milestone in his international journey. The appearance is being seen as a proud moment for Indian music, as Malik continues to represent the country on global platforms.



Varun shares rickshaw ride video, later deletes it

Actors travelling in public transport is nothing new. So, recently, actor Varun Dhawan ditched his luxury car and decided to travel in Mumbai's rickshaw. He took to Instagram to share the video of the same, and used his song

Wow from the film *Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai* in the reel. Varun captioned the video as, "Rickshaw ride ek dum wow (sic)." However, the actor later deleted the video. Well, we wonder what made the actor delete the video from Instagram. However, we found it on one of the Instagram pages.



Photo: Instagram_@varundvn