



People visiting the Taj Mahal amid rain in Agra on Sunday

PTI

# Monsoon drenches India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday announced the southwest monsoon covered the entire country on Sunday (June 29), significantly ahead of its normal schedule of July 8. However, in Delhi, its arrival was slightly delayed from the usual onset date of June 27. Last year, the monsoon reached the national Capital on June 28, while in 2022 it arrived earlier, on June 25.

“The Southwest Monsoon has further advanced into remaining parts of Rajasthan,

**The IMD has issued red alert for heavy rainfall on June 29, June 30 across Uttarakhand, including Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Tehri, etc**

West Uttar Pradesh and Haryana and Entire Delhi today, the 29th June 2025. Thus, it has covered the entire country on 29th June, 2025, against the normal date of 08th July (9 days before the normal date of covering the entire India),” the IMD said in a statement on X.

A cloudburst in

Uttarakhand’s Uttarkashi district early Sunday left two construction workers dead and seven missing as monsoon covered the entire country almost a week earlier than usual, bringing rain in the national Capital and other northern States, triggering landslides in several hilly areas and sending rivers into spate. The IMD has issued a red alert for heavy rainfall on June 29 and 30 in various districts of Uttarakhand, including Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Dehradun, Tehri, Pauri, Haridwar and Nainital. Authorities have put the Chardham yatra on hold for a day for the safety of pilgrims.

The Shimla Meteorological Centre has also issued a red alert for very heavy downpour in 10 districts of Himachal Pradesh, where the death toll from rain-related incidents climbed to 20 since the onset of monsoon in the State on June 20. In Uttarakhand, a landslide triggered by a cloudburst destroyed the shelters of workers engaged in the construction of a hotel along the Yamunotri National Highway in Uttarkashi district, officials said. There were 29 labourers at the campsite when the landslide occurred washing away around 10 metres of the highway.

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## Stampede mars Lord Jagannath’s yatra



People gather near the chariots of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra during the annual 'Rath Yatra' festival celebration, in Puri, Odisha, Sunday

PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Puri

At least three persons, including two women, were killed and 50 others injured in a stampede near Shree Gundicha Temple in Odisha’s Puri on Sunday morning during a ceremony related to the ongoing Rath Yatra festivities. The incident took place around 4.20 am when thousands of devotees had gathered near the chariots parked in front of the temple, they said. The injured have been admitted to a nearby hospital, and the condition of six people is stated to be critical.

The Gundicha Temple, located around 3km from the 12th century shrine, is the aunt’s house of Lord Jagannath and his siblings, Subhadra and Balabhadra. During Rath Yatra, the deities visit their aunt’s home, stay there for seven days, and then return to their abode - the Jagannath Temple.

According to police, chaos ensued after two trucks carrying materials for rituals reportedly entered the crowded spot

**Following the stampede, CM ordered the transfer of two bureaucrats and suspension of two police officers**

near the chariots of Lord Jagannath and his sibling deities. The deities were seated on the chariots when the stampede took place.

“Thousands of devotees had assembled outside the temple since the early hours to catch a glimpse of the deities when the ‘Pahuda’ (cloth) covering the front portion of the chariots was to be removed, as part of the rituals,” officials said. The deceased were identified as Basanti Sahu (36) from Bolagarh, and Premakant Mohanty (80) and Pravat Das (42) from Balipatna. Their bodies have been handed over to family members, and the cremation will take place at ‘Swargadwar’ in Puri.

In a punitive measure following the stampede, Chief Minister Mohan Majhi ordered

the transfer of District Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain and SP Vineet Agrawal. Majhi also announced the suspension of two police officers - DCP Bishnu Pati and Commandant Ajay Padhi - an official release said. He ordered an administrative inquiry into the matter to be carried out under the supervision of the Development Commissioner.

In another order, senior bureaucrat Saswata Mishra was appointed principal secretary to the CM in addition to his current responsibilities. The 1996-batch IAS officer is presently posted as principal secretary in finance department with additional charge of chairman, IDCO. The Odisha Government will provide financial assistance of ₹25 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased, the release added.

Another notification issued by the General Administration Department stated that senior bureaucrat Aravind Agarwal was being appointed as in-charge of the overall supervision of Rath Yatra.

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## Two arrested for attacking US nationals in Capital

VAISHNAVI MISHRA  
■ New Delhi

The Delhi Police, on Sunday, arrested two men after a brief exchange of fire for allegedly robbing and attacking two US nationals, in southeast Delhi’s Astha Kunj Park, officials said.

According to police, the robbery took place on the intervening night of June 25 and 26, when a 28 year-old American national and his female friend were taking a late-night walk in Astha Kunj Park, which is located between the Nehru Place and Kailash Colony areas. Two men allegedly approached the couple and, after a brief altercation, attacked the male tourist with a knife, injuring both his hands. They then snatched the woman’s mobile phone and fled the scene.

The injured tourist was initially taken to a nearby private hospital for treatment but was later shifted to another hospital in Sarita Vihar, where he underwent surgery for his injuries. Based on a statement given by the female companion, who also filed the complaint, the police registered a case of robbery and voluntarily causing hurt.

As per the police, the US national was identified as Aradome Bela Kahn, who has been abandoned by his parents in childhood and since then he is under care of a lady Dr. Mala Sibal living in Delhi.

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## The ByStander



## Maharashtra scraps three-language policy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Mumbai

Facing mounting opposition to the introduction of Hindi language in Maharashtra schools from classes 1 to 5, the State Cabinet on Sunday decided to withdraw two GRs (Government orders) on the implementation of the three-language policy.

Immediately after the announcement, the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and Uddhav Thackeray’s Shiv Sena (UBT) said the protest march planned on July 5 against the GRs has been cancelled. However, Uddhav Thackeray said that a programme will take place on July 5 to celebrate the “unity of the Marathi manooos”.

Addressing a press conference in Mumbai on the eve of the monsoon session of State legislature, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said the GRs have been withdrawn, and announced the formation of a committee headed by educationist Narendra Jadhav to suggest the way forward on the language policy.

“Why was the Government so adamant about the Hindi language and who exactly was pressuring the Government for this remains a mystery,” Raj Thackeray wrote on X.

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## PM quotes forgotten leaders on Emergency

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday played remarks of leading anti-Emergency politicians in his monthly radio broadcast to slam the then Congress Government for atrocities on people, and said they should always be remembered as it inspires people to stay alert to keep the Constitution strong. Speaking in his Mann Ki Baat programme, Modi said those who imposed the Emergency not only murdered the Constitution but also made judiciary their puppet.

His condemnation of the Congress for the Emergency-era excesses without naming the party or the then PM Indira Gandhi came amid an ongoing bitter war of words between the ruling BJP and Opposition parties, which have claimed that an undeclared Emergency prevails under the Modi Government.

Modi said in his address that with the power of public participation, big crises can be confronted.

He said, “I will play an audio for you. In this audio you will get an idea of ??the magnitude of that crisis. How grave that cri-

**The PM said, people were tortured on a large scale during the Emergency for the 21-month period between 1975 and 1977**

sis was.”

In the audio, Morarji Desai, the prime minister after the Emergency, said the “oppression” of the Indira Gandhi regime was going on for several years but reached its peak in the last two years after the Emergency was imposed.

Desai said, “People’s right to freedom was snatched away, newspapers were left without freedom. Courts were made completely powerless. And the way more than one lakh people were put in jail and then arbitrary rule continued, it is difficult to find its traces in the history of the world.”

Modi said in the broadcast that people were tortured on a large scale during the Emergency for the 21-month period between 1975 and 1977. There are countless examples of atrocities on people that cannot be forgotten, he added.

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## Rail reservation revamped



File Photo

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA  
■ New Delhi

After experimenting success of 24-hours advanced railway reservation charting system in one of its division, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has given the go ahead for implementation of eight hours advanced rail reservation charting in a phase wise across the Indian railways network.

Presently the decades old practice is four hours advanced reservation charting and the railways rolled out the 24 hours prototype in its Bikaner Division.

Following the feedback from passengers as well as zonal officials, the Railway Board will now take it to pan India as improved advanced charting will help travellers secure certainties of travel plan.

“To remove this uncertainty, the railway board has proposed preparing the reservation chart eight hours before the departure. For trains departing before 2 pm, the chart will be prepared the previous day at 9 pm itself.

This move will reduce uncertainties for passengers with waitlist tickets. The passengers will get the first update on waitlist status well in advance. It will benefit passengers travelling from remote locations or suburbs of major cities for catching long distance trains. It will also provide more time to make alternative arrangements in case the wait list is not confirmed,” said ADG PIB, Railway Spokesman, Dharmendra Tewari.

Currently, the reservation chart is prepared four hours before the departure of the train. This creates uncertainty in the minds of passengers. Wherever passengers are coming from a nearby area to catch the train, this uncertainty can cause serious problems.

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## Top colleges default on anti-ragging norms

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Four Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and three Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are on the defaulter list for not complying with anti-ragging norms, according to officials at University Grants Commission (UGC). The UGC has issued show-cause notices to 89 institutions across the country for not submitting mandatory compliance undertakings of anti-ragging norms.

On the defaulter list are 17 Institutes of national importance, including IITs, IIMs, AIIMS and NIDS.

The defaulter IITs are - IIT Bombay, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Palakkad and IIT Hyderabad. Similarly, IIM Bombay, IIM Rohtak and IIM Tiruchirappalli are also on the list.

The defaulters also include AIIMS Raebareilly and National Institute of Design -- Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana.

“It has come to the attention of UGC that these institutions have failed to submit the mandatory Anti-Ragging undertakings by students and compliance undertaking by the

**The UGC has warned defaulter institutions of withdrawing UGC Grants and Funding, impacting financial assistance**

institutions, despite multiple advisories issued by the UGC, follow-up calls from the Anti-Ragging Helpline, and direct interventions by the Anti Ragging Monitoring Agency,” said UGC Secretary Manish Joshi. “Adherence to the UGC Regulation on Ragging, 2009 is mandatory for all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Failure to comply not only violates UGC guidelines but also compromises student safety, particularly in light of increasing concerns about ragging-related distress and campus hostility,” he added.

The UGC has warned the defaulter institutions of withdrawing UGC Grants and Funding, impacting financial assistance and research projects and de-recognition or withdrawal of affiliation, if the norms are not complied within 30 days.

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## Kalyan, Mahua trade barbs on Kolkata law college rape



SAUGAR SENGUPTA  
■ Kolkata

A war of words on Sunday ensued within the Trinamool Congress (TMC) after senior party MP Kalyan Banerjee slammed the leadership for not practicing what it preached and receiving flak from party colleague Mahua Moitra for nourishing an alleged misogynistic mindset.

Banerjee hit back Moitra for her misogynist remarks saying it was not him but Moitra who was anti-woman. Mounting a personal attack on Mitra’s marriage, Banerjee said, “Emerging from a one and a half month honeymoon from abroad she is calling me anti-woman but if her recent (marital) conduct is to be seen, women will understand who is actually anti-women because she

has ruined the life and family of a woman.”

Earlier Moitra had in a subtle statement on remarks made by some of her party colleagues including Banerjee and former Minister Madan Mitra written “Misogyny in India cuts across party lines. What differentiates ... is that we condemn these disgusting comments no matter who makes them.”

Banerjee in reference to the to the South Calcutta Law College gangrape case had earlier asked, “What can be done if a friend rapes his friend?” He also said that the leadership should practice what it preaches adding, “The zero tolerance as is being bandied about and preached should be practiced before and not after the crime has been committed.”

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## MP cop blames internet for crimes

GIRISH SHARMA ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Kailash Makwana, has attributed the increasing incidents of rape to a combination of societal factors, including easy access to the internet, mobile phones, alcohol, and a decline in moral values. He emphasised that preventing such crimes cannot be the sole responsibility of the police.

Addressing a divisional review meeting in Ujjain, DGP Makwana stated that the widespread availability of mobile phones and the internet has made obscene content more accessible, which he believes plays a significant role in influencing young minds. He said, “There are many reasons behind the rise in such incidents, but in my view, the easy access to mobile phones, the internet, obscene material, and alcohol



are contributing factors. The ability to connect with anyone at any time through mobile phones has further aggravated the situation. There is a noticeable decline in moral values in society, and these are the key reasons behind the increase in rape cases.”

Makwana specifically pointed to the effect of obscene content available on the internet, stating that it has a disturbing influence on young people. “The

kind of obscenity being served through the internet is distorting young minds from an early age, and this, undoubtedly, is one of the primary reasons behind the rise in such incidents,” he added.

The DGP also reflected on the gradual erosion of moral values within families and communities. He remarked that, unlike in the past, children today no longer consistently listen to their parents or teachers, which has led to a breakdown in societal discipline. “Earlier, children used to listen to their parents and teachers. There was a sense of shame and respect, but many of those boundaries have now disappeared. Even within homes, people are not keeping watch over each other,” he said.

Makwana concluded by highlighting that addressing such deep-rooted issues requires more than just law enforcement measures.



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
Varanasi

**U**ttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamp and Court Registration Fees Ravindra Jaiswal said that along with protecting the cultural and historical heritage of Kashi it would be developed further. He emphasised that the cultural and historical heritage of Kashi will be developed and light and sound systems will be developed through new technology. Action plan will be prepared for light and sound of new technology at places like Kashi Vishwanath Temple and LT College of Orderly Bazaar associated with the memory of Vivekananda.

Jaiswal was holding a meeting with Divisional Commissioner S Rajalingam, DM Satyendra Kumar, VDA V-C Pulkrit Garg, Municipal Commissioner Akshat Verma and other departmental officials at the Circuit House here on Saturday in which an action plan was prepared to preserve the things of old cultural and religious importance of Varanasi and how the tourists visiting it can get maximum information about it. It was also decided that all the things will be preserved in a hall for the display of historical and cultural heritage related to Kashi. Tourists visiting Kashi will be able to get complete information about it. During the meeting, the minister heard the problems of the corporators one by one and directed the officials of the department concerned for quick resolution on priority. The minister directed the chief engineer of the Electricity Department that there should not be any hanging wires and dilapidated poles of electricity anywhere in the urban areas. "There is no shortage of budget. Whatever problem of the Electricity department is there, get it resolved", the minister said, discussing and deliberating on various points to get rid of the problem of traffic jams in the city. Apart from the corporators, Ayush Jaiswal, Amitabh Bhattacharya, Alok Parikh, Pradeep Singh and others were present.

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**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
Varanasi

**V**ehicles will soon run at full speed on the Kanakpura railway overbridge (ROB) in the city.

Varanasi City South assembly MLA and former minister Dr Neelkanth Tiwari on Saturday conducted a surprise inspection of the under construction ROB. After inspection, he directed the officers concerned to complete the construction work in three months. After reaching there, he inquired about the current status from the project officer of Setu Nigam (Uttar Pradesh State Bridge Corporation) and discussed in detail every point related to the construction work. He walked on the approximately 1.5-km-long bridge and got information about the delay in completion of the construction work. He said that the obstacles coming in the construction work of the bridge are being removed. In any case the construction work of the said bridge should be completed in three months, he added. The MLA said that this ROB was the longest rail overbridge in Purvanchal (eastern UP), which would cross two railway lines. Due to the narrow path to Kazzkapura railway crossing and Lat Bhairav, there was often a traffic jam here. There was a demand for ROB here since 1980. "After the construction of this bridge, the crowd of vehicles will increase further. To control this, a wide and systematic path will be required on both sides of the bridge. By developing a crossroad on GT Road at the Golgadda end, it will be easy for vehicles to go in every direction without any hindrance, on the other hand, the

old bridge at the Saraiya end, which is very narrow, will be widened to make traffic easier" the MLA said. He talked to the district magistrate and asked to develop a crossroad after getting down from the bridge at the Golgadda GT Road end of the bridge and to widen the old bridge located at the Saraiya end.

Meanwhile, water coolers including RO, were inaugurated at many places in Rajghat ward by the MLA. These water coolers will provide great convenience to the passersby. Due to Rajghat, Namu Ghat and Konia Pul (bridge), the movement of passersby has increased significantly in these areas. Water coolers have been installed for pure drinking water near Sheetla Mata Mandir New Colony in Kazzkapura of Rajghat ward, Tadvaveer Baba Temple, Bhadauveer Baba Temple and

Bhaissaur Baba Temple at Rajghat. So far, 10 public places of City South assembly have been inaugurated by Dr Tiwari.

BJP mandator President Bablu Seth, Sandeep Chaturvedi, Vijay Sonkar, Rohit Jaiswal, Deepak Maurya, Ashok Tiwari, Avnish Kushwaha, Shubham Chaurasia, Deepak Jaiswal, Balaji and others were present.

**सार्वजनिक सूचना**  
मेरे पुत्र का नाम भूलव्य अनिकेष्ठ कुमार लिख गया है। अब उसका नाम बदलकर आवर्ष लिख हो गया है, भविष्य में उसे इसी नाम से जाना व पहचाना जाए। प्रया देवी पत्नी संतोष कुमार अजयदा तिरासी - ग्राम पूर्वा तालाब पोस्ट चण्दा नवलखी, औरैया, अजीमनगर जिला - औरैया, पिन कोड-206122

**IN THE DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, LUCKNOW.**  
**MINISTRY OF FINANCE**  
**(DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES)6001/ UNIVERSITY ROAD NEAR HANUMAN SETU**

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**IN THE DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, LUCKNOW.**  
**MINISTRY OF FINANCE**  
**(DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES)600/1 UNIVERSITY ROAD NEAR HANUMAN SETU**

Vineet Kumar Srivastava said. He added that at present, this NSG-3 category station has foot over bridge, enquiry office, public address system, 10 ticket windows, coach indication boards, signage, CCTV cameras, toilets, waiting hall, executive lounge, separate waiting rooms and dormitories for men and women are available. "Two escalators have been installed here. A high-mast tower has been installed for better lighting in the circulating area", the DRM informed.

He stated that under the ABSS, the station building of Deoria Sadar is being given an attractive look and modern amenities are being developed and expanded. He said that under this scheme, work was being done to improve the approach road and circulating area of the station and the entrance portico in the station building. "Apart from this, a waiting hall and toilets are being constructed. For the convenience of passengers, a 12 metres wide FOB and three lifts and two escalators will be installed. Signage will be installed at the station as per international standards. The station building will be equipped with attractive facade lighting", he said. PNS

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
Varanasi

**I**ndigenous skills and the spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) have once again proved their superiority at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW).

The production at the BLW was disrupted due to technical fault in CNC heavy duty portal milling machine worth Rs 27.26 crore purchased from the Czech Republic in the year 2015, which is very important for the machining of crankcase.

The problem of ground fault had arisen in the B-axis head of the machine, for the solution of which the manufacturing company was contacted several times, but the expected help could not be obtained.

In such a situation, under the leadership and guidance of General Manager Naresh Pal Singh, technical team of the Banaras Locomotive Works accepted this challenge and decided to repair the machine in-house. Without foreign assistance, the Banaras Locomotive Works engineers made the impossible possible. Before opening the head of the machine, its entire structure and drawings were thorough-

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ly studied. Re-drawings of all the necessary components were prepared and they were carefully opened. It was decided to shift the power supply to the spare ring present in the slip ring assembly - this work was extremely complex and of high technical capability. By opening all the power and control wire connections, the slip ring supply shifted in the brass ring was lifted from bottom to top. With this amazing technical skill, a permanent solution to the problem was obtained and the machine started working smoothly again.

This achievement has resulted in direct financial savings of about Rs 25 lakh for BLW, and also the disruption in the production of crank cases has been eliminated. This success is not only a testimony to BLW's technical proficiency, but is also a living example of the spirit of 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

"BLW's skilled artisans and engineers have once again proved that India is second to none in the field of technological self-reliance. This achievement is a matter of pride for the entire Indian Railways system", said the general manager.

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**Varanasi:** The ancient Andhara Pul of the city is going to be beautified. It will now be decorated on the theme of the rich cultural and historical heritage of Kashi. Attractive art work will be done on the walls of the bridge through special tiles, which will not only enhance its beauty, but also dust will not stick on the walls with the use of this special technique. The cost of this work to be done by Smart City Project will be around Rs 46.37 lakh. The beautification work is in the tender process.

Andhara Bridge is important in the route connecting the trans-Varuna region, a large number of local people and tourists also pass through here. This decades-old bridge will now be rejuvenated. CGM of Varanasi Smart City Project Amarendra Tiwari said that the years old Andhara Bridge will be beautified with the theme of Kashi. "Cultural and historical heritage will be engraved on the walls. Art work will be done with glass mosaic tiles in its construction. Dust does not stick to these special tiles, due to which the art work will always look clean. Special historical, cultural and religious places located in the direction of coming and going from Andhara Bridge will be engraved, which will also work as a guide for tourists. Along with this, direction indicators will also be installed regarding important places", he said.

Tiwari said that there was also a plan for smart lighting on this ancient bridge, which would increase the attraction of this bridge at night.

"This work will not only enhance the beauty of the city, but will also become a centre of special experience for tourists while strengthening the infrastructure of the city. This will give a new attraction to the travellers coming to Kashi and they will also get an opportunity to connect with its history and tradition", he added.

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**BETWEEN**  
**PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK**  
**.....APPLICANT**  
**vs.**  
**SUNDAR SINGH**  
**.....RESPONDENT**  
To Mr. SUNDAR SINGH S/o. TECH  
CHAND R/o. PLAT NO. 254, GROUND  
FLOOR, SHAKTI KHANNO 401 INDI-  
RAPURAM, GHAZIABAD.  
Whereas in the above mentioned case,  
the Applicant has made M.A.  
Take notice that you are hereby  
required to appear before the Registrar,  
on day 16.07.2025, at 10:30 AM, in  
the forenoon in person or by a  
pleader/advocate to show cause as to  
why the said M.A., should not be  
allowed. Failing which the said M.A.,  
will be heard and determined Ex-Parte.  
Given under my hand & seal of this  
Tribunal on 13.05.2025.

**Registrar**  
**Debt Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow**

It is informed to the general public that the original power of attorney related to house number ML-203 (MLIG) area 72 sqm located Type C Ambekad Nagar, Kanpur was executed by Shri Prabhru Dahiya in favour of Smt. Janakshi Devi on 23-10-2009 and the said power of attorney is registered at number 2057 on page number 193200 of book number 4, volume number 275, the said power of attorney is not mortgaged in any place somewhere. It is not mortgaged in any bank or financial institution. The use of the said power of attorney will not be considered valid in any way. Date-29/06/2025

**Shivsher Singh So Satyabhanu Singh**  
Resident- LIG 156, Ambekad Nagar  
Gujaini, Kanpur Mob. 8849897604

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
Kanpur

**W**ellness is the desire of every person and also the need of the hour. The Wellness Talk by Kavita's Nutrition Club and Muskuray Kanpur was inaugurated by Dr Sidhanshu Rai of CSJM University, Senior Medical Officer Dr Pankaja Pandey and Dr Kavita Arora.

Dr Sudhanshu Rai said, "we should maintain a balance in our choices, behaviour and lifestyle". Senior Medical Officer of KPM Hospital, Dr Pankaja Pandey, said that mental health was the most important and stress management was the need of every person today. Program coordinator Dr Kavita Arora asked to never ignore fitness. Naturopathist Dr Amarnath Kashyap said, "just

like you service your car, it is necessary to service your body i.e. detox from time to time".

Dietician Dr Meenakshi Anurag said that diabetes was not a disease but it is an imbalance in your lifestyle. Preeti Ranjan said that along with inner beauty, outer beauty also satisfies a person. Dr Hemant Mohan said "our body and mind should move in the same direction". Lions Club Mangalam President AS Agarwal emphasised on spreading awareness in the entire city through wellness talk. Members of the Nutrition Club shared their experiences.

On this occasion, Anoop Dwivedi, Dr Amit Mishra, Dr Sushil Mishra, Akhil Tyagi, Deepika Srivastava, Manish Agarwal, Shikha Agarwal, Anita Tyagi, Upendra Yadav and others were present.

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**A** man and his nephew drowned into a canal in the Bidhnu police station area. They had gone there for fishing and died by drowning. According to a report, received here, Ramesh Paswan (55) of Khersa village and his nephew Bablu (35) had gone to the canal bank to catch fish on Saturday night. While casting the net in the canal, Bablu's feet slipped and he got entangled in the net and started drowning. At this, uncle Ramesh also jumped into the canal to save his nephew. However, both of them drowned due to the strong current and slippery water.

On Sunday morning after clothes and belongings were found on the bank of the canal the family informed the police.

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Kanpur

**T**he four-day summer camp organised under the guidance of Dr Mukta Garg, in charge, Department of Human Development, CSAU&T, concluded successfully with an environmental conservation programme. As part of the event, BSc 4th semester students showcased an exhibition of educational materials designed for both typical and differently-abled children. During the camp, under the mentorship of Dr Sumedha Chaudhary and Renu, various interactive and creative activities were conducted.

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# Mining sector a key driver of economic growth: Yogi

## Asks officials to expedite composite licensing process

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has emphasised the crucial role of the mining sector in Uttar Pradesh's journey towards achieving the goal of one trillion-dollar economy.

He noted that the mining sector has evolved beyond just mineral extraction to become a key driver of economic growth, investment attraction and local employment generation.

During a comprehensive review meeting of the Geology and Mining Department on Sunday, the chief minister stated that the state's mining policy has now emerged as a model of transparency and technological efficiency.

Highlighting the department's performance, he noted that mineral revenue has recorded an average annual growth rate of 18.14 per cent between FY 2022 and FY 2025. In FY 2025, revenue from major minerals stood at Rs 608.11 crore. Remarkably, in just the first two months of FY 2026, the state has already generated Rs 623 crore in revenue, reflecting the sector's consistent growth and the operational effectiveness of the department.

The chief minister was informed that leases for major minerals such as phosphorite, iron ore, and gold have been successfully auctioned in recent years. He directed officials to expedite the composite licensing process further and ensure



timely identification of potential mining zones along with the prompt preparation of geological reports.

Emphasising the impact of transparent and investor-friendly policies, the chief minister noted that prominent companies like JSW, Adani Group, Tata Steel and UltraTech Cement have shown strong interest in investing in Uttar Pradesh.

The department has undertaken substantial work across more than 70 sub-indicators to secure Uttar Pradesh a top position in the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI). A 100 per cent implementation of the mine surveillance system has been achieved in all mining districts, leading to significant improvements in the average timeline for environmental clearances and enhancing the overall transparency of regulatory procedures.

The chief minister instructed

ed that the remaining reforms be completed within the stipulated time-frame to ensure Uttar Pradesh attains 'Category-A' status in SMRI.

To effectively curb illegal mining, transportation and storage, the chief minister called for a robust monitoring mechanism in coordination with transport operators.

He made it clear that mining activities will not be permitted in river catchment areas, and strict accountability will be enforced against responsible officials if violations occur.

Officials reported that 57 technology-enabled check gates have been installed, and 21,477 vehicles have been blacklisted. Systems such as the Vehicle Tracking System (VTS), colour coding, and white tagging are functioning efficiently.

The chief minister directed that only GPS-enabled vehicles

meeting the required standards should be authorised for mineral transportation and that their movement must be tracked in real-time through the VTS module.

Since 2024, the PGRS laboratory and drone surveys have identified 99 potential mining sites, of which 23 have been deemed suitable for operations. Post-monsoon assessments have also been conducted for sand/morang deposits in 52 locations.

Appreciating these efforts, the chief minister instructed that monitoring of active leases and volumetric analysis for accurate extraction assessment should be further intensified.

The meeting was also informed that the regulation fees collected from brick kilns amounted to Rs 258.61 crore in 2024-25 and Rs 70.80 crore as of 2025-26. The chief minister directed that the brick kiln sector be modernised through the adoption of technology and innovation, with regular engagement with kiln operators.

Additionally, the chief minister directed that the process of issuing new leases for minor minerals be completed during the monsoon season, enabling mining activities to commence from October 15. He also emphasised the optimal utilisation of the DMF fund, instructing that it be prioritised for public welfare initiatives, such as establishing Anganwadi centres, developing playgrounds, enhancing healthcare and skill training, and promoting water and energy conservation.

## CM pays tribute to Lahiri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday paid tributes to revolutionary and mastermind of the Kakori train conspiracy Rajendra Nath Lahiri on his birth anniversary, and said his sacrifice is an indelible heritage of the nation.

"Many salutes to the heroic hero of 'Kakori Train Action', great revolutionary Rajendra Nath Lahiri on his birth anniversary!" Adityanath said on X.

The chief minister said, "Your (Lahiri's) sacrifice is an indelible heritage of the nation, which will always show us the path of patriotism and devotion to duty."

Born on June 29, 1901 in Mohanpur village of present-day Panna district in West Bengal, Lahiri moved to his maternal uncle's house in Varanasi at the age of nine.

In order to arrange money to buy guns to fight the British rule, Lahiri along with Pandit Ram Prasad Bismil, Thakur Roshan Singh, Ashfaqulla Khan and half a dozen other associates attacked the 8 down train from Saharanpur to Lucknow at Kakori railway station on August 9, 1925 and looted the government treasury. The four were sentenced to death in the case.

All the revolutionaries were kept in different jails of the state by the Britishers. Lahiri was sent to Gonda jail, where he was hanged on December 17, 1927. The Kakori train conspiracy was a significant event in India's struggle for Independence.

# Gorakhpur gears up to welcome Prez today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Gorakhpur

Gorakhpur is all set to welcome President Droupadi Murmu on Monday during her two-day visit during which she will attend key events at three major institutions and cover an unprecedented 129 kilometres across the city by road.

She will arrive on June 30 and depart on July 1, with her first engagement being the inaugural convocation of AIIMS Gorakhpur, where she will confer medals on meritorious students.

The following day, July 1, President Murmu will inaugurate Uttar Pradesh's first Mahayogi Guru Gorakhnath AYUSH University in the morning. In the afternoon, she will inaugurate the academic block, auditorium and Panchkarma Centre and lay the foundation stone for the girls' hostel at Mahayogi Gorakhnath University's Arogyadham campus in Sonbarsa.



Additionally, she will visit the Gorakhnath temple on both days, where a special darshan and prasad ceremony has also been scheduled.

On Monday, President Murmu will travel approximately 37 kilometres by road from the airport to Circuit House, AIIMS, and Gorakhnath temple. On Tuesday, she will cover approximately 92 kilometres, visiting the Circuit House, AYUSH University, Mahayogi Gorakhnath University Arogyadham, the Gorakhnath

temple, and finally, the airport. This marks the longest road journey by any Indian president within the state of Uttar Pradesh, specifically in the Gorakhpur region.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has already reviewed preparations for the President Murmu's visit, including the event venues and travel routes to AYUSH University and Mahayogi Gorakhnath University. Notably, this will be the fourth time Chief Minister Yogi will welcome a president to Gorakhpur in his eight-year tenure.

Meanwhile, President Murmu will be the chief guest at the 11th convocation ceremony of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute at the Swami Vivekananda Auditorium at Izzatnagar, Bareilly, officials said Sunday. Chief Minister Yogi, two governors and as many union ministers are also expected to attend the event on Monday.

# Advertising co's server hacked

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Cyber thugs hacked the server of an Indira Nagar-based advertising company.

The incident came to light on Sunday.

The cyber thugs corrupted the data and files of the entire computer network of the company by planting a virus through an attachment. The accused later demanded money for repairing the system.

IT in-charge of the compa-

ny, Vivek Jain, has filed a complaint at the cyber crime police station. Cyber police station's Inspector Brajesh Kumar Yadav said that the IT in-charge of the company had filed a complaint of cyber attack on the company's computer system.

According to the complainant, on May 9, at around 3 am, his company's server was hacked through a cyber attack. After this, all the computer systems, data and files of the company were hacked by the thugs. This was discovered when the data could not be

accessed. On opening the files, it was found that they were corrupted. After this, the officials were informed and the help of an antivirus team was taken but the files and data could not be recovered as a result of which work of the company came to a halt.

The cyber team and the police station were informed immediately. The company's computer system has been formatted and the fraudsters are being traced.

Police are gathering information about the cyber thugs.

# Govt plans to upgrade village infra, services

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

## MISSION 2031

The Uttar Pradesh government is preparing a large-scale development initiative focused on rural transformation. As a part of Mission 2031, the government aims to modernise and enrich villages across the state by significantly upgrading their infrastructure and services.

In a recent meeting with the Central Finance Commission, the state government submitted a proposal seeking over Rs 2.15 lakh crore for rural local bodies. This proposal is seen as a major step towards realising the vision of a self-reliant and developed rural Uttar Pradesh.

As part of this roadmap, the government has proposed Rs

1,74,755 crore for gram panchayats, Rs 17,334 crore for block-level development and Rs 22,940 crore for district panchayats. The total allocation is earmarked for essential infrastructure improvements, repairs, and maintenance, marking one of the most comprehensive rural investment drives in the state's history.

Notably, the 'Mission 2031' blueprint also includes a Rs 1.29 lakh crore infrastructure development roadmap for the state's 17 municipal corporations, indicating the dual focus of the government on both urban and rural transformation.

By the year 2031, every village in Uttar Pradesh should be self-reliant and prosperous. Under this mission, the focus is on improving basic amenities like roads, water supply, electricity and infrastructure. By presenting this proposal to the Central Finance Commission, the government has shown that rural development is one of its top priorities.

This massive initiative, involving an investment of Rs 2.15 lakh crore in rural areas, is expected to not only improve the overall condition of villages, but also generate employment and raise the standard of living for rural residents. The plan will accelerate development and support of making Uttar Pradesh a leading state in the country.

## Three youths beaten up

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

SUV-borne miscreants and their cohorts riding 2-3 motorcycles beat up three youths returning from a dhaba after dining there in Chinhat in the wee hours of Saturday. The assailants also tried to kidnap them at gunpoint. When the youths resisted, they were hit on the head with an iron rod. The miscreants also hit the motorcycle of the youths trying to escape with their Scorpio from behind. The reason for the attack is said to be an old rivalry. Police have registered a case and are investigating the matter.

The victims were identified as Akhand Pratap Singh of Maharishi Nagar in Barabanki and his friends Gaurang Dwivedi and Shivam Shukla of Lucknow.

# 8 IAS, 5 IPS officers transferred

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government, on Sunday, transferred eight IAS officers and five IPS officers.

Among the IAS officers transferred on Sunday, Alok Kumar-3 has been given the additional charge of the principal secretary, Planning and Programme Implementation Department, and the nodal officer of One-Trillion Dollar Economy along with the post of principal secretary, Restructuring Coordination, Language, National Integration and General Administration Department and Director, Hindi Institute.

Rakesh Kumar Singh-2 has been removed from the post of secretary to the chief minister and made Chief Executive Officer of Yamuna Expressway

Industrial Development Authority and chief executive officer of Noida international airport.

Yogesh Kumar has been removed from the post of special secretary, Home, and made commissioner and registrar in-charge of Cooperative Societies.

Dr Heera Lal has been removed from the post of commissioner and registrar of Cooperative Societies and made secretary of National Environment Department.

Anamika Singh has been removed from the post of secretary, Women Welfare, Child Development and Nutrition Department, Director General Nutrition Mission and made CEO of UP Clean Air Management Project Authority and secretary of National Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department.

Bhawani Singh Khangarot, who was on the waiting list, has been made special secretary, Revenue Department. Sanya Chhabra has been removed from the post of MD, State Tourism Development Corporation, and made chief development officer of HarDOI.

Isha Priya has been given additional charge of State Tourism Development Corporation along with the post of special secretary of Tourism Department.

The IPS officers shifted include the ADG of Lucknow Zone, the SSP of Saharanpur and the ADG of PAC along with DG of Police Recruitment Board. Lucknow Zone ADG SB Shiroadkar, who was recently promoted to the rank of DG, has now been made the Chairman of the Recruitment Board. The responsibility of the

Chairman of the Recruitment Board was with DGP Rajiv Krishna till now. Krishna now remains DG of Vigilance Establishment with additional charge of the DGP of Uttar Pradesh.

PAC ADG Sujit Pandey has been made the new ADG of Lucknow Zone. He was earlier commissioner of police of Lucknow and IG of Lucknow Range.

RK Swarnkar, who was removed from Kanpur police commissionerate and sent to PTC Sitapur, has returned. He has been given the responsibility of ADG in PAC.

Apart from this, SP Ashish Tiwari, posted in CID, has been made the new SSP of Saharanpur district. Saharanpur SSP Rohit Sajwan is going on deputation, before that he has been attached to the DGP Headquarters.

# Forest Dept to plant 1.14 crore saplings along roads in UP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

To mark Van Mahotsav from July 1 to 7, the Yogi Adityanath government is launching a large-scale plantation campaign aimed at boosting green cover across Uttar Pradesh.

As part of this ambitious campaign, the Forest Department will plant 1.14 crore saplings along roadsides, contributing significantly to the state's monsoon plantation target of 35 crore trees during the 2025 season.

The nodal agency for the plantation drive, the Forest Department, has completed preparations for the campaign. A total of 52.43 crore saplings have been prepared in 2,586 nurseries across the state to ensure successful implementation.

In addition to roadside plantations, Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) will carry out the planting of 2.5 lakh saplings along expressways, further supporting the state's green agenda.

The campaign is being conducted with the cooper-

ation of various departments, showcasing a coordinated effort to expand forest cover and promote ecological sustainability throughout the state.

Besides the Forest Department which will plant 1.14 crore saplings along roadsides, UPEIDA will plant 1,20,000 saplings along Bundelkhand Expressway, 60,000 saplings along Purvanchal Expressway, 40,000 saplings along Ganga Expressway, 20,000 saplings along Gorakhpur Link Expressway and 10,000 saplings along Agra-Lucknow Expressway.

Plantation Campaign 2025 Mission Director Deepak Kumar said, "All preparations for planting 35 crore saplings across Uttar Pradesh are now complete. On Saturday, the chief minister also held a meeting with department officials regarding this initiative. The Forest Department will plant 1.14 crore trees along roadsides, while UPEIDA has been assigned the task of planting 2.5 lakh trees along expressways. With everyone's cooperation, we are rapidly moving towards making Uttar Pradesh a greener state."

# Traders facing economic, social emergency: AKY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Lucknow

Samajwadi Party (SP) president and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday took a swipe at the ruling BJP, saying traders are facing an "economic-social emergency" due to flawed policies and a complicated tax system.

He said all the "engines" of the double engine government are busy arranging "fuel" instead of governance.

Addressing a meeting of the party's Vyapar Sabha, Yadav said, "This government that calls itself the 'double engine government' is only for name-sake. In reality if you look at their way of working, you can clearly see that its engines are busy arranging fuel."

Plantation Campaign 2025 Mission Director Deepak Kumar said, "All preparations for planting 35 crore saplings across Uttar Pradesh are now complete. On Saturday, the chief minister also held a meeting with department officials regarding this initiative. The Forest Department will plant 1.14 crore trees along roadsides, while UPEIDA has been assigned the task of planting 2.5 lakh trees along expressways. With everyone's cooperation, we are rapidly moving towards making Uttar Pradesh a greener state."

He said the government's claims of simplifying taxes like GST have not helped businesses and instead created more hurdles. Yadav cited media reports to claim that 35,000 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have shut down in the last year, and added that SP will ensure safety, respect, and convenience for traders if voted to power in 2027.

He claimed that business associates have also resolved to work with full responsibility, supporting the Samajwadi Party's election campaign from their respective places.

The SP leader also paid tribute to Bhama Shah and recalled his contributions to society and support to Maharana Pratap during the Battle of Haldighati.

# Powermen condemn privatisation move

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

The Power employees' Joint Action Committee, spearheading the agitation against the privatisation of power distribution in 42 districts, has condemned the Uttar Pradesh government's move to privatise Dakshinanchal and Purvanchal power distribution companies and demanded the immediate withdrawal of FIRs and "fabricated" charges against key leaders of the ongoing protest.

The Joint Action Committee alleged that the state Vigilance Department had registered FIRs against three prominent trade union leaders, including Jitendra Singh Gurjar and Jai Prakash, as part of a "vindictive" campaign following their 2023 strike.

The victim underwent a CT scan as the injury was serious. He was admitted to a hospital.

Around 10:30 am on Sunday, a complaint came from the municipal control room about garbage collection near St. Michael School in Sector B of Aliganj. After this, the victim Anand Valmiki, an employee of an agency authorised by the municipal corporation, went to collect garbage. After collecting garbage from the spot, he started leaving when a young man

# Powermen condemn privatisation move

Joint Action Committee convener Shailendra Dubey urged the government to initiate dialogue instead of repression and warned of intensified agitation if the charges against the trade union leaders were not withdrawn.

The Joint Action Committee has given a call for nationwide lunch-hour protests on July 2 in solidarity with UP power employees. "Power employees and engineers have been resisting the privatisation bid for the past seven months. A massive Bijli Mahapanchayat held in Lucknow on June 22 saw participation from national unions including Samyukt Kisan Morcha, All India Railwaymen's Federation and State Government Employees' Federation, unnerving the state administration," Dubey said.

came to him and said that garbage was lying near his house too. The youth asked Anand to remove the garbage from there. When Anand said he would come very soon again and remove the garbage, the irked youth called his supporters and after abusing him, they assaulted Anand and hit him with stones. Anand informed his colleagues about the attack and they reached the scene and took him to Aliganj police station. The police took Anand to a hospital. PNS

# Police follower assaults female head constable

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

UP Police follower deployed at the Reserve Police Lines in Mahanagar allegedly thrashed his acquainted female head constable on Saturday afternoon. The accused follower was allegedly inebriated when he entered the quarters of the victim and thrashed her. The reason for the assault is said to be some differences which cropped up between them in the recent past.

The police have registered a case and are investigating the matter.

As per reports, the victim police woman, Poonam Bharti, a resident of Arjunpur in Mirzapur, is posted as a head constable in Uttar Pradesh Police. Currently, she is posted at the Reserve Police Lines and lives in the quarters there with her son. Poonam alleged that at 3:30 pm on Saturday, she received a call from Mohammad Ayyaz, a follower posted at the police lines.

Ayyaz reportedly asked her if the food was ready. When Poonam denied, Ayyaz said he would be coming to her quarters in five minutes. Though Poonam told him not to come, Ayyaz came in an inebriated state and forcibly entered the room. When Poonam opposed him, he started abusing and assaulting her. Poonam suffered

injuries in the assault and dialed 112 for help. Ayyaz fled the scene before the police arrived. Mahanagar's Inspector Akhilesh Mishra said a case had been registered. "The accused is a former acquaintance of the woman. The fight took place after an argument. The accused has been taken into custody and legal action is being taken," he said.

## GOLD CHAIN OF ADDL SECY'S WIFE SNATCHED

Unidentified miscreants riding a motorcycle snatched the gold chain of the wife of an additional secretary in Krishna Nagar police station area on Saturday. The victim, Suruchi Singh of Geetapalli, was on morning walk near Tulsi Park around 5:10 am when two youths riding a black motorcycle snatched her gold chain near a flour mill. But in a flash, Suruchi Singh caught hold of the gold chain while trying to save it and in the process the chain broke and half of it fell into the hands of the accused.

In her complaint she stated that the miscreant riding the bike was wearing a white T-shirt, while the miscreant riding pillion was wearing an orange colour shirt. The Krishna Nagar police registered a case. Police are scanning the footage of nearby CCTV cameras and are searching for the miscreants.



# 95 crore people benefiting from social security schemes: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said around 95 crore people are now benefiting from one social security scheme or the other, while till 2015, the Government schemes were reaching less than 25 crore people.

In his monthly Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast, Modi cited an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report which stated that more than 64 per cent of India's population is now availing some social protection benefit or the other.

"Presently, most of the populace in India is taking advantage of one social protection benefit or the other and recently a very important report of the ILO has come out. It has been mentioned in this report that more than 64 per cent of the population of India is now definitely availing some sort of social protection benefit or the other," Modi said.

Social Security is one of the biggest coverages in the world, he said.

"Today, around 95 crore people of the country are getting the benefit of some or the other social security scheme; whereas, till 2015, the Government schemes were reaching less than 25 crore people," Modi said.

From health to social security, the country is moving ahead with the feeling of saturation in every field, he said.

"This is also a great picture of social justice. These successes have instilled a belief that the coming times will be even better; India will become even stronger at every step," Modi said. The prime minister also hailed as a "remarkable milestone" the World Health Organisation (WHO) declaring India Trachoma-free and lauded the efforts of healthcare workers for the success.

Trachoma is a highly contagious bacterial infection, which has been a major cause of preventable blindness worldwide.

"The 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' also helped in eradicating it. The 'Jal Jeevan Mission' also contributed a lot to this success. Today, when clean water is reaching every



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

FILE PHOTO

home through taps, the risk of such ailments has reduced," Modi said.

The WHO has also appreciated the fact that along with tackling the disease, India has also got rid of its root causes, he said.

In his broadcast, Modi also extended his best wishes to all the fortunate devotees going on

the various religious yatras.

After a long time, the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra has had an auspicious re-start, he said.

"Kailash Mansarovar is the abode of Lord Shiva. Kailash is considered the centre of faith and devotion in every tradition; be it Hindu, Buddhist or Jain," he said.

Noting that the holy Amarnath Yatra is going to commence on July 3, Modi said the holy month of 'Sawan' is also just a few days away.

"Just a few days ago, we have also witnessed the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath ji. Be it Odisha, Gujarat or any other corner of the country, lakhs of devotees participate in this

Yatra. From North to South, East to West, these Yatras are a reflection of the spirit of 'Ek Bharat-Shrestha Bharat'," he said.

"I also commend those who are engaged in making these Yatras successful and safe with a spirit of service," he said.

Talking about Assam's Bodoland, Modi said today it stands out in the country with a new face, a new identity.

"The energy and confidence that the youth here have, is most visible on the football field. In the Bodo Territorial Area, the Bodoland CEM Cup is being organised. This is not just a tournament; it has become a celebration of unity and hope," Modi said.

More than 3,700 teams, about 70,000 players, and even among them, a large number of our daughters are participating, he said.

"These statistics tell the story of a big change in Bodoland. Bodoland is now increasingly casting its glow on the sports map of the country," the prime minister said.

Modi also reiterated his call for reducing obesity and cut-

ting 10 per cent oil in food to reduce obesity.

"When you'll be fit, you will be more super hit in life," he said.

Noting that people across the country and the world participated in the 'International Yoga Day' on June 21 this year, Modi said that over these 10 years, this event is turning grand with every passing year.

"This is also an indication that more and more people are adopting yoga in their daily lives. We have seen so many attractive pictures of 'Yoga Day' this time. Three lakh people performed yoga together on the beach of Visakhapatnam. Another amazing visual emerged from Visakhapatnam itself - more than two thousand adivasi students performed 108 Surya Namaskars for 108 minutes," he said.

"People of Delhi connected yoga with the resolve of a clean Yamuna and performed yoga on the banks of the Yamuna. In Jammu and Kashmir, people also did yoga on the Chenab Bridge, which

is the world's highest railway bridge. The snowy peaks of the Himalayas and ITBP soldiers - yoga was seen there too; courage and 'sadhana' were hand in hand," he said.

In Gujarat's Vadnagar, 2,121 people did 'Bhujangasana' together and created a new record.

"Pictures of yoga came in from New York, London, Tokyo, Paris; every big city of the world' - and one thing was special in every picture - peace, stability and balance," he said.

In his broadcast, Modi also highlighted the Eri Silk of Meghalaya, saying it has received the GI Tag a few days ago.

"Eri Silk is like a heritage for Meghalaya. The tribes here, especially the people of the Khasi community, have preserved it for generations and have also enriched it with their skills. This silk has many specialities that make it different from other fabrics. Its most special feature is the way it is made. The silkworms that make this silk are not killed to obtain it, hence it is also called Ahimsa Silk," Modi said.

## EC to upload 2003 Bihar voter list on website

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Election Commission will soon upload the 2003 Bihar electoral roll on its website to facilitate the nearly 4.96 crore voters whose names figure on it extract the relevant portion to be attached with the enumeration form for the special intensive revision of the voters' list.

As opposition parties questioned the revision exercise, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar told PTI on Sunday that the purpose is to ensure that no eligible citizen is left out of the electoral rolls and no ineligible person is a part of it.

Several opposition parties have said that the intensive revision carries the risk of willful exclusion of voters using the state machinery.

A senior functionary asserted that anyone opposing the exercise is also opposing Article 326 and should therefore clarify their stand.

Article 326 says that all eligible citizens should be included in the electoral rolls, and



District Election Officer cum District Officer Nawada and his team hand over counting forms to voters ahead of the Bihar Assembly elections

PTI

those not eligible or not citizens of India cannot be part of the voters' list.

EC functionaries pointed out that during the ongoing SIR in Bihar, the poll authority advised political parties to appoint their workers as booth level agents (BLAs) in all polling stations now rather than finding faults with the electoral rolls later.

On Saturday, the commission said all recognised national and state political parties have already appointed 1,54,977 BLAs. They can still appoint more, it pointed out.

BLAs are party workers who coordinate with booth level officers (BLOs) during the preparation or revision of the voters' list.

According to the instruc-

tions issued by the poll authority to its Bihar poll machinery, the 4.96 crore voters -- 60 per cent of the total electors -- who were listed in the 2003 special intensive revision need not submit any supporting document to establish their date or place or birth except the relevant portion of the electoral roll brought out after the revision.

The other three crore --

nearly 40 per cent -- will have to provide one of the 11 listed documents to establish their place or date of birth.

Here too, the voters whose parents have been named in the 2003 voters' list, will have to only give documents about their place/date of birth. They will not have to give documents regarding the place/date of birth of their parents as their entry in the 2003 list will be considered as proof, underlined an official.

"The basic exercise is to identify each and every individual of the remaining three crore voters before their names are included in the list," a functionary explained.

Bihar, as of now, has more than 7.89 crore voters spread across 243 assembly seats.

Polls in the state are due later this year.

According to EC instructions, the electoral registration officer (ERO) of each assembly constituency will be responsible for ensuring that "no eligible citizen is left out and no ineligible person is included in the electoral roll" while carrying out the revision.


## Congress slams Government over Chhattisgarh coal project clearance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday slammed the Centre over environmental clearance to a coal mining project in Chhattisgarh, saying the recognition of community forest rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, cannot be wished away.

The former environment minister said that on January 15, 2024, the two-member Bhopal Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) delivered a 209-page judgment quashing the environmental clearance given on July 11, 2022, to the Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited (MAHAGENCO) for mining of coal at Gare Palma, Sector-II in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh.

The Congress general secretary in charge of communications said the open-cast mine covers an area of over 6,300 acres spread across 14 villages. Of this, about 8 per cent is a rich

 The procedure prescribed by law for the grant of environmental clearance had not been followed both in letter and spirit

— JAIRAM RAMESH, CONGRESS LEADER

forest area.

"The judgment was detailed and concluded: The procedure prescribed by law for the grant of environmental clearance had not been followed both in letter and spirit," Ramesh said.

It stated that the requirement for a public hearing had not been met in accordance with the prescribed law, the Congress leader said.

"The project's impact on public health, hydrology, and its cumulative effect on the local ecosystem had neither been properly considered nor appraised," Ramesh said, citing the judgment.

"Within just seven months, however, a fresh environmental clearance was issued. Now, mas-

sive tree felling has commenced. Should we be surprised and shocked? Perhaps not, since the mine operator and the developer are the Adani Group," he said in social media post..

"At the very least, the NGT must convince itself that the grounds for its initial rejection are no longer valid, that proper public consultations have indeed been held, and that health, hydrology, and cumulative impact assessments have indeed been carried out in a professional manner," Ramesh said.

In addition, the recognition of community forest rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, cannot be simply wished away, he added.

Ramesh shared a media report that claimed that at least 5,000 trees were cut on June 26 and 27 in the villages of Mudagaon and Saraitola in Tannar tehsil in Chhattisgarh's Raigarh district as part of a massive tree felling operation to set up the coal mine in the Gare Palma Sector II coal block.

## Congress slams Centre over Indian defence attache's reported 'lost jets' remarks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Congress on Sunday cited the reported comments of India's defence attache to Indonesia that the Indian Air Force lost fighter jets to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor and accused the government of having "misled" the country.

The party also asked why is Prime Minister Narendra Modi "refusing" to preside over an all-party meeting to take the Opposition into confidence and why has the demand for a special session of Parliament been rejected.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh shared a media report on X which quoted Captain (Indian Navy) Shiv Kumar, speaking at a seminar in Indonesia recently, that the Indian Air Force lost fighter jets to Pakistan on the night of May 7, 2025 during its targeting of terror-linked sites in Pakistan.

Kumar's remarks in the media report could not be independently verified and there was no immediate reaction from the government or the defence establishment on it.

"First the Chief of Defence Staff makes important revelations in Singapore. Then a senior defence official follows up from Indonesia," Ramesh said in his post on X.

"But why is the PM refusing to preside over an all-party meeting and take the Opposition into confidence? Why has the demand for a special session of Parliament been rejected?" he said.

Citing the same media report, Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Kherra said the Modi government has "misled the nation from the start - failing to disclose the aircraft losses during Operation Sindoor".

"There were oblique references to losses in air combat on 6/7 May, during a briefing by the DG Air Ops (Air Marshal Awadhesh Kumar Bharti)

when he said - 'we are in a combat situation and losses are a part of combat'," he said on X.

"Then, it was left to Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan to make the first official admission of our attrition in the air while speaking to Bloomberg TV on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore," Kherra said. "And now, in another shocking revelation by Capt. Shiv Kumar, it has emerged that the Indian Air Force lost fighter jets to Pakistan on the night of May 7, 2025 during its targeting of Pakistan's terror-linked sites 'only because of the constraint given by the political leadership'," the Congress leader said.

"This is a direct indictment of the Modi Government, particularly Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. No wonder they are ducking our demand for a Special Session of Parliament like the plague," he alleged.

They know they've compromised national security, and

they're terrified of what the Congress party will expose before the people of India, Kherra claimed.

The Congress had last month asked the government to be truthful about the country's losses during the conflict with Pakistan after CDS Gen Chauhan had remarked that India rectified tactics and hit deep inside enemy territory after aircraft "loss".

Gen Chauhan, however, dismissed as "absolutely incorrect" Islamabad's claim of downing six Indian jets.

Latching onto the comment by the CDS, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had accused the government of misleading the nation on the India-Pakistan conflict and demanded holding a special session of Parliament immediately. India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting the terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan using long-range weapons in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

## Protecting lives paramount, says Rahul on Puri stampede

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Condoling the loss of lives in the stampede near Gundicha Temple in Odisha's Puri, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said protecting lives is paramount and any lapse in this responsibility is unacceptable.

He said the tragedy is a serious warning that security arrangements and crowd management for such big events should be taken seriously and must be reviewed.

"The stampede during the Rath Yatra in Puri is extremely saddening. My deepest condolences to the bereaved families, and I hope for the speedy recovery of the injured devotees," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said in a social media post in Hindi.

He appealed to the Odisha government to speed up the relief work and urged Congress workers to help in



Family members of a victim mourn at a hospital after a stampede near Shree Gundicha Temple in Puri, Odisha

PTI

every possible way.

"This tragedy is a serious warning -- security arrangements and crowd management for such big events should be taken seriously and must be reviewed," Gandhi said.

"Protecting lives is paramount, and any lapse in this responsibility is unacceptable," he asserted.

At least three people,

including two women, were killed and around 50 sustained injuries in the stampede near Shree Gundicha Temple on Sunday morning, officials said.

The incident took place at around 4 am when hundreds of devotees gathered near the temple to witness Rath Yatra festivities, Puri District Collector Siddharth S Swain said.

## Om Birla to interact with Dalai Lama

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will interact with the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, during his visit to Dharamsala to inaugurate a zonal conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) on Monday.

The theme of the Conference is 'Good Governance in the Digital Era: Managing Resources, Defending Democracy, and Embracing Innovation'.

The Zone II of the CPA comprises the states of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Punjab, and the Union Territories of Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir.

The two-day conference will feature a series of plenary sessions and discussions on significant legislative and constitutional issues.

A spiritual highlight of the event will be a special interaction with the Dalai Lama, bringing a moment of peace and reflection to the proceedings, an official statement said.

The delegates will also deliberate on the role of legislatures in managing the state resources vis-a-vis development of the state, provisions as to disqualification on grounds of defection under the 10th Schedule of the Constitution, and the usage of Artificial Intelligence in legislatures.

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairperson Harivansh, Himachal Pradesh Assembly Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania and other dignitaries will be present at the Inaugural Session.

## Centre asks States to finalise administrative boundaries by December 31

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Centre has asked states and Union Territories to make any proposed changes in the boundaries of administrative units before December 31, when they will be considered final for the census exercise.

In a letter to all states and Union Territories, Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India Mritunjay Kumar Narayan has said that for the Census, all villages and towns are divided into uniform enumeration blocks and for each block, an

enumerator is assigned to avoid any miss or repetition during the population count.

According to norms, the Census can be conducted only three months after the freezing of boundary limits of administrative units such as districts, sub-districts, tehsils, talukas and police stations.

Narayan said from April 1, 2026, the Houselisting Operation, the appointment of supervisors and enumerators and the work division among them will be done, and on February 1, 2027, the Census of the population will begin.

It is important that once enumeration blocks are

According to norms, the Census can be conducted only three months after the freezing of boundary limits of administrative units

finalised, boundaries of administrative units are not changed, the letter said.

In his letter addressed to chief secretaries, Narayan asked them to direct all departments to make any proposed changes in the boundaries of municipal corporations, revenue villages, tehsils, sub-divi-

sions or districts before December 31.

He asked the states and UTs to ensure that no changes should be made in the boundaries of administrative units between January 1, 2026, and March 31, 2027, during which Census exercise will take place.

Any changes in the existing boundaries must be intimated to Census Directorates in the states and Union Territories and Registrar General of India by December 31, 2025, it said.

"For Census 2027, boundaries of administrative units will be frozen on December 31, 2025," the letter said.

To ensure a fair workload for

enumerators, an administrative unit is divided into manageable sections for the Census called "blocks". A block is a clearly defined area within a village or town on a notional map for census purposes.

These are termed Houselisting Blocks (HLBs) during Houselisting Operations and Enumeration Blocks (EBs) during Population Enumeration and serve as the smallest administrative units for the Census.

India's 16th Census with caste enumeration will be carried out in 2027 with the reference date of October 1, 2026, in snow-bound areas like

Ladakh and March 1, 2027, in the rest of the country.

The Census will be conducted in two phases. In phase one i.e. Houselisting Operation (HLO), the housing conditions, assets and amenities of each household will be collected.

Subsequently, in the second phase i.e. Population Enumeration (PE), the demographic, socio-economic, cultural and other details of every person in each household will be collected.

In the Census, caste enumeration will also be done, a Government statement had said.

For Census activities, about 34 lakh enumerators and supervisors and around 1.3 lakh Census functionaries would be deployed.

It is the 16th Census till now and the eighth after independence.

The ensuing Census will be conducted through digital means using mobile applications. Provision of Self-enumeration would also be made available to the people.

Very stringent data security measures would be kept in place to ensure data security at the time of collection, transmission and storage, the statement had said.



# NGT orders probe into illegal constructions on Aravalli land

PARVESH SHARMA ■ Gurugram

Five days after *The Pioneer* exposed rampant illegal constructions on Aravalli land in violation of National Green Tribunal (NGT) directives, a formal inquiry has been ordered by the Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Chander Bidhan.

The probe has been marked to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Gurugram, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Sohna and the Executive Officer (EO) of the Sohna Municipal Council.

The development comes in response to revelations made in *The Pioneer's* report that highlighted the ongoing violations in protected Aravalli zones and the alleged inaction of the Sohna Municipal Council.

The report questioned the Council's selective enforcement of NGT guidelines and raised concerns about its seriousness in curbing illegal activities.

Sources confirmed that despite clear orders from the NGT mandating demolition of unauthorised structures in ecologically sensitive areas such as Ansal Aravali Retreat and Raisina, the Municipal Council has shown minimal progress.

While notices were issued to a limited number of violators and public warnings were made urging self-demolition of illegal structures, these actions appear to be mere formalities.

A recent inspection conducted on Sunday found recent construction at several sites, including plots B-01, D-08, E-20, E-34, G-9, CR-27, F-10 and C-56.

Notably, fresh concrete was laid at plot no F-10, further raising doubts about the Council's enforcement efforts.

Insiders have revealed that although a detailed list of illegal constructions has been prepared, enforcement action has only been initiated against a select few,



sparkling allegations of favoritism and undermining the credibility of the Sohna Municipal Council.

Reports indicate that many plot owners in the region have acquired land under the pretense of building farmhouses but have developed luxury residences and commercial properties instead.

This is a clear violation of the 1992 Aravalli Notification, which prohibits any construction on gair mumkin pahar (uncultivable hills).

Despite several notices and legal provisions, construction continues unchecked.

Earlier, the Sohna Municipal Council had issued warnings to multiple owners in Ansal Aravali Retreat and Golden Heights, following an October 2018 directive from the NGT.

However, the ongoing rise of permanent structures and fencing in the restricted forest area highlights a persistent failure in enforcement.

Meanwhile, Members of the Aravali Retreat Welfare Association (ARRWA) have demanded stringent action and transparency in the ongoing probe to safeguard the fragile Aravalli ecosystem from further degradation.

# LG Sinha promises swift justice and support for families affected by terrorism in J and K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Jammu

Reaching out to families devastated by Pakistan-backed terrorism over the past three decades, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday assured swift action, including Government jobs, financial aid and entrepreneurial support to help them rebuild their lives.

LG Manoj Sinha met these families at an event organized with the support of the non-profit Save Youth, Save Future Foundation in Srinagar.

Over 80 families from South Kashmir, who endured immense hardships due to the loss of loved ones in terror acts, interacted with the Lieutenant Governor.

During the open session, the next of kin of the terror victims courageously countered decades of false propaganda, exposing Pakistan's role



in fueling terrorism and debunking narratives that portrayed terrorists as victims and Indian security forces as aggressors.

Since 1990, over 40,000 people—including civilians, security personnel, and children—have lost their lives to terror-related incidents in the region. Shockingly, in most

civilian death cases, no First Information Reports (FIRs) were filed, leaving families without justice or closure.

Addressing this long-standing grievance, Sinha announced that directions would be issued to register FIRs for unresolved cases and pledged to reclaim land and property encroached upon by

terrorist sympathizers or separatist elements.

Paying tribute to the victims, Sinha condemned the brutality of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, stating, "For decades, these families were marginalised, their voices silenced, and their pain ignored. Their stories remain untold, and the truth was deliberately suppressed." He highlighted that before 2019, terrorists' funeral processions were permitted, while the deaths of thousands of ordinary Kashmiris went unacknowledged.

The Government of India has launched an initiative to amplify the voices of these families, enabling them to expose the conspiracies of the terror ecosystem.

"Today, hundreds of families have found the courage to declare that their loved ones were killed by Pakistani terrorists," Sinha said.

# Want to contest Assembly polls: Chirag Paswan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Patna

Union Minister Chirag Paswan on Sunday asserted that he wanted to contest the upcoming assembly polls "for the sake of Bihar," unfazed by what he called "jittery" detractors trying to put hurdles in the way.

The Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president addressed a rally titled 'Bahujan Bhim Sankalp Samagam' at Rajgir, in Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's home

district of Nalanda.

The Hajipur MP urged the people to be on guard against the "false narrative" of the opposition INDIA bloc, which had "alleged during the Lok Sabha polls last year that the Constitution will be under threat if Prime Minister Narendra Modi got a third consecutive term".

"They are trying to play the same trick again in the run up to assembly polls. But you must remember that the worst attack on Constitution came during the Emergency when

the Congress was in power and countless young men, mostly Dalits, minorities and OBCs, had been forcibly sterilised", alleged Paswan.

He added, "Today the Congress and its allies are busy trying to present themselves as the champions of minorities by attending a rally in Patna where they are opposing the Waqf Act which had been brought for the benefit of poor Muslims. They should be asked about the Turkman gate massacre".

Launching a frontal attack

on RJD's Tejashwi Yadav for "allying with the Congress just for the sake of power", the Union minister challenged him to "seek an apology from Rahul Gandhi for excesses during the Emergency, the sufferers of which include his own father (RJD president Lalu Prasad)".

Mocking Gandhi for carrying "a red copy of the Constitution", Paswan charged the Congress with having ignored, while in power, the contributions of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

# Opposition boycotts high tea event on eve of Monsoon Session, calls Maharashtra Government dishonest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Mumbai

The opposition parties in Maharashtra on Sunday announced a boycott of the traditional high tea event of the state Government on the eve of the legislature's Monsoon Session citing rampant corruption, unpopular policies and misuse of funds.

Confirming the development, Leader of Opposition in the legislative council Ambadas Danve of the Shiv Sena (UBT) said the boycott is a mark of protest against a "dishonest government".

"From the forced implementation of the Shaktipeeth Expressway to the failure to provide buses to MSRTC, non-payment of dues to private

contractors, and injustice in the Vaishali Hagawane (dowry harassment-suicide) case in Pune, this Government has lost the moral right to seek cooperation. Why should we meet the Government that is imposing a third language (Hindi) on Standard I," he said.

His colleague and former minister Aaditya Thackeray attacked the Mahayuti Government of Devendra Fadnis for corruption in school admissions.

"The first list for 11th standard admissions appears to be tainted with corruption. There is reason to believe that school education minister Dada Bhuse may be involved," he alleged. Thackeray also slammed the state Government for "tacitly back-

ing" the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC), which he claimed was imposing "unjust" fines to the tune of Rs 12.50 crore on motorists using the Mumbai-Pune Expressway.

**The MMRDA, which is helming the project, also announced a reduction in the cost of the project subsequently**

The driver of Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena Lok Sabha MP Sandipan Bhumre has received a huge parcel of land from the descendants of the erstwhile royal Salar Jung family of Hyderabad, which

raises suspicion of irregular land deals, Thackeray further alleged.

Leader of Opposition in the assembly and senior Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar pointed out to former BJP minister Babanrao Lonikar's objectionable statements at a gathering.

Lonikar had slammed critics of the BJP-led Government by claiming the clothes they were wearing and other amenities they were enjoying in life have been handed down to them by the ruling party.

"This Government is indifferent to people's problems. The three constituents of the Mahayuti are fighting among themselves for funds and to expand their influence. They are more concerned with siphoning off public resources,"

Wadettiwar alleged.

The Mahayuti comprises the BJP, Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party. The Congress leader also pointed out to the "inflated cost" of infrastructure projects in the state, citing the cancellation of tenders for a tunnel and road project in Thane-Ghodbunder-Bhayander route after the matter reached the Supreme Court.

The MMRDA, which is helming the project, also announced a reduction in the cost of the project subsequently. "Why was the cost inflated in the first place? The intention was to misuse the money to possibly buy MLAs or for other nefarious purposes," he alleged.

# Railway link to parts of Northeast partially restored after six days

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Guwahati

The railway link to Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram and southern Assam was partially restored on Sunday, six days after it was snapped due to landslides in the Lumding-Badarpur hill section of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), officials said.

Limited train operations are being allowed for the time being, with normalisation of movement expected by Monday, they said.

"The first goods train and first passenger train (Kanchenjunga Express) crossed the landslide-affected location at Jatinga Lampur

after restoration," an NFR spokesperson said. An NFR statement on Saturday evening said that train movement along the affected portion between KM 108/6-8, via Jatinga Lampur-New Haflong in the hill section will be partially restored from Sunday.

"Restoration efforts at the affected location are progressing rapidly to normalise train movement. Limited train operations are planned between 12:00 and 18:00 hours tomorrow (29.06.2025), with full-fledged train services expected to resume from Monday," it said.

Goods trains carrying petroleum products and food grains bound for Tripura and the Barak Valley will be prioritised

for movement along the section. A POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) wagon currently stranded at Guwahati and scheduled for unloading at Dharmanagar, Tripura, will be dispatched as soon as the track is cleared, the statement had said. The section between KM 108/6-8 in the Lumding-Badarpur hill section was severely affected by multiple earth slips triggered by heavy rainfall.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had said that besides rail connectivity, partial road communication through landslide-hit Dima Hasao district, mainly to Barak Valley in the southern part of the state, will be restored by Sunday.

# Himachal faces red alert as heavy rains trigger landslides

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Shimla

The Shimla Meteorological Centre on Sunday issued a "red alert" for downpour in 10 districts of Himachal Pradesh while services on the Shimla-Kalka rail line were suspended after boulders and trees fell on the tracks following overnight rains.

A landslide near Koti on the Shimla-Kalka National Highway (NH-5), connecting Shimla and Chandigarh, damaged some stretches of the road, resulting in a two to three-km-long traffic jam for hours.

Solan Superintendent of Police (SP) Gaurav Singh on Sunday said two-way traffic has been restored near Chakki mod on NH 5 which was damaged due to landslides and police teams facilitating traffic movement.

An alternative route via Jangeshu road is also closed due to fallen debris, which is being cleared.

Traffic from Kasauli towards Chandigarh will be diverted via Jangeshu once it gets cleared.

Of the 12 districts, a red alert for downpour has been issued for 10 district — Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Mandi, Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur, Una, Kullu and Chamba — for June 29.

The Met office has warned of landslides, water logging, damage to vulnerable structures, traffic congestions and disruption in essential services.

In 2023, massive damage was caused by heavy rains in the state when the MeT office issued a red alert in the months of July and August.

Over 550 people had died in the worst ever monsoon disaster in Himachal Pradesh.

The train service on the Shimla-Kalka railway line — a UNESCO world heritage — was disrupted on Sunday as boulders and trees fell on the track near Solan's Koti area after heavy rain, the officials said.

The repair work is underway, they added.

The first train that was scheduled to arrive in the morning is stuck at Koti railway station, while other trains have been halted at Gumman and Kalka.

Videos of passengers, waiting for hours, expressing their anger are also surfacing online.

Stones, trees and debris have fallen at various places not only in Koti but also till Shimla.

A bridge on the road leading to Himuda Complex near Truck Union in Barotiwala industrial area of Solan district has been washed away and the road to Himuda Complex Mandhala and Baggwala has been closed.

Bald River in the Baddi area of the district is on surge and taking a fierce form near Jhadmajri.

A threat of damage in the surrounding areas looms as continuous rains are going on for hours.

Reports of water upto four feet entering over 20 houses in



A vehicle crushed under an uprooted tree after heavy rainfall in Shimla on Sunday

Shivalik Nagar in Jhadmajri in the Baddi industrial area has also poured in. Due to a lack of proper drainage, this problem is an annual affair during rains.

The locals have informed the administration about the incident.

Meanwhile, the water level in Mandi's Juni Khad and Beas River has increased and the local administration has appealed to people not to go to the river bank and stay alert.

Due to pre-monsoon flushing in Larji Dam, all five

spillway gates of Pandoh Dam were opened on Sunday morning resulting in an increase in water level in Beas River.

About 44,000 cusecs of water is flowing in the Beas river, the silt level has increased to 4,000 ppm and the Baggi tunnel has been closed for the time being due to which power generation in Dehar Power House has been temporarily stopped, Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) officials said.

Jogindernagar received 135 mm of rains since Saturday

evening followed by Kasauli 125 mm, Hahu 119.5 mm, Poanta Sahib 116.8 mm, Bijahi 102 mm, Sundernagar 96 mm, Ghaghas 92 mm, Shimla 91 mm, Kufri 89 mm, Bilaspur 86.6 mm and Solan 85.6 mm.

Meanwhile, Dharampur recorded 84.2 mm of rain, Sujanpur Tira 79.8 mm, Pandoh 68 mm, Nagrota Suriyan, 65.2 mm, Chopal 60 mm, Gohar and Murari Devi 60 mm each, Kangra 53.8 mm and Jattoon Barrage 51 mm.

It also cautioned of moderate to high flash floods risk in

parts of 10 districts — Bilaspur, Chamba, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kullu, Mandi, Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur and Una — till Monday.

The local Met office has issued an orange warning of heavy to very heavy rains in isolated areas of the state on Monday and predicted a wet spell in the state till July 5.

Rain-related incidents have claimed 17 lives in Himachal Pradesh since the onset of monsoon in the state on June 20, while four persons are missing, according to the state emergency operation centre.

# Nadda, CM Saini attend Mann Ki Baat in Gurugram

PARVESH SHARMA  
■ Gurugram

A mass listening event of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio program 'Mann Ki Baat' was held in Gurugram on Sunday.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Jagat Prakash Nadda, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, BJP Haryana State President Mohanlal Badoli and Minister for Industry & Commerce and Environment Rao Narbir Singh.

Senior party leaders, local citizens and BJP workers gathered to listen to the Prime Minister's address and engage in meaningful interaction.

Speaking to the media after the programme, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini highlighted that 'Mann Ki Baat' showcases the inspiring stories of everyday citizens who contribute to the nation through their dedication and efforts.

He said that the programme serves as a source of motivation for both the common man and future generations.

Following the broadcast, senior leaders also distributed Ayushman Cards to eligible beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. This initiative aims to ensure that Government welfare schemes

effectively reach those most in need.

The event was part of a broader effort to strengthen public engagement and trust. It witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of citizens and party workers.

On this occasion, Saini, along with Nadda and Environment Minister Rao Narbir Singh, planted saplings along the forest corridor developed by the Forest Department over the Badshahpur Drain near Vatika Chowk.

**Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini highlighted that 'Mann Ki Baat' showcases the inspiring stories of everyday citizens who contribute to the nation through their dedication and efforts.**

— NAYAB SINGH SAINI, HARYANA CM

He urged the people of Haryana to actively participate in the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign, aimed at promoting environmental conservation.

The Chief Minister said that under this initiative, every citizen should pledge to plant and nurture a tree in honour of their mother.

He said that this noble effort will not only contribute to a greener Haryana but also play a vital role in addressing the challenges of climate change.



Editor's  
TAKE

## Why One Nation Needs One Law

The Constitution is the covenant that binds Indian diversity into a single nation. Any deviation risks weakening it

India is home to unparalleled diversity — in language, religion, region, and caste. Our Constitution guarantees each one of us a sense of dignity regardless of our region, religion, language, or ethnicity across the country. But what if there are more than one set of laws in the country. It is an anomaly which can be disruptive. In a powerful reaffirmation of India's constitutional unity, Chief Justice of India B R Gavai recently underscored this deep philosophical and legal reasoning behind the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the abrogation of Article 370. Speaking at the inauguration of the Constitution Preamble Park and unveiling of Dr B R Ambedkar's statue in Nagpur, CJI Gavai emphasised that having "only one Constitution" is central to India's unity — an idea that traces its roots to the vision of Dr Ambedkar himself. This is more than a symbolic gesture. It is a legal, moral, and historical reckoning with the idea of justice.

The idea that one nation should be governed by one Constitution is not simply a matter of administrative convenience; it is foundational to the integrity of the Republic. Dr BR Ambedkar maintained that a single constitutional framework was essential to maintaining the unity and integrity of a diverse nation. Ambedkar believed in a Constitution that was both federal and unitary in spirit — capable of embracing diversity while ensuring a central unity. The existence of Article 370, which granted Jammu and Kashmir its own Constitution and special status, was thus contrary to this foundational vision. The Constitution, though federal in structure, vests significant powers in the Union during times of crisis, war, or disintegration. Ambedkar defended this framework, saying the Indian Constitution was designed to remain united through both peace and conflict.

Article 370, inserted as a temporary provision, effectively created an exception to the rule of uniform citizenship. It allowed Jammu & Kashmir to operate under a separate Constitution and enjoy special privileges, creating a sense of legal and political separation from the rest of India. Over time, this provision, which was supposed to fade, calcified into a structural anomaly. When the Parliament abrogated Article 370 in 2019, it was challenged in court.

The five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, including CJI Gavai, upheld the decision in December 2023. This ruling was a declaration that India, in its truest constitutional spirit, must be governed by one set of laws and rights for all its citizens, regardless of region. Whether one lives in Kerala or Kashmir, every citizen must be equal before the law — not just in theory, but in real life situations. This is what our Constitution guarantees. Fragmented legal frameworks breed fragmented identities. In contrast, a unified constitutional order promotes a shared sense of belonging and purpose. While Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh have had constitutional breakdowns, India has stood strong, thanks to our Constitution. Long live the Constitution!

## Trump's Quest for a Nobel: A Deal Too Far?

Now, in a move that has sparked both disbelief and debate, US President Donald Trump is aggressively lobbying for the Nobel Peace Prize. But can a figure as polarising as Trump ever align with the Nobel's spirit?

Alfred Nobel's will (1895) established the foundational principle of the prize "for the greatest benefit to humankind". Specifically, the famous will mandates the Nobel Peace Prize to be bestowed on someone who "shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies and the holding and promotion of peace congresses".

It is a tall ask, and it has therefore been given to achievers like Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Kofi Annan etc., who have shaped the destiny of societies across the world.

However, like all awards, it has had its share of questionable winners like Henry Kissinger (who oversaw US bombings in Laos and Cambodia, after the award), Menachem Begin (who was involved in activities like Irgun bombings), Abiy Ahmed (who subsequently participated in a brutal civil war) etc.

Equally contentious has been the track record of certain denials of the Nobel Peace Prize to luminaries like Mahatma Gandhi (ostensibly owing to technicalities) or Eleanor Roosevelt — or even an odd case of Vietnamese Le Duc Tho, who refused to accept the Prize, as peace had not been established in Vietnam, conclusively.

But all said and done, it remains the most coveted award that carries global heft and credibility, odd derelictions notwithstanding. Now there is a case of an individual making a brazen pitch for a Nobel Peace Prize for himself — i.e, American President Donald Trump. His plea that he was a deserving candidate for "doing great things" has been met with incredulous guffaws — even support.

Trump's conviction is based on the precedence of four previous Presidents of the USA — i.e, Theodore Roosevelt (for mediating the Treaty of Portsmouth between Russia and Japan), Woodrow Wilson (for ending World War I and founding of League of Nations), Jimmy Carter (for yeoman services in advancing democracy, human rights and global conflict resolutions, post-retirement), and Barack Obama (for promoting nuclear non-proliferation).

This has emboldened Trump to reposit the longstanding case (as he believes) of the Abraham Accords and summit diplomacy with Kim Jong-Un from his previous tenure, to what he believes has been a continuation of stellar performances in his second tenure. But he senses a bias in the Nobel Committee, as he expressed his frustration by saying, "No, I won't get a



Nobel Peace Prize no matter what I do, including Russia/Ukraine, and Israel/Iran, whatever those outcomes may be, but the people know, and that's all that matters to me." He has unabashedly added ostensible mediation in the four-day India-Pakistan

standoff to buttress his claim. But the truth is that none of the claims of having "mediated successfully" have proven to be sustainable or attributable to him personally. If anything, the motor-mouth has been a major global disruptor and hardly a beacon for "best work for fraternity between nations".

Further, Trump's unilateral approach towards reneging on the crucial Iran Nuclear Deal, the UN Human Rights Council, or withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord has had a dangerously destabilising impact across the board. Added to the questionable track record is the obvious falling short of the Nobel spirit it when a nominee actively propagates and beseeches his fitment for the Prize. At the

end of the day, the author (that too, ghostwritten) of The Art of the Deal, who thrives on his businessman's transactional nature, does not perhaps understand that the ethos and spirit of the Nobel Prize is holistic and does not preclude human rights, sufferings, and diminishments accompanying the so-called sovereign "Deals" and "Agreements" that Trump boasts of.

The jury evaluating the suitability of a nominee like Trump cannot ignore his inglorious track record, including acts like separating migrant families, brutal handling of public protests, and his other incendiary comments. Trump is the first former US President convicted of a felony and is infamously called by monikers like "Insurrectionist-in-Chief", "The twice-impeached President", "Grifter-in-Chief" etc., and with that sort of polarising public perception — the only practical recourse left to someone like Trump is through coercive demands or threats to the Norwegian Nobel Committee itself!

Towards the same, Trump has left no major pulpit or opportunity to stake a personal claim — however hankering, inelegant, and undignified it looks. Proposing his name for the Nobel are a bunch of extreme right-wing politicians and now

joined in the "cause" by the Pakistani Field Marshal Asim Munir. The Nobel Committee is already under a lot of flak for its past choices, and therefore someone like Trump could be the death knell for the award.

Peace laureates must be seen as inclusive leaders, champions of democracy and human rights per se, besides championing their specific cause or people. Whereas Trump has patently pooh-poohed legality, constitutionality, and ideals of democracy — besides peddling misinformation and polarisation as a means to divide and rule.

When compared to a former awardee of the Nobel Peace Prize like the statesman Nelson Mandela, who stood for forgiveness, moral endurance, inclusivity, and social justice — the contrasting and jarring narrative à la Trump is about "Deals", deterrence, and personal achievements! There is a reason why Trump cannot be Gandhi (who didn't get the Prize), Mandela, or even Barack Obama (who has a lot to justify). The businessman struggles to comprehend that recognition cannot be bought — it has to be earned.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lieutenant Governor of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. Views are personal)

## PIG TALK



Stunning rice paddy art in Oshu, Japan, celebrates hometown hero Shohei Ohtani and his beloved dog Decoy. PTJ

## Ashtanga Yoga for Youth in Emotional Crisis

### SECOND Opinion

In today's fast-paced, pressure-filled world, a growing number of young people are grappling with emotional turmoil. Many find themselves overwhelmed by academic stress, unemployment, social media pressures, family conflicts, loneliness, and a lack of emotional support. In the absence of healthy coping mechanisms, some tragically turn to drugs or even consider suicide as a way to escape their inner pain.

Young minds are especially vulnerable. When they cannot express their emotions or find a constructive outlet, they may seek temporary relief in self-destructive habits. Substance abuse often begins as a coping mechanism but soon turns into a trap. Similarly, suicidal thoughts often arise from deep-seated hopelessness and the belief that things will never improve. Yet, amidst this despair, there is a powerful source of hope: Yoga.

### Yoga — More Than Just Exercise

Yoga is not merely a form of physical activity. It is a holistic practice that nurtures the body, calms the mind, and builds emotional resilience. Through breathing techniques, meditation, and mindful movement, yoga helps reduce anxiety, improve focus, and release inner tension. It encourages young people to observe their thoughts without judgment and to manage stress more effectively. Numerous stud-

ies show that regular yoga practice can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety—two major risk factors for substance abuse and suicide. Yoga cultivates self-awareness, emotional balance, and inner peace. Just as importantly, it builds discipline and a sense of self-worth, helping young individuals reconnect with their inner strength and purpose.

### Ashtanga Yoga: A Path to Inner Healing

In an era of rising stress, identity crises, and emotional unrest, many young people are falling into the trap of substance abuse and suicidal ideation. The modern world offers constant stimulation but little inner stillness, leaving a deep emotional void that many attempt to fill in harmful ways. Here, Ashtanga Yoga, an ancient and disciplined path of self-realisation, offers a compelling alternative.

### What Is Ashtanga Yoga?

As described by the sage Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras, Ashtanga Yoga, or the "Eight-Limbed Path," is a comprehensive system for living a balanced, ethical, and purposeful life. The eight limbs are:

1. Yama - truth, non-violence, non-stealing
2. Niyama - Personal disciplines
3. Asana - Physical postures
4. Pranayama - Breath control
5. Pratyahara - Withdrawal of the senses
6. Dharana - Concentration
7. Dhyana - Meditation
8. Samadhi - Bliss or self-realisation



SHRI  
YOGESH

### How Ashtanga Yoga Supports Youth in Crisis

Ashtanga Yoga offers a clear, consistent path. For youth lost in confusion or despair, the daily practices provide structure and discipline—essential for recovering from addiction and emotional instability.

The combination of asanas (postures) and pranayama (breath control) strengthens the body and helps detoxify it. These practices soothe the nervous system and reduce the physical cravings often associated with drug use.

The inner practices of pratyahara, dharana, and dhyana help slow the mind and cultivate inner awareness. Young people learn to step back from overwhelming emotions and respond with greater clarity, reducing impulsive behaviors and suicidal tendencies. Yama and niyama guide practitioners toward ethical living, self-discipline, and personal growth. Instead of seeking escape, young people are encouraged to develop self-respect, purpose, and meaningful direction in life. At its heart, Ashtanga Yoga fosters a deep spiritual connection. While medical support and counseling are essential, Ashtanga Yoga can serve as a powerful complement. It does not merely address surface-level symptoms such as anxiety or addiction—it reaches the root. By fostering self-awareness, discipline, and emotional resilience, it empowers young people to reclaim their well-being and walk the path of healing and self-realisation. Ashtanga Yoga offers the youth a rare and precious gift: a way back to themselves.

(The writer is Co-founder, Yogiparivaar, and Faculty at Subharti University, Dehradun. Views are personal)

## Letters to the Editor

### PM Modi speaks with Subhanshu Shukla

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Group Captain Subhanshu Shukla aboard the space station, offering an inspiring message that urged him to absorb every moment of the mission and channel the experience into India's upcoming Gaganyaan programme.

PM Modi lauded Shukla as a beacon of hope for countless children dreaming of reaching space. In response, Shukla said he was soaking up knowledge "like a sponge," calling the journey not just personal but national. As he conducts vital experiments in orbit, his family — and the nation — eagerly await his return, expected on 12 July.

His safe landing will mark a giant leap for India's space aspirations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's conversation with Group Captain Subhanshu Shukla aboard the space station highlighted India's growing space ambitions. Praising him as an inspiration for future generations, Modi urged Shukla to absorb every moment for Gaganyaan's success.

Shukla, calling the mission a national journey, continues critical experiments in orbit. His return on 12 July is eagerly awaited by his family and the nation, symbolising a proud milestone and a giant leap for India's human spaceflight programme.

RS NARULA | PATIALA

### Tragedy at Puri Rath Yatra

Once again, tragedy has struck during India's revered Rath Yatra festival in Puri. A stampede near the Gundicha Temple claimed three lives — Premakanta Mohanty (80), Basanti Sahoo (36), and Prabhati Das (42) — and left many injured. Even before the incident, hundreds of devotees were hospitalised due to crowd pressure and exhaustion. Sadly, no one is surprised. In a country where the common person's life holds little value, such calamities have become routine.

Just last year, 121 people, mostly women and children, perished in a stampede at a satsang in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh. The so-called godman responsible faced no consequences. Crowd management across India remains woefully inadequate — be it during the Mahakumbh, cricket celebrations, or major religious festivals. There is no accountability. As a senior citizen, I feel deeply disillusioned. Prime Minister Narendra Modi often promotes pilgrimages with grand gestures, but does little to ensure safety. The Odisha Government should have foreseen the risk and acted proactively. Mere condolences cannot cleanse the stain of negligence. What India needs is a transparent, time-bound high-level inquiry — and a Government with the moral courage to take responsibility. My heart goes out to those who lost their loved ones in this senseless tragedy.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

### Beauty of Indian Cultural Heritage

The beauty of Indian cultural heritage is visible in everything, from clothes to handbags, artefacts to footwear, and fashion sense — Indian style carries a unique, matchless mark. In a time when the Government of India has awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to these indigenously Indian curations, it is unfortunate that global brands like Prada, which recently copied the Kolhapuri chappal style in their men's summer collection, failed to credit this traditional Indian footwear. When the world embraces Indian art and collectibles, why does it fail to credit India as the source of inspiration? Prada must apologise to Indian chappal makers for stealing and overpricing their design without credit. If brands can credit Michelangelo, Vermeer, or graffiti artists for inspiration, why can they not equally acknowledge Indian creators for our indigenous cultural artefacts? Until Prada Milano credits India, it must be held accountable as an art thief. Prada must apologise for presenting the Indian Kolhapuri chappal as its original leather design.

KIRTI WADHAWAN | KANPUR

In the Sunday Pioneer Agenda (29/06/2025) article "India's Missile Blitz: Made in India, Felt in Pakistan" authored by G Parthasarthy, Former High Commissioner to Pakistan, it was inadvertently carried Former Diplomat. Error is regretted.

## EMERGENCY: A DARK CHAPTER AND ITS LINGERING LEGACY

Apropos of the news of the dictatorial regime of Congress during the Emergency in 1975–1977, June 25th, every year witnesses such debates and discussions on the atrocities on the detainees under MISA and DIR, public caning, mass arrests, etc. Still, Congress is unapologetic, to its own disadvantage.

The blackest chapter of our democracy, the Emergency is an unobliterated part of constitutional history and an unforgettable misery of the democracy warriors, many of whom were not allowed to attend the funeral of their family members and parents. The democracy protected by our Constitution looked failing. The Congress continued to build its organisation and leadership on the ashes of the Emergency. After five decades, the Congress is starved of the leadership which can steer the party away from political turmoil — both within the party and in the opposition camp. Narrative-based politics is not sustainable. Even the present stalwarts

— the eloquent speakers in Parliament, former Union Ministers, and experienced leaders — are deserting the party, or are forced to leave, or are preparing to leave. The reason behind imposing the Emergency is still to be debated. And we also need to debate why President's Rule was imposed 134 times under Congress rule. Even after the Emergency, President's Rule was imposed more than 50 times. The debates on the Emergency have democratic spirit and values and are indispensable to protect against misuse of the Constitution.

The Emergency (1975–77) remains a grim reminder of constitutional misuse and democratic failure under Congress. Despite ongoing debates, the party has yet to reconcile with this past. Leadership crises and political instability continue, highlighting the urgent need to safeguard democracy and prevent repeating such abuses.

VINOD JOHRI | DELHI



# The Emergency of 1975: India's Brush with Dictatorship

The Emergency of 1975 was not merely a temporary suspension of law and order; it was a full-scale attack on the soul of the Indian Constitution. It showed how easily democracy can be manipulated through legal instruments when the spirit of constitutionalism is lost

FIRST  
Column

On the midnight of June 25, 1975, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed a National Emergency under Article 352 of the Constitution of India. This decision plunged the world's largest democracy into a period of authoritarian rule lasting 21 months, during which the Indian state witnessed mass arrests, censorship of the press, curtailment of civil liberties, and the systematic dismantling of democratic institutions. Although the Emergency was imposed citing "internal disturbances," it was in reality a direct response to political and judicial challenges to Indira Gandhi's authority — particularly her conviction in the Allahabad High Court for electoral malpractices.

## Democratic Institutions Undermined

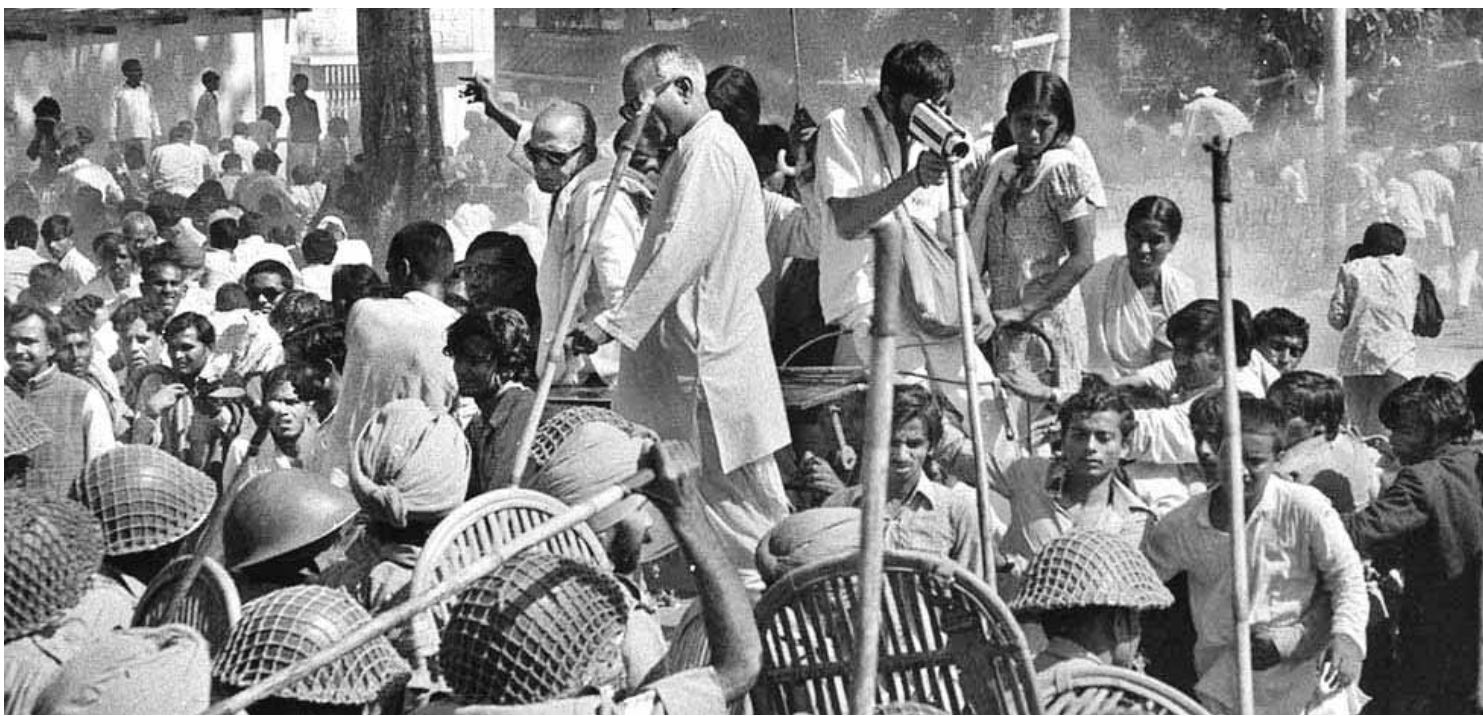
At the heart of any democracy lie its institutions — Parliament, judiciary, press, and independent statutory bodies. During the Emergency, these were systematically subverted:

- Parliament functioned merely as a formal body approving the executive's will. The ruling Congress party, with a brute majority, used it to push through draconian laws and amendments without genuine debate.
- Judiciary was made subservient. The government actively manipulated judicial appointments and transferred or superseded judges, particularly in response to unfavorable rulings. Justice H.R. Khanna's dissent in the ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla case — where the Supreme Court upheld the suspension of even the Right to Life — was a rare beacon of judicial independence.
- Press freedom was virtually extinguished. Through pre-censorship orders and threats of imprisonment, newspapers were gagged. Notably, The Indian Express published a blank editorial as a silent protest against this censorship.
- Institutions like the Election Commission and CAG were stripped of autonomy and turned into tools for consolidating executive power.

## Civil Liberties Crushed

One of the most alarming aspects of the Emergency was the suspension of fundamental rights through a Presidential order. Articles 14 (equality before law), 19 (freedom of speech, assembly, movement), 21 (right to life and personal liberty), and 22 (protection against arbitrary arrest) were either suspended or rendered meaningless.

Under the draconian Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and Defense of India Rules, over 100,000 people were arrested without trial. The majority were political opponents, trade unionists, student leaders, journalists, and activists. Preventive



detention became a norm, used to crush dissent and instill fear.

Simultaneously, in the name of urban development and population control:

- Forced sterilisation campaigns — largely targeting the poor — were launched under Sanjay Gandhi, Indira's son. Millions were sterilised under coercion and threat.
- Slum demolitions in Delhi's Turkman Gate led to deaths and displacement, with security forces opening fire on protesting residents.

## Torture and Brutality: Silencing Dissent Through Fear

While the Emergency is widely known for the suspension of rights and mass detentions, less acknowledged — but deeply disturbing — was the widespread use of physical and psychological torture to silence dissent and break the morale of political prisoners. Thousands of activists, students, and opposition workers were not just jailed — they were subjected to cruel and degrading treatment in custody, in clear violation of basic human dignity and international human rights norms.

Among the most harrowing accounts are those of Lawrence Fernandes and Suresh Kumar, both political activists and vocal critics of the regime. Lawrence Fernandes, the brother of George

Fernandes, was an active member of the Socialist Party and was arrested under the Baroda Dynamite Case, which was falsely projected as a subversive plot against the state. He was tortured, subjected to electric shocks, kept in solitary confinement for extended period.

Despite the torture, Lawrence Fernandes refused to confess to charges that were politically motivated and baseless. Suresh Kumar, a young student who was associated with ABVP, was arrested in Bengaluru and he was subjected to harsh and inhuman treatment. Likewise, countless individuals were systematically identified and subjected to harsh treatment in order to instill fear.

## Flouting of Constitutional Norms and Processes

The very manner in which Emergency was proclaimed and maintained showcased a brazen disregard for constitutional procedure. Article 352 requires that the President act on the advice of the Cabinet. However:

- The Cabinet was not consulted before the Emergency was declared. President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed signed the proclamation late at night based only on Indira Gandhi's recommendation, violating the constitutional mandate of collective cabinet responsibility.
- This unilateralism extended into the passage of laws. The most egregious instance was the passage of the 42nd Amendment, which fundamentally altered the Constitution in

favour of the executive.

## The Infamous 42nd Amendment — Passed on a Weekend

The 42nd Amendment Act, 1976 — dubbed the "Mini-Constitution" — was the most sweeping constitutional amendment in India's history. It sought to:

- Curtail the judiciary's power of review
  - Make the President bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers
  - Insert "Socialist" and "Secular" into the Preamble
  - Extend the duration of legislatures and Emergency from 5 to 6 years
  - Make any amendment to the Constitution non-judicial
- But what stood out as an act of procedural subversion was the hasty manner in which the amendment was introduced and passed:
- The Bill was introduced in Parliament on a Saturday, November 1, 1976, when Parliament does not customarily sit.
  - Within two days, with minimal debate and amidst opposition boycott or absence, the amendment was passed by both Houses.
  - It was notified on a Sunday, December 19, 1976, once again demonstrating the regime's intent to avoid public scrutiny and procedural safeguards.

The decision to open Parliament on a Saturday

— unprecedented and unannounced — was a calculated move to push through legislation with minimal media or political attention. This weekend maneuver was symbolic of how far the Indira regime had drifted from democratic ethos.

## Mass Arrests Across Party Lines

The Emergency saw an unparalleled crackdown on the political opposition. Leaders from all major opposition parties — from the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (predecessor to the BJP), Socialists, Congress (O), to trade unionists — were thrown behind bars:

- Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) — Architect of the people's movement against the regime.

- Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, and Chandra Shekhar — Prominent Congress and opposition leaders.
- Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L.K. Advani, and other leaders of the Jana Sangh.
- George Fernandes — Arrested and tried in the sensational Baroda Dynamite Case.

The aim was clear: decapitate any credible opposition and rule without challenge.

## India at the Edge of Dictatorship

The Emergency period was a moment when India came perilously close to becoming a dictatorship. With institutions subdued, opposition silenced, the Constitution altered, and fear pervasive, the checks and balances of democracy were dismantled. Had it not been for the courage of right-minded individuals, India might have permanently veered away from its democratic path.

The Emergency of 1975 bore eerie similarities to the early days of Adolf Hitler's rise to authoritarian rule in Germany during the 1930s.

Though India did not descend into fascism, the pattern of executive overreach, institutional dismantling, and suspension of civil liberties mirrored Hitler's initial tactics that led to Nazi totalitarianism and one of the darkest chapters in human history.

The Emergency of 1975 was not merely a temporary suspension of law and order; it was a full-scale attack on the soul of the Indian Constitution. It showed how easily democracy can be manipulated through legal instruments when the spirit of constitutionalism is lost.

The manipulation of parliamentary timing to pass the 42nd Amendment, the unconstitutional proclamation of Emergency, and the mass suppression of civil and political rights all point to a near-complete breakdown of democratic governance.

India survived the Emergency, but only because of the resilience of a few brave individuals and the collective wisdom of its electorate. It stands as a stark warning: eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

(The writer is Union Cabinet Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Minister of New and Renewable Energy. Views expressed are personal)

# Harvard vs Trump: The battle for academic freedom in a polarised America

Education is a driver of change, development, and human enlightenment; it helps individuals to question, experiment, and explore, leading to regulated change. When supported by the community and Governments, it brightens up at a faster speed, opening new horizons. The research throws light that empowers the researchers to explore further; it is a continuous project. The communities gain from it in human welfare, while the Governments and businesses gain by profiting. To control who gains the most engenders politics of conflicting interests.

That is the main impulse of the current feud between the Trump administration and Harvard University. While Harvard aims to promote liberal ideologies encouraging free speech and the right to protest unjust and inhuman actions, the Trump administration aims to contain the proliferation of liberal ideologies. President Donald Trump has been spinning a narrative of packing in 'America's burden' policy of supporting international students, migrant labour, and political seekers as a solution for the problems of the local population. The politics of ideological conflicts come to the fore in the exchange on social media and press statements on the sidelines of formal communication.

Trump has gone on to accuse Harvard faculty of colluding with the Communist Party of China, while those rejecting the charges have called the Trump Government policies reminiscent of McCarthyism of the 1940s.

As to the formal war between Harvard and the Trump Administration, responding to Harvard's lawsuit on May 23, 2025, a US district court in Massachusetts has ruled that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) May 22, 2025 order revoking Harvard's Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) certification is restrained till the next hearing on May 29, 2025. The court has blocked DHS from "implementing, instituting, maintaining, or giving effect" to the revocation of Harvard's eligibility to enrol international students and sponsor international scholars.

Describing SEVP as a privilege and not a right, the DHS issued a letter on May 22, 2025, revoking Harvard's SEVP certification, which meant that Harvard could not admit foreign students on F- or J-nomination status for the 2025-2026 academic year, and existing foreigners on F- or J-nomination "must transfer to another university in order to maintain their non-immigrant status."

To avoid SEVP privilege revocation, Harvard had been advised to provide within 72 hours all the information related to on — or off-campus activities by its non-immigrant students allegedly against others in the last five years. In response to the Government action, Harvard chose to challenge it in court, communicating to the Harvard community that the revocation was against

Harvard's refusal to submit to the federal Government's illegal assertion of control over its curriculum, faculty, and student body.

In a series of actions, the Trump administration wrote a letter to Harvard on April 11, 2025, charging it with failure to "justify federal investment."

To rectify its failure, the university was advised to (a) reduce the power of students, faculty, and administrators; (b) share all admissions and hiring data for a comprehensive audit; (c) prevent the admission of "students hostile to the American values... and Semitism"; and (d) commission an external party, acceptable to the federal Government, "to audit the student body, faculty, staff, and leadership for viewpoint diversity" and "the programs and departments that most fuel anti-Semitic harassment or reflect ideological capture." (e) discontinue "all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, offices, committees, positions, and initiatives..."; (f) reform "its student discipline policies and procedures"; (g) establish procedures to protect anyone reporting "noncompliance with the reforms..."; (h) make "organisational changes to ensure full transparency and cooperation with all federal regulators."

Instead of surrendering to the DHS demands, Harvard had preferred to challenge the letter in the court while conveying to the Government that their demands were "unconstitutional," amounting to encroachment on academic freedom. On May 23, pleading in the court, Harvard described the "revocation" order as "quintessential arbitrary, irrational, and unilateral executive action."

Although the university has acceded to correcting some of the lapses during protests against the Gaza war, it has refuted the charges of any planned discrimination against Semitism. It has rejected the conditions as a requirement to get a \$2.2 billion federal grant and tax-exempt status.

In the meanwhile, the federal Government's 'stringent' conditions on Harvard have drawn strong reactions from many academics, activists, and political leaders, including the Jews, criticising the Trump administration for using anti-Semitism as a weapon to act upon universities for their ends.

Whether the Trump administration will gain anything politically from the continuing feud is ambivalent, but the damage to the work and values that the USA has been claiming to stand for is definite. Harvard may or may not lose the fed-

eral grant, but it has retained its character through its unflinching resistance to the Government pressures to surrender its DEI programmes.

Its strength to resist comes not from its classroom activity alone but from its community programmes of capacity building and its socially relevant research and education. According to a Study on the Global Economic and Social Impact of Harvard Alumni, the alumni of Harvard University have created 146,429 jobs globally. Harvard's socially relevant inventions include baking powder, organ transplantation, oral rehydration therapy (ORS), functional MRI, portable surgery, logical quantum processors, and gene-editing medicine.

Harvard created the world's first MBA programme in 1908. Harvard has about 5800 patents to its credit.

Harvard works for the welfare of its neighbourhood community. It partners with local communities to provide apprenticeship and internship opportunities for youth. "As of August 2024, Harvard was the 5th largest employer of Massachusetts residents and the largest in the city of Cambridge." According to a report, Harvard's revenue for work comes from philanthropy: endowment income and gifts (45 per cent); education: tuition, housing, and food sales (11 per cent); research (federal grant 11 per cent + non-federal 5 per cent = 16 per cent); and other sources (18 per cent). Harvard spends the federal grant on research. Although Harvard is financially as well as academically strong, the freeze of the 2.2 billion dollar federal grant and the tax-exemption status will affect its research programmes.

While the 'feud-theatre' and the 'gain-loss narrative spinning' exercise continue, there is enough stuff for the Indian and the rest of the world's universities to learn from:

1. The universities have to nurture the values of equity and inclusion and of internationalism to gain a wider exposure environment for their learners and knowledge creators.
2. To do that, the universities must reach out to the community for support rather than overdependence on Government grants.
3. To gain the community's support, the universities must relate their knowledge and research to the community for its welfare and capacity building.
4. The universities must create work cultures for skilling and knowledge to the highest standards for the physical, psychological, socio-cultural, economic, and spiritual welfare of the community.

(The writer is Professor (Retd) of Applied Linguistics & ELT Department of English, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. Views are personal)

# Naxalism on the Brink: India's Unified Strategy Turns the Tide

After decades of bloodshed, India's long war with Naxalism is approaching a decisive conclusion. Once seen as the country's most persistent internal security threat, the Maoist insurgency, rooted in a violent ideology that rejected the Indian Constitution, is now rapidly losing ground across the Red Corridor. This transformation is not incidental. It is the result of a strong revolved govt taking all the right steps at all levels — military, administrative, and ideological, under a unified national strategy. According to official figures, India saw nearly 2,000 Naxal-related violent incidents in 2010. By 2024, that number had dropped by over 80 per cent, to just 374. The number of districts affected by Naxalism has shrunk from 126 in 2013 to just six in 2025. Between 2021 and 2025, hundreds of Maoists were neutralised in operations, over 1,000 arrested, and nearly 900 surrendered. This is not just a statistical decline but it reflects a tectonic shift in ground reality, especially in central and eastern India.

One of the most significant recent blows to the insurgency came with the elimination of Maoist central committee member Basavaraj, who carried a ₹1.5 crore bounty. A top ideologue and operational planner, Basavaraj had for decades led brutal campaigns across tribal regions, targeting civilians and security forces alike. His death in a multi-agency operation deep in the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border region represents not only the loss of a senior commander but a symbolic collapse of the fountainhead of terror.

What marks the current counter-Naxal strategy apart from earlier efforts is its integrated and multi-dimensional character, steered at the national level by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. After assuming office in 2019, Shah launched a decisive campaign to uproot the insurgency by deploying a mix of hard and soft strategies. His leadership in revitalising the Ministry of Home Affairs' "SAMADHAN" doctrine, an acronym encapsulating steps such as smart policing, coordination, and technology use, has ensured a coordinated and sustained push across affected states.

The central Government's resolve is also evident in the way Union Commands were activated across states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Bihar, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh, bringing state police and central forces like CRPF and CoBRA units onto the same operational page. These joint task forces have not only improved strike capability but also built trust among field units, enabling rapid deployment and long-term area domination.

Focus has also been made on choking the financial and ideological pipelines of Maoist groups. Urban cells that previously functioned as ideological factories and funding nodes have been systematically tracked and prosecuted under existing anti-terror laws. This has undeniably fractured the Maoist support base in academic and civil society circles.

Yet, the transformation is not limited to guns and arrests. Equally crucial has been the state's push to restore governance and dignity to long-ignored tribal regions. Roads, schools, electricity, mobile towers, and health centres have been introduced in villages once known only as No Go zones in govt circles. In districts like Sukma, Narayanpur, and Gadchiroli, villagers now have access to banking, internet, ration shops, and employment schemes, marking the return of the state in both form and spirit.

Under schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and the Aspirational Districts Programme, remote hamlets have been connected to block headquarters, enabling faster movement of goods, people, and ideas. Several surrendered Maoists have been reintegrated through rehabilitation packages that include financial aid, vocational training, education, and job placement. In some areas, these former insurgents now serve as village-level coordinators in development projects, marking a remarkable arc of transformation. But the fight is not without complications. Maoists continue to leverage difficult terrain, ambushing troops using IEDs, and threatening local villagers to deter participation in Government programs. Several state forces have suffered casualties in inter-state border operations, and administrative presence in some dense forest pockets remains tenuous. Moreover, there is always a risk that if development does not keep pace with security operations, local grievances, often rooted in land alienation, displacement, and economic exclusion could resurface, resulting in boost to the Maoists. The role of the political class has been a mixed bag. While the central Government has shown sustained commitment, opposition parties have been

sadly politicising anti-Naxal operations. In Chhattisgarh, for instance, some Congress leaders have publicly questioned military engagements, advocated dialogue, and even participated in condolence meetings for slain Maoists without acknowledging the sacrifices of security forces. In Telangana, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's remarks describing Maoism as a 'social issue' have also drawn criticism from veterans of the counter-insurgency grid. As of today, India is on the threshold of writing a new chapter in its fight against extremism. The gains made in the last five years under the strategic direction of the central Government, with Home Minister Amit Shah working hands-on with states, paramilitary forces, and intelligence agencies, are substantial and possibly irreversible. The challenge now is to consolidate peace with justice, ensure that governance takes deeper root, and that tribal communities are treated as equal participants in our nation's democratic journey.

(The writer is commentator on socio-political issues. Views are personal)



SUKHDEV SINGH



RAHUL KAUSHIK



# Census 2026 houselisting to begin on April 1: Government

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The houselisting operations for the forthcoming Census will begin from April 1, 2026, marking the start of the first phase of the decennial exercise, the Registrar General of India has said.

In a letter to chief secretaries of states and Union Territories, Census Commissioner and Registrar General of India Mrityunjay Kumar Narayan said the Houselisting Operations and Housing Census shall begin on April 1, 2026. Before that the appointment of supervisors, enumerators and work distribution among them shall be done with cooperation from states and district administration, it said.

The Census is a two-phase exercise — in phase one ie Houselisting Operation (HLO), the housing conditions, assets and amenities of each



BLO hands over an enumeration form to an elderly voter as part of the special intensive revision of electoral rolls, ahead of the Bihar Assembly elections

household will be collected.

Subsequently, in the second phase ie Population

Enumeration (PE), the demographic, socio-economic, cultural and other details of every

person in each household will be collected which is scheduled for February 1, 2027, according to the letter. In the Census, Caste enumeration will also be done, a government statement had said. For Census activities, over 34 lakh enumerators and supervisors and around 1.3 lakh Census functionaries would be deployed.

It is the 16th Census till now and the eighth after independence. The forthcoming Census will be conducted through digital means using mobile applications. Provision of self-enumeration would also be made available to the people.

The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner had prepared around three dozen questions to be asked to the citizens. The survey will ask households about ownership of items like phones, internet, vehicles (bicycle, scooter, motorcycle, car, jeep, van) and appliances (radio, TV, transistor) among others.

## Kolkata Gangrape: NCW slams police

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata

The Kolkata Police have come under severe attack from the National Commission for Women and the civil society for “dereliction” of duty and “insensitivity” towards the victim of the South Calcutta Law College gangrape case.

Archana Majumdar one of the members of the NCW charged the police with “non-cooperation” alleging, the visiting team of the quasi-judicial authority “not only not allowed to videograph the crime scene but also failed to provide the whereabouts of the victim.”

Saying that the entire report will be filed in details to the appropriate authority Majumdar said, “when we entered the college we found two rooms entirely sealed and the two staircases also closed, the lift was proba-

**Elsewhere a section of lawyers and members of the civil society too attacked the police for trying to mask the identities of the accused**

bly switched off, when the NCW team wanted to video graph the crime scene the police prevented us and said they would seize the instruments if a videography was done.” A First Year law student of the elite South Calcutta Law College was allegedly gangraped by two TMC student leaders and Manojit Mishra an alumnus and a practicing lawyer — allegedly “very close to some top TMC leaders including MPs, MLAs and ministers.”

Referring to the Sunday’s development NCW member Majumdar also alleged that when the NCW “which too is an investigating and quasi-judicial authority asked for the whereabouts of the victim girl, the Deputy Commissioner of Police concerned would not oblige, though she had given the phone number of her parents, when we could not contact her the nodal officer said that the victim was called for recording her statement and was dropped somewhere after 12 am — in the night.”

The senior officer also said that “she was not aware of her whereabouts, it is gross negligence on her part concerning the gravity of the situation, at a time it has become a national news, she runs a great security risk and the police let her go without any security at the

dead of night, this statement itself from the senior officer is reckless, negligent and amounts to dereliction, and if the officer is lying to the NCW about the victim then also she is guilty of misleading a statutory authority.” The NCW had not been able to contact the victim girl till reports last came in.

Elsewhere a section of lawyers and members of the civil society too attacked the police for trying to mask the identities of the accused — all leaders of the Trinamool Congress students’ arm TMC Chhatra Parishad — in the gangrape case.

In an apparent bid to put the accused persons in an advantageous position and confound the victim during judicial scrutiny at the trial stage the police have mentioned initials and not the names of the felons in the First Information

## Rail reservation revamped

Continued from >> P1 Sources in the Ministry said Vaishnav agreed with the proposal of advanced charting and directed the board to start implementing this in phases so that there is no disruption.

Vaishnav last week reviewed the progress of several reforms on anvil for the New Passenger Reservation System which will be capable of generating over 1.5 lakh rail tickets per minute, i.e. about five times the current

capacity of 32000 tickets in a minute, to be ready by year end. Further railway is also working to make Passenger Reservation System multilingual with focus on passenger convenience and smart ticketing.

The Railway Minister reviewed the upgradation of the passenger reservation system. The project is being executed for the last few months by CRIS. The new upgraded PRS design is agile, flexible, and

scalable to handle 10 times the current load. The ticket enquiry capacity will also jump 10 times i.e. from four lakh to over 40 lakh per enquiry will be possible in a minute time. In the new PRS, users will be able to submit their choice of seat and see the fare calendar. It also has integrated facilities for Divyangjan, students, patients, etc. Streamlined authentication for Tatkal bookings Indian Railways will allow only authenticated users to book

Tatkal tickets on IRCTC website and mobile app beginning 1st July, 2025. Further, OTP-based authentication will be done for Tatkal bookings from the end of July, 2025.

The Railways Minister has instructed officials to broadband the authentication mechanism for Tatkal bookings. The authentication should be done using Aadhaar or any other verifiable Government ID available in the user’s DigiLocker account.

## Two arrested for attacking US nationals...

Continued from >> P1 Aradome is a Law graduate from Symbiosis college, Pune and currently pursuing his LL.M from a university in the USA. The lady who was accompanying him, is said to be his debate partner at university and his friend. Following the incident, a special team was formed at the Amar Colony police station under the supervision of Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Aishwarya Sharma. The team conducted detailed technical surveillance and scanned CCTV footage from areas around Astha Kunj Park, Garhi, Nehru Place, and Kalkaji. Local informers were also roped in to trace the suspects.

The breakthrough came when the police received a tip-off about the movement of the accused in the early hours of Sunday. Acting on this information, the team laid a trap near the entry and exit points of Astha Kunj Park. Around 5:10 am, two men matching the description

given by the complainant were seen approaching from the direction of the ISKCON Temple. “When asked to surrender, the suspects opened fire on the police team,” said Additional DCP Sharma during a press briefing. “They fired three rounds. One bullet hit the bulletproof jacket of an inspector and another hit the jacket of a head constable. Thankfully, no police personnel were injured in the encounter.”

In response, the police fired three rounds, aiming at the legs of the accused to stop them. Both men were hit in their right legs and were quickly overpowered by the rest of the team. They were then taken to the AIIMS Trauma Centre, where they are currently undergoing treatment under police supervision. The arrested suspects have been identified as Jatin alias Mogli (20), a resident of Uttam Nagar, and Akshay Baithini (20), a resident of Amritpuri, Garhi. Jatin has two previous criminal cases regis-

tered against him, both involving assault and robbery. Akshay does not have any prior record, according to the police. During questioning, Jatin revealed that he and Akshay were childhood friends and had studied together until class 5, after which both dropped out of school. Over time, they became addicted to alcohol and drugs and started committing crimes to fund their habits. Jatin admitted that they often targeted people in isolated areas such as parks and parking lots where there is minimal public presence.

“On the night of the robbery, they saw the American tourist and his friend walking alone in a quiet area of the park and decided to rob them,” said Sharma. “Jatin used a knife to injure the man while Akshay snatched the woman’s iPhone before the two fled.”

The police recovered a sophisticated pistol with two live rounds, a country-made pistol with one live cartridge, and three empty cartridges from

the scene-evidence of the shots fired during the encounter. The stolen iPhone was also recovered from the accused.

According to the police, the duo had returned to the same area on Sunday, possibly to commit another robbery, when they were caught. Further investigation is underway to determine whether they were involved in any other recent crimes in the area.

Additional DCP Aishwarya Sharma said that this swift action sends a strong message that public safety remains a top priority for the Delhi Police. “We will continue to remain vigilant and act swiftly against those who attempt to disturb peace or endanger the safety of citizens, especially in public spaces like parks,” she said.

The case has been registered at Amar Colony police station, and efforts are ongoing to trace any other associates of the accused and check their possible links to other incidents of crime in the city.

## PM quotes forgotten leaders on...

Continued from >> P1 He also played bits of speeches of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and former deputy PM Jagjivan Ram related to the period. George Fernandes was shackled, he noted and recalled that anyone could be arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) at that time. Students were harassed and freedom of

expression throttled, he added. Thousands of people were arrested and subjected to inhuman treatment, but it is the strength of Indians that they did not bow and accept any compromise with democracy, he said. People finally won, the Emergency was lifted and those who imposed it lost, he said.

Noting that the 50th anniversary of Emergency was

commemorated recently as ‘Samvidhan Hatya Diwas’, he said those who fought against it must always be remembered.

The Emergency was imposed on June 25, 1975 by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi. After the defeat of the Indira Gandhi government in 1977, Vajpayee said, according to the audio, “Whatever happened in the country cannot be

called just an election. A peaceful revolution has taken place. The wave of people’s power has thrown the killers of democracy into the dustbin of history.”

Modi said, “We should always remember all those people who fought the Emergency with fortitude. This inspires us to remain constantly vigilant to keep our Constitution strong.

## Top colleges default on anti-ragging...

Continued from >> P1 National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Hyderabad; Aligarh

Muslim University; Nalanda University; IGNOU and Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata are among other prominent insti-

tutions on the defaulter list. The Anti-Ragging Regulations, 2009 mandate that every student and their parents and guardians

must submit an anti-ragging undertaking at the time of admission and at the beginning of every academic year.

## Monsoon drenches India

Continued from >> P1

Twenty of them were evacuated to safety while nine went missing, the district emergency operation centre said.

The Chardham Yatra has been postponed for a day as a precautionary step and a decision on further travel will be taken after reviewing the weather conditions along the routes on Monday, Garhwal Commissioner Vinay Shankar Pandey said.

In Himachal Pradesh, three more deaths were reported in rain-related incidents since Saturday. One person each drowned in Una and Bilaspur districts while a person died after falling from a height in the Shimla district, according to the state emergency operation centre. Services on the Shimla-Kalka rail line -- a UNESCO world heritage -- were suspended on Sunday after boulders and trees fell on the tracks following overnight rains in Solan district. A bridge in Solan’s Barotiwala industrial area was also washed away. A landslide near Koti on the Shimla-Kalka National Highway (NH-5), connecting Shimla and Chandigarh, damaged some stretches of the road, resulting in a two to three-km-long traffic jam for hours. Bald River in the Baddi area of the district is swelling and there are reports of water up to four feet entering over 20 houses in Shivalik Nagar in Jhdmajri. The water level in Mandi’s Juni Khad and Beas River has increased and the local administration has appealed to people not to go to the river bank and stay alert. All

five spillway gates of Pandoh Dam were opened on Sunday morning, resulting in an increase in water level in Beas River.

Meanwhile, the monsoon’s arrival has brought much-needed relief from the prolonged heatwave that gripped Delhi last week. Residents can expect light to moderate rainfall today and tomorrow, the weather department said.

In recent days, Delhi has witnessed a steady influx of moisture-laden southeasterly winds, which enhanced cloud cover and brought scattered to fairly widespread rainfall across the region. Though it gradually covered the remaining parts of the country in the days that followed, its arrival in Delhi and adjoining areas was delayed due to anti-cyclonic winds over the region that hindered the flow of monsoon currents. The monsoon reached Delhi on June 28 last year, June 25 in 2023, June 30 in 2022, July 13 in 2021 and June 25 in 2020. The system covered the entire country by July 2 in 2024, 2023 and 2022; July 13 in 2021 and June 26 in 2020. According to the IMD, there have been only a few instances since 1960 when the monsoon has advanced over both Delhi and the entire country on the same day. One such occurrence was on July 2, 1967. Most such instances have taken place in July - in 1968, 1987, 1990, 2003, and 2011. Only once before, in 2013, did the monsoon cover Delhi and the entire country simultaneously in the month of June - on the 16th.

Though it gradually covered the remaining parts of the country in the days that followed, its arrival in Delhi and adjoining areas was delayed due to anti-cyclonic winds over the region that hindered the flow of monsoon currents.

Earlier, IMD officials had attributed the delayed arrival over Delhi, despite persistent cloud cover, to an anticyclonic circulation that was temporarily obstructing the monsoon’s advance. They noted that the system would weaken soon, allowing the monsoon to progress. In a statement, the IMD announced the monsoon on Sunday covered Delhi two days after the normal date of June 27 and advanced over the remaining parts of the country nine days before the usual date of July 8.

According to IMD data, this is the earliest the monsoon has covered the entire country since 2020, when it did so by June 26. “The monsoon has further advanced into remaining parts of Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh and Haryana and entire Delhi today, June 29 2025,” the IMD said in a statement. It said that heavy to very heavy rain is likely to continue in many parts of northwest, central, east and northeast India over the next seven days. Extremely heavy rain may occur in some areas of Jharkhand on June 29 and 30 and in Odisha on June 29, the weather department added.

The rain-bearing system usually makes its onset over Kerala by June 1 and covers the

entire country by July 8. It starts retreating from northwest India around September 17 and withdraws completely by October 15. This year, the monsoon reached Kerala on May 24, its earliest onset over the Indian mainland since 2009, when it arrived on May 23. Supported by strong low-pressure systems over the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, the monsoon advanced rapidly over the next few days, covering areas up to central Maharashtra, including Mumbai and the entire north-east by May 29. However, this was followed by a prolonged stagnation of around 18 days, from May 29 to June 16.

In May, the IMD had forecast that India is likely to receive 106 per cent of the long-period average rainfall of 87 cm during the June-September monsoon season. Rainfall between 96 and 104 per cent of this 50-year average is considered ‘normal’.

Above-normal rainfall is expected in most parts of the country, except Ladakh, adjoining areas of Himachal Pradesh, the northeast and some parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

Some isolated areas in Punjab, Haryana, Kerala and Tamil Nadu may record below-normal rainfall. The monsoon is crucial for India’s agriculture sector, which supports the livelihood of around 42 per cent of the population and contributes 18.2 per cent to the GDP. It also plays a key role in replenishing reservoirs essential for drinking water and power generation.

## Maharashtra scraps three-language...

Continued from >> P1 “Do not create confusion with the (Jadhav) committee’s report again, otherwise the Government should note that this committee will not be allowed to function in Maharashtra,” he said.

Uddhav Thackeray told reporters that the BJP-led government was forced to withdraw the GRs owing to the strong unity shown by Marathi manoes. “The government tried to divide Marathi people but failed to do so,” he said.

Fadnavis alleged that as chief minister Uddhav Thackeray had accepted the recommendations of the Dr Raghunath Mashelkar committee to introduce a three-language policy from class 1 to 12 and set up a committee on the policy implementation.

Uddhav dismissed the claim, saying he had appointed a study group on Mashelkar panel suggestions, but the group did not hold even a single meeting.

The Fadnavis government had issued a GR on April 16, making Hindi a compulsory third language for students in classes 1 to 5 studying in English and Marathi medium schools. Amid backlash, the Government issued an amended GR on June 17 making Hindi an optional language. Maharashtra minister Ashok Uike’s remarks opposing the imposition of Hindi found unexpected support from the MNS, which prominently featured his photograph and quote on its posters ahead of the July 5 protest.

The party displayed the

state tribal development minister’s quotes on its banners in some parts of Mumbai. Uike had recently said that he would speak only in Marathi, asserting, “I was born in a tribal family.

My mother, who was illiterate, instilled in me the values of Marathi. I don’t know Hindi, and I will not speak in Hindi.” Hours before Fadnavis made the announcement, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Sunday said efforts were being made to ensure that the need for the July 5 march against the three-language formula did not arise. Reacting to Ajit Pawar’s statement, Uddhav Thackeray said someone in the Government showed the courage to oppose it (GRs), and not everyone has become a slave. “My party

does not oppose Hindi but only its imposition,” he said, after copies of the June 17 government resolution on the three-language policy for schools was burnt at a well-attended protest event in south Mumbai.

Congress MP Varsha Gaikwad accused the BJP-led Maharashtra government of launching a false propaganda campaign to undermine public resistance against its alleged “anti-Marathi” agenda and push for the imposition of Hindi. The former state school education minister also refuted claims that the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government, in which Congress was an ally, had accepted the three-language formula under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

## Kalyan, Mohua trade barbs on Kolkata...

Continued from >> P1 Apart from Banerjee, former Minister and senior MLA Madan Mitra too stirred controversy by saying that the victim should not have gone to the college and stayed back there till odd hours, before advising women to take guard against “such beasts roaming about the area.”

Moitra promptly took up the issue and hit back calling out “misogynistic mindset” of leaders cutting across party lines inviting a violent counterattack from Banerjee.

Meanwhile, the TMC party

in an official X handle wrote, “the remarks made by MP Kalyan Banerjee and MLA Madan Mitra concerning the heinous crime at South Calcutta Law College were made in their personal capacities. The party unequivocally disassociates itself from their statements and strongly condemns the same. These views do not reflect the position of the party in any manner whatsoever.”

Elsewhere, in a related development Union junior minister and Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar was on

Sunday released unconditionally by the Kolkata Police after more than 12 hours’ detention even as he refused bail on personal bond on Saturday.

Majumdar and some of his colleagues were picked up by the police late on Saturday noon from the Gariahat crossing in South Kolkata while they were proceeding towards the South Calcutta Laws College where a girl student had been gangraped by some of her fellow students and an alumnus and an influential Trinamool Congress students’ leader. Stating that he had

refused bail on personal bond, Majumdar, said that “the police released us in the morning without pressing any charge” adding how “Bengal has become a killing field of democracy where you cannot raise your voice against wrongs done by the ruling party people ... I have been arrested four times in one month ... I refused bail on personal bond ... and now I will ask all the BJP who are held during agitations to refuse bail on bonds from now on ... we will like to see how bid the Government jails are.”

## Stampede mars Lord Jagannath’s yatra

Continued from >> P1

Chief Minister Majhi sought forgiveness from devotees of Lord Jagannath for the stampede, and tendered an apology on behalf of his government for the incident. “Due to intense eagerness among devotees to have a glimpse of Mahaprabhu... An unfortunate incident occurred because of the resulting jostling and chaos. I and my government seek forgiveness from all Jagannath devotees. We express our condolences to the families of devotees who lost their lives... Pray to Mahaprabhu Jagannath to grant them the strength to bear this profound sorrow,” Majhi said. He also said that security lapses behind the incident would be probed and those found guilty will face

stringent action. State Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said the situation is now normal at the Shree Gundicha Temple, where devotees are offering prayers to the deities. Puri’s titular king, Gajapati Maharaja Divyasingha Deb, expressed shock over the incident, and appealed to the state government to carry out a comprehensive inquiry into the matter. The titular king, who is also the chairman of the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee (SJTMC), also urged the Odisha government to take proper and immediate steps to prevent the recurrence of any such incident. Health department sources said among those critically injured, one has been shifted to the SCB Medical

College and Hospital in Cuttack, while five others are in ICU. A host of political leaders, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and BJD chief Naveen Patnaik condoled the deaths, with many criticising the state government over arrangements for the Rath Yatra. Kharge said he was deeply pained by the stampede, and asserted that the “negligence and mismanagement” which led to the tragedy are inexcusable. In a post on X, Gandhi described the Puri temple stampede as “extremely tragic”, and urged the Odisha government to expedite relief efforts.

BJD chief and Leader of Opposition in Odisha assembly, Naveen Patnaik, claimed that the stampede exposed the State

Government’s glaring incompetence in ensuring a peaceful Rath Yatra for devotees. “While I refrain from accusing the government of criminal negligence, their blatant callousness has undeniably contributed to this tragedy.

I urge the government to implement urgent corrective measures to ensure the smooth conduct of Adapa Bijje, Bahuda, Suna Besha, and other key #RathYatra rituals,” Patnaik, a five-term Chief Minister, added. The chariots of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra had on Saturday reached Shree Gundicha Temple, a day after the Rath Yatra began in Puri. The return car journey, known as ‘Bahuda Yatra’, will held this year on July 5.



# UK police reviewing rapper’s anti-Israel comments at Glastonbury Festival

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ London

British police said they were examining videos of a band that led chants of “death to the IDF” or Israel Defense Forces at Saturday’s Glastonbury Festival.

Rapper Bobby Vylan, of rap punk duo Bob Vylan, led crowds attending the festival in chants of “free, free Palestine” and “death, death to the IDF”.

Avon and Somerset Police said video evidence would be assessed by officers “to determine whether any offenses may have been committed that would require a criminal investigation”.

The Israeli Embassy to the UK said on social media that it was “deeply disturbed by the inflammatory and hateful rhetoric expressed on stage at the Glastonbury Festival”.



Health Secretary Wes Streeting on Sunday condemned the band’s actions as “appalling”.

He told Sky News that the BBC and festival organisers had to answer questions about how

the comments were broadcast live to millions.

The Government said Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy has spoken to the BBC director general about Bob Vylan’s performance.

The BBC said it issued a warning on screen about “very strong and discriminatory language” during the live stream.

Saturday’s festival lineup also included Irish-language rap group Kneecap, which gave an

impassioned performance for tens of thousands of fans despite criticism by British politicians and a terror charge for one of the trio.

Liam Og O hAnnaidh, who performs under the stage name Mo Chara, has been charged under the Terrorism Act with supporting a proscribed organisation for allegedly waving a Hezbollah flag at a concert in London in November.

The rapper, who was charged under the anglicised version of his name, Liam O’Hanna, is on unconditional bail before a further court hearing in August.

The group has faced criticism for lyrics laden with expletives and drug references, and for political statements, especially since videos emerged allegedly showing the band shouting “up Hamas, up Hezbollah” and calling on people to kill lawmakers.

# Musk renews criticism of Trump’s big bill as it faces Senate vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Washington

Elon Musk on Saturday doubled down on his distaste for US President Donald Trump’s sprawling tax and spending cuts bill, arguing the legislation that Republican senators are scrambling to pass would kill jobs and bog down burgeoning industries.

“The latest Senate draft bill will destroy millions of jobs in America and cause immense strategic harm to our country,” Musk wrote on X on Saturday as the Senate was scheduled to call a vote to open debate on the nearly 1,000-page bill.

“It gives handouts to industries of the past while severely damaging industries of the future.”

The Tesla and SpaceX CEO, whose birthday is also Saturday, later posted that the bill would be “political suicide for the Republican Party”.



The criticisms reopen a recent fiery conflict between the former head of the Department of Government Efficiency and the administration he recently left.

They also represent yet another headache for Republican Senate leaders who have spent the weekend working overtime to get the legislation through their chamber so it can pass by Trump’s Fourth of July deadline.

Musk previously made his opinions about Trump’s “big, beautiful bill” clear.

Days after he left the federal government last month with a laudatory celebration in the Oval Office, he blasted the bill as “pork-filled” and a “disgusting abomination”.

“Shame on those who voted for it: you know you did wrong. You know it,” he wrote on X earlier this month.

# Heat waves hit southern Europe as local authorities warn against wildfire risks

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Rome

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

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

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

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

In Italy, a few regions - Lazio, Tuscany, Calabria, Puglia and Umbria - were planning to ban some outdoor work activities during the hottest



hours of the day in response to the record-high temperatures. Italian trade unions pushed the government to expand such measures at a national level.

On Sunday, the Italian Health Ministry placed 21 out of 27 monitored cities under its highest heat alert,

including top holiday destinations like Rome, Milan and Naples.

In Rome, tourists tried to seek shade near popular spots like the Colosseum and the Trevi Fountain, using umbrellas and drinking from public water fountains to stay cool.

Similar scenes were reported in

Milan and Naples, where street vendors sold lemonade to tourists and residents to offer some refreshment from the heat.

Greece was again on high wildfire alert because of extreme weather, with the first summer heat wave expected to continue throughout the weekend.

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

Greek authorities deployed 130 firefighters, 12 planes and 12 helicopters to battle the blaze, while police evacuated 40 people, with five areas under evacuation orders.

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

Southern regions of Spain record-

ed temperatures above seasonal averages, prompting health alerts and safety recommendations from authorities.

The country’s national meteorological service Aemet has said that June is set to break yet another record, becoming the hottest such month since records started.

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

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

A Lancet Public Health study published last year highlighted the increasing risk of heat-related deaths because of climate change. The study predicted that heat-related deaths could more than quadruple by mid-century under current climate policies.

While more people currently die from cold than heat, the study stressed that rising temperatures will offset the benefits of milder winters, leading to a significant net increase in heat-related mortality.



# Russia launches biggest aerial attack: Ukraine

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Kyiv

Russia launched its biggest aerial attack against Ukraine overnight, a Ukrainian official said on Sunday, part of an escalating bombing campaign that has further dashed hopes for a breakthrough in efforts to end the 3-year-old war.

Russia fired a total of 537 aerial weapons at Ukraine, including 477 drones and decoys and 60 missiles, Ukraine’s air force said. Of these, 249 were shot down and 226 were lost, likely having been electronically jammed.

The onslaught was “the most massive airstrike” on the country since the beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion in February 2022, taking into account both drones and various types of missiles, Yuriy Ihnat, head of communications for Ukraine’s air force, told The Associated Press. The attack targeted several regions, including western Ukraine, far from the front line.

Poland and allied countries scrambled aircraft to ensure the safety of Polish airspace, the country’s air force said.

One person died in a drone strike in the Kherson region, Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin said, while another was killed when a drone hit a car in the Kharkiv region, according to its Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. Six people were wounded in Cherkasy, including a child, according to regional Gov. Ihor Taburets.

In the far-western Lviv region, a large fire broke out at an industrial facility in the city of Droboych following a drone attack that also cut electricity to parts of the city.

Ukraine’s air force said one of its F-16 warplanes supplied by its Western partners crashed after sustaining damage while shooting down air targets. The pilot died.

Russia’s defence ministry said it had shot down three Ukrainian drones overnight.

Two people were wounded in another Ukrainian drone attack on the city of Bryansk in western Russia, regional Gov. Alexander Bogomaz said Sunday morning, adding that seven Ukrainian drones had been shot down over the region.

Meanwhile, Russia claimed on Sunday that it had taken control of the village of Novoukrainka in the partially Russian-occupied Donetsk region. Russian forces have been slowly grinding forward at some points on the roughly 1,000-kilometre front line, though their incremental gains have been costly in terms of troop casualties and damaged armor.

The fresh attacks follow Russian President Vladimir Putin’s comments Friday that Moscow is ready for a fresh round of direct peace talks in Istanbul.

However, the war shows no signs of abating as US-led international peace efforts have so far produced no breakthrough. Two recent rounds of talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegations in Istanbul were brief and yielded no progress on reaching a settlement.

Long-range drone strikes have been a hallmark of the war. The race by both sides to develop increasingly sophisticated and deadlier drones has turned the conflict into a testing ground for new weaponry.

# US Supreme Court upholds Texas law on age checks for porn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Washington

The US Supreme Court handed down a decision on June 27, 2025, that will reshape how states protect children online. In a case assessing a Texas law requiring age verification to access porn sites, the court created a new legal path that makes it easier for states to craft laws regulating what kids see and do on the internet.

In a 6-3 decision, the court ruled in Free Speech Coalition Inc. V. Paxton that Texas’ law obligating porn sites to block access to underage users is constitutional. The law requires pornographic websites to verify users’ ages - for example by making users scan and upload their driver’s license - before granting access to content that is deemed obscene for minors but not adults.

The majority on the court rejected both the porn industry’s argument for strict scrutiny - the toughest legal test that requires the government to prove a law is absolutely necessary - and Texas’ argument for mere rational basis review, which requires only a rational connection between the law’s legitimate aims and its actions.

Instead, Justice Clarence Thomas’ opinion established intermediate scrutiny, a middle ground that requires laws to serve important gov-

ernment interests without being overly burdensome, as the appropriate standard.

The court’s reasoning hinged on characterizing the law as only “incidentally” burdening adults’ First Amendment rights. Since minors have no constitutional right to access pornography, the state can require age verification to prevent that unprotected activity. Any burden on adults is, according to the ruling, merely a side effect of this legitimate regulation.

The court also pointed to dramatic technological changes since earlier similar laws were struck down in the 1990s and early 2000s. Back then, only 2 in 5 households had internet access, mostly through slow dial-up connections on desktop computers.

Today, 95 per cent of teens carry smartphones with constant internet access to massive libraries of content. Porn site Pornhub alone published over 150 years of new material in 2019. The court argued that earlier decisions “could not have conceived of these developments,” making age verification more necessary than judges could have imagined decades ago.

More importantly for future legislation, the court embraced an “ordinary and appropriate means” doctrine: When states have authority to govern an area, they may use traditional methods to exercise that power. Since



age verification is common for alcohol and tobacco, tattoos and piercings, firearms, driver’s licenses and voting, the court held that it’s similarly appropriate for regulating minors’ access to sexual content.

The key takeaway: When states are trying to keep kids away from certain types of content that kids have no legal right to see anyway, requiring age verification is an ordinary and appropriate way to enforce that boundary.

Implications for other laws

This decision could resolve a fun-

damental enforcement problem in child privacy laws. Current laws like the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act protect children only when companies have actual knowledge a user is under 13. But platforms routinely avoid this requirement by not asking users’ ages or letting them enter whatever age they want. Without age verification, there’s no actual knowledge and thus no privacy protections.

The Supreme Court’s reasoning changes this dynamic. Since the court

emphasized that children lack the same constitutional rights as adults regarding certain protections, states may now be able to require age verification before data collection. California’s Age-Appropriate Design Code and similar state privacy laws would gain substantially more regulatory power under this framework.

Meanwhile, social media platforms could face more restrictions. Several states have tried to limit how social media platforms interact with minors. Florida recently banned kids under 14 from having social media accounts entirely, while other states have targeted specific features such as endless scrolling or push notifications designed to keep kids hooked.

The Supreme Court’s reasoning could protect laws that require age verification before kids can use certain platform features, such as direct messaging with strangers or livestreaming. However, laws that try to block kids from seeing general social media content would still face tough legal challenges, since that content is typically protected speech for everyone.

The decision also supports state laws regulating how minors interact with app stores and gaming platforms. Minors generally can’t enter binding contracts without parental consent in the physical world, so states could require the same online.

# Celebrities, blue jeans and couture: How Anna Wintour changed fashion over 37 years at Vogue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Melbourne

After 37 years at the helm, fashion industry heavyweight Anna Wintour is stepping down from her position as editor-in-chief of American Vogue.

It’s not a retirement, though, as Wintour will maintain a leadership position at global fashion and lifestyle publisher Condé Nast (the owner of Vogue and other publications, such as Vanity Fair and Glamour).

Nonetheless, Wintour’s departure from the US edition of the magazine is a big moment for the fashion industry - one which she has single-handedly changed forever.

Fashion mag fever

Fashion magazines as we know them today were first formalised in the 19th century.

They helped establish the “trickle down theory” of fashion, wherein trends were traditionally dictated by certain industry elites, including major magazine editors.

In Australia, getting your hands on a monthly issue meant rare exposure to the latest European or American fashion trends.

Vogue itself was established in New York in 1892 by businessman Arthur Baldwin Turnure. The magazine targeted the city’s elite class, initially covering various aspects of high-society life.

In 1909, Vogue was acquired by Condé Nast. From then, the magazine increasingly cemented itself as a cornerstone of the fashion publishing.

The period following the second world war particularly opened the doors to mass fashion consumerism and an



expanding fashion magazine culture.

Wintour came on as editor of Vogue in 1988, at which point the magazine became less conservative, and more culturally significant.

Not afraid to break the mould

Fashion publishing changed as a result of Wintour’s bold editorial choices — especially when it came to the magazine’s covers. Her choices both

reflected, and dictated, shifts in fashion culture.

Wintour’s first cover at Vogue, published in 1988, mixed couture garments (Christian Lacroix) with mainstream brands (stonewashed Guess jeans) — something which had never been done before. It was also the first time a Vogue cover had featured jeans at all - perfectly setting the scene for a long career spent pushing the magazine into new domains.

Wintour also pioneered the centring of celebrities (rather than just models) within fashion discourse.

And while she leveraged big names such as Beyonce, Madonna, Nicole Kidman, Kate Moss, Michelle Obama and Oprah Winfrey, she also featured rising stars as cover models — often helping propel their careers in the process.

Wintour’s legacy at Vogue involved elevating fashion from a frivolous runway to a powerful industry, which is not scared to make a statement. Nowhere is this truer than at the Met Gala, which is held each year to celebrate the opening of a new fashion exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute.

The event started as a simple fundraiser for the Met in 1948, before being linked to a fashion exhibit for the first time in 1974.

Wintour took over its organisation in 1995. Her focus on securing exclusive celebrity guests helped propel it to the prestigious event it is today.

This year’s theme for the event was Superfine: Tailoring Black Style. In a time where the US faces great political instability, Wintour was celebrated for her role in helping elevate

Black history through the event.

Not without controversy

However, while her cultural influence can’t be doubted, Wintour’s legacy at American Vogue is not without fault.

Notably, her ongoing feud with animal rights organisation PETA — due to her unwavering support for fur — has bubbled in the background since the heydays of the anti-fur movement.

Wintour has been targeted directly by anti-fur activists, both physically (she was hit with a tofu cream pie in 2005 while leaving a Chloe show) and through numerous protests.

This issue was never resolved.

Vogue has continued to showcase and feature fur clothing, even as the social license for using animal materials

starts to run out.

Fashion continues to grow increasingly political.

How magazines such as Vogue will engage with this shift remains to be seen.

A changing media landscape

The rise of fashion blogging in recent decades has led to a wave of fashion influencers, with throngs of followers, who are challenging the unidirectional “trickle-down” structure of the fashion industry.

Today, social media platforms have overtaken traditional media influence both within and outside of fashion. And with this, the power of fashion editors such as Wintour is diminishing significantly.

Many words will flow regarding Wintour’s departure as editor-in-chief, but nowhere near as many as what she oversaw at the helm of the world’s biggest fashion magazine.



# Indian IT majors repositioning themselves as AI-native firms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Indian IT majors are aggressively repositioning themselves as AI-native firms, focusing on high-margin applications and integration over high-risk, capital-intensive foundational research. A deep dive into the FY25 annual reports from the industry behemoths — TCS, Infosys, Wipro and Tech Mahindra — indicates that in the global AI race, India's tech titans are not competing to invent foundational AI, they are positioning themselves to become premier integrators of it. The shift from general digital transformation to a specific AI focus is captured in the very titles of their annual reports. TCS frames its strategy within "The Perpetually Adaptive Enterprise," driven by a stated "AI-First approach."

Infosys takes an even more direct path with its theme, "AI Your Enterprise," while Wipro focuses on its role as an enabler in "Helping Clients Build AI-Powered Future-Ready Businesses." Tech Mahindra joins this chorus with "AI Delivered Right." The IT firms are laying a greater focus on investing in human capital and upskilling their workforce. TCS has reported that over 1 lakh of its employees have acquired "higher order skills in AI/ML and GenAI, while Infosys has said that over 2.70 lakh of its employees are now "AI-Aware." Similar trends are observed in Wipro and Tech Mahindra as well. "The advent of AI with all its possibilities and potential creates another arc of uncertainty. As enterprises look at applying AI to every aspect of the business, some long-stand-



ing challenges will become imperative and self-evident to firms," Infosys Chairman Nandan Nilekani said. The need to modernise legacy systems and create a data architecture so that all the firm's data is consumable by AI, in a holistic manner, can no longer be put off, he said and urged enterprises to have an AI foundry and an AI factory to fuel innovation as well as scale. "Let us think of AI as a gifted child prodigy born and brought up in a library. It has access to all the knowledge in the world. It absorbs everything — information, fact, fiction, truth, untruth, every pattern of human behaviour. Used well, it can create extraordinary value, particularly for businesses like TechM," Mahindra Group Chairman Anand G Mahindra said. The global AI market is projected to skyrocket, reaching an estimated \$1.3 trillion over

the next decade, according to industry estimates. The IT firms are not building their own large language models (LLMs) to compete with OpenAI or Google. Instead, they are deepening partnerships with hyperscalers (Microsoft, Google, AWS) and chipmakers (Nvidia) to access the latest models and infrastructure. Firms are creating dedicated spaces for co-innovation, TCS is establishing AI Centres of Excellence and AI Labs, while Infosys is building its AI foundry, allowing clients to experiment with AI in a controlled environment. Their bet is that as AI becomes a utility, the most enduring value will be captured not by those who create it, but by those who can expertly wire it into every corner of the enterprise. India's largest IT services company TCS believes

that generative artificial intelligence (AI) is not just another tech cycle but a "civilisational shift" which will positively benefit every industry. Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran, who also chairs the TCS board, said the USD 30 billion IT services company will create a "large pool" of AI agents to work alongside humans and deliver solutions in a "human AI" model in the future. Wipro announced realignment within its Global Business Lines (GBLs) to better align with the changing needs of clients and to capitalise on opportunities in AI, cloud computing, and digital transformation. "This evolution of our business lines will enable us to further sharpen our focus towards client needs with consulting-led and AI-powered solutions," Wipro CEO and MD Srini Pallia had said.

## Rosneft in early talks with Reliance to sell Indian stakes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Russian oil giant PJSC Rosneft Oil Company is in early talks with Reliance Industries for sale of its 49.13 per cent stake in Nayara Energy, which operates a 20-million tonnes-a-year oil refinery and 6,750 petrol pumps in India, sources said. Reliance has held preliminary talks for acquisition of Nayara, which will help it overtake state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to become India's number one oil refiner as well as give a meaningful presence in the fuel marketing space. But the talks are at preliminary stage and there is no guarantee that they may lead to a definite deal as valuation remains a sticky ground, three sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. Top Rosneft officials have visited India at least thrice in the last one year, including visits to Ahmedabad and Mumbai, for talks with potential investors. For Rosneft, which is looking to exit from Nayara due to western sanctions limiting its ability to repatriate full earnings from India operations, a



potential buyer could be one who has substantial earnings overseas or is an international company — both of which could make quick overseas payouts for the stake. Being a large exporter of fuel, Reliance has substantial overseas income, the sources said. While emails sent to Rosneft for comments remained unanswered, a Reliance spokesperson said, "As a policy, we do not comment on media speculation

and rumours." "Our company evaluates various opportunities on an ongoing basis," the spokesperson said. "We have made and will continue to make necessary disclosures in compliance with our obligations under Securities Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015 and our agreements with the stock exchanges." Rosneft, which had in 2017 acquired Essar Oil in a \$12.9-

billion deal, is unable to get full financial benefits from its Indian operations, including repatriating earnings, due to international sanctions. Essar Oil was subsequently named Nayara Energy. The Russian giant sometime in 2024 decided to exit Nayara and began scouting for potential buyers. Alongside Rosneft, UCP Investment Group, a major Russian financial firm, is also selling its 24.5 per cent stake in Nayara. The rest of Nayara's owner-

ship includes Trafigura Group (24.5 per cent) and a group of retail shareholders. If a deal is struck, Trafigura too may exit the venture within months on same terms, they said. The stake of Rosneft and UCP was offered to Reliance Industries, Adani Group, Saudi Aramco and state-owned ONGC/IOC combine among others. But the \$20-billion valuation that Rosneft had put for Nayara was considered too steep a price by almost every potential investor. Adani Group politely declined the offer to invest in an oil refinery, which is considered a sunset business given the energy transition planned worldwide. Besides the asking price being too high, the conglomerate's understanding with French energy giant TotalEnergies, with whom it has stitched multi-billion dollar partnership in city gas and renewable energy space, also came in the way of investing in Nayara, the sources said, adding Adani had in its deal with TotalEnergies agreed to limit future investments in fossil fuel space to only natural gas. Sources said Saudi Aramco

is a serious contender to take over Nayara as it will fulfil its long-desired ambition of having downstream presence in the world's fastest growing oil market. Aramco, the world's largest oil exporter, had previously agreed to invest in a giant oil refinery-cum-petrochemical complex that state-owned firms had planned to build in Maharashtra, but that project hasn't taken off due to land acquisition delays. It had in 2019 signed a non-binding agreement to buy a 20 per cent stake in Reliance's oil-to-chemical (O2C) business for \$15 billion but the deal was called off two years later over valuation issues. Sources said Aramco too considers the \$20 billion valuation too high. It wasn't known if talks between Rosneft and Aramco have progressed beyond initial contact. Nayara makes the most sense for Reliance, they said. Reliance operates twin refineries, with a combined capacity of 68.2 million tonnes per annum at Jamnagar in Gujarat. Its units are in the vicinity of Nayara's 20-million tonnes-a-year unit at Vadinar, Gujarat.

## Monetise investments: Finance Ministry to PSBs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

The finance ministry has tasked Public Sector Banks (PSBs) to look at monetising their investment in subsidiaries by listing them at bourses after further scaling up operations so that they realise good return. There are about 15 subsidiaries or joint ventures of PSBs lined up for initial public offering or divestment in medium to long term, sources said. Wherever required banks should invest funds to scale up operations of their subsidiaries or joint ventures, sources said, adding, banks can look at unlocking value at an opportune time. As a precursor to monetisation, sources said, banks should improve governance, professional decision-making and bring in greater operational efficiency in their subsidiaries. For example, the country's biggest lender State Bank of India may look at listing SBI General Insurance and SBI Payment Services in the future after they scale up their oper-

ations. SBI General Insurance Company Ltd, incorporated on February 24, 2009, earned a profit of Rs 509 crore for the financial year ended March 2025. The general insurance arm of SBI has allotted 3,71,693 equity shares of Rs 10 each during the year ended March 2025. Consequently, the stake of SBI in SBI General Insurance Company Ltd has reduced from 69.11 per cent to 68.99 per cent. SBI Payment Services Pvt Ltd, which is in the merchant acquiring business, is 74 per cent owned by SBI, and the rest with Hitachi Payment Services. SBI Payments is one of the largest acquirers in the country, with more than 33.10 lakh merchant payment acceptance touch points as of March 31, 2024, including 13.67 lakh POS (point of sales) machines, deployed across geographies. Meanwhile, Canara Bank has already initiated the process for listing of asset management joint venture Canara Robeco AMC. Besides, it is also planning listing of its life insurance joint venture Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company.

## Reliance Power participates in global bids for 1,500-MW gas-based power project

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Anil Ambani's Reliance Power Ltd is planning to set up a 1,500-MW gas-based power project overseas and is actively participating in several international tenders for its development, according to sources. Sources said, Reliance Power has submitted competitive bids for gas-based power projects in Kuwait, UAE, and Malaysia as part of its selective global expansion strategy. The company has recently secured two mega power projects in Bhutan — a 500-MW solar project and a 770-MW hydropower project. Based on the outcome of the ongoing international bids, Reliance Power plans to relocate

two 750 MW modules of world-class equipment currently in its possession in India. The proposed project is expected to create significant value in Reliance Power's balance sheet, as the company aims to realise up to ₹2,000 crore through the monetisation of these assets. When contacted, a Reliance Power spokesperson confirmed the company's participation in global tenders. Originally, the company had imported three modules of 750 MW world class equipment from General Electric, USA, for a gas-based combined cycle power project, out of which one module was exported to Bangladesh for an LNG based power project in partnership with Japan's JERA. Now, Reliance Power intends

to deploy the remaining two modules for a similar project at an overseas location. The demand for gas-based power — widely regarded as a clean energy source — is significantly high in countries such as Kuwait, the UAE, and Malaysia. However, global suppliers like GE typically require 3 to 5 years to deliver equipment for gas or LNG-based power plants. In contrast, Reliance Power has 1,500 MW of equipment readily available, enabling it to execute such projects in the shortest possible timeframe. Reliance Power is actively focusing on renewable and clean energy. The company has a strong development pipeline, including 2.5 GWp of utility-scale solar projects and more than 2.5 GWh of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).

## RBL Bank aims to widen its net interest margin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Mumbai

RBL Bank is aiming to widen its net interest margins (NIM) from retail assets by shifting the portfolio mix towards higher-yielding assets, a senior official has said. As part of the same strategy, the private sector lender will launch a commercial vehicle (CV) financing and used 4-wheeler finance in the next three months. The increase in NIMs, which is being targeted at a time when the entire industry is facing challenges on this front, will be achieved while maintaining that the secured retail share in the overall loan mix was at around 31 per cent level, Kumar Ashish, its head of retail assets and collections, told PTI. Ashish, however, did not share the current NIMs of the retail business nor did he share an aspirational number. It had reported a sharp decline in the overall NIMs to 4.89 per cent as against 5.45 per cent, and the narrowing was one of the reasons along with setbacks in the MFI business for the 76 per cent drop in the Q4 net profit at Rs



86 crore. He said at the bank level, it is aiming for expanding NIMs to 5.1 per cent. In retail assets, the bank's focus relies on going deeper into tier-II and III cities, where the bank already has a distribution network courtesy its 550 branches and over 1,500 business cor-

respondent touchpoints. After understanding the customer needs and tailoring the product mix, it will focus on quicker turnaround times for delivering credit in categories such as tractor finance, gold loans, homes loans, business loans and the upcoming businesses, he said.

Admitting that RBL Bank is a "challenger bank" in many of the retail businesses and will be up against aggressive competition, Ashish said it will have to find new niche of customers whose needs are unfulfilled, use a lot of digital inputs for loan underwriting, depend on quicker turnaround times and have a control over the costs to deliver on higher NIMs. Citing the case of home loans, he said the bank will focus more on the affordable housing segment while even in the soon-to-be-launched CV segment, it will go after demand from customers a notch under prime to expand margins. On the costs front, it is making best use of the existing staffing for doing more, pointing out that the talent across branches which was primarily focused on liabilities will now be doing retail credit as well. "We would have to gain market share in order to grow," Ashish, who joined the bank from Aditya Birla Capital recently, made it clear. The CV financing will be done to smaller players in smaller cities and the bank's tractor financing team will be used for distribution, he said.

## CEA, BSES discoms observe Electrical Safety Day 2025

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Central Electricity Authority (CEA), in collaboration with BSES discoms, observed 'Electrical Safety Day 2025' in New Delhi on Thursday, reaffirming its commitment to building a safer and smarter power ecosystem. Observed every year on June 26 since 2018, the day highlights the importance of electrical safety in India's dynamic energy landscape. This year's theme, "Smart Energy, Safe Nation," focused on the need to prioritise safety across emerging technologies such as Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, and rooftop solar installations. With growing electrification and decentralisation, the potential for electrical

hazards has increased, calling for enhanced awareness and collective responsibility. The event was inaugurated by Shripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State for Power and New and Renewable Energy. Emphasising that safety must remain central to India's energy transition, he said, "Electricity powers every aspect of our lives, but it must be handled with care. Safety is not just a government responsibility-it belongs to every individual and organisation." Among the key attendees were Pankaj Agarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Power; Ghanashyam Prasad, Chairperson, CEA; Amal Sinha, Director and Group CEO, BSES; along with CEOs of BSES Rajdhani and Yamuna Power Ltd. The event drew over 300 delegates from more than 50 organisations

including POWERGRID, GAIL, Renew Power, Adani Green, Indgrid, TPDDL, state electrical inspectors, RWAs and safety equipment firms. Thousands more joined virtually via webcast. A major highlight was the unveiling of 'Suraksha Shakti', the official Electrical Safety Mascot, designed to raise public awareness in a friendly and relatable way. The first edition of the 'Electrical Safety Handbook' was also launched-a joint effort by CEA and BSES offering clear safety guidelines for modern energy systems, including rooftop solar, EV chargers, and BESS. The day featured expert-led technical sessions by CEA, NPTEL, and BSES, covering topics such as digital safety tools, fault protection, and rooftop solar safety practices.

## Executive Director of Reliance to get ₹10-₹20 crore salary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Anant Ambani, the youngest son of billionaire Mukesh Ambani and the first among three siblings to be appointed Executive Director on flagship Reliance Industries, will be paid ₹10-₹20 crore salary annually plus a host of perks including a commission on company profits, according to a shareholder notice. While the richest Asian's all three children — twins Akash and Isha, and Anant — were inducted on board of the oil-to-telecom-and-retail conglomerate in 2023 as non-executive directors, the youngest of the three was in April this year appointed Executive Director of Reliance Industries Ltd. As non-executive directors, the three were entitled to no



Anant Ambani

salary and were each paid a sitting fee of ₹4 lakh in 2023-24 fiscal year and a commission on profit of ₹97 lakh each. But as an Executive Director, Anant, 30, will be entitled to salary and other prerequisites. Reliance in a stock exchange

notice on Sunday said shareholder approval for the appointment has been sought through a postal ballot. The appointments in 2023 were part of a succession planning at India's most valuable company, which many saw as Ambani's attempt to avoid the

sibling feud that followed his father's death in 2002. Isha is on the board of Reliance Retail and joined that of the newly spun-off Jio Financial Services, Akash chairs telecoms. Anant is part of the materials and renewable energy ventures. They operate alongside professional managers. In the postal ballot, Reliance said Anant's "salary, perquisites and allowances shall be in the range of ₹10 crore to ₹20 crore per annum." "The perquisites and allowances shall include accommodation (furnished or otherwise) or house rent allowance in lieu thereof; house maintenance allowance together with reimbursement of expenses and/or allowances for utilisation of gas, electricity, water, furnishing and repairs and leave travel concession for self and family including dependents," it said.

He shall also be entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred for travelling, boarding and lodging including for his spouse and attendant(s) during business trips and provision of car(s) for use on company's business and communication expenses at residence. He shall also be entitled to medical reimbursement as well as company-arranged security for him and his family members. "In addition to the salary, perquisites and allowances, Anant M Ambani shall be entitled to receive remuneration based on net profits," the notice said. Mukesh Ambani had in August 2023 announced the induction of his three children on the board of oil-to-telecom conglomerate as non-executive directors, in preparation of an eventual succession plan.



# A Decade of Celebrating Yoga

As India celebrated the 11th International Yoga Day with record numbers, remember: the doors are always open for you to join in the Yog world and it's never too late, writes ABHI SINGHAL

Yoga is a magnet; it pulls you through itself once you start practising it. When you hear the word 'Yoga', you sense calm, you sense stillness — and that calm and stillness become a daily peace in one's life. India celebrated the 11th *International Yoga Day* on 21 June 2025, and this year marks a decade of India consecutively celebrating Yoga and taking it to the global stage. A practice initiated and pitched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 2014 UN address has now become a global success, year after year.

The first International Day of Yoga was observed across the world on 21 June 2015. The Ministry of AYUSH made the necessary arrangements in India. A total of 35,985 people — including Prime Minister Modi and dignitaries from 84 nations performed 21 asanas (yoga postures) for 35 minutes at Rajpath in New Delhi. This event became the largest yoga class ever held, with the highest number — 84 — of participating nations.

In 2025, Yoga Day once again created world records. The largest gathering for a yoga session at a single venue was achieved with an impressive 302,000 (3.02 lakh) participants joining on 21st June 2025. Another milestone was the largest mass Surya Namaskar demonstration, with 22,122 tribal students participating on 20 June 2025.

There is something very special and healing in Yoga that has led to these numbers increasing year after year into the lakhs.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "After 11 years, we can see that Yog has worldwide become a way of living for crores of people. Yoga is for everyone — beyond boundaries, beyond backgrounds, and beyond age or ability."

Yoga demonstrations emphasised physical resilience and national service in some of the country's most challenging terrains — such as the Siachen Glacier, where Indian Army personnel performed yoga at the world's highest battlefield; Galwan Valley, where sessions were held at over 15,000 feet, symbolis-



ing India's message of peace and inner strength; and Rohtang Pass, Sela Tunnel, and Pangong Lake, where personnel from the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) practised yoga in extreme weather. Atop the Chenab Rail Bridge in Jammu & Kashmir — the world's highest railway bridge — yoga was performed, marrying engineering excellence with spiritual harmony. People also flooded X (formerly Twitter) with tweets about how Yoga has changed their lives. Believe me say that it is never too late to begin your yoga journey. Whether you're young or old, fit or unfit, the best part about Yoga is that it welcomes you as you are. With its various benefits, even a few minutes a day can transform your mind and body.

## FIVE BASIC ASANAS FOR BEGINNERS

**TADASANA (MOUNTAIN POSE):** Improves posture, balance, and coordination. Tadasana also helps increase awareness of body alignment and breathing.  
**VRIKSHASANA (TREE POSE):** It enhances balance and concentration while strengthening the legs, back and the core.  
**BHUVANGASANA (COBRA POSE):** This asana strengthens the spine, opens up the chest and

lungs and relieves the stress and fatigue.  
**BALASANA (CHILD'S POSE):** It gently stretches your hips, thighs and ankles. It also helps in calming the mind and relieving tension.  
**ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA (DOWNWARD-FACING DOG POSE):** It strengthens your arms and legs, improves blood flow to the brain and also energises the body. Downward Dog stretches the hamstring and calf muscles.

**BELIEVE ME SAY THAT IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO BEGIN YOUR YOGA JOURNEY. WHETHER YOU'RE YOUNG OR OLD, FIT OR UNFIT, THE BEST PART ABOUT YOGA IS THAT IT WELCOMES YOU AS YOU ARE. WITH ITS VARIOUS BENEFITS IT CAN TRANSFORM YOU**

## ADVANTAGES OF YOGA

- Improved flexibility and posture
- Enhanced concentration and mental clarity
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Better respiratory and cardiovascular function
- Strengthened immunity and overall vitality

Yoga is inclusive — accessible to people of all ages and fitness levels — making it an ideal daily practice for anyone seeking better health and balance. Yoga is a powerful tool to centre your thoughts, bring clarity.

## YOGA BRINGS CALM

Yoga has a unique way of grounding the mind and body, offering a quiet retreat from the chaos of daily life. Through slow movements and controlled breathing it creates space for inner stillness. The focus on the breath helps activate the body's natural "rest and digest" response — reducing stress levels and lowering the heart rate.

PHOTOS: PTI

## TRIVIA



Did you know? Lemons are among the world's healthiest foods, packed with vitamin C and powerful health benefits. They help support the immune system, aid digestion and may even assist in weight management by promoting a feeling of fullness. A simple squeeze of lemon in warm water each morning can give your body a natural wellness boost. This citrus fruit also has antioxidant properties, helping to fight free radicals. Small but mighty, lemons are a refreshing and effective addition to your daily routine.

## FIT FACT



**Prioritise hydration for a healthier you!** Drinking enough water throughout the day supports essential bodily functions and boosts overall well-being. Staying hydrated improves brain function, helping with focus and concentration. It also aids digestion, prevents constipation, and keeps energy levels up. Proper hydration can ease joint pain by lubricating joints and may reduce the risk of kidney stones by flushing out waste. Make it a habit to sip water regularly - your body and mind will thank you for it.

# How Monsoons Impact Hair Health

When temperature soars and humidity strikes, your scalp becomes the first victim, says ABHI SINGHAL

The humid weather brings with it relentless sweat. At the end of June and the month of July, when the temperatures skyrocket, the sweat, apart from affecting the body, also impacts the scalp in various ways. Greasy hair returns just a day after washing, and dandruff clings to your strands. Tied hair throughout the day does not allow the sweat to evaporate; instead, it stays trapped, irritating your scalp and causing further discomfort.

The damaging part is also the rainwater. "Rainwater is loaded with pollutants, dust and even acid residues which are irritating for the scalp and disturb its pH balance. Sweaty scalp plus exposure to rainwater makes the hair fall more prominent", says Dr Khushboo Jha.

Rainwater, despite seeming pure, is far from clean — especially in urban areas. As it falls through polluted air, it picks up particulate matter, chemical residues and microbes. When this contaminated water touches the scalp, it disrupts the natural barrier, weakens the roots, and leaves hair prone to infection and inflammation. The scalp's microbiome is sensitive to these sudden changes, often resulting in excess oil production or dryness, depending on the individual's skin type.

Both extremes further aggravate dandruff and itching. Humidity further intensifies these effects. The combination of sweat, dirt, and rainwater increases fungal activity on the scalp, especially if hair remains damp for long. Moisture-laden conditions are ideal for fungal growth, leading to itchiness, flakiness, and hair fall. Those with longer hair or scalp sensitivity may notice a quicker onset of symptoms if proper care isn't taken immediately after rain exposure.

Hair fall during monsoon is common due to high humidity, fungal infections, and clogged follicles caused by sweat and dirt. The roots become weaker, especially if the scalp isn't

kept clean. So, while oiling the hair can be nourishing, it must be done the right way. Dr Khushboo says that, "During monsoons one should beware of oiling their scalp heavily as more oil attracts dirt and clogs the pores. Use light oiling and after massaging hair, wash it off within an hour. Shampoos should be anti-fungal in nature and make sure to wash hair after it gets exposed to rainwater." Dandruff grows bad during the time when heat and humidity hits the season. The scalp becomes dry and the bacteria make it even worse and itchy surrounds you the whole day. Avoid too many gel based products on your scalp to avoid this.

— Inputs by Dr Khushboo Jha, MBBS, MD, Chief Dermatologist Consultant Metro Hospital

**IF YOU NEED TO MINIMISE HAIR FALL, AVOID TYING WET HAIR, REFRAIN FROM USING HEAVY STYLING PRODUCTS**



# Guilt-Free Indulgence with Dates Bar

Pecan Nut Dates Bar is a power-packed and sugar-free snack that perfectly combines health with taste. This dates bar is made with natural, clean and healthy ingredients like peanut butter, dates, oats and American pecans. This Pecan Nut Dates Bar is a nutritious treat.

Bars can be both delicious and nutritious — and this *Pecan Nut Dates Bar* is a perfect example. In today's fast-paced world, finding a snack that satisfies cravings while also fuelling the body can be a challenge. This power-packed, sugar-free bar delivers the best of both worlds. Made with wholesome ingredients like American pecans, oats, dates, and peanut butter, it's a guilt-free indulgence that's as nourishing as it is tasty.

Naturally sweetened with dates and maple syrup, the bar offers a quick energy boost without the sugar crash. Rich in heart-healthy fats, antioxidants, protein, and fibre, it makes for an ideal mid-day snack or post-workout bite. Healthy eating never tasted this good — and you won't miss the sugar.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup American Pecans
- 1/2 cup Oats
- Peanut Butter
- Virgin Coconut Oil or Butter
- Maple Syrup
- Salt
- 12-13 soft dates



## PROCESS

- To make the Pecan nuts base
- Take a cup American Pecans & dry roast them
  - Same way, take a cup oats & dry roast them; and mix into pecan nuts
  - In the grinder, add roasted pecan nuts and oats and grind them.
  - In a bowl, add the grind mixture and take 2 tbs peanut butter
  - Add 1 tbs Virgin coconut oil (or 1 tbs melted butter as an alternative to oil)
  - Add honey or jaggery powder
  - Add a Pinch of salt
  - Mix everything well & set it on a lined tray
  - Pecan Nuts Base is ready

## WAY TO MAKE THE DATES CARAMEL

- Take soft dates
- Add some warm water
- Make smooth paste & spread it over the pecan mixture
- Put it in the fridge to set for an hour.
- No Sugar Pecan nut dates bar is ready, Garnish with roasted American Pecan nuts

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** American Pecans are packed with heart healthy fats, rich in antioxidants that fight inflammation. Naturally sweetened with dates and maple syrup, it gives a quick energy boost without a crash. Oats, peanut butter, and nuts provide a wonderful balance of protein and fibre in every bite, ensuring that you feel satisfied for longer.

— Inputs by Chef Meghna Kamdar on behalf of American Pecans





# Rohit Sharma recalls T20 World Cup triumph

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Revisiting India's T20 World Cup triumph under his captaincy, Rohit Sharma has revealed he was a bundle of nerves, didn't sleep the whole night and "couldn't feel my legs" before the big final against South Africa.

Sunday marked the first anniversary of the memorable win in Barbados that broke 13 years of World Cup title drought for India.

"Thirteen years is a long time. Most people don't even have a 13-year career. So, to wait that long to win a World Cup. The last one I won was in 2007. For me, it couldn't have

gotten any bigger than this. I didn't sleep the whole night. I was only thinking about the World Cup. I was nervous. I couldn't feel my legs," Rohit reminisced while speaking to JioHotstar.

"Did I feel nerves? Of course. I just don't show it — but inside, it was a lot. We were supposed to leave around 8:30 or 9 in the morning. But I woke up at 7. From my room, I could see the ground and just kept watching it. "I remember thinking — In two hours, I'll be there. And in four hours, the result will be out. Either the Cup will be here or it won't."

The skipper described the nimble-footed Suryakumar Yadav's catch to dismiss David Miller in the last over as the



defining moment of the final.

"Even after (the catch), the umpires sent it up to the third umpire and it was being checked whether Surya caught the ball or not and everyone's hearts were in their mouths.

"I thought it was gone, and it was a six because I was on the long off. I was standing right opposite Surya," Rohit said of the thrilling game.

Suryakumar showed great presence of mind to pull off a stunning catch at long-off to dismiss the dangerous looking Miller, which eventually sealed a seven-run win for the Indian team.

Detailing the catch, the then India captain added, "I saw this and thought 'Oh shit,' (they now need) 10 (runs) off five

balls. But then I saw that the ball is coming into Surya's hands. "It would have taken a blinder to take that catch. It would have taken a lot of effort to take that catch because when it was in the air it looked like it would cross the rope easily.

Maybe the wind pulled the ball a bit into the ground. "I was standing with Surya. When the umpires were checking the catch and I said 'Surya, tell me. You tell me. I don't want to look there (at big screen). And he said I have caught it."

"Surya is honestly one of the safest catchers in the team — without a doubt. I haven't seen him drop many catches. He's got incredibly safe hands."

South Africa needed 16 in the last over bowled by Hardik

Pandya but could manage only eight runs, after Virat Kohli anchored India to 176 for seven with a 59-ball 76 after Keshav Maharaj and Kagiso Rabada removed Rohit, Rishabh Pant and Suryakumar.

Pandya also contributed to the win with three vital wickets. "When we lost those three wickets up front, there were obviously a lot of nerves in the dressing room," Rohit said.

"I was panicking. I was not comfortable. I was thinking that we let them into the game."

"But of course, in the back of my mind there was always a thought that our lower middle order had not batted so much in the tournament but whenever they had the opportunity, they made an impact."

## T20I century against England is pretty special: Smriti Mandhana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Nottingham

Smashing a maiden T20I century against England was "pretty special" as the shortest format is "not one of my strengths", said India stand-in skipper Smriti Mandhana after powering her side to a 97-run victory in the opening match here.

Mandhana struck her first T20I ton in her 149th game, a 62-ball 112 studded with 15 fours and three sixes, to help the visitors to 210 runs before dismissing the hosts for 113 in 14.5 overs.

"It's a nice feeling because this format is something which, for me as a batter, I need to keep pushing and keep improving. It's not a very natural format for me," Mandhana said during the post-match press conference on Saturday.

"I like to time the ball; (I'm) not a bit hatter of the ball and, for the last six years, it's always (been) a work in progress and it's still a work in progress."

**Mandhana struck her first T20I ton in her 149th game, a 62-ball 112 studded with 15 fours and three sixes**

"So, to actually get a hundred in this format, getting it before in Test cricket and one-day cricket which are more suited to my batting, but getting it in this format is pretty special because it's not one of my strengths," she said.

Mandhana added that she had been working on her power hitting.

"The improvement. And I'm trying to work a lot on my power hitting and to see that come through, which is a really nice feeling," she said.

The left-handed opener, who had topped the batting charts last year with 763 runs in 23 T20Is, including eight fifties, said her celebration after scoring the ton was directed at teammate Radha Yadav. "That's actually a funny story. I think three days

back, me and Radha Yadav were having a conversation that (and) you know all these girls are really hard on me sometimes, they keep telling me (and) she was telling me that it's high time you get a century in T20s," Mandhana said.

"You keep getting out in 70s, 80s and you're not doing justice to your talent' and all of that stuff. I was like, 'okay Radha, I will see now'. This time, I'll try and get (it) in one of the matches in the series.

"I did not think that it would come in the first match. The finger was towards her that 'see, I got it today'. It's pretty frustrating to get out in the 70s and 80s over the last 10 years," she added.

Mandhana heaped praise on India bowlers, especially 20-year-old debutant Shree Charani, who bagged four wickets.

"The way the bowlers bowled and executed the plans was just amazing. That makes our job very, very easy when they bowl like that," Mandhana said.

## England's batting helped them get over the line: Smith

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ London

England batters' decision to go after Ravindra Jadeja in the 82nd over and complete the task of winning the first Test in a hurry was borne out of the thinking that India could bring in their strike bowler Jasprit Bumrah in a desperate attempt to take some late wickets.

With Joe Root and keeper-batter Jamie Smith batting comfortably and the winning target of 371 within sniffing distance, the latter finished off the contest by smashing Jadeja for two sixes and a boundary to guide the hosts to a memorable five-wicket win.

"The runs at that point (when Smith decided to go after Jadeja) were not too many, so I wasn't expecting him (Bumrah) to come on and bowl (with the new ball), but you're just never quite sure, especially in cricket," Smith was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

England's thinking was that had Shubman Gill pressed Bumrah into service when the hosts were 355/5 after the 81st



over and the Indian quick had struck a couple of blows, things could have become slightly difficult for Ben Stokes' side.

"You don't know what will happen. I always back our tail but there could be a couple of decent balls and suddenly you're eight-down and the pressure's back on you again. It was nice to just get it done and move on."

"I knew there was a new ball coming and it looks as though I'd exposed Chris Woakes (at No. 8) but, at that point, if I'd

hit another couple of sixes in that over, you're taking all the momentum into the new ball," said Smith.

He added, "The second new ball can bring wickets but it can increase the scoring rate as well. There's always a little bit of calculated thinking behind it."

Smith said India "kept trying all day" on the final day but England's philosophy of keeping it simple in good batting conditions helped the hosts get over the line.

Chasing 371, England won

in the final hour with Ben Duckett (149), Zak Crawley (65), Root (53 not out) and Smith (44 not out) delivering the goods.

"It was simple in that you knew you had to chase the runs and we weren't going to block out for the draw," Smith said.

"We were always going to be positive and try to get the runs. It was a rapid outfield and as good a batting conditions as you could have on day five."

"It (wicket) wasn't misbehaving too much as the Test went

on, so you always felt as though you could keep it simple, you didn't have to do things too out the box to get the runs which is very helpful," he said.

Smith said he did not read much into the talk about the inexperience in the Indian side.

"When they're trying to get 10 wickets and you're chasing 370, it's not everyday that gets done. There could have been some head-downs at the end but they kept trying all day," he said.

"I see a lot of chat about maybe some inexperience on their part but I thought they were fantastic throughout the five days."

Smith said the backing from the team management to play aggressively had helped him.

"It's great. Having that belief from other people is something that definitely took my game to the next level," he said.

"When you're out there batting, it is you and your partner at the other end, so it's quite individual, but to have that backing and trust that other people are doing the same thing, you don't feel you're alone when you're doing what you feel is right in that moment."

## Carlos Alcaraz loves playing on grass

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ London

Carlos Alcaraz's first match on a grass court came just six years ago. He's obviously a quick study. When Wimbledon gets started Monday, the 22-year-old from Spain will play in the first Centre Court match of this fortnight, an honor reserved for the previous year's men's champion.

The contest against Fabio Fognini will open Alcaraz's a bid for a third consecutive championship at the place. That's something only four men have achieved in the Open era, which began in



1968: Bjorn Borg, Pete Sampras, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. Not bad company.

Alcaraz already is 5-0 in Grand Slam finals, which

includes going 2-0 at the French Open - which he won three weeks ago via a come-back from two sets down against number one Jannik Sinner in the final — and 1-0

at the US Open. Last year, the number two-ranked Alcaraz became the youngest man to win a major trophy on each surface: grass, clay and hard courts. But he's got a fondness for the green stuff.

"The most beautiful tennis that we can watch is on grass. The style that the people bring to the court when they play on grass. The sound of the ball," said Alcaraz, who will go into Monday on a career-best 18-match winning streak, including a title at the Queen's Club tournament last weekend.

"The movement is really tough, but when you get it, it's kind of (as though) you're flying."

## German Masters: Diksha Dagar in top 10

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Hamburg (Germany)

Diksha Dagar held onto her spot inside the top-10 despite a difficult third round at the Amundi German Masters here at the Green Eagle Golf Courses.

Diksha shot a round of 1-over 74 with three birdies and four bogeys and was tied-eighth. Vani Kapoor (76) was T-21 and Avani Prashanth (74) was T-36 after three rounds.

Singaporean star Shannon Tan produced a strong round of 5-under 68 to become the sole leader heading into the final day. She made seven birdies and two bogeys in her



round to move three shots clear of her closest rival for the title. She now has a combined score of 12 under par.

Diksha's third round was a mixed tale as her front nine and

back nine were contrasting in nature. She started on the front nine and played a bogey free round with three birdies for the first 11 holes.

In the last seven holes she

had four bogeys and fell down the leaderboard, barely hanging on within the top 10 with a combined score of three under par. Vani Kapoor, the other Indian who was in the top 10 after two rounds, also started on the front nine and like Diksha had a mixed round as she made six bogeys on the front nine.

After her first birdie of the day on the 12th hole she was able to get two more on the 16th and 18th holes to close the day with a score of 3-over 76. She is now tied 21st on the leaderboard.

The other Indian in the field to have made the cut is Avani Prashanth at tied 36.

## Spain hopes for Bonmati recovery at Euro 2025

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Madrid

Spain's final preparations for the Women's European Championship have been upended. Three years ago, Alexia Putellas tore an ACL days before the competition. This time, a different Ballon d'Or-winning midfielder's tournament is in question after Aitana Bonmati was hospitalized with viral meningitis.

Bonmati came down with a fever during practice Friday and later checked in to a Madrid hospital.

The team planned to travel to Switzerland on Sunday for the tournament, where it is considered one of the favorites after winning the 2023 World Cup, even though it has never reached a Euros final before.

Spain coach Montse Tomé revealed after Friday's 3-1 victory in a friendly against Japan that the 27-year-old star tested positive for viral meningitis.

"The word is scary, but the doctor tells me that she is under control. She will remain in the hospital and we don't know for how long," Tomé said. Spain's first game is against Portugal on Thursday in Bern.



It will also face Belgium and Italy in Group B.

Stability after Rubiales scandal Bonmati's setback aside, Spain had been enjoying some peace and stability now that the Luis Rubiales scandal is behind them. Spain is arriving for Euro 2025 just a few months after Rubiales was convicted of sexual assault for an unsolicited kiss on player Jenni Hermoso during the 2023 World Cup awards ceremony. The conviction helped end one of the worst chapters in the his-

tory of Spanish soccer.

The kiss sparked outrage and marred the nation's celebrations of the team's first major title in women's soccer. It ignited an unprecedented crisis that left the Spanish federation and women's soccer in turmoil. Spanish society called for more support for women, and sports officials ultimately were forced to review outdated protocols and improve the conditions for the women's team that is among the main title favorites at Euro 2025.

"I remember when I used to come to play for the national team and I didn't enjoy it. I just wanted to go home, to be honest," playmaker Bonmati, a two-time Ballon d'Or winner, said a few days before falling ill. "It was tough to play here. The situation wasn't good. But now everything is better, there is more stability for everyone and that benefits the group."

The crisis prompted by the kiss on Hermoso - who was not called up by Tomé for the Euro 2025 squad - helped expe-

dite changes that players had been demanding for a long time, including by some who refused to play for the national team even before the World Cup. "The conditions have changed a lot," said Putellas, another two-time world player of the year.

"Especially in terms of travel, nutrition, training. Things have changed radically. Now we are enjoying conditions that are at the top level of the men's team. It's something that has taken a lot of effort and work by many people," Putellas said it's clear that the structure provided for the women's team is much more professional now, including in areas such as marketing and communication.

"We are finally where we wanted to be for some time," she said. "Because we have pushed for it, and also because a lot of people have helped us. Now we are just ready to compete and enjoy it."

Rubiales was convicted in February and ordered to pay more than 10,000 euros (\$11,700) in fines. He was prohibited from approaching Hermoso or communicating with her for a year. Prosecutors had asked for a prison sentence.

## Suruchi, Niraj, Samrat Rana shine at national selection trials



Suruchi Inder Singh  
Niraj Kumar

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■**  
Dehradun

Suruchi Inder Singh pipped Olympic medalist Manu Bhaker to win the women's 10m pistol event at the national selection trials for Group 'A' athletes while Navy marksman Niraj Kumar completed a double in the 50m rifle 3 positions men's competition here Sunday.

In a star-studded final, Suruchi finished with a score of 245.6, 1.1 better than Bhaker who shot 244.5 to finish in second place, while the seasoned Rahi Sarnobat ended third with a score of 223.1.

Suruchi was also way ahead

of the field in the qualification round, finishing with a score of 585, four better than Esha Singh who shot 581. Rahi (580), Manu (578-20x), Priya (578-17x), Pranjali (576), Sakshi (574-18x) and Simranpreet (574-15x) completed the top eight.

In the first final of the day, Samrat Rana leaped to first place with a 10.5 in the final shot ahead of Saurabh, who could only manage a 9.6 in the men's 10m air pistol event.

Eventually, Samrat ended with a score of 241.7 while Saurabh took second place with a total of 241.5. Aditya Malra finished in third with 217.8. Niraj Kumar produced

a clinical performance in the men's 50m rifle 3P final to win back-to-back trials. The Navy man shot 463, two better than Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar who took home another medal. World Championship medallist Akhil Sheoran finished third with a score of 448.8 while Paris Olympics bronze medallist Swapnil Suresh Kusale ended fourth with 438.4.

Aishwary had finished on top of qualification with a brilliant score of 595-35x, while Niraj shot 592-32x. Nikhil Tanwar was third with a score of 591-34x and Swapnil followed with a 590-34x ahead of Akhil who shot 589-32x.

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