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25 JULY, 2 PM | 30 JULY, 8 AM

AHMEDABAD
12
JULY

BENGALURU
22
JULY

BHOPAL
27
JUNE

CHANDIGARH
18
JUNE

HYDERABAD
30
JULY

JAIPUR
24
JUNE

GTB NAGAR, DELHI

10 JULY, 8 AM | 29 JULY, 6 PM

JODHPUR
2
JULY

LUCKNOW
22
JULY

PUNE
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• Jaishankar meets Xi in Beijing

Value the guidance of our leaders in that regard."

Speaking at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers, Jaishankar said the SCO was founded to combat the "three evils" of "terrorism, separatism and extremism", and it was imperative for the SCO to take an "uncompromising position on this challenge".

"The three evils that SCO was founded to combat were terrorism, separatism and extremism. Not surprisingly, they often occur together. Recently, we in India witnessed a graphic example in the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on 22 April 2025. It was deliberately conducted to undermine the tourism economy of Jammu and Kashmir, while sowing a religious divide. The UN Security Council, of which some of us are currently members, issued a statement that condemned it in the strongest terms and underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice. We have done exactly that and will continue doing so. It is imperative that the SCO, to remain true to its founding objectives, take an uncompromising position on this challenge," he said, referring to Operation Sindoor.

• Nimisha execution deferred

the Supreme Court that it had done all it could to save Priya.

Airline consultant and social worker Samuel Jerome Baskaran, who has been leading the negotiations in Yemen to secure her release, told The Indian Express that the decision to postpone her execution did not involve Mehdi's family.

Baskaran said that the Yemeni government took the decision after Abdul Malik Al Nehaya, ruler of the Al Wasab region, met the President of Yemen last Friday. A day later, President Rashad al-Alimi consented to defer the execution. "The Indian government also got involved in this mission. There was a directive from the Yemeni authorities not to disclose the details," he said. Before approaching the President, Baskaran met the director general of prosecution and the jail authorities, where Priya is lodged, last week. With the involvement of the Indian mission officials and local au-

"We meet at a time of considerable disorder in the international system. In the last few years, we have seen more conflicts, competition and coercion. Economic instability is also visibly on the rise. The challenge before us is to stabilize the global order, de-risk various dimensions and through it all, address longstanding challenges that threaten our collective interests," he said.

India, he said, has taken several initiatives in the SCO in domains ranging from startup and innovation to traditional medicine and digital public infrastructure. "We will continue to positively approach new ideas and proposals that are genuinely for our collective good. It is essential that such cooperation is based on mutual respect, sovereign equality and in accordance with territorial integrity and sovereignty of member states," he said, in an oblique reference to China.

A Xinhua report quoted Xi saying China is "committed to making the organization more substantive and stronger, safeguarding regional security and stability, promoting the development and prosperity of member states". He said he hoped to meet the leaders of other member states at the Summit in Tianjin later this year.

authorities, he conveyed a plea from Priya's mother to the President, pleading to postpone the execution.

Baskaran said the President's order reached the prosecutor on Monday. Subsequently, the public prosecutor on July 14 issued an order to the director of the central correctional facility, saying that based on the directions of the attorney general, the execution of the retaliation sentence against Priya is postponed.

Sources said the communication regarding deferring the execution was delayed to avoid a law-and-order situation. "Talal's family has not pardoned the woman so far. Many people were proceeding to the prison to witness the execution on Wednesday. Hence, any disclosure of the decision to defer the execution at an early date would have created a law and order issue," sources said. "The key to Nimisha's life rests with the Talal family. They have to forgive her."

FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

BJP ally TDP to EC: Define SIR scope, make clear there is no citizenship link

On Tuesday, written by TDP parliamentary party leader Lalu Sri Krishna Devarayalu and signed by five other party leaders, the TDP said: "The scope of the SIR must be clearly defined and must be limited to electoral roll recorrection and inclusion. It should be explicitly communicated that the exercise is not related to citizenship verification, and any field instructions must reflect this distinction."

The N Chandrababu Naidu-led party called for "the presumption of inclusion", and said voters enrolled after the previous revision must not be required to re-establish their eligibility "unless specific and verifiable reasons are recorded", and called for a third-party audit under the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to identify anomalies.

Citing a Supreme Court judgment, the TDP letter said the prior inclusion of a person in electoral rolls creates a presumption of validity and any deletion must be preceded by a valid inquiry. "The burden of proof lies with the ERO or objector, not the voter, especially when the name exists in the official roll," said the

letter, signed by TDP MPs Byreddy Shabari and D Prasada Rao, TDP Andhra president Palla Srinivasa Rao, and MLA Koona Ravi Kumar.

The letter was submitted to the EC after TDP leaders met it as part of an ongoing exercise by the poll panel to take suggestions from political parties to strengthen electoral processes.

Asked about the letter, TDP national spokesperson and one of the signatories, Jyothsna Tirunagari, denied any link between the ongoing SIR in Bihar and the party's suggestions. "We just met the EC and, as we were asked for suggestions, made our stand clear on the electoral process. We are a democratic party and would want transparency in the electoral process," she told *The Indian Express*.

As reported by *The Indian Express*, the EC on July 5 wrote to Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all states, directing them to begin preparations for a Bihar-like exercise with January 1, 2026, as the qualifying date.

The TDP letter said that any such electoral roll revision should "not ideally be held within six months of any major

election". To ensure voter confidence and administrative preparedness, the SIR process should be conducted with a sufficient time lead," it said.

Pointing out that Assembly polls in Andhra – where the TDP is in power with allies BJP and Pawan Kalyan's JanaSena Party (JSP) – are not due till 2029, the letter said that the SIR provides "a valuable opportunity to ensure electoral rolls are updated in a fair, inclusive and transparent manner".

Specifically pointing to seasonal migration in coastal areas of Andhra, the TDP's letter called for temporary address declarations with basic documentation to be permitted. "Where voters are unable to submit documents at the time of visit, age-wise verification must be permitted," the letter said.

Reacting to the letter, Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader in Bihar Shakeel Ahmad Khan said the process "stifles individual and voting rights". "No one will like it. There needs to be a time frame and objective for a survey and the SIR lacks both. It is against the Constitution," he said.

The RJD said it had made similar suggestions to the EC in the past. Saying that "the EC's intentions are not right", party spokesperson Subodh Kumar Mehta said: "The poll panel is working in violation of democratic norms and Constitutional principles. The Maneka Gandhi versus Government of India case established that the intention behind a procedure, along with the procedure itself, is open to challenge. It seems that the TDP has made the suggestions in this context."

The JD(U), which leads the NDA coalition in Bihar, refused to comment on the TDP letter.

Some other suggestions made by the TDP include district-wise data on voter addition and deletions, with explanation, on the EC portal; permission for Aadhaar-based cross-verification; penalties for inaction by EROS (Electoral Registration Officers) and DEOs (District Election Officers); a state-level ombudsman under the EC to handle unresolved grievances; and targeted re-enrolment campaigns for migrant workers, tribal groups and senior citizens.

• New NCERT Class 8 book

will cover the Delhi Sultanate, the Mughals, and the Marathas will now only be dealt with in Class 8 in the new syllabus.

In the new book, the chapter covering Indian history from the 13th to the 17th century – 'Reshaping India's Political Map' – spans the rise and fall of the Delhi Sultanate and resistance to it, the Vijayanagara Empire, the Mughals and the resistance to them, and the rise of the Sikhs.

It describes the Sultanate period as one marked by political instability and military campaigns that saw villages and cities being plundered and temples and seats of learning destroyed. The sections on the Sultanate and the Mughals contain multiple references to "attacks" on temples, and the "brutality" of some of the rulers, none of which are mentioned in the old Class 7 NCERT book that introduced students to this period of history.

These are some instances from the new book:

■ Alaudin Khilji's General Malik Kafur "attacked a number of Hindu centres such as Srirangam, Madurai, Chidambaram, and possibly Rameswaram".

■ The Delhi Sultanate period witnessed "numerous attacks on sacred or revered images in Buddhist, Jain and Hindu temples; such destruction was motivated not just by plunder but also by iconoclasm".

■ Referring to "jizya", a tax that some sultans imposed on non-Muslim subjects to grant them protection and exemption from military service, the book says that the tax was a source of public humiliation and formed a financial and social incentive for subjects to convert to Islam. In the old Class 7 book, "jizya" was described as tax paid by non-Muslims initially along with land tax, but later as a separate one.

■ On Babur, the first Mughal emperor, the book notes that his autobiography points to him as being cultured and intellectually curious. "But he was also a brutal and ruthless conqueror, slaughtering entire populations of cities, enslaving women and children, and taking pride in erecting 'towers of skulls' made from the slaughtered people of plundered cities." In the old Class 7 book, Babur was only described as having been forced to leave his ancestral throne, seizing Kabul, and then Delhi and Agra.

■ It describes Akbar's reign as being a "blend of brutality and tolerance". When Akbar attacked the Rajput fort of Chittorgarh and "ordered the massacre of some 30,000 civilians", he sent a message of victory which read: "We have succeeded in occupying a number of forts and towns belonging to the infidels and have established Islam there. With the help of our bloodthirsty sword, we have erased the signs of infidelity from their minds and have destroyed temples in those places and also all over Hindustan." The book also notes that despite Akbar's later tolerance for different faiths, "non-Muslims were kept in a minority in the higher echelons of the administration".

■ It is important to note that the new textbooks are expected to reflect the NEP 2020 and the NCFSE 2023; they are based not only on a wholly new approach but also on a new syllabus, a new design and new pedagogical tools. Any comparison with the old syllabus and textbooks is therefore fruitless," the NCERT said.

• Terrorists fired in air to celebrate'

four used cartridges from the spot. The man is also learnt to have told investigators that he saw Parvaiz and Bashir – the two arrested locals – allegedly standing near a hill and looking after the belongings of the attackers, which the gunmen eventually collected from them.

Investigators have also questioned Parvaiz and Bashir at length, based on which they now know what transpired in the run-up to the attack.

"Parvaiz has claimed that a day before the incident, all three attackers came to his house around 3:30 pm and asked for food. They were carrying weapons. His wife served them food, and they sat around four hours, asking questions related

to security arrangements in Baisaran, tourist gathering spots, routes, and timings," a source in a central intelligence agency said.

Before leaving, the men asked Parvaiz's wife to pack some spices and uncooked rice, and gave the family five notes of Rs 500. "Afterwards, they met Bashir. They asked them (the two locals) to reach Baisaran around 12:30 pm on April 22 and left for a seasonal dhok (hut) at Hill Park," the source said.

Sources said one of the attackers is believed to be Suleiman Shah, who was involved in the killing of seven employees of a firm constructing the Z-Morph tunnel on the Srinagar-Sonamarg highway on October 20 last year.

"From room to courtyard to street, he was always on the move."

Once awake, he wouldn't stop. He would start his day with a desi pinni, followed by a light brunch of chapati and a sabzi. He loved ghiya (bottle gourd), tinda (apple gourd), and was "crazy about mangoes. Even till the end, he would eat a kilo a day," smiles Bhanji.

At 3 pm, he would have a cup of tea, after which he walked for hours through the village. "Jis deh gaya, ussi din baith jaunga (The day I skip my walk is the day I give up)," he said once.

On July 14, too, he was walking. He was crossing the highway to visit a small roadside eatery named after his late son, Kuldeep Singh, when an unidentified vehicle struck him down.

• 10 days to go, Bihar CEO launches online form for residents outside state

Commission was working on a hassle-free online system to address apprehensions of "those living temporarily outside Bihar".

On Tuesday, the Bihar CEO's office prominently advertised the process of online submission, through just scanning a QR code. "If you have a mobile phone in hand, why worry about filling an enumeration form?" says the EC advertisement. It goes on to explain: "After clicking the 'enumeration form online' on EC site, one can log in using one's EPIC (voter ID) number or mobile

phone, and the enumeration form will show. One can now fill in details such as one's name and date of birth."

For signature, the advertisement says, the applicant can sign on a white sheet of paper or put a thumb impression, and upload it with the form. The EC said a confirmation SMS would be received on the applicant's phone.

About uploading a photo and documents, the CEO makes it clear that if one is unable to submit the same, Electoral Registration Officers (EROS)

would take a final call, on the basis of documents which can be submitted between August 1 and August 30, or use other records such as names in government schemes or land documents.

All parties welcomed the EC initiative, with the RJD and Congress calling it "belated". RJD spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwari said: "The EC has been responding late to all our grievances.

Retaining migrants in electoral rolls has always been a matter of big concern. Anyways, it is a welcome move."

• Back on Earth: Shukla, team return

with a few tentative steps.

Exactly 50 minutes earlier, the space capsule, named Grace, carrying Shukla, Peggy Whitson from the US, Slawosz Uzanski-Wisniewski of Poland and Tibor Kapu of Hungary, had splashed down in the cold waters of the Pacific Ocean, off the coast of California.

After detaching from the ISS on Monday afternoon, the spacecraft took about 20 hours to reach Earth. On its way, it made another few rounds of the Earth, giving the astronauts some more opportunities to view it from space. During their 18-day stay on the ISS, the astronauts completed 288 revolutions of the Earth.

"He has not just touched space, he has lifted India's aspirations to new heights. His journey to the International Space Station and back is not just a personal milestone; it is a proud stride for India's growing space ambitions," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on X.

"Bharat today finds an enduring space in the world of Space," said Science Minister Jitendra Singh, who is also the minister in charge of Space.

Axiom-4 mission was a commercial human spaceflight journey to the ISS, managed by Axiom Space, a private US company, and facilitated by US space agency NASA. The rocket and spacecraft used for the mission came from SpaceX, the world's largest private space corporation.

The participation of Shukla – a fighter pilot with the Indian Air Force who was selected as one of the four astronauts for Gaganyaan – in the Axiom-4 mission was the result of a strategic partnership forged between NASA and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in 2023. Through the Axiom-4 mission, ISRO provided Axiom with an opportunity to gain some first-hand experience in human spaceflight missions ahead of the Gaganyaan launch.

The knowledge and experience gained during Shukla's space journey – 41 years after Rakesh Sharma travelled to space on the then Soviet Union's Soyuz T-11 spacecraft – would be invaluable for ISRO as well as other astronauts who go on future missions.

ISRO had also designed several experiments for the Axiom-4 mission that would further its space research activities. Shukla carried out those experiments and participated in several others as well.

The Axiom-4 mission not only carried one of the largest number of scientific experiments – 60 experiments representing 31 countries – but it also represented the return of astronauts from three countries, India, Hungary and Poland, back in space after four decades. This is why the mission was themed "Realise the Return".

Congratulating everyone involved in the mission, President Droupadi Murmu said in a post on X: "A hearty welcome to Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla as he comes back on Earth after his space journey. His role in piloting of Axiom Mission 4 to the International Space Station has created a new milestone for India's space exploration as well as for international collaboration in science and technology."

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi said Shukla had inspired a billion dreams. "As India's first astronaut to have visited International Space Station, he has inspired a billion dreams through his dedication, courage and pioneering spirit. It marks another milestone towards our own Human Space Flight Mission – Gaganyaan," he said on X.

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Khushwant Singh, who spent two years writing Fauja's 2011 biography Turbaned Tornado, recalls how he interviewed the

marathoner on foot in East London: "He said, 'I can either walk or sleep.' So walk we did".

Khushwant says Fauja's accomplishment as the "oldest marathoner" was not recognised by the Guinness World Records because he did not have a birth certificate to prove his age. Fauja, he says, had a British passport that showed his date of birth as April 1, 1911, while a letter from Indian officials stated that birth records were not maintained in 1911.

Khushwant, who once travelled with Fauja to Australia, recalls how he never lost his humility or his large heart, not even when fans from the expat Sikh community thrust dollars into his palm at gurdwaras. "On the way back, he would quietly put all the money into the gurdwara's gula

lak," he says. Khushwant says that when Nestlé asked for Fauja's address for a sponsorship cheque, he gave the name of an Amritsar-based charity organisation.

In Punjab, Fauja was courted by politicians, yet was never dazzled by authority. In 2011, in a meeting with then

WOMAN SAYS HARASSED FOR FEEDING DOGS

Feed every community dog in your own house, SC tells Noida woman

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

AMID A debate over rising incidents of stray dog bites across the country, the Supreme Court on Tuesday advised a Noida resident – who had alleged that she was being harassed for feeding community dogs – that she should open a shelter in her own house and feed them there.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was hearing an appeal moved by one Reema Shah challenging a March 3 order of the Allahabad High Court.

As soon as it took up the matter on Tuesday, the bench asked Shah's counsel, "Should we leave every lane, every road open for these large-hearted people?"

Making its displeasure evident, the court added, "There is all space for these animals, no space for humans." It then asked, "Why don't you (appellant) feed them in your own house? Nobody is stopping you."

The counsel submitted that the appellant was subjected to

harassment and was unable to feed community dogs, in accordance to animal birth control rules, which puts onus on resident welfare associations, apartment owner associations, and local body representatives to make necessary arrangements for the feeding of community animals residing in their premises or their areas.

This did not go down well with the bench, which said, "We give you a suggestion to open a shelter in your own house. Feed every dog in the community in your own house."

The counsel then said the municipality was creating feeding places in Greater Noida but not in Noida.

When the counsel submitted that feeding spots could be set up in places not frequented by people, the bench asked him when he goes for cycling in the morning. It then added, "Try doing it (cycle) and see what happens."

As the counsel said, he goes on morning walks and sees several dogs, the bench said that "morning walkers are also at

risk" and "cycle riders and two-wheelers are at greater risk".

Shah had earlier approached the HC seeking directions to the Noida Authority and others not to harass her, other feeders as well as any other institution that feeds community dogs and animals, both in her society and outside it in Noida. She had also sought directions to implement the provisions of Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001, and cautioned, keeping in view the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.

Disposing of the petition, the HC had said, "While protection of street dogs would be warranted in accordance with the provisions of the applicable statute, at the same time, the authorities will have to bear in mind the concern of the common man, such that their movement on streets are not hampered by attacks by these street dogs. A balance approach would be needed such that not only the concern of prevention of animal cruelty is addressed, but at the same time, the interest of common man is also protected."

As the counsel said, he goes on morning walks and sees several dogs, the bench said that "morning walkers are also at

14-year-old girl gangraped at home, two juveniles held

NEETIKA JHA
GHAZIABAD, JULY 15

A 14-YEAR-OLD girl was allegedly gangraped by four minor boys inside her flat in Ghaziabad on Sunday. Two of the minors have been apprehended, said police.

According to the police, the girl was alone at her house at the time, and the incident came to light when her mother returned home and found the boys inside. The police on Monday registered an FIR under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act based on a complaint filed by the girl's father.

A senior officer told *The Indian Express* that the girl is yet to record her statement before the magistrate.

According to the complaint filed by the girl's father, around 11.30 am on Sunday, she received a call from one of the accused. Her mother had gone to a nearby market to buy groceries at that time. "...received a call on her Instagram from a boy who had been texting her on social media for the last two days. He told her that he was coming to the flat to meet her," the complainant stated.

Four boys allegedly came over and rang the bell. "When my daughter opened the door, the four forcibly took her into the room by covering her mouth with their hands and raped her by taking turns," the father said in his complaint.

He added that when his wife returned home, she found the door open and saw four boys inside a room. She then closed the door from inside and called him, the father said.

The father has alleged that though he called police helpline 112, the police did not reach the spot. He also alleged that some members of his society reached the spot and helped the four boys escape, said police.

GHAZIABAD

Court rejects bail pleas of pastor, aide arrested for 'religious conversion'

NEETIKA JHA
GHAZIABAD, JULY 15

THE GHAZIABAD District Court on Tuesday rejected the bail application of a pastor and a Ghaziabad resident, who were arrested for allegedly attempting to convert members of the Scheduled Castes by offering them inducements.

The Ghaziabad Police had arrested two men, pastor Vinod Kunj Mohan (50) and Premchand Jatav (66), following a complaint filed by Bajrang Dal member Prabal Gupta on June 15. He had alleged that the pastor carried out religious conversions at Jatav's home.

During Tuesday's hearing, Ghaziabad Additional Session Judge Rohit Aggarwal said that there is no relevant ground for releasing the pastor.

"Keeping in view all the facts and circumstances of the case and in the light of the gravity of the crime and various documentary and oral evidence collected during the investigation against the accused, Vinod Kunj Mohan, there is no relevant ground for releasing the applicant on bail," the petitioner had told the court.

"His bed was at the same level as the window, and he must have fallen out the window while sleeping. However, we're still confirming the cause of death," the officer added. Police said the cause of death would be confirmed after the post-mortem report comes out.

During the preliminary probe, it was found that Kalyan worked in a sweet shop and used to live in one of the floors above the shop. ENS

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कुपनगर, पंजाब - 140001 / Rupnagar, Punjab - 140001
Advertisement No. IITRPR/FACREC/03/2025
The last date for submission of online applications is 16.08.2025
कुलसचिव / REGISTRAR

29 YEARS LATER, CONVICT SEEKS PREMATURE RELEASE

'What signs of reformation has he shown': Mattoo's family relives horror of her death as killer seeks freedom

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

HEMANT MATTOO hadn't felt this kind of rage in years.

When he read about the Delhi High Court directing that the case for premature release of his sister's killer be considered afresh, it struck like a blow. But anger quickly gave way to disbelief when he saw the reason: the convict had shown an "element of reformation."

Nearly three decades ago, his sister, Delhi University law student Priyadarshini Mattoo, was killed. She was 25.

The accused was a college senior and an IPS officer's son, Santosh Kumar Singh. He had been pursuing her relentlessly in the months leading up to her death.

On January 23, 1996, while Priyadarshini was alone at home, Santosh would be seen by a neighbour entering her house in the evening. She would later be found lying under her bed, with a room heater's cord wrapped around her neck – she had been brutally raped and murdered.

For Hemant, the decades since her killing have been filled with recurring waves of fury. First, when the district court nearly let Santosh walk free, then when the Supreme Court commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment, and again upon learning that he was lodged in an open prison, afforded freedoms unimaginable to the family he destroyed.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Hemant, who is settled in Canada, says, "I want to know what signs

of reformation he has shown. Has he apologised to my family? Has he apologised to his own family? He's never even approached us. He still maintains his innocence."

On July 1, the HC had directed the Sentence Review Board (SRB) to consider the case of Santosh's premature release afresh. Holding the SRB's decision to deny Santosh, along with two other prisoners, premature release as suffering from "material procedural and legal infirmities", the court highlighted several lacunae in the current process undertaken by the board while deciding applications for early release of prisoners. A fresh decision is to be taken within four months.

Hemant vividly remembers that fateful January day. He was in Kuwait at the time when he got a call around 4 pm. It was from a family friend, who broke the news to him.

By the time he reached Delhi, almost the entire Kashmiri Pandit community had gathered to pay their condolences. "They first thought the murder was a militant attack. Then they got to know it was a guy who did it, a college student... Nothing like that had ever happened within our community."

Hemant pauses for a moment before saying, "Well, apart from the exodus."

It had just been a few years after the Kashmiri Pandits had been forcibly exiled from the valley. The Mattoos had moved from Srinagar to Jammu. After Priyadarshini moved to the Capital to pursue her studies in Law, her father, Chaman Lal Mattoo, took up a job as chairman

TIMELINE

JAN 23, 1996: Priyadarshini Mattoo was raped and murdered in Vasant Kunj, Santosh Kumar Singh, a law student of Delhi University, was arrested.

DEC 3, 1999: Singh was acquitted by the trial court in the case

OCT 27, 2006: The Delhi High Court reversed the decision, holding him guilty of rape and murder and awarded him the death penalty. Singh challenged his conviction and death sentence

OCT 6, 2010: Supreme Court upheld Singh's conviction but commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment.

of a non-profit organisation in Delhi.

However, their parents would soon notice how troubled Priyadarshini was in college. She had caught the eye of Santosh, a senior, and he was determined to woo her.

In February 1995, he followed her on his bike and stopped her car at a traffic light. Priyadarshini responded by lodging a complaint at the RK Puram police station, where he signed an undertaking that he wouldn't harass

her again.

Six months later, in August, Santosh followed her home to Vasant Kunj and tried to break into the house. Priyadarshini went to the police. Again, the police made him sign an undertaking.

By October, Priyadarshini's parents were aware of the routine harassment she was facing. She and her father approached the Commissioner of Police, seeking protection. She was subsequently assigned a Personal Security Officer (PSO). That same day, she debriefed the Dean of the Faculty of Law about the harassment, who, in turn, called Santosh and requested him to desist.

Furious at her resistance, Santosh would attempt to get her expelled from college by accusing her of pursuing two degrees simultaneously. Priyadarshini had to give a detailed explanation to the authorities, reiterating Santosh's ploys of harassment.

From then on, his behaviour saw an escalation.

In November, he grabbed hold of her arm in college and refused to let go. This time, Priyadarshini filed a complaint and an FIR was registered at Maurice Nagar police station under Section 354 (assault or criminal force to a woman with intent to outrage her modesty) of the IPC.

Santosh was arrested – before being let go on a personal bond.

By December 1995, Priyadarshini was a nervous wreck.

Hemant, who had come to Delhi for a vacation, recalls that she looked stressed. "... I remember she looked scared and stressed. When I asked her, she brushed it off as exam stress... she

never told me anything. Later, when I demanded why I was kept in the dark, my cousins said nobody wanted me to worry..."

By January next year, she was gone.

The post-mortem report noted 19 injuries and three broken ribs.

Santosh had also used his motorcycle helmet to bludgeon her head, a piece of evidence that would become crucial in the High Court case. When the helmet was submitted as evidence, it was damaged – the visor was broken, containing specks of blood. Moreover, Priyadarshini's PSO and the neighbour who saw Santosh entering the house would note in their testimonies that they had seen the same helmet with him, but undamaged and with a visor.

During Priyadarshini's last rites, their mother confided in Hemant that they'd approached Santosh's father. "They had asked him to make his son stop troubling Priya..." recalls Hemant.

"After we left Kashmir, we felt out of place everywhere. We were always looking for a place to settle down and put down our roots. He (Santosh) really took what little we had left," says Hemant.

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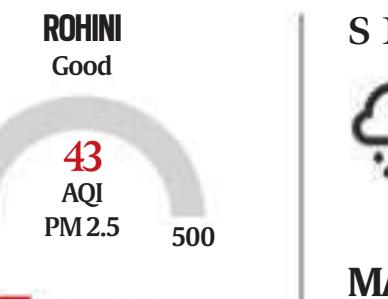
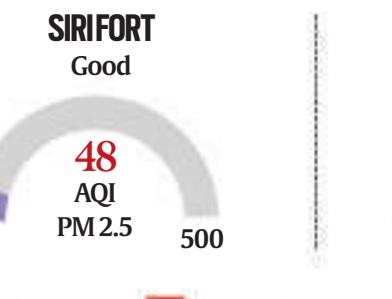
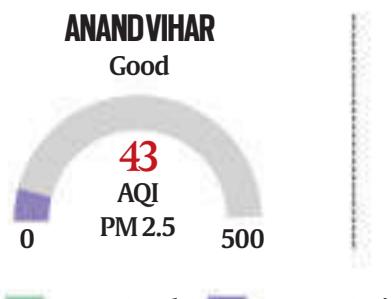
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SKYWATCH
FORECAST: July 16
Generally cloudy sky; very light to light rain with thunderstorm/lightning

MAX: 31-33 2.2°C below normal **MIN: 24-26** 1.2°C below normal

DU UNDERGRAD ADMISSIONS: OVER 3.05 LAKH REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED

B.Com (Hons) leads the pack again; SRCC most popular college choice

VIDHEEsha
KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

FOUR YEARS into the CUET-based admission process at Delhi University, B.Com (Hons) continues to remain the most popular undergraduate programme, drawing the highest number of applications across colleges. And the most preferred college choice among students was Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC).

This year, the university has received over 3.05 lakh registrations for undergraduate admissions for the 2025-26 academic session – the highest since the Common University Entrance Test was implemented.

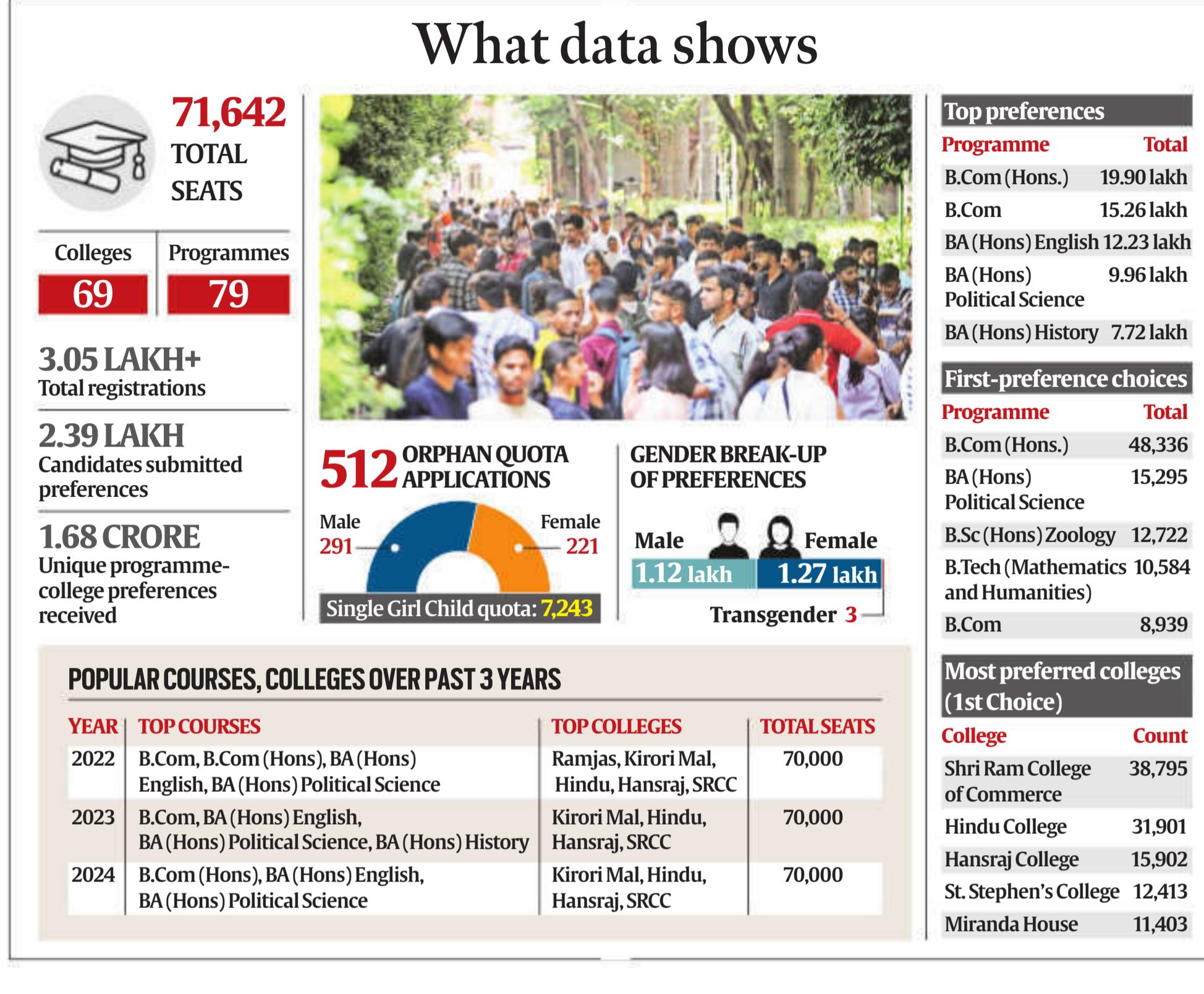
Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Dean of Admissions Haneet Gandhi said, "Simulated ranks – provisional indications of possible admission based on submitted preferences – have been allotted to the applicants as of 5 pm on Tuesday. This year, we will only be taking extra allocations in Languages in North campus colleges, since there is less movement or withdrawal of students in these colleges. In the rest of the colleges, like the evening ones, we have slotted extra allocation capacities, similar to last year, for seats under all categories."

As per the varsity, 2.39 lakh candidates successfully submitted their preferences during Phase II of the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS), which opened after CUET results were declared on June 17.

Candidates will be allowed to revise their preferences until 11.59 pm on July 16. The first list of CSAS seat allocations will be released on July 19 at 5 pm.

Key takeaways

As per data from the university, B.Com (Hons.) received 19.90 lakh preferences, followed by



B.Com (15.26 lakh) and BA (Hons) English (12.23 lakh). The top three BA programme combinations selected were History + Political Science (7.60 lakh), Economics + Political Science (3.88 lakh), and English + Economics (3.49 lakh).

In terms of first preference, B.Com (Hons.) was the top choice with 48,336 selections, followed by BA (Hons) Political Science (15,295) and B.Sc (Hons) Zoology (12,722).

The most preferred colleges based on first-choice data after SRCC (38,795) were Hindu College (31,901) and Hansraj College (15,902).

And in terms of gender, 512 orphan quota applications were received, with 291 males and 221 females.

Male candidates submitted 1.12 lakh preferences, while female candidates submitted 1.27 lakh preferences.

Transgender candidates submitted 3 preferences.

Single Girl Child quota: 7,243.

Admission trends post-CUET

This year, B.Com and B.Com (Hons) courses continue to dominate applicant preferences, mirroring patterns seen in 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, 9 of the 10 most-selected college-programme combinations were in Commerce. In 2023, B.Com was the most preferred course with over 72,000 applicants.

Popularity of BA (Hons) English and Political Science has

remained steady over the years.

Colleges like Kirori Mal, Hindu, Hansraj, and SRCC have consistently attracted the highest number of applicants. In 2025, this pattern holds, with SRCC, Hindu, Hansraj, and St Stephen's among the most listed colleges in candidate preferences.

The number of applicants has remained above 2.4 lakh since 2023; in 2025, 2.39 lakh candidates submitted preferences, marginally lower than the 2.45 lakh recorded in the previous two years.

After ELV owners complain, Delhi govt set to probe 'irregularities' by scrapping units

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

New Delhi: St Stephen's College and St Thomas School in Dwarka received bomb threat emails Tuesday morning, prompting a search operation at the Delhi University (DU) college and the school.

According to an official of the Delhi Fire Services, they received a call regarding a bomb threat at the college at 8.01 am and at the school at 8.51 am. He said one fire tender each was dispatched to both sites.

According to a police officer, the mail received by St Stephen's College stated that a bomb was planted in the library. Local police, along with the Bomb Detection Team and Bomb Disposal Squad, conducted a search operation but did not find anything suspicious.

Similar hoax bomb threats were received at three schools Monday. The officer said cyber units of the respective district police are conducting an inquiry into the threats. ENS

and scrap overaged vehicles charged vehicle owners extra money for towing, handling, and logistical charges.

"Many also alleged they did not receive the scrap value on time and their vehicles were not released by the RVSFs, despite receiving the department's permission to do so. Further, we have observed that even if the vehicle owners were paid, they received reduced scrap value after deductions for towing and parking charges, in violation of guidelines," said a senior official.

Moreover, officials said, many have complained that the RVSFs were not providing the Certificate of Deposit (COD) to vehicle owners on time and "were generating wrong COD... and trading it without owner consent".

"As per ELV guidelines, the COD and Certificate of Vehicle Scrapping (CVS) are issued to those who get their ELVs scrapped from a RVSF.. The owners can show the COD to get a discount on purchasing a new vehicle," the official added.

According to officials, ELV owners have complained to the Transport department that RVSFs authorised by it to seize

cle. But the scappers have been trading by selling CODs illegally..." said the senior official.

Under the discount scheme, while the concession is 20% for new non-transport petrol/CNG/LPG vehicles and 15% for diesel vehicles, for transport vehicles, the concession is 15% for petrol/CNG/LPG and 10% for diesel.

However, tax concessions cannot exceed 50% of the scrap value. Also, the COD is only valid for three years from the date of issuance. Further, no concessions will be available for government-owned or impounded vehicles, according to norms.

"Also, while RVSFs show in their records that vehicles have been scrapped, in reality, they sell these vehicles in other states illegally... Many people have said they have received messages of vehicles with their numbers paying toll tax in different states," the official added.

Officials said if the people do not claim their vehicles from

RVSFs in 15 days, the RVSFs are to deposit the scrap value into the government's treasury. But this has not been done.

The Transport department, a few months ago, had issued showcause notices to 11 authorised RVSFs in this regard, said officials. It had also asked all the RVSFs to deposit the full scrap value in the government treasury.

"The scappers are yet to submit the money. There are huge gaps... these scappers also do not conduct audits and keep records as per guidelines for handling ELVs," said an official.

The Transport department had first launched an aggressive drive against overaged petrol and diesel vehicles in March 2023. However, after several vehicle owners moved court against the drive, the court directed the department to come up with a policy for the scrapping and handling of these vehicles.

While last year, 39,273 vehicles were scrapped, the figure was 22,397 in 2023, said officials.

While last year, 39,273 vehicles were scrapped, the figure was 22,397 in 2023, said officials.

Fazilpuria, in his complaint to the police, has said that he got into his vehicle and escaped un-

hurt as the assailants could not chase him due to the traffic.

Fazilpuria, known for promoting Haryanvi folk music, has several hits to his name. He gained fame in 2014 with his rap song 'Ladki Kar Gayi Chull', which was also featured in the Bollywood movie 'Kapoor and Sons'.

He unsuccessfully contested the 2024 Lok Sabha election from Gurgaon as a Janayak Janta Party candidate against the Congress's Raj Babbar and the BJP's Rao Inderjit Singh, who was elected.

Last year, Gurgaon Police had arrested him and YouTuber Elvish Yadav for allegedly using rare species of snakes and a .32 calibre pistol in a music video.

however, say that earlier, the waste water from these colonies used to flow directly into an open drain – this was covered by the NHAI to expand the Delhi-Delhi Expressway.

Sources say a pipe drain was then constructed by the road authority along the highway – from the CRPF camp to Khajuri road along the Relief drain of I&FC – and it functioned well for a year.

But this pipe drain got choked due to the continuous discharge of domestic waste from the colonies. "The disposal of garbage and sewage from adjacent habitations choked the manholes and drain pipes," an NHAI official says, adding that the road authority has signed an MoU with the I&FC Department to remodel the drain.

No increments, promotions – DU's ad hoc faculty struggled for yrs, HC order brings some hope HC opens avenue for regularisation of two ad hoc teachers

VIDHEEsha
KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

NO INCREMENT. No promotion. No medical security.

For several ad hoc teachers at Delhi University (DU), these aren't temporary inconveniences, but work conditions that have lasted for decades.

But a recent Delhi High Court order has opened a narrow window of hope.

On July 11, the HC, while hearing a plea by two ad hoc assistant professors – Namita Khare and Mehak Talwar, from DU's Department of Germanic and Romance Studies – came down strongly on the university for "consciously using ad-hoc appointments as a substitute for regular employment".

Typically, ad hoc faculty at DU are hired on four-month contracts, renewed repeatedly with brief "breaks" to avoid legal obligations. Many have taught full-time for over a decade, often in the same colleges, without being considered for a permanent post. This despite performing the same duties as regular faculty.

The Indian Express spoke to several current and former ad hoc teachers to understand what this order means for them.

Vishal Pandey, an ad hoc assistant professor at Ramjas College, who's been teaching Commerce for over 10 years, said the order gives some hope. "I

(OBC) reservations, the central government had sanctioned additional teaching posts for universities. DU was allocated over 2,600 such posts. While about 1,300 were released in 2007, the recruitment process stagnated in the years that followed.

He added that in 2023, he gave an interview for a permanent post – "nothing came of it".

The selection procedure for permanent teachers in DU departments started from April 1, 2022. Until April 2023, as reported by *The Indian Express* earlier, about 2,000 teachers have been appointed permanently in colleges. There were about 4,500-5,000 posts available in colleges.

The teaching community alleged that around 2,000 ad hoc teachers have been displaced over the past two years.

One teacher, who had worked at a government-funded DU college for four years before being displaced in 2024, now works as guest faculty elsewhere. "I'm still giving interviews," he said. "There are positions. But the criteria for selection is unclear."

Protests over the years

The rise in ad hoc appointments over the past decade can be traced to two key developments.

Between 2008 and 2013, an estimated 1,500 teachers retired from DU, opening up a wave of vacancies. Around the same time, following the implementation of Other Backward Classes

Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh had earlier told *The Indian Express*, "Over the past two years, about 3,500 permanent spots have been filled. Of these, 3,000 were filled by former ad hocs. All appointments were made strictly based on UGC guidelines."

Another teacher, who was displaced, said, "What makes the case significant is that the court saw through DU's longstanding justification for not regularising ad hocs that they were temporary hires."

Replace defunct lifts: Health minister directs GTB Hospital

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

DELHI HEALTH Minister Dr Pankaj Kumar Singh on Monday ordered the Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital Medical Director, Dr Vinod Kumar, to replace old and defunct lifts on the premises. The minister also asked Dr Vinod Kumar to inspect ongoing works and submit a report.

The move comes after *The Indian Express* report in June detailed the infrastructural barriers at the hospital, including the lack of functioning lifts.

The report noted how doctors were forced to reschedule two surgeries as patients could not be brought up to the operation theatre. Doctors had also claimed hospital staff had to carry a dead patient's body on their shoulders to the ground floor due to non-functional lifts at the hospital, which is one of the Delhi government's biggest facilities.

Addressing the issues, Singh directed that the hospital's defunct lifts be replaced with a modern unit and made functional without further delay to avoid inconveniencing patients as well as hospital staff.

Singh also ordered the upgradation of the emergency ward with a ventilator-based monitoring system and other modern life-support equipment.



Drain water outside Khajuri Khas police station. Abhinav Saha

SITUATION HAS PERSISTED FOR NINE MONTHS, SAY RESIDENTS

'Can't even step out': Sewage floods road in NE Delhi — even police station hit

DRISHTI JAIN
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

"WE CAN'T step out on duty. If someone calls to lodge a complaint, how will we respond to it?" said a police officer at the Khajuri Khas police station in Northeast Delhi, pointing to the murky water that's seeped into the premises.

The scene outside is no better. At the end of the road, one can spot a blue board that reads 'Delhi Development Authority. Thankyou for visiting facilitation centre, Khajuri Khas.' From this point onward, sewage has flooded a 200-metre long stretch, extending from the DDA board to Shriram Colony and Sonia Vihar.

This has been the situation for the past nine months, owing

to blocked drains, say residents of the area. The government has hired workers to pump out the water to no avail.

The area has turned into a motorist's nightmare. Drivers on two-wheelers are forced to lift their legs to dodge piles of floating garbage – sanitary napkins, diapers, vegetable waste, polythene bags, the occasional fallen branch – as they navigate the road. E-rickshaws fare even worse; their vehicles stall multiple times, forcing the drivers to halt.

Deepak Gaur, an advocate who works at the Karkardooma Court, complains that the elected representatives lack the political will to tackle the mess.

"People say lakhs have been spent here... that this area is under a responsible minister of the government – but people of his area are still facing trouble," he says.

On the other end of the waterlogged road are small businesses – and piles of garbage. Flies hover around, and a foul smell hangs in the air.

Devyansh Kaushik, who has been running a bakery for the last eight years, says the waterlogging has affected his business as vehicles carrying goods can't

cross the stretch. "We have sent multiple complaints. (Area MLA) Kapil Mishra came once before the elections, but he never visited again," he gripes.

2017 GURGAON SCHOOL MURDER CASE

HC seeks CBI stand on police officers' petition to quash summons for trial

MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, JULY 15

The officers have been accused of tampering with evidence and falsely implicating the school bus conductor in the murder of a minor boy on campus

THE PUNJAB and Haryana High Court has sought a response from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Haryana government on a plea filed by senior police officers challenging a CBI court's decision to summon them for trial in connection with the 2017 Gurgaon school murder case.

The officers have been accused of tampering with evidence and falsely implicating the school bus conductor in the murder of a minor boy on campus.

Taking up the petitions Monday, a bench of Justice Manjari Nehru Kaul issued notices to the CBI and the Haryana government and listed the matter for further hearing on July 28.

Representing the petitioners, senior advocates Bipin Ghai and Vinod Ghai, along with advocates Nikhil Ghai, Arnav Ghai, Akhil Godara, and R S Bagga, argued that the magistrate's decision to take cognisance of the case against the officers was legally unsound. They con-

tended that the trial court order was passed without obtaining prior sanction for prosecution, which is mandatory under the law when public servants are alleged to have committed offences while discharging official duties.

The lawyers pointed out that in an earlier order passed in 2021, the same magistrate had declined to take cognisance for precisely this reason—the absence of sanction.

"Now, without any fresh sanction, and merely on an application by the complainant, the magistrate has reviewed that decision and taken cognisance. This is not legally permissible," they contended.

The petitioners further argued that the officers, including

an assistant commissioner of police, were acting in their official capacity during the initial investigation and are therefore entitled to protection under the law.

On the court's direction, Deputy Advocate General Karan Sharma appeared for Haryana, while advocate Prateek Gupta accepted the notice for the CBI. Both sought time to respond.

The case dates back to September 8, 2017, when the student was found with his throat slit inside a washroom of the school campus.

Police initially arrested a school bus conductor, accusing him of the murder.

However, following nationwide outrage and pressure from the victim's family, the probe was handed over to the CBI. The CBI later arrested a senior student of the same school, alleging he had committed the murder to delay exams and a parent-teacher meeting.

This led to accusations that the police had falsely implicated the conductor and tampered with evidence, prompting the CBI to file a supplementary chargesheet against several police officers.

Officials said that in 2020, the department had raided 4,511 units—places where a medicine is manufactured, packed, printed and sent for distribution—leading to the suspension or cancellation of licences of 369 units. The next year, the number of raids had increased to 5,041, and 480 licences were cancelled or suspended.

Spike in spurious drug cases in Delhi since Covid, shows govt data

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

SINCE THE Covid-19 pandemic, Delhi has witnessed a surge in spurious drug cases. Drug Control department data has revealed.

According to department officials, since September 2020, around 35 to 40 such cases have been moved against distributors in Delhi's sessions courts. "Over the years, we have collected samples and seized fake drugs from 55 distributors, many of them repeat offenders," said an official, adding that before the pandemic, the number of such cases was lower.

Officials said that in 2020, the department had raided 4,511 units—places where a medicine is manufactured, packed, printed and sent for distribution—leading to the suspension or cancellation of licences of 369 units. The next year, the number of raids had increased to 5,041, and 480 licences were cancelled or suspended.

Since 2022, the number of such spurious cases has seen a slight decline.

According to records, many of the spurious drug cases were related to medicines for hypertension, cholesterol, dermatitis and allergy, as well as Calcium and

TOP 6 MEDICINES LINKED TO SPURIOUS CASES

TELMA 40	Hypertension
SHELCAL	Calcium, Vitamin D3 supplements
ROSUVAS 10	Cholesterol, Triglyceride
BETNOVATE N CREAM	Eczema, Psoriasis, Dermatitis
ROSUVAS F 20	Cholesterol, triglyceride
MONTEK LC	Allergic symptoms

327 were cancelled or suspended.

Last year, 3,915 units were raided, of which licences of 443 were cancelled or suspended, said officials.

The reason, said officials, was proactive enforcement of the law due to an increase in the department's manpower. "In the last two years, manpower has been strengthened significantly as we needed more people to look into such cases," the official said.

Most of the dealers are based in Delhi, particularly Bhagirath Palace—market famous for wholesale distribution of drugs—said officials. "Delhi is a transit state from where vendors get drugs and send them to other states in North India," the official said.

While in 2022, 4,281 units were raided and 304 had their licences cancelled or suspended, in 2023, raids were conducted at 3,806 units, of which licences of

Vitamin supplements. (See box)

"These vendors also deal in spurious sanitiser, toothpaste, almond oil, injections and nutritional supplements," the official said.

On why the number of cases saw a rise in the Covid-19 years, an official said, "Advancement in technology when it comes to printing and packaging, often makes it difficult to differentiate between spurious and real drugs."

Another reason behind the surge is the decentralisation of manufacturing units, the official added. "Earlier, companies used to manufacture and distribute drugs from one destination. Now, printing, stripping and blistering of medicines takes place at different areas... in many cases, even in different states... making identification of spurious drugs a challenge."

DU students and designers set to attend govt's Khadi fashion show

New Delhi: The Delhi government's first-of-its-kind handloom fashion show is set to be attended by renowned designers and students from the Capital's top institutions.

The show, scheduled for August 6, will be attended by bigwigs like Rahul Mishra, Sanjay Garg, Surekha Jain, Rina Dhaka, and Pernia Qureshi, among others. The event will also see over 150 students from top Delhi colleges like Miranda House, Lady Shri Ram College, Hindu College, Guru Gobind Singh College, and Pearl Academy curating exhibits and walking the ramp in handloom wear.

The event will feature a 24-stall curated exhibition and a fashion ramp walk with a Ved civilisation theme. ENS

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR
Ganderbal, www.cukashmir.ac.in

ADMISSION TO UNDER-GRADUATE (UG) PROGRAMMES
Candidates having appeared in CUET-UG-2025 and are interested in seeking admission to any of the Undergraduate (UG) Programmes offered by the Central University of Kashmir, are hereby informed to register for admission. The registration process shall start from 15th July, 2025. For detailed information regarding registration process & programmes, the candidates are advised to visit University website: www.cukashmir.ac.in Date: 14-07-2025 S/d Director (I/C) Directorate of Admissions

डॉ. श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी गार्डीन जल एवं स्वच्छता संस्थान
DR. SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WATER AND SANITATION (An autonomous institution under Dept. of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Govt. Email: spm.niwas@gov.in | Website: www.spmnawas.in

VACANCY NOTIFICATION

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS), Kolkata, an autonomous institution under the Dept. of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Gol invites applications for the following positions on contract (re-employment) basis:

1. Section Officer (Admin)-01 No.
2. Section Officer (Finance)-01 No.

Details of eligibility conditions are available in www.spmnawas.in website.



Last date of receipt of application: 28.07.2025.
CBC45128/12/0004/2526

Ministry of Culture
Government of India
Centre for Contemporary Studies
Prime Ministers Museum and Library
cordially invites you to a Talk

on
The Revival of Ethical and Religious Teaching
in North India (c. 1880-1950)

by

Dr. Ankur Kakkar

Fellow, PMML

17 July 2025 at 3:00pm

Venue:

Seminar Room

Prime Ministers Museum and Library

Teen Murti House, New Delhi

All are Welcome.

Those wishing to have their names added to the email list may please email us at: ccs2nmml@gmail.com

CBC- 09142/12/0011/2526

हरियाणा राज्य तकनीकी शिक्षा समिति (HSTES)
(तकनीकी शिक्षा विभाग, हरियाणा सरकार के तत्वाधारान में)
वार्ष नंबर: 7-12, सेक्टर-4, पान्दुकल, हरियाणा.
वेबसाइट: www.hstes.org.in,
www.techadmissionshry.gov.in
फ़ोन:- onlineadmissionhelp@gmail.com
टेल फ़ोन एडमिशन हेल्पलाइन नंबर 1800-137-3735

Public Notice

Subject: Revised admission schedule for admission to B.Pharmacy & B.Pharmacy (Lateral Entry) Courses in the State of Haryana for the session 2025-26.

It is for the information of all stakeholders, the admission aspirants & General Public that the admissions in B.Pharmacy & B.Pharmacy (Lateral Entry) courses in all State Govt. Universities, Private Universities, Deemed to be Universities Institutions and all Private B.Pharmacy institutions situated in the State of Haryana will be made on the basis of Online Common Entrance Test (OCET-2025) to be conducted by the HSTES. The admission aspirants have to register at website www.techadmissionshry.gov.in as per the below schedule for appearing in the OCET-2025:-

Course Name	Registration Dates & Disposition of Fee	Issuance of Admit Cards	OCET-EXAM Dates	Merit Result/ OCET Result
B.Pharmacy	06.06.2025 (11:00 AM) to 22.07.2025 (11:59 PM)	24.07.2025 onwards	28.07.2025	06.08.2025
B.Pharmacy (Lateral Entry)	10.06.2025 (11:00 AM) to 21.07.2025 (11:59 PM)	24.07.2025		04.08.2025

Note:

1. Two Online Centralized Counsellings will be conducted for admission to the above said courses on the basis of Inter-se-Rank of the OCET-2025. The schedule of the counseling is available on the www.techadmissionshry.gov.in.
2. For complete details regarding eligibility, list of institutions, fee structure, online centralized counseling schedule and reservation policy etc., please visit HSTES websites for admission brochure available at www.hstes.org.in and <http://techadmissionshry.gov.in>.
3. The candidates from State of Haryana must provide their Parivar Pechnar Patra (PPP) ID or Aadhaar No. (If applicant does not remember PPP ID) as per the provisions of the "THE HARYANA PARIVAR PECHNAR ACT, 2021" (refer to <https://meraparivar.haryana.gov.in>).
4. The aspiring candidates may contact to the HSTES at toll free no. 18001373735 and email at onlineadmissionhelp@gmail.com. Candidates are advised to visit HSTES websites time to time for the admission related latest information: www.hstes.org.in <http://techadmissionshry.gov.in>. and No. 36636/HR

JOINT DIRECTOR (HSTES)

**हरियाणा के प्रसिद्ध रागनी गायक एवं संस्कृतिकर्मी
सांग समाट बाजे भगत जी
को उनकी जयन्ती पर
हादिक नमन
16 जुलाई, 2025**

“किसी भी देश की सम्यता और संस्कृति को
स्वर उसके संगीत एवं गीतों से मिलते हैं।”
- नरेन्द्र मोदी

सूचना, जन सम्पर्क एवं भाषा विभाग, हरियाणा

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सूचना एवं जन सम्पर्क विभाग, हरियाणा
वा. प्रा. भाषा विभाग का

SC refuses plea seeking to cancel AIMIM registration

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

WHILE REFUSING to entertain an appeal which sought cancellation of the registration of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) as a political party for allegedly promoting only Muslim interests, the Supreme Court Tuesday permitted the petitioner to file a fresh petition raising larger issues of political parties advancing not just communal, but even casteist or regional interests, terming it "equally dangerous".

Presiding over a two-judge bench, Justice Surya Kant said, "Let's not confine to the question of communal parties (alone)... There are some regional parties. They also sometimes indulge in regional sentiments. Is it appropriate and in the interest of national integration?... So let us not confine only to communal issues."

The bench, also comprising Justice Joymalya Bagchi, suggested to Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain - who appeared for the petitioner Tirupati Narasimha Murari - to focus on the "wider perspective of reforms in the political parties."

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

**CONSTABLE KARNAI SINGH
25.05.1969 - 16.07.1993**

Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Constable Karnail Singh on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained fatal injuries in a grenade blast while fighting with militants in Shopian area, J&K and made ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

**CONSTABLE/TRADESMEN SANJAY DHAR, PMG
15.07.1980 - 16.07.2014**

Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Constable Tradesmen Sanjay Dhar, PMG on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained bullet injuries in Counterpart firing in area of BOB Pital, R S Pura, Jammu and later succumbed to his injuries.

**SH DHARAM PRAKASH, COMDT, PPMG
05.08.1939 - 16.07.1992**

Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Head Constable Mahavir Singh, PMG on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained bullet injuries while fighting with militants in Srinagar, J&K and later succumbed to his injuries.

**HEAD CONSTABLE MAHAVIR SINGH, PMG
07.07.1952 - 16.07.1992**

Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Head Constable Mahavir Singh, PMG on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained bullet injuries while fighting with militants in Sopore area, J&K and later succumbed to his injuries.

**INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP)
16 July, 2025**

Head Constable Satbir Singh Vill.- Khatiwash Distt.- Jhajjar (Haryana)	Lance Naik Virender Singh Vill.- Budhpur Distt.- Rewari (Haryana)
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Constable Ashok Kumar Vill.- Phardipur Distt.- Siwan (Bihar)	Constable Mangal Singh Vill.- Matena Distt.- Pithoragarh (Uttarakhand)
--	--

Constable Karam Chand Vill.- Chandran Distt.- Kangra (Himachal Pradesh)	Constable Raj Kumar Vill.- Kangu Kaghara Distt.- Mandi (Himachal Pradesh)
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ITBP salutes its bravehearts Head Constable Satbir Singh, LNK Virender Singh, Constable Ashok Kumar, Constable Mangal Singh, Constable Karam Chand and Constable Raj Kumar of 22nd Battalion, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty fighting bravely with the militants on this day in Punjab in 1995.

Constable Harish Singh

ITBP Salutes its brave heart Constable Harish Singh of 24th Battalion, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on this day in (J&K) in 1992. Resident of : Vill Musgaon, Distt.- Pithoragarh (Uttarakhand)

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
16 July 1987**

Veer Balidani Shri Sawai Singh Assistant Commandant 69 Bn 10-9-1937 To 16-7-1987	Veer Balidani Constable Omprakash 69 Bn. 2-4-1960 To 16-7-1987	Veer Balidani Ramkishan 69 Bn. 1-4-1962 To 16-7-1987
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69 Battalion of CRPF was deployed in West Tripura to tackle insurgency. On 15 July 1987, a CRPF convoy was ambushed by the insurgents at Ishanpur. Displaying exceptional leadership, Assistant Commandant Shri Sawai Singh led a swift counterattack, inflicting heavy losses on the insurgents and forcing them to flee. However, Shri Sawai Singh, Constable Ramkishan, and Constable Omprakash sustained grievous injuries and succumbed the next day, on 16 July. For their outstanding courage and supreme sacrifice, Assistant Commandant Sawai Singh was awarded the President's Police Medal for Gallantry and Constable Om Prakash was posthumously conferred the Police Medal for Gallantry.

16 July 1993

Veer Balidani Head Constable B S Rai 12 Bn. 13-8-1943 To 16-7-1993	Veer Balidani Constable P D Bhai 12 Bn. 1-6-1970 To 16-7-1993
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12 Battalion of CRPF was deployed in Nagaland to counter the rising threat of insurgents. On 16 July 1993, insurgents launched a sudden attack on a CRPF check post, opening indiscriminate fire. The troops responded with effective retaliation, forcing the attackers to flee. In the fierce exchange, Head Constable B. S. Rai and Constable P. D. Bhai, who led from the front, sustained critical bullet injuries and made the supreme sacrifice. Their valour and dedication to duty will always be honoured by the nation.

16 July 1996

Veer Balidani Naik Sagir Ahmed Khan 134 Bn. 2-3-1959 To 16-7-1996	Veer Balidani Head Constable Daya Nand 14 Bn. 5-10-1966 To 16-7-1996
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In 1996, 134 Battalion of CRPF was deployed in Srinagar for anti-terrorist operations. On 6 July, militants opened fire on Naik Sagir Ahmed Khan, who was on escort duty in a crowded area. Shot twice at close range from behind, he sustained critical injuries. Due to civilian presence, troops couldn't retaliate, and the assailants escaped. Naik Sagir Ahmed Khan succumbed to his injuries on 16 July, making the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

16 July 2004

On 16 July 2004 at around 2150 hrs, insurgents attempted to breach a CRPF post of 14 Battalion at the Community Hall, PS Churachandpur, taking advantage of darkness. Alert sentries retaliated instantly, triggering a fierce exchange of fire. As insurgents tried to storm the camp, the troopers held their ground and forced them to retreat. In the gunfight, Head Constable Daya Nand, who led from the front, sustained serious injuries but continued to fight bravely till his last breath, making the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

DIRECTS OFFICIALS TO PUT IN PLACE 'CLEAR RULES & SOP'

Won't allow sale of biostimulants without scientific nod: Chouhan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

TWO DAYS after he asked chief ministers of states to immediately stop forced sale of nano-fertilisers and biostimulants to farmers, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan Tuesday said the government will not allow the sale of biostimulants without scientific nod.

He directed the officials of his ministry to put in place "clear rules and SOPs (standard operating procedures)" for the sale of biostimulants.

Chairing a meeting, Chouhan said that farmers raised numerous complaints about the sale of fake fertilisers, seeds, biostimulants, and nano urea during his visits to villages as part of recently concluded 15-day 'Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan', where he held direct interactions with them.

Chouhan questioned why biostimulants, despite repeated renewals and years of sales, were



Farmers raised complaints about sale of biostimulants as part of 15-day Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan: Chouhan

still in the market even after several complaints stated that they were ineffective.

"Now, only those biostimulants that meet all the criteria and are proven beneficial to farmers will be approved. Approvals will now be based solely on scientific validation, and the responsibility for this will rest entirely with the concerned officials," he said, according to an official statement.

Many companies started selling biostimulants without any rules, but the government

will not let this happen at any cost, he said, adding that the government will take action against suspicious manufacturers of biostimulants.

"It is necessary to review biostimulants thoroughly to see how much benefit the farmers are getting from it; if not, then permission to sell it cannot be given," Chouhan said.

He also emphasised the need for the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to evaluate biostimulants.

Chouhan instructed the officials to put in place clear rules and SOPs, and said that irregularities will no longer be tolerated.

Biostimulants are substances or microorganisms (such as beneficial bacteria, fungi, or plant extracts) that, when applied to seeds, plants, or soil, stimulate natural plant processes.

The minister pointed out that for several years, around 30,000 biostimulant products were being sold unchecked, and even in the last four years, around 8,000

products remained in circulation. "After I enforced stricter checks, the number has now come down to around 650," he said.

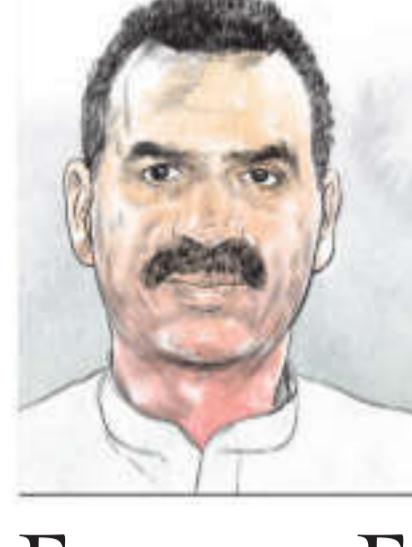
It is learnt that the meeting was called impromptu and no notice was given to officials. The meeting was attended by the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and the ICAR.

The biostimulants market in India was valued at approximately USD 355–362 million in 2024 and is projected to reach between USD 1.13 billion and USD 1.2 billion by 2032.

On July 13, Chouhan had asked the state governments to immediately stop the "forced tagging" of nano-fertilisers or biostimulants along with conventional fertilisers such as urea and diammonium phosphate (DAP). In a letter to chief ministers, Chouhan highlighted complaints that retailers are not selling subsidised conventional fertilisers such as urea, DAP, etc. to farmers unless they purchase nano-fertilisers or biostimulants.



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



FRIENDLY FIGHT

WITH TWO senior BJP leaders, both former ministers, going head-to-head for the post of secretary (administration), Constitution Club of India, the party circles in Delhi are busy canvassing support for their favourite candidate. Scheduled for August 12, the poll will see Saran MP Rajiv Pratap Rudy go up against former Muzafarnagar MP Sanjeev Balyan for the position to lead the governing council of the Constitution Club, which has an electorate of over 1,200 members from eminent backgrounds across the country. Party insiders say both leaders are currently engaged in "a lively campaign" for the poll. The Constitution Club was founded by members of the Constituent Assembly in 1947 and is located a stone's throw away from Parliament. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is the ex-officio president of the club.

SWIFT SCREENING

THE STANDING committee of the National Board for Wildlife has been appraising a number of proposals in past few meetings, with their agenda, including proposal details, running into hundreds of pages. In its last meeting, the committee took up 93 fresh proposals and cleared most of them. Despite the practice of circulating a pre-decided agenda, the committee is also taking up late submissions for appraisal. A recent case was that of alteration of Sariska Tiger Reserve's critical tiger habitat boundary, which was taken up just days after Rajasthani board for wildlife cleared the proposal at the state level.

CONGRESS CONCLAVE

THE CONGRESS'S law, human rights and RTI department is busy with the preparations for its upcoming conclave in the Capital on August 2, where senior party leaders and state chiefs from across India will be in attendance. The theme and the speakers' list have been prepared after several meetings of the department. The primary theme of the conclave, according to sources, is teachings of Dr BR Ambedkar and social justice. There will be three sessions in the conclave, exploring topics like freedom of religion, separation of powers, social justice and Dr Ambedkar's vision for the country. A source said the conclave is the brainchild of senior party leader Abhishek Singhvi, who heads the department.



Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge with V-P Jagdeep Dhankhar, Tuesday. Kharge later attended a party meeting at senior leader Sonia Gandhi's residence. PTI

why terrorists are not being caught. We are hopeful that the government will give answers," Tiwari said. He said a discussion will also be sought on the poll panel's electoral roll revision in Bihar, which he called a "threat" to democracy.

Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi chaired a meeting of the party's parliamentary strategy group Tuesday at her 10, Janpath residence. The meeting was attended by Leaders of Opposition of both Houses – Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge – other senior leaders including K C Venugopal, P Chidambaram, K Suresh, Tarun Anwar, Kumari Selja, Manish Tewari and Jairam Ramesh.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Congress deputy leader in Rajya Sabha Pramod Tiwari said, "Our first priority is to demand answers on the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoora. Soon after the attack, Opposition parties made repeated calls for a special session of Parliament, with INDIA bloc's top leaders writing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 2. Two INDIA bloc parties – AAP and NCP (SP) – did not sign the letter.

The coming Parliament session will be the first since the Pahalgam attack on April 22, which killed 25 tourists and a local ponywala. Soon after the attack, Opposition parties made repeated calls for a special session of Parliament, with INDIA bloc's top leaders writing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 2. Two INDIA bloc parties – AAP and NCP (SP) – did not sign the letter.

Tiwari said the Congress will also discuss the issue of impeachment motion against former Delhi High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma, from whose residence stacks of currency notes were allegedly recovered.

He said the other issues that the Opposition will highlight will include the statehood to J&K, women's safety, farmers' distress, and the Ahmedabad plane crash.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
E-Tender Notice No CWMPD-01-2025-26 Date: 10.07.2025
Online (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by Chief Workshop Manager, Bridge Workshop, East Central Railway, Plant Depot, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya for and on behalf of the President of India, from reputed Firms.

E-Tender Closing Date : 01.08.2025

1. Name of the work with its location :

Transportation of Raw/Fabricated materials such as bridge girders, slabs, glued joints etc by Plant Depot, DDU.

2. Approx cost of the work:

Rs. 4,51,07,062.26.

3. Earnest Money:

Rs. 3,75,500.00.

4. Date and time for closing of e-tender :

01.08.2025 at 12:00 Hrs.

5. Website particulars of e-tendering : www.reps.gov.in

Chief Workshop Manager/BW Plant Depot, ECR/DDU PR/585/DDU/Mech./T/25-26/32

DO NOT SMOKE BIDI/CIGARETTE IN TRAINS

Online (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by Chief Workshop Manager, Bridge Workshop, East Central Railway, Plant Depot, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya for and on behalf of the President of India, from reputed Firms.

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Chief Workshop Manager/BW Plant Depot, E

Curtailed post-crash, A-I to start restoring international flight schedule from Aug 1

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

AIR INDIA will start from August 1 partial restoration of its international wide-body schedule that had been truncated by about 15% due to the airline taking a "safety pause" after AI 171 crash on June 12 of its Ahmedabad-London Gatwick flight operated by a Boeing 787 aircraft. The full restoration is expected from October.

The restoration will also see a few changes from the earlier schedule. For instance, the five-times-a-week Ahmedabad-London Gatwick service will be replaced by a thrice-weekly service to London Heathrow from August 1.

Delhi-London Heathrow and Delhi-Zurich flight frequencies are being reinstated to weekly 24 flights and five flights, respectively. The airline is also re-instating its thrice-weekly Delhi-Nairobi service till August-end, after which it will be suspended for the whole of September.

"As schedule reductions taken as part of the Safety Pause had been implemented until 31 July 2025 and the restoration to full operation is being phased, some services initially planned to operate between 1 August and 30 September 2025 will be removed from schedule," the airline said.

"That (safety) pause enabled

Mamata: No ban on samosa, jalebi, won't interfere with food habits

SWEETY KUMARI
KOLKATA, JULY 15

WEST BENGAL CM Mamata Banerjee said Tuesday that state government will not implement a ban on popular snacks like samosas and jalebi as suggested by some media reports and her government would not interfere with people's food habits.

In a post on X, Banerjee wrote, "Some media have reported that apparently samosas/jalebis cannot be consumed from now on, based on instructions from the (Union) Health Ministry. This is not a notification from the Government of West Bengal. We are not interfering in every matter. We shall not implement this. I think, samosas and jalebis are popular in other states also. People in those states also love these food items. Let us not interfere with people's food habits."

During a lecture on 'The life and legacy of former PM Shri PV Narasimha Rao', Naidu termed him a "great statesman" and "visionary" who changed the future of India. Independent India, he said, is divided into two phases: pre-economic reforms and after it. Recalling the 1991 economic crisis, Naidu credited Rao for the economic reforms and called him "one of the greatest sons of Bharat Mata". "PV Narasimha Rao was the Deng Xiaoping of India," he said, likening the opening up of the economy in 1991 to Deng's transformation of the Chinese economy in 1978. "He changed the future of India and we are enjoying the fruits of his reforms today," Naidu said.

"Rao was heading a minority government then. Yet, because of his political acumen he could build a consensus across parties

Air India to perform additional precautionary checks on its Boeing 787 aircraft as well as accommodating longer flying times arising from airspace closures over Pakistan and the Middle East. The partial resumption will see restoration of some frequencies from 1st August, relative to July, with full restoration planned from 1st October 2025," the airline said Tuesday in a release.

The restoration will also see a few changes from the earlier schedule. For instance, the five-times-a-week Ahmedabad-London Gatwick service will be replaced by a thrice-weekly service to London Heathrow from August 1.

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"That (safety) pause enabled

Narasimha Rao knew 17 languages, today we are asking — why learn Hindi: Naidu

VIKAS PATHAK
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

ANDHRA PRADESH CM N Chandrababu Naidu Tuesday said former PM PV Narasimha Rao was a scholarly person who knew 17 languages, and took a veiled dig at the charge of Hindi imposition in states like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, saying, "now we are asking — why should we learn Hindi?"

During a lecture on 'The life and legacy of former PM Shri PV Narasimha Rao', Naidu termed him a "great statesman" and "visionary" who changed the future of India. Independent India, he said, is divided into two phases: pre-economic reforms and after it. Recalling the 1991 economic crisis, Naidu credited Rao for the economic reforms and called him "one of the greatest sons of Bharat Mata". "PV Narasimha Rao was the Deng Xiaoping of India," he said, likening the opening up of the economy in 1991 to Deng's transformation of the Chinese economy in 1978. "He changed the future of India and we are enjoying the fruits of his reforms today," Naidu said.

"Rao was heading a minority government then. Yet, because of his political acumen he could build a consensus across parties

NMC vacant posts: Ministry selects 24 part-time members by drawing lots

10 part-time members picked from nominees of states, UTs

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

THE UNION Health Ministry conducted a draw of lots on Tuesday for the selection of 24 part-time members of the National Medical Commission (NMC) and its four autonomous boards.

The previous appointments of the part-time members happened in December 2022 for a term of two years; the posts were lying vacant for at least six months.

The positions of full-time members, including the post of presidents of three of the four autonomous boards, however, have remained vacant for nearly nine months now.

The Centre appointed Dr Abhijit Sheth, currently heading the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences that conducts the entrance exams for PG and super-specialty medical courses, as the chairperson of the NMC over the weekend.

As per the rules, 10 part-time members for the commission are selected from among the nominees from States and Union Territories. Members nominated by Gujarat, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, Chandigarh and Madhya Pradesh were chosen through the draw of lots.

Another nine part-time

members for NMC — from among those nominated by state medical councils — were chosen from West Bengal, Karnataka, Nagaland, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Manipur and Uttarakhand.

The part-time posts on the four autonomous boards were also filled through this process from among the nominees of medical councils of Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, Haryana, and Punjab.

The expert from Jammu and Kashmir was chosen for the search committee that looks for suitable candidates for positions of chairperson and other members of the regulatory body.

The National Medical Commission consists of 33 members who lay down policies for medical education and ensure coordination among the four autonomous boards.

According to a former member, all changes to curricula, minimum requirements for setting up different courses and policies on fees should go through this board.

Earlier this month, *The Indian Express* had reported that this 33-member commission had not met since August or September last year.

In addition to the Commission, the regulatory body is made of four autonomous boards with five members each — one president, two whole-time members, and two part-time members.

The Undergraduate Medical

Education Board is responsible for developing the standards of medical colleges, the curricula for UG courses, frame policy guidelines for medical colleges and facilitate training of faculty members teaching UG courses. The PG Medical Education Board does the same for PG courses across the country.

The Medical Assessment and Rating Board ensures that colleges follow the minimum requirements set by other boards and grants permissions to colleges to continue their courses, add seats or new courses.

The Ethics and Medical Registration Board works to promote and regulate ethical behaviour among registered medical practitioners and create a national medical register of all such professionals across the country.

The vacancies in the country's apex medical education regulatory body have serious implications for the overall functioning of medical education in India, especially conducting inspections for starting new colleges or adding seats or renewing existing seats.

This year, the body decided to conduct only virtual inspections — looking at CCTV feeds and biometric attendance records of faculty members — for the new colleges or seats.

The process of starting new colleges or adding seats was halted by the National Medical Commission amid a CBI probe into allegations of corruption in regulation of medical colleges.

BRIBERY CHARGE

NMC blacklists 4 assessors, stops renewal of UG, PG seats in 6 colleges

New Delhi: The NMC has blacklisted four assessors and stopped renewal of existing UG and PG seats in six medical colleges for 2025-2026 after an FIR over allegations of bribery against 34 people, including owners and representatives of various medical colleges as well as government officials.

"... The Commission... has decided to blacklist the said 4 Assessors, pending investigation and final verdict in the matter. It has been also decided that the renewal of the existing number of UG & PG seats of 6 medical colleges in Under-graduate and Postgraduate courses shall not be done for the AY 2025-26," the NMC said in a statement.

CBI uncovered a major corruption scandal in medical education and registered a case against senior officials in the health ministry, NMC, a former UGC head and representatives of private medical colleges earlier this month.

In one of the cases detailed in the FIR, a medical college received a four-day heads-up for a surprise inspection, along with the names of the assessors, giving college time to make fraudulent arrangements. In this case, the assessors allegedly accepted the bribe.

ENS

2nd GE engine arrives, 12 LCA Tejas set to roll out by year-end

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

TWELVE TEJAS Mk 1A light combat aircraft, powered by the GE F404 engine from US defence major GE Aerospace, will be ready for rollout by December this year, and six of these aircraft have already been lined up, officials privy to the latest developments have told *The Indian Express*.

The second GE F404 engine, officials said, landed in India Monday and will be taken to the Bengaluru facility of HAL where it will be integrated with the indigenous Tejas Mk 1A.

In August 2021, HAL placed an order worth ₹5,375 crore for 99 F404 engines with GE Aerospace to power the Tejas Mk-1A. The first engine was delivered to HAL in April this year after considerable delay — the scheduled delivery date was in 2023.

The IAF has placed an order to procure 83 Tejas Mk 1A LCA. The Ministry of Defence is also in the process of procuring another 97 Mk 1A LCAs at an estimated cost of ₹67,000 crore.

Officials said that GE Aerospace has said it will deliver 10 engines by the end of this year.

"It takes about a month to integrate the engines and do the tests. The process first involves building the fuselage, then getting the lading and piping done, followed by combining the landing gear," an official said.

"After integrating the engines, the ground runs, including high-speed runs, are carried out for all thorough checks," the official said.

The deliveries of the LCA Tejas Mk 1A were scheduled to begin in March 2024, but have been delayed by over a year.

Last month, HAL Chairman and MD D K Sunil attributed the delay to GE Aerospace missing the deadline to supply the aircraft engines to HAL for the Tejas Mk 1A.

The development came

EXPLAINED
E The IAF's urgency

OPERATING WAY below its authorised strength of 42 fighter squadrons, the IAF is seeking timely delivery of the indigenous Tejas Mk 1A. It has already phased out most of its MiG-21 squadrons and in the coming years, it will begin phasing out other ageing fighter squadrons.

weeks after IAF chief Air Chief Marshal A P Singh expressed concern over the delay in delivery of the fighter aircraft.

The timely induction of the indigenous fighter jets, including Tejas Mk 1A, is crucial to hold the IAF's dwindling squadron strength. The IAF has phased out most of its MiG-21 squadrons, and early next decade, it is likely to begin phasing out other ageing fighter squadrons.

According to officials, HAL plans to produce 16 fighter aircraft next year if engine deliveries from the US are on schedule. The original plan was to produce 16 aircraft every year and complete deliveries of all aircraft by 2030.

The Tejas Mk 1 A LCAs have multiple upgrades over the Mk 1 version, including integration of the AESA radar, Advanced Electronic Warfare Suite with jammer, and Beyond Visual Range (BVR) capabilities with integration of the Derby and the indigenous ASTRA air-to-air missiles.

Officials said testing of the ASTRA missile firing from the aircraft is currently underway.

Earlier this month, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh asked US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth to expedite the deliveries of GE F404 engines for the Tejas Mk 1A.

Shashikant Shinde is NCP-SP state unit chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JULY 15

IN A change of leadership within the party, Jayant Patil, Maharashtra chief of NCP-SP on Tuesday submitted his resignation from the post and the party replaced him with party MLC Shashikant Shinde.

After taking over as NCP (SP) state chief, 61-year-old Shinde said, "It is my greatest honor that a person like me, who comes from the humble background and climbed up the political ladder, has been given the opportunity to lead the party. I assure my leaders that I will work day and night, not only to raise the people's issues but to also build the organisation in such a manner that it reclaims

the power once again."

"There is a huge political vacuum that needs to be filled by the Opposition. When we will stand as a strong organisation, I am confident that the people of Maharashtra will come to us in large numbers," he said.

Shinde stood with Sharad Pawar after the split in the NCP, despite most of the party leaders and legislators joining the Ajit Pawar-led faction.

Shinde was elected to the state Legislative Assembly four times in a row, but lost to Mahesh Shinde of the Shiv Sena in 2019. In the first two elections, he won from the Jaoli Assembly segment in Satara district. After the delimitation, he contested from Koregaon and won in 2009 and 2014.

Banke Bihari corridor work starts, residents say 'a house 7 km away isn't home'

NEETIKA JHA
VRINDAVAN, JULY 15

PROTESTS OVER the Uttar Pradesh government's plans to build a corridor for Banke Bihari Temple in Vrindavan have got a new lease of life due to remarks by BJP leader and Mathura MP Hema Malini.

Recently a video surfaced of Malini, the local MP, saying: "Banke Bihari Corridor will be constructed. Those opposing it can be shifted somewhere else. We will make the corridor for sure." Residents facing displacement had earlier met Malini to air their grievances, and had been assured that their demands would be considered.

Soon after, the BJP issued an official statement saying the video of Malini was not new, but taken before the Lok Sabha election of 2024, and that "it is not complete but edited". The statement quoted the MP as saying

"she has complete understanding of Brijwasi's faith."

While *The Indian Express* could not reach Malini despite several attempts, the uncertainty of residents such as Radha Mishra, 54, and her neighbours has grown.

Mishra lives in a four-storey building just 10 m from Gate No. 5 of the Banke Bihari Temple, past a rusting iron gate. Against the peeling paint of the walls of her house, a portrait of 'Banke Bihari', revered as the combined form of Krishna and Radha, stands out.

"I came to this house in 1982 after marriage. We also own 5 shops nearby. The rent pays for our dal-roti. Where will we go if they break our house?" Mishra says.

The Supreme Court nod for the project to develop a 'Banke Bihari Corridor' came on May 15. The court also allowed the government to use temple funds to purchase 5 acres to build the corridor, at an estimated cost of around ₹1,000 crore. This was a

modification of an Allahabad HC order which had accepted the government's development plan but barred access to temple funds. The temple priests are opposed to the government accessing the funds, seeing it as an erosion of their traditional authority over the running of the religious place.

The plan is to have a corridor on the lines of the one at Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi, also built under BJP government.

Within days of the court order, the Yogi Adityanath government passed an ordinance to set up a trust to manage Banke Bihari temple and oversee the corridor's development. The families displaced would be rehabilitated in Rukmini Vihar and Sunrakh Bangar areas of the Mathura-Vrindavan region, 7 km away, the government said.

District Magistrate, Mathura,

Chandra Prakash Singh says the changes are needed to cater to an increasing footfall. "The number of visitors on a normal day is between 30,000 and 60,000, and on festivals goes up to 3 lakh. The lanes around the temple are too narrow to handle this huge number," says the DM.

Three years ago, the Banke Bihari Temple saw a stampede during the Janmashtami rush, killing 3 and leaving 7 injured.

Nimish Goswami, 32, says they are in the dark even on details of the compensation. "They are telling us they will give us a flat. I spent about ₹1.12 crore to build this house. We have 24 members here. How many flats will the government give us? Can we continue to live as a joint family?"

Asking why the circle rates had not been increased for years if this was the government plan, causing a loss to home owners like them, Goswami says: "No one asked us (anything), and

when we go to the authorities, they don't meet us. Then they say they have the people's support! We will never support this."

Vice-chairman of Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority (MVDA), Shyam Bahadur Singh, says 4 large plots have been earmarked for Rukmini Vihar housing scheme. Around 350 one- and two-bedroom flats will be constructed initially, he says.

'Objectionable' post on PM, RSS: SC grants anticipatory bail to cartoonist

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday granted anticipatory bail to Madhya Pradesh-based cartoonist Hemant Malviya, who was booked for sharing objectionable content targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the RSS, after he agreed to delete them and tendered an apology.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Arvind Kumar, however, said that one of his posts was "very, very offensive".

Deprecating such conduct, Justice Dhulia said, "What is happening today... all kinds of statements are being made. The language they use. There are some among the lawyer community also doing this."

Malviya had approached the SC, challenging the Madhya Pradesh High Court order denying him anticipatory bail in the case.

Malviya was booked following a complaint filed by one Vijay Joshi who alleged that his Facebook profile contained images, videos, and comments that were deliberately posted to incite hatred against the RSS.

Joshi alleged the posts also contained objectionable, offensive, and derogatory cartoons targeting PM Modi and RSS volunteers.

There were also comments deemed offensive to religious sentiments, the complainant alleged.

Joshi alleged that the posts were a deliberate act to "incite conflict between communities (and) defame and provoke the world's largest organisation, the RSS."

"The intention behind this act appears to be to instigate RSS workers and society to riot, take the law into their own hands, engage in violence, and disrupt public order," Joshi alleged.

'Discriminatory': CAT stays Urdu mandate for J&K revenue exam

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, JULY 15

THE CENTRAL Administrative Tribunal has held as "discriminatory" and stayed a J&K government notification making Urdu compulsory for naib tehsildar exams in the union territory, instead saying that applications from candidates with knowledge of any of the five official languages in the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Act, 2020, should be considered.

The CAT decision came on the back of a petition filed by job seekers who were aggrieved by J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB)'s order on applications for the position of naib tehsildar. J&K's five official languages include Hindi, Urdu, English, Kashmiri and Dogri.

In its notification on June 9 for 75 revenue posts, the JKSSB specified that paper two of the exam will comprise checking the candidate's "working knowledge of Urdu".

Significantly, almost all the revenue records and land settlements in J&K are in Urdu, and naib tehsildars, being revenue



Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's parents Shambhu Dayal and Asha Shukla (right) celebrate in Lucknow. Vishal Srivastav

'There was tension... we kept faith': Shukla's parents cheer his return

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, JULY 15

THE PARENTS OF Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla breathed a sigh of relief Tuesday afternoon when they saw the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft carrying the Indian astronaut and other crew members safely return to Earth from the International Space Station (ISS).

Shukla's parents were also

and the school management.

The moment Shubhanshu emerged safely from the capsule, the family jumped up from their seats and joined others in clapping and cheering.

"My son has made history, and we are so proud of him. These tears are only of happiness. He has now become the second Indian after Rakesh Sharma to travel to space and return safely," said Asha Shukla, her eyes filled with emotion.

She added that even after the launch, she could not stop worrying about him, wondering if he was eating properly, getting enough rest, and staying safe, even though Shubhanshu was strictly following the instructions given by the authorities.

Moreover, during a conversation from space, he assured them that he was doing well. "As a mother, these thoughts kept coming to my mind no matter what," she said.

they had been informed in advance by the authorities about the expected return time, they kept flipping through news channels since morning, eagerly searching for any updates on his safe arrival.

In the morning, the family recited the Sunderkand at the temple, lit lamps, and offered prayers.

They added that while they are not yet sure when he will return home, the excitement is widespread; everyone, from his school friends to neighbours, is looking forward to welcoming him back. Shubhanshu will be on medical observation for a few days, said his sister.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also extended congratulations to Shukla. In a post on X in Hindi, he said: "...Your accomplishment is a shining testament to courage, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to science. Today, every Indian, especially the people of Uttar Pradesh, stands proud..."

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Hyderabad: CPI leader shot dead just after wife, daughter left park

NIKHILA HENRY
HYDERABAD, JULY 15

HOURS AFTER Communist Party of India's Hyderabad city leader K Chandra Naik (47) was shot dead while on a morning walk at Shivalikana Nagar park, his wife told *The Indian Express* that she and their daughter narrowly missed the attack.

"My husband said he would stay back to talk to a few of his friends. My daughter and I left the park and reached home. We were just untangling our shoelaces when someone informed us that he was shot," K Nari said.

She claimed that she had seen one of the accused, whom she recognised, and three others in a Swift car before the incident.

"When we were going to the park, we saw (the accused) drive by in a Swift car. I informed my husband about it, but he did not pay heed to it," Nari alleged,

adding that she again spotted the car near the park. "There were three people inside, resting."

Naik was the CPI's Hyderabad state council member. According to officials, the suspect named by his wife used to be a functionary of the CPI(ML) Liberation.



Police at the site of the shootout in Hyderabad. PTI

The motive, though, is believed to be related to real estate business rivalry. According to the Malakpet police, four assailants carried out the attack. "Five rounds were fired," Malakpet inspector P Naresh said.

The attackers first threw chilli powder at Naik's face. "When he tried to run away, they gunned him down," Naresh said. The attackers fled in the car they arrived in before anyone at the park could apprehend them. There were 20 to 30 people at the park when the attack took place.

Naik's family has claimed there was an ongoing enmity between him and the accused.

"The accused was extorting money from a slum in

Hyderabad. My husband opposed this," his wife claimed.

"We are investigating all possible angles in the case," Naresh said. Hyderabad South East DCP S Chaitanya Kumar said, "Ten teams have been formed to trace the accused."

The police arrived at the crime scene within 30 minutes of the attack and secured it. When contacted, the CPI's national leader, K Narayana, said,

"From what we know, he was gunned down by his enemies. We don't think this is a matter of political rivalry." Before joining the CPI, Naik was with the CPI (Marxist). "He was removed from the party 10 years ago," a senior leader of the party said.

BJD, CONG TRAIN GUNS ON BJP GOVT

Odisha student who set self on fire over sexual harassment cremated

Her parents and friends reflect on what could have been

SUJIT BISOYI
BHUBANESWAR, JULY 15

AN ABVP member, a self-defence teacher to women in her college, a student who sought to find the balance between studies and extracurricular activities – the woman who died after setting herself on fire at a university in Odisha's Balasore dreamt big for the future, her family and friends said.

The student had complained to her institute on July 1, alleging that she was being subjected to mental harassment by an assistant professor ever since she rejected his advances. She had also filed a police complaint in this regard. The accused professor and the college principal were suspended and arrested after she set herself on fire on the campus on Saturday.

The student had complained to her institute on July 1, alleging that she was being subjected to mental harassment by an assistant professor ever since she rejected his advances. She had also filed a police complaint in this regard. The accused professor and the college principal were suspended and arrested after she set herself on fire on the campus on Saturday.

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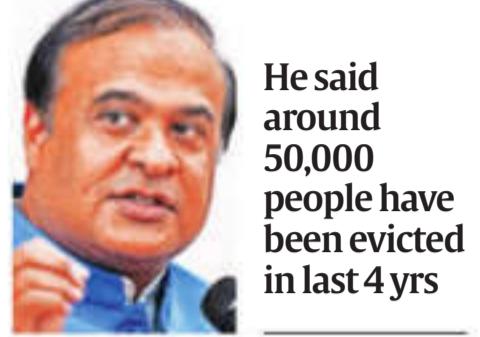
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HIMANTA'S RATIONALE FOR MASS EVICTIONS

'Missed demographic invasion in lower, middle Assam, won't allow it elsewhere'

SUKRITA BARUAH

GUWAHATI, JULY 15



He said around 50,000 people have been evicted in last 4 yrs

AS EVICTION drives intensify in Assam, the state government on Tuesday said it has conducted evictions on 160 sq km of land affecting around 50,000 people in the last four years, with Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma saying that one of the aims is to stem "demographic invasion" by "people of one religion".

In the past month, the Assam government has conducted five major evictions across four districts in which at least 3,300 families have been removed from forest land, grazing land and government revenue land.

On Wednesday, Sarma referred to "land jihad" and said "an effort has started to change the demography of Upper Assam."

He said that ever since his government came to power in 2021, it has conducted evictions to clear over 1.19 lakh bighas of land. The highest area is of forest land at 84,743 bighas, VGR/PGR (grazing land) accounts for over 36,000 bighas, 'khas' or general government land is 26,713 bighas, and land belonging to religious institutions is 4,449 bighas.

Saying that around 50,000 people have been evicted, Himanta added that district administrations have been tasked with striking off the affected individuals' names from the voter list of the place from which they were evicted. The aim, he said, is to "protect Assamese constituencies."

"They have their name in the (voter list of their) original village. You cannot have names in two places. Once they are evicted and the houses are gone, the DCs have to remove the names from the voter lists. Our job is to protect the Assamese constituency or the local indigenous constituency... Almost 50,000 people have been evicted so far, but their names will be there somewhere in the voter list in Assam. Their names will not be cut from the Assam voter list provided they are Indian or proper citizens, but the duplicates

HC: No bar on furlough when appeal pending in SC

Hashimpura convicts challenged jail rules

SOHINI GHOSH

NEW DELHI, JULY 15

DECIDING A challenge to Delhi's prison rules by the convicts in the 1987 Hashimpura massacre, the Delhi HC held Tuesday that there is no bar on the executive (the prison authorities in this case) to consider parole or furlough when the convicts' appeals are pending before the Supreme Court.

The convicts, whose criminal appeals are pending before the SC, had challenged the rules after jail authorities denied their requests for furlough. They specifically challenged Note 2 to Rule 1224 of the Delhi Prison Rules, 2018, which reads: "If an appeal of a convict is pending before the High Court or the period for filing an appeal before the High Court has not expired, furlough will not be granted and it would be open to the convict to seek appropriate directions from the Court."

A division bench of Justices Prathiba Singh and Amit Sharma ruled that what was restricted in Note 2 to Rule 1224 was the grant

Officials: Israeli man father of kids found in cave with Russian woman

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

BENGALURU, JULY 15

THE RUSSIAN woman, who was found in a cave in Karnataka, along with her two daughters claimed that she gave birth to one of the babies while staying at a cave in Goa while officials said they have contacted an Israeli businessman, who the woman said is the father of the kids.

Nina Kutina, 40, and her two daughters aged six and four years, were found in a cave on July 9 near Gokarna in Uttara Kannada district. Officials said her visa had expired in 2017. Nina is presently at a detention centre in Bengaluru.

Speaking to media, Nina said she had lost her son a long time ago, "and did not come to Gokarna

'Disturbing': SC asks YouTubers who joked about disabled to attend next hearing too

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JULY 15

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday reiterated its call for framing guidelines for social media users, balancing freedom of speech and expression with rights and duties.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said this as it heard a plea by M/s SMA (Spinal Muscular Atrophy) Cure Foundation accusing YouTubers Samay Raina, Vipul Goyal, Balraj Paramjeet Singh Ghai, Sonali Thakkar and Nishant Jagdish Tanwar of cracking insensitive jokes on persons with disabilities (PwDs).

Complying with the court's direction during the last hearing, the five appeared before the Bench Tuesday.

The Supreme Court gave them two weeks to file a counter-affidavit and directed all except Sonali Thakkar to appear again before the bench on the next date of hearing. Thakkar has been allowed to appear online.

"Respondents number 6-10

are present in court in compliance with our order. Their counsel seeks and is granted two weeks to file counter-affidavit... No further time shall be granted... Respondents 6-8 and 10 shall remain present in person on the next date as well. Any absence shall be viewed seriously. Respondent No.9 (Sonali Thakkar) is permitted to appear online," the bench said in its order.

Justice Kant said, "Individual misconducts, which are under scrutiny, will continue to be examined. (SMA Cure) Foundation has raised serious issues. Something very disturbing."

The court is also seized of two other petitions by YouTubers Ranveer Allahabadia and Ashish Chanchlani for clubbing of FIRs lodged against them in connection with allegedly objectionable remarks made on 'India's Got Latent' show.

In May, the court while hearing Allahabadia's plea to club the FIRs against him had flagged the need to put regulations in place for social media use. It also sought the assistance of Attorney General R

on June 18, 22-year-old Probash Doley, a resident of Assam's Dhemaji district, was allegedly assaulted and killed in Chimpu village in Itanagar. On July 13, another youth from the community, 29-year-old Shankar Pegu was shot dead in Roing town in Lower Dibang Valley district.

In protest against both these killings, three major Mising organisations – Takam Mising Porin Kebang, Takam Mising Mime Kebang, and Mising Mimang Kebang – had called for an "indefinite blockade" of all roads linking Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

While protesters had blocked seven key roads connecting both states Tuesday morning, they lifted the blockade by the afternoon after authorities after governments of both states assured action in both the cases.

In a statement, the Takam Mising Porin Kebang said they had received official communication and response from both the Assam government and the Arunachal Pradesh government promising action and that they decided to "temporarily suspend" their protest because of "the establishment of dialogue between the two state governments".

In a call for calm on Tuesday, Arunachal Pradesh IGP Chukhu Apa had said: "We are very serious about both these cases and very concerned by them. These are both isolated incidents of crime and I assure you that it is not targeted against any specific

He also pointed to the need to ensure that the guidelines are not misused. "What we are doing is for posterity. What we do should not be misused by anyone, you have to ensure that too. There has to be a balance. We have to protect citizens' rights," Justice Kant remarked.

Apology before NCW

YouTuber Samay Raina appeared before the National Commission for Women (NCW) on Tuesday and submitted a written apology over remarks deemed disrespectful to women in his show 'India's Got Latent'. The NCW summoned Raina over objectionable content in the programme aired on an online platform. During the hearing before NCW chairperson Vijay Rahatkar, Raina expressed regret for his comments and assured the Commission that he would avoid such statements in the future, according to a statement.

Right to dignity also emanates from the right which someone else is claiming... Article 19 can't overpower Article 21... Article 21 must prevail if any competition takes place," said Justice Kant.

ASSAULTED OVER 6 MONTHS: COPS**2 lecturers, aide held for student's rape in Karnataka**

KIRAN PARASHAR

BENGALURU, JULY 15

TWO LECTURERS of a private college in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka and their friend have been arrested for allegedly raping a 19-year-old student repeatedly over the last six months, police said on Tuesday.

Confirming the arrests, which happened on Sunday, Joint Commissioner of Police (East) Ramesh Banoth said they were investigating the case.

According to police, a case of rape and blackmail has been registered in a suburb of Bengaluru.

Police said the 19-year-old is a student at the private college where two of the accused teach Physics and Biology respectively; the third accused is their friend from Bengaluru.

According to police, one of the lecturers first befriended the student by offering to share study notes. When she visited Bengaluru for work, the accused is alleged to have lured her to his

friend's house, where he allegedly raped her.

Police said the second lecturer and the third accused used blackmailed the student by claiming to possess videos of her, and allegedly raped her.

Police said that while the first incident allegedly happened about six months ago, all three accused had reportedly started blackmailing the student frequently and exploiting her.

The student then confided in her parents, and the family approached the Karnataka Women's Commission. Acting on the commission's directive, police registered rape and blackmail cases against the trio.

Nagalakshmi Choudhary, chairperson of the State Commission for Women in Karnataka, said the student had approached the commission and they immediately informed the police. "One after another, they have blackmailed the victim and exploited her. There is Instagram and Facebook involved in the crime," she said.

CHHATTISGARH**Maoists kill 2 teachers on police informer suspicion**

JAYPRakash NAIDU

RAIPUR, JULY 15

such villages. A villager, who has completed HSC, is hired as a teacher in the village and is paid Rs 12,000 per month from the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds. They teach in primary schools which are mostly run in small huts.

The incident took place in a remote village in the national park area around 57 km from the Bijapur district headquarters on Monday night in Farsigad police station jurisdiction. The deceased have been identified as Vinod Made, 28, from Pillur village and Suresh Metta, 29, from Tekameta village.

SC refuses premature release of terror convict, asks him to challenge remission policy of J&K

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday declined to order the premature release of Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, a convict in a triple murder case allegedly linked to a terrorist act.

A bench comprising Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and SVN Bhatti, however, allowed Bhat to challenge the remission policy of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by filing an application in another pending case.

Bhat allegedly entered the residence of an Army informer and opened fire with an AK-47 rifle, killing three persons.

Nataraj submitted killing

civilians for allegedly providing information to the Army amounted to a terrorist act and therefore Bhat was disintegrated from availing benefits of premature release.

Gonsalves then sought liberty to challenge the J&K remission policy within the ongoing proceedings. The bench allowed him to file an interim plea in a pending matter challenging the same policy.

"He said it was accidental fire but we are not leaving it at that, we will investigate. The man has been arrested and the weapon seized," he said.

community".

Providing an update on police action in both the cases, Apa said Dolet had been attacked over an argument "over a trivial matter" and that the accused Tai John had been arrested.

"The investigation is completed from our side but we are waiting for the FSL reports. I have given directions to file the charge-sheets and the FSL report can be filed as a supplementary charge-sheet," he said. In the second case, he said that Pego had been shot by a subcontractor, Tadar Bhai, he had been working under.

"He said it was accidental fire but we are not leaving it at that, we will investigate. The man has been arrested and the weapon seized," he said.

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Category wise break-up of the posts are as under:

Sr. Advt. No.	Name of Posts	Gen/UR	SC		Backward Classes		EWS	Total
			OSC	DSC	BCA	BCB		
1	Assistant Director (DNA)	01	0	0	0	0	01	01
2	Assistant Director (Lie-Detection)	01	0	0	0	0	01	01
3	Assistant Director (Cyber Forensic)	05	0	1	0	0	0	06
4	Assistant Director (Toxicology)	02	0	0	0	0	0	02
5	Senior Scientific Officer (Cyber Forensic)	10	02	02	01	01	18	18
6	Senior Scientific Officer (Scene of Crime)	03	01	0	01	0	01	06
7	Senior Scientific Officer (Documents)	0	01	0	01	0	01	03
8	Senior Scientific Officer (Physics)	02	0	0	0	0	0	02
9	Senior Scientific Officer (Toxicology)	03	01	01	01	0	01	07
10	Senior Scientific Officer (NDPS)	0	0	01	0	0	0	01
	Total	27	05	05	05	01	04	47



SHE TOO

Sexual harassment victim in Balasore spoke up, complained. She was let down by a system that refused to pay heed

WHAT DID YOU not speak up? Implicit in this question, put to those who have faced sexual harassment and abuse, is the assumption that breaking a silence leads, inevitably, to justice. The young woman who died this week in Balasore, Odisha, three days after she set herself on fire, spoke up. She named her alleged harasser, a professor, to the internal complaints committee of her college. She filed a complaint with the police. Yet, she was let down, driven to despair by a system that she trusted. The question that must now be answered is this: Why was this young woman not heard?

The police have arrested the accused professor on charges of abetment to suicide, sexual harassment and criminal intimidation, among others. The principal of the college, too, is in custody on the charge of abetment to suicide. Both had already been suspended from the college following the young woman's self-immolation on Saturday. The law must now take its course, but the larger questions looming over this tragedy — about institutional responsibility and accountability, of power asymmetries that take a high toll on those who speak out against abuse — cannot be ignored. It must be asked why, 12 years after the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act was passed — marking what seemed to be a turning point in the long-drawn, painful confrontation with the dismal phenomenon of sexual harassment and violence that women routinely endure — complaints still appear to fall on deaf ears. Questions of institutional failure and lack of sensitivity can no longer be evaded. As the Supreme Court pointed out in 2023, when it issued directions for a "time-bound exercise" to verify whether all public and private bodies are compliant with the PoSH Act, a law alone cannot ensure "dignity and respect". Investigation will reveal what the college in Balasore did, and did not do, after the student complained of sexual harassment. But beyond this one college, beyond Odisha, other institutions, too, are stakeholders in building a safe environment for women — it's time they looked at how far they've gone, how far they have been willing to go, to ensure that women can study, work and travel safely.

Back in December 2012, shaken by the death of a young woman in Delhi after a gruesome incident of sexual assault, there appeared to be a strong public resolve to push for change. It has periodically flared up since then, such as during the MeToo movement of 2018 and in 2023, when there was a swell of public support for the wrestlers who had accused a powerful politician of sexual harassment. In almost every case, it has been driven by women who refused to be silenced. They've spoken up, over and over again. It is time for the system to listen, and respond.

BILL OF DISTRACTION

Punjab's proposed sacrilege law could push the state back into a precarious debate that had receded into the background

THE PUNJAB GOVERNMENT'S bill proposing life imprisonment and a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh for the desecration of any religious text — sent to a Select Committee — is deeply problematic. The existing laws address the crime, there was no need for a separate piece of legislation. It pushes the state back into a debate that had receded into the background. In 2015, the Bargi sacrilege incident followed by police firing that killed two protesters, and a chain of "beabdi" cases, had set the state on edge. It became a flashpoint, and a potent symbol of the growing disillusionment with the then-ruling Akali-BJP alliance, which had been in power for an unprecedented two successive terms since 2007. The public mood was already souring; Bargi crystallised the anger.

Congress, which succeeded the Akalis, tried to ride that wave by pushing for a sacrilege law, capitalising on the issue's emotional resonance. This period also witnessed the meteoric rise of the Aam Aadmi Party, which played the "outsider" card and swept the 2022 Punjab Assembly elections. The AAP's victory was less a testament to the party's popularity, given that it had never been tested in the state, than a collective indictment of legacy parties that had persistently failed to meet the people's aspirations. Sacrilege, by then, had become a non-issue. Voters said they were weary of hollow promises about smooth roads and clean drains.

It is troubling that the AAP, which appears to have shifted gears after its electoral setback in Delhi, should now choose to steer Punjab back towards the volatile terrain of sacrilege. In 2015, such incidents carried a discernible political undertone, and suspicions were trained on the role of the Dera Sacha Sauda. But in the years since, the sporadic episodes have increasingly appeared to be individual acts of crime rather than politically orchestrated. There is no denying that sacrilege wounds deeply as it strikes at the core of faith. But for a border state grappling with economic, social, and security challenges, the reintroduction of this emotionally charged issue into the political discourse is a cause for concern. Punjab's agricultural sector flounders in the absence of diversification. Despite handwringing over depleting groundwater, the state still pushes paddy cultivation to new highs. Land pooling for real estate is fuelling new tensions in a state struggling to transition from an agrarian economy to one led by manufacturing. The drug menace continues to kill and the law-and-order situation teeters on the edge. This bill can only be read as an attempt to stoke emotions and consolidate votes in the extended run-up to the 2027 Assembly elections. At a time when Punjab needs to focus on rebuilding its economy, and restoring public trust, it's a dangerous distraction.

THEY HAD US AT WOOF

AI is trying to bridge the communication gap between species. Who needs that?

THERE'S SOMETHING PRIMORDIAL in the bond between *Homo sapiens* and *Canis lupus familiaris*. Dogs helped hairless apes become people and humans helped wolves become dogs. From palaeolithic hunting companions down to social media celebs, there has been a seamless, wordless bond between the species. But, as with so many things, the AI hype can't leave well enough alone. Several companies are now promising to "translate" what your canine or feline companion is trying to say when she wags her tail, sulks for attention or purrs. The danger, though, is this: What is gained in translation may be lost in affection.

The Jeremy Coller Centre for Animal Sentience at the London School of Economics will deploy considerable resources to bridge the communication gap between species. There is much to gain from the endeavour. For too long, a human-centric view of personhood — which ignores intelligent, feeling creatures as diverse as corvids and apes, dolphins and elephants — has resulted in cruelty on the one hand and limited how we interact with these animals on the other. But when it comes to pets, do we really need to know what they are "saying"? More importantly, predictive models may tell people what they want to hear, rather than what the animal "means".

Take the pooch you have had for years. The eagerness with which he greets every member of the family when they return, the comfort of every winter cuddle, even the manipulative looks as they seek scraps from the table — what if it was all just translated to "food giver here"? And the disdain of the domestic feline might ruin the self-esteem of the most secure persons. These words can be lies of translation. Because the language people share with their pets is no less complex or complete than those humans reserve for each other. In essence, it is a love beyond words. Let's not ruin that.

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

THE BETTER I GET TO KNOW MEN, THE MORE I FIND MYSELF LOVING DOGS. —CHARLES DE GAULLE

Hedging against America



RAJA MANDALA
C RAJA MOHAN

Trump 2.0 is upending US ties with allies and partners in Asia and Europe. De-coupling may be hard, de-risking is necessary

SECTIONS OF THE Indian foreign policy community feel "betrayed" by the Donald Trump administration, which has found unexpected affection for Rawalpindi, raised a host of tough demands on trade, and threatened additional tariffs on India because of its BRICS membership and continued purchase of Russian oil. It is, perhaps, a small consolation that India is not alone. America's neighbours and largest trading partners (Mexico and Canada) and its longstanding allies in Europe and Asia have even more reasons to feel betrayed.

Most of these alliances date back to the end of World War II and have weathered multiple crises over the past eight decades. But as in life, so in international relations — nothing is forever. If change is the only constant, that moment of restructuring has now arrived for America's alliances and partnerships in Europe and Asia. As a non-ally, India is better prepared for change in America.

The idea of "strategic autonomy", long central to India's foreign policy, has been viewed with scepticism by India's Western partners. They have argued that India's near obsession with autonomy limits the scope for strategic cooperation with the US and Europe. But today, "strategic autonomy" has become the new mantra among America's allies themselves.

In his address to the British Parliament last week, French President Emmanuel Macron reflected on the implications of the unprecedented disruption unleashed by President Trump's second term. He underlined the need for deeper Franco-British cooperation to reduce what he called the "dual dependency" on the US and China. Macron warned against Europe's excessive reliance on the two superpowers for economic, technological, and security needs, and emphasised the urgency of reclaiming European strategic autonomy. He called for stronger Franco-British collaboration on defence, climate action, migration and technological innovation, suggesting that only through unity can Europe effectively respond to global challenges and safeguard its interests.

Although America's European allies bent over backwards to placate "daddy" Trump at the NATO summit last month, they are shocked by the Trump administration's policies. If there were any lingering doubts, Trump dispelled them over the weekend by imposing a 30 per cent tariff on imports from the European Union, shattering hopes for compromise on trade. Trump has long regarded the EU as a bigger economic threat than China but few anticipated that transatlantic ties would deteriorate

so sharply in his second term.

Britain's Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, may lack the rhetorical flair of his French counterpart but he, too, is seeking to rebalance the "special relationship" with the US against the geographic imperative of Europe. If Brexit a decade ago was about distancing from Europe and reconnecting with the Anglosphere, Starmer's Labour government is working to rebuild links with the Continent. Trump, despite his family origins in the UK, has little affection for Britain. His MAGA coalition looks down on its "poorer cousins" in the British Isles.

The story is no different in Asia, where two of America's staunchest allies are seething over Trump's actions. The announcement of 25 per cent tariffs on Japanese imports triggered rare outrage within Japan's political class, which has placed nearly all its strategic bets on the US since World War II. It was remarkable, therefore, to hear the Japanese PM declare that Tokyo must reduce its dependence on Washington. He made it clear that Japan would not offer "easy concessions" or compromise its national interests in the face of US pressure.

To be sure, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba is in the midst of an upper house election campaign this week. But this is not mere campaign rhetoric. He stressed that Japan, as the largest foreign investor in the US and a major creator of American jobs, deserves different treatment from countries targeted by the tariffs. Despite months of negotiations, repeated diplomatic missions to Washington, and a pledge of \$1 trillion in new investment, Ishiba's government could not persuade Trump to hold back, especially as the US President remained dissatisfied with Japan's market access for American rice and automobiles.

Equally emphatic about strategic autonomy has been Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. Few countries have been as close to Washington as Australia. Yet, in a major speech last week, Albanese insisted that being an ally does not mean being a blind follower. He described the US alliance as a "pillar" of Australian foreign policy but argued that this partnership should not constrain Australia's sovereignty or decision-making. He called for an "Australia first" approach — particularly relevant amid intensifying US-China rivalry in the Indo-Pacific. As it happens, Albanese is in China this week, stepping up efforts to engage Australia's Asian neighbours.

The frustration among allies does not mean they can simply walk away from Washington. All America's partners have

enormous stakes in sustaining their economic and technological ties with the US. Even more important, their security challenges will become far more demanding without American guarantees. If Europe must find new ways to defend itself against Russia, Asian allies must devise strategies to cope with Chinese power. America's Eurasian partners will not simply fold their hands — they will search for creative answers. In Europe, France and Britain are discussing better coordination of their nuclear weapons policies, while the EU is accelerating collective defence efforts.

In Asia, the challenge is harder. Unlike in Europe, regional institutions remain underdeveloped, and the gap between China's power and that of its neighbours is vast. Yet, the logic of diversification is undeniable. We are already seeing Asian allies doing more with each other and engaging other actors, such as the EU. Some are beginning to reassess their engagement with China.

At the same time, the depth of the US relationship is such that preventing a slide into outright rupture remains a top priority for allies in both Asia and Europe. As Macron told the British Parliament, Europe does not want to walk away from the US — but it must "desist" ties by finding new partners and rebuilding its own capacities.

India, for its part, is holding its nerve and continuing to engage Washington. As Delhi weighs the consequences of the Trump upheaval for Eurasia and the global order, it is worth recalling that India has managed many strategic surprises before: The Chinese "betrayal" in 1962, Beijing's embrace of Pakistan, the Sino-Soviet split, the US-China entente in the 1970s, the Soviet collapse in 1991, the rise of a new economic order in the 1990s, and the Russia-China alignment in the 2000s.

If external change is inevitable, Delhi's focus must be on managing it rather than bemoaning it. For now, India remains one of the few major US trade partners not yet notified of a new tariff level. Delhi has resumed trade talks with Washington this week and is eager to conclude one of its most ambitious negotiations before the August 1 deadline. But it must be prepared for failure. As Trump might remind us, the golden rule of any negotiation is the will to walk away.

The writer is distinguished fellow at the Council for Strategic and Defence Research, Delhi, and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express



B R GURUPRASAD

"THE SECOND INDIAN in space", Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla's return journey to *terra firma* was safely and successfully accomplished on July 15. Shukla is back after a fruitful stay of about 18 days on the International Space Station (ISS). A day before his return, the Crew Dragon spacecraft *Grace* in which he comfortably sat with his three *Axiom 4* colleagues successfully undocked (detached) from the ISS, circling the Earth at 400 km height. For the next 22 hours or so, the craft independently orbited the Earth and then dived back into the atmosphere, survived the subsequent fiery re-entry heat and splashed down off the coast of California at a comfortable speed of about 24 km per hour. With this, Shukla's maiden sojourn in space concluded.

Understandably, the successful completion of Shukla's *Axiom 4* mission will make an already joyous India more euphoric for quite some time. Many among our hundreds of millions of strong, intelligent and capable students will consider Shukla a role model. Shukla has said that India's first space traveller, Rakesh Sharma, was a role model for him.

The sense of excitement associated with spaceflight, especially human spaceflight, and the inspiration it can provide are immense. It

IN A GREATER SPACE

Shubhanshu Shukla's mission, safe return will provide valuable inputs to Gaganyaan

The participation of one of its astronaut candidates in *Axiom 4* will enrich Gaganyaan in terms of planning and execution.

Shukla was extensively trained in many US facilities, including at NASA, for about eight months. Fairly detailed knowledge of such facilities as well as the training procedures would not have been available to us without the participation in a human spaceflight mission.

can effectively empower students to pursue STEM education with seriousness. This is one of the prominent benefits to accrue from Shukla's worthwhile journey to space.

Having many significant achievements to its credit in the arena of uncrewed spaceflight, India is confidently taking its first step into human spaceflight. Gaganyaan aims to launch Indian space travellers from Indian soil, in an Indian-built spacecraft, propelled by an Indian launch vehicle, and make them orbit the Earth for a few days. Serious and systematic efforts are being led by ISRO, with the enthusiastic participation of many national scientific/technical institutions of repute.

As part of this arduous endeavour, the human rating (significantly enhancing the reliability of a rocket vehicle to safely launch human beings) of India's most capable launch vehicle, LHLV3, has reportedly been completed.

The design and development of the Gaganyaan spacecraft, which will be capable of accommodating three space travellers, is in progress. Prashant Balakrishnan Nair, Ajit Krishnan, Angad Pratap and Shukla, all test pilots now holding the rank of group captain in the Indian Air Force, have been selected and trained in India and Russia.

The participation of one of its astronaut

candidates in *Axiom 4* will enrich Gaganyaan in terms of planning and execution. Shukla was extensively trained in many US facilities, including at NASA, for about eight months. Fairly detailed knowledge of such facilities as well as the training procedures would not have been available to us without the participation in a human spaceflight mission.

Thus, not only has Shukla been trained for the launch, he also now has first-hand experience of travelling in a spacecraft to Earth orbit. More importantly, he has gained invaluable experience of living and working in the weightless environment of space aboard the ISS. That he was able to perform the carefully designed and packaged bio-medical, health-care, space food production and cognitive science-related experiments from India has greatly encouraged our scientific and engineering community and enhanced our confidence and *atmanirbharata*. Thus, India's participation in the *Axiom 4* mission is beneficial in many ways indeed.

The writer is director, Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, Bengaluru, adjunct faculty, National Institute of Advanced Studies and former associate director, ISRO. Views are personal



JULY 16, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

BLACK BOX ANALYSIS

The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and the engineering department of Air India are all set to extract a read-out and a print-out of the cockpit voice recorder and the digital flight data recorder of the ill-fated Air India jumbo Kanishka that perished in the Atlantic off the Irish coast on June 23.

PM ON SRI LANKA WAR

THE SRI LANKAN President, J R Jayewardene, has offered to grant "sufficient autonomy" to Tamil areas of the island to resolve the ethnic issue, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said. The

offer had come during the talks the Sri Lankan President had with the Prime Minister. Virtually ruling out support for a separate Eelam, the Prime Minister told a news conference at Raj Bhavan that "we will not support anything more than what is available in India".

JKLF DISINTEGRATION

THE OVERSEAS WING of the so-called Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) seems to be disintegrating and its former president, Amanullah Khan, is so frustrated with what he called "integral politics" that he is now seriously thinking of setting up his headquarters in

some Middle East country, possibly the UAE.

DHARAVI SCANDAL

AFTER A FIERY four-and-a-half-hour discussion over the "Dharavi land scandal", the entire Opposition in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly walked out for the day in protest against the government's refusal to appoint a committee of House members to probe the "deal". Leader of the Opposition Sharad Pawar did not agree with Minister of State for Urban Development Ram Manohar Lohia's offer to ask the chief secretary to investigate the land deal.

THE IDEAS PAGE

The Millennium Village

Flood-hit Gurugram's problem isn't primarily physical infrastructure, it's a state of mind that has no concept of a public beyond family, caste and class circuits



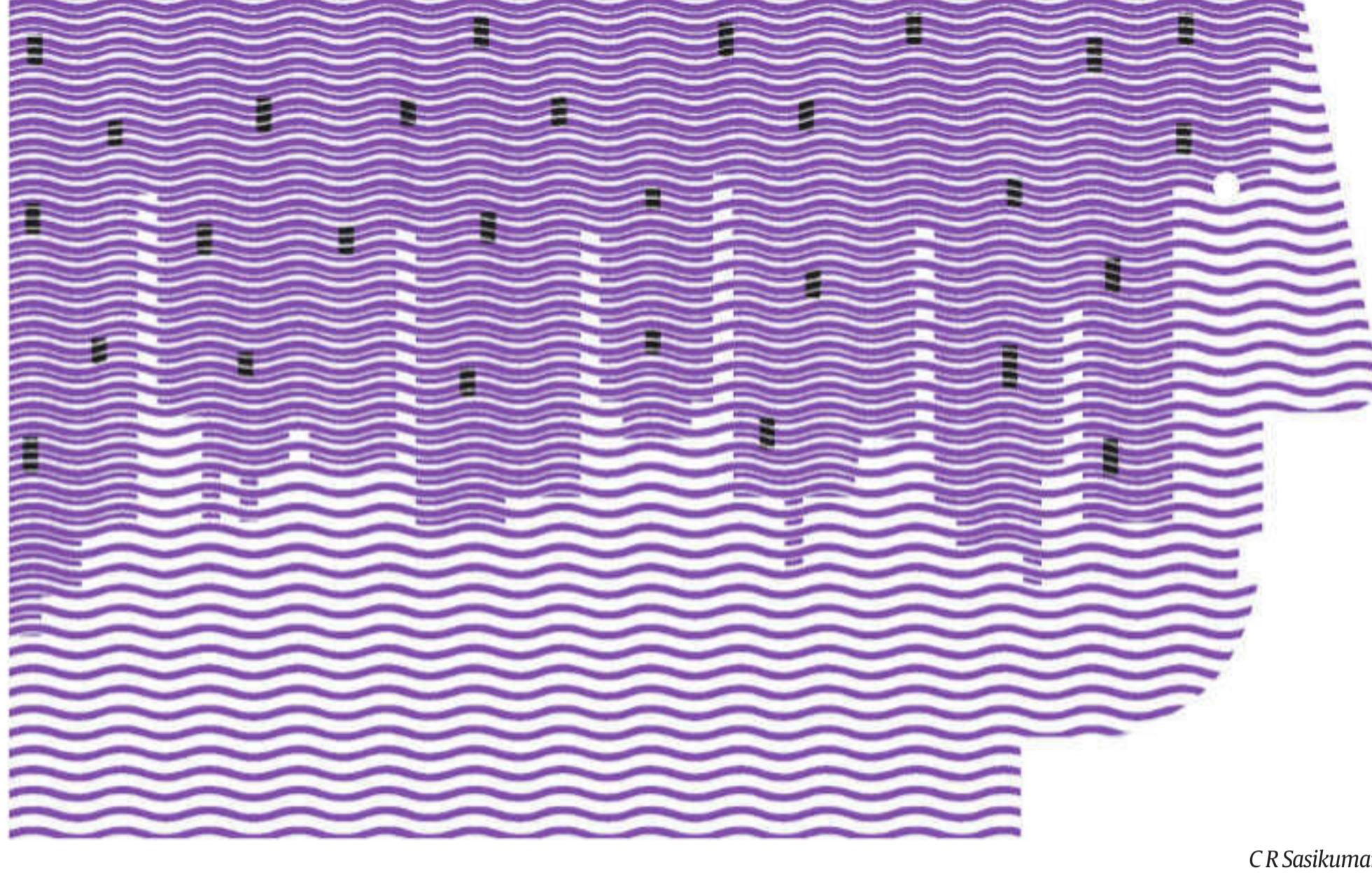
SANJAY SRIVASTAVA

THE SO-CALLED Millennium City's waterlogging problems are in the news again. In Gurugram, flats and houses that sell for prices that compare to real estate in Western countries and rentals with rates comparable to the starting salaries of many white-collar professionals have become islands surrounded by surging water after rain-induced floods. As a result of the waterlogging, there were also sustained cuts to the electricity supply as the privately owned transformers that kick in when the government supply fails also went underwater. There was, reasonably enough, an outcry over the state of infrastructure in a locality that is home to the offices of many Fortune 500 companies and a citizenry that has achieved wealth in many walks of global activity and expects a certain level of an "international" lifestyle.

But Gurugram's problem is not primarily physical infrastructure. It is one of the mental attitudes through which our cities are built and occupied. Physical infrastructure is not so difficult to build and operate. How we choose to live in urban environments — which are supposed to rid us of "backward" rural attitudes — has always been a more complex task. It is made more complex in places such as Gurugram because new urbanism has simply built upon old attitudes rather than changing them. The most fundamental of these is the idea of publicness or the distinction between the private and the public.

When we think of contemporary urbanisation in India, the easy way out is to blame its ills on privatisation and that largely meaningless concept of "neoliberalism", where the state is supposed to have ceded ground to private capital. Public interest would have been much better served, it is frequently suggested, had public authorities looked after the welfare of citizens. This gross oversimplification overlooks the history of publicness in our everyday lives, one that also lies at the heart of the state of Gurugram and other such urban developments.

The first "licence" for private development was issued to the Delhi Land and Finance (DLF) corporation on April 21, 1981, under the Haryana Development & Regulation of Urban Areas Act of 1975 in the village of Chakkarpur in Gurgaon district. Everyday social life in Chakkarpur, as in all villages around it, was organised through the arrangements of caste: Public life was entirely expressed through caste hierarchies and beliefs. Who could say what, pray where and clean the garbage were matters of caste. There was no generalised public life, but, rather, one that was entirely expressed through the personal attributes of caste. You looked after your own. "New Gurgaon" has simply built on that, keeping the old social attitudes alive while giving off the idea of newness. New highways, metro stations and



CR Sasikumar

shopping plazas appear to speak of a new public life, but that is a mirage.

Urban life in Gurugram is largely organised through the idea that there is no public except that which belongs to one's family, caste and class circuits. It is this that also lies at the heart of what passes for urban planning. If, for example, it is considered personally beneficial to cement over a waterway or clear a forest area for a private residence, then that comes to pass. The wider ramifications are rarely considered as there is really no sense of a public and hence, public welfare beyond the immediate circles in which people live. This, however, has little to do with the privatisation of urban development in cities such as Gurugram. It is fundamentally connected to a ruralism practised by the urban well-to-do.

At the present time, the most significant urban development in Gurugram is taking place in what were earlier its rural hinterlands, the areas furthest away from Delhi. Lands are being bought, sold and cleared for residential, commercial and infrastructure purposes. It is not difficult to see how, while multiple modern technologies are being used for mapping and digitising records to make land market-ready in these areas, the state, private capital and citizens have combined to further the ends of private benefit through wilfully rejecting the idea of publicness and public welfare.

Land consolidation and rectangularisation (*chakbandi* and *kilabandi*) is important for the rationalisation of holdings that might otherwise be scattered or irregular lands that prevent the construction of roads and other infrastructure. However, in most cases, these are also contexts when panchayat lands — meant for general benefit — are appropriated for personal use and profit. The assistance of a variety of government officials — able to bend GIS technologies that are meant to produce transparency to the needs of private benefit — is, of course,

crucial. As urbanisable land is built upon and becomes urban, the attitudes towards publicness displayed in appropriating public lands for private benefit simply scatter in different directions. The re-fashioning of rural spaces into urban ones is not accompanied by a different attitude towards publicness and public welfare.

Gated residential enclaves, where the problems of public life are simply pushed out to the spaces and people beyond the walls, are not really a dramatically new phenomenon. They are merely the concrete manifestations of mentalities that linger under the appearance of change. The roads and underpasses that surround the luxury apartments and which get routinely flooded and engulfed by rainwater do so because of the mental infrastructure through which city planning and design happens. That rural state of mind that appropriates public lands for private profit is simply reproduced within urban spheres where the idea of the public — if it ever existed — has largely disappeared.

City planning does not require "smart" planning and "smart" technologies such as CCTV and "command and control" centres designed by global consultancy companies with little idea of local conditions of life. The most fundamental aspect to be incorporated into planning for city life is the idea of publicness and the sense that without this we have nothing but a hollow modernity. We spend an enormous amount of time debating the past and the nature of the private and public lives of past generations. It is our strange wariness in giving the same attention to the problems of the present that lie at the heart of the flooded streets of Gurugram and other cities that challenge our claims to civilisational achievements.

The writer is distinguished research professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS University of London

The work of decolonisation

A relook is needed at the functioning of all the agencies working on monuments



TARUN VIJAY

"The history of India is not just about slavery. The history of India is about emerging victorious... The mistake of not keeping those events in the mainstream is being rectified now" — Narendra Modi

PUTTING THE MARATHA Military Landscapes on the UNESCO World Heritage list is a significant step towards recognising Indian monuments of victory and glory and decolonising the heritage space. The momentum must be taken further as this area had been neglected for a long time post-Independence.

Monuments are our collective memory etched in stone. After Independence, there was little effort to correct the mindset of teachers and those preparing history books. The colonial mindset continued even in the preservation of monuments and archaeological sites. Teaching took place under the shadow of what PM Modi has called the history of our defeat and the stories of enemies' victories.

It is only under the Modi government that the decolonisation drive has begun, giving us new insights into the history that the British and the Left cabal sought to bury. It has highlighted the stories of King Suheldev, Rani Durgavati and Lachit Borphukan. The founder-king of Delhi, Maharaja Anangpal Tomar, was long ignored — now, Anang Tal, which was a neglected sewer reservoir, has been designated a Monument of National Importance. Excavations at Rakshigiri have restarted. The Navy has new insignia inspired by Chhatrapati

Shivaji. There have also been efforts to delve into the history of tribal communities' wars of independence in the Northeast, specifically the Tai-Khamti War (1839). These are just a few examples of the Modi government's vision of resurrecting India's glorious history and detoxing colonised minds.

As chairman of the National Monuments Authority (NMA), I had an opportunity to flag some anomalies and suggest changes in the way we look at preservation. We have created a list of 3,695 Monuments of National Importance that have brought out interesting facets of Indian history.

Afzal Khan, the cruel general serving the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur, believed a prophecy about his death before his "meeting" with Shivaji. Some tales suggest that he killed his many wives the night before he departed to encounter his foe. We know Shivaji killed him. But the graves of his wives are now a Monument of National Importance in Bijapur. Maharan Tarabai Bhonsle fought the Mughals and ruled as a Maratha queen for 30 years. But her *samadhi* is in ruins in Satara. It deserves the honour of being a Monument of National Importance.

The great Sikh warrior Baba Baghel Singh conquered Delhi in 1783, made the Mughal emperor pay fines and constructed seven gurdwaras including Sis Ganj Sahib. His 30,000 Sikh soldiers camped near the Red Fort — and so, the camp became known as Tis Hazari. But nowhere, even in the Red Fort Museum, is there any mention of this conquest. The

National Monuments Authority was asked to approach the Tis Hazari court to ask if it would like to have the name explained in its precincts.

The Marathas conquered Delhi in 1757 under Raghuji Rao and in 1771 under Mahadaji Shinde. They controlled the Red Fort and continued to rule until 1803, when the British overpowered them in the second Anglo-Maratha War. The British took Delhi from the Marathas and not the Mughals. This fact, too, is completely missing from the Red Fort museum. The NMA struggled for two years to have this mentioned on a wall of honour inside the fort without any success.

On the Delhi-Meerut highway, there lies a nondescript grave of British soldiers who were killed by local revolutionaries in 1857. This was declared a Monument of National Importance. But the Kali Paltan Agharnath temple, Meerut, a renowned place that housed revolutionaries and Purabia soldiers — a shelter for the marching armies of the freedom struggle — has been refused the honour.

There isn't a single Monument of National Importance connected with the Dalit struggle and B R Ambedkar's life. His first primary school in Satara and the Sayaji Baug Vadodara Banyan tree, where he resolved to bring equality for all Indians, now known as Sankalp Bhumi, have yet to be accepted as national monuments.

After a detailed site inspection by the NMA, the Governor of Kerala sent a recommendation to declare the birthplace of Adi Shankara, Kalady, a Monument of National

Importance. It was not even responded to.

Mangarh has been a place of the greatest reverence for PM Modi. He visited the place many times before he became Gujarat CM, and recently, as PM. The NMA visited the site and recommended that it be declared a Monument of National Importance. It was the site of the massacre of more than 1,500 Bhil tribals by the British army in November 1913. We are still waiting for action on the matter.

There are more than 100 monuments like Tota-Maina Ki Kabr that have absolutely no history. Nobody knows what they represent and why they have been declared Monuments of National Importance. Similarly, some Monuments of National Importance, like the Mohammad Gauri Ke Senapati Ki Chhatri and Babur Ka Bagicha (where he is said to have stayed for a few hours), defy any logic. Not a single Monument of National Importance from Kashmir, like Martand, Parihaspore or Harwan, was ever recommended to be declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and none has been given even a security guard.

I had recommended a relook at the functioning and mandates of all the agencies working on monuments to unshackle them from the colonial mindset. We need an Archaeological Foundation to preserve civilisational and revolutionary monuments of India.

The writer was chairman, National Monuments Authority

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Mr Trump's pledge on Monday to send Patriot missiles to Ukraine, along with a broader weapons deal to be financed by Europe, appeared to confirm the wisdom of the EU's cautious approach as the President's unifying bromide with Vladimir Putin sours."

— THE GUARDIAN

A common thread of exclusion

In both the SIR in Bihar and language politics in Maharashtra, the migrant worker is alienated, disenfranchised



ANISHA GEORGE

THE PRESENT POLITICAL moment in India is another demonstration of the now routine politics of alienation and exclusion. On the one hand, the Election Commission has announced a revision of the voter list in Bihar, requiring elaborate paperwork that effectively stands to exclude millions of poor migrant workers spread across the country. On the other hand, multiple parties have made a great show over the language issue in Maharashtra, with poor migrant workers being vilified and made the primary target — many have recently been beaten up for not speaking Marathi. This is also a growing trend across southern states, where the opposition to Hindi imposition by the Centre has been countered by the imposition of state languages on precarious "outsiders". Such disenfranchisement of the mobile poor in both origin and destination states in India is a threat to their basic citizenship rights.

The language issue in India is an existential one. Who are we as a people? What is our identity as a nation? To many, a singular language is indispensable to national identity/unity. To others, unity lies in diversity. Strikingly, both parties are caught in tangles when it comes to poor migrant workers. These workers, predominantly hailing from the poorer and more populous northern and eastern parts of India, migrating to the west and south, are identified as linguistic/cultural others, if not inferiors, at migration destinations. This vastly heterogeneous demography is variously essentialised as *bhaiya*, *Hindikara*, *vadakkan*, *Bangaligal*, *Bihari*, etc. Their own rich and varied linguistic backgrounds are erased and reduced to Hindi, a language that may also be alien to them, but a gateway to traverse broad geographies in search of work. Hindi, for better or for worse, has become the language of the labour market today.

States that insist on workers learning their respective state languages are seeking to extract cultural assimilation in exchange for economic citizenship. However, the latter is scarcely forthcoming. Workers barely manage to find steady employment for the masses in general. State politicians mobilise such ethno-linguistic solidarities to paper over deep-rooted intra-state tensions of class and caste. The immigrant outsider, evidently nobody's constituency, is an easy political target for dehumanisation. Politicians everywhere oppose the extension of urban housing and voting rights to poor immigrants and try to restrict citizenship claims to their points of origin. However, if more origin states undertake moves like Bihar, immigrants' political rights back home also stand threatened.

This disenfranchisement of poor immigrants comes at a time when the country is yet to recover from the post-pandemic recession fully, and workers are yet to resume pre-pandemic levels of migration.

While the loss of workers is perilous to destination states (and to economic growth), the loss of migration avenues is even more detrimental to workers (and to poverty reduction).

Parties preying on the poor are against both democracy and politics.

The writer teaches at Azim Premji University, Bengaluru. Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A MORAL IMPERATIVE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Shine more light' (IE, July 15). The preliminary report on the tragic crash of Air India Flight 717 brings up more questions than answers. Its late-night release, vague language, and the disclosure of only some audio clips from the cockpit raise serious concerns. Even more troubling is the absence of clarity on whether this was a technical failure or human error, yet the report's focus subtly leans toward the latter. The report's silence on Boeing's design issues, despite earlier FAA warnings, and the lack of a press briefing further undermine transparency. As with the Boeing 737 MAX crisis, downplaying early warnings can have grave consequences. A full, impartial investigation is a moral imperative.

K CHIDANAND KUMAR, Bengaluru

DANGEROUS BILL

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Life term, 10-lakh fine: Punjab introduces anti-sacrilege Bill' (IE, July 15). The Punjab government's recently tabled anti-sacrilege Bill is a reflection of the state's unresolved wounds and the public sentiment surrounding incidents of desecration. While the intent may be rooted in justice, the broad framework the Bill proposes raises pressing questions. In its present form, the Bill risks turning public outrage into legal overreach. With life imprisonment and non-bailable provisions, it gives extraordinary weight to complaints that may not always arise from genuine grievance. The Bill punishes not just desecration, but even attempts at it, creating a slippery slope. For the law to earn legitimacy, it must be guided by precise definitions, procedural safeguards and strong checks against misuse.

ANKITA CHALIA, Kurukshetra

TEST OF RESILIENCE

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'At end of five-day gladiatorial fight, India falls just short, Jadeja stands tall' (IE, July 15). The third Test concluded at Lord's on Sunday was a stirring reminder of why Test cricket remains the ultimate test of skill, character, and endurance. While India may have fallen short by 22 runs, the match was a showcase of resilience — not least from Ravindra Jadeja. It was heartbreaking to see the dream slip away after tea, especially when the tail couldn't provide him the support he so richly deserved. Jadeja's determination under pressure was a masterclass in Test match temperament and grit. While the loss hurts, such performances give fans hope and players belief.

SANJAY CHOPRA, Mohali

RIGHTS AT RISK

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'When the sound of politics is shrill' (IE, July 15). The controversial Maharashtra Special Safety Bill could limit citizens' right to free speech, turning it into a luxury available only to pro-government people. Likewise, the uncalled-for Special Intensive Revision exercise in Bihar, where the election to the state Assembly is around the corner, is threatening democracy. Expecting citizens, many of whom live in abject poverty, to provide documents few possess to stay on electoral rolls is an insult to the voting exercise. It has led to a fear of mass disenfranchisement among the electorate. The ruling dispensation rushes to criminalise dissent every chance it gets; this is an old story. When the roles of the government and Opposition are reversed, they will regret these decisions.

S H QUADRI, Bikaner



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PUNE PORSCHE CRASH CASE**Juvenile Justice Board rejects police plea, 17-year-old accused to be tried as minor**

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

PUNE, JULY 15

THE JUVENILE Justice Board (JJB) on Tuesday rejected the Pune city police's application seeking that the minor accused in the Porsche car crash be tried as an adult. Two software engineers, Aneesh Awadhya and Ashwini Koshta, both aged 24 and hailing from Madhya Pradesh, were killed after the speeding Porsche, allegedly driven by a 17-year-old boy in an inebriated state, hit their motorcycle around 2.30 am on May 19 last year.

The same day, an FIR was lodged against the minor at the Yerawada police station. Subsequently, citing sections of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the Pune city police filed an application before the JJB, seeking that the child in conflict with law (CCL) be tried as an adult in this case.

A senior police officer confirmed that the JJB passed an order in favour of the CCL. Special public prosecutor (SPP) Shishir Hiray said, "I have not received the copy of the order passed by the JJB. I will study the order and then decide the further course of action after a discussion with the police authorities..."

The prosecution had argued that the CCL had committed a 'heinous offence' and was driving the Porsche car after consuming liquor despite knowing its consequences.

The defence lawyer opposed the application, saying the present offence cannot be legally termed 'heinous', and also argued that the object of the Act is "reformative" and not "punitive".

Earlier, when the police had detained the minor and produced him before the JJB on May 19, 2024, he was granted bail on the condition that he would "write an essay of 300 words" on 'topic in effect of road accidents and their solutions', assist RTO officers and practice and study traffic rules for 15 days.

But, following a public up-roar, the minor was sent to an observation home on May 22,

2024. The police submitted applications at the JJB on May 21 and May 22 for trying the CCL as an adult.

The minor's paternal aunt had then moved a plea before the High Court and sought his release, claiming that as per the Juvenile Justice Act, it needs to be ensured that any conflict with the law does not result in him turning into a hardened criminal. On June 25, the High Court ordered the minor's release and that he be handed over into the care of his paternal aunt. Subsequently, the minor was released from the observation home.

Meanwhile, the police investigation had revealed that when the minor, who is the son of a prominent realtor, was taken to the government-run Sassoon Hospital after the accident for a medical examination, his blood sample was allegedly replaced with his mother's.

The police have arrested and charged 10 people, including the minor's parents; Dr Ajay Taware, the then head of the forensic medicine department of Sassoon Hospital; Dr Shishir Hiralal, the casualty medical officer at the time; Atul Ghatkamble, a morgue staff; and others.

SPP Hiray had argued at the JJB that the minor had been booked under IPC sections 467 (forgery) and 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), which attract punishment of life imprisonment or imprisonment for up to 10 years.

"So he has committed a 'heinous offence' as per Section 2 (3) of JJ Act, which says that offences having punishment of imprisonment for seven years or more are 'heinous,'" Hiray had argued.

Defence lawyer Prashant Patil had submitted before the JJB that the CCL has no prior criminal record and the Porsche crash incident, though unfortunate, arose out of a moment of poor judgement, not criminal intention. Citing a Supreme Court judgment in Shilpa Mittal versus State of Delhi case, Patil had claimed that the present offence may not legally qualify as "heinous".

5-yr-old's testimony leads to father's conviction in wife's murder case

Boy's statement clearly establishes that the accused, Akhilesh, was not in Madhya Pradesh at the time of incident but was at his residence, says court

MANISH SAHU

LUCKNOW, JULY 15

WITH FIVE key witnesses, including the main complainant turning hostile, things were moving in favour of Akhilesh, who was being tried for killing his wife three years ago — until his five-year-old son appeared in the witness box.

"Mujhe pata hai ki sach baat bolni chahiye, jhoot nahin bolna chahiye. Jhoot bolne se Bhagwan naraj ho jaate hain..." (I know that one should speak the truth and should not tell lies. If one speaks lies, then God becomes angry)," the five-year-old son told the court and confirmed that his father was present in the house on the day his mother was found dead, leading to his conviction.

The case dates back to February 10, 2022, when 32-year-old Savitri was found dead at her home in the Gabbhana area of Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. Her brother, Ram Avatar, was informed about her death by her in-laws. He was told that his sister had hanged herself. By the time the police arrived, the body was found lying on the floor. Avatar alleged that his sister, married for 12 years and with three children, was being harassed by her husband and in-laws for dowry. He suspected that she had been killed, prompting the police to seize the

body and send it for post-mortem examination.

The autopsy report concluded that the death was caused by strangulation and noted multiple injuries on her body.

Akhilesh was arrested and later released on bail.

During the trial, the defence argued that Akhilesh was not at home on the day of his wife's death, claiming he was in Madhya Pradesh and returned only after learning about her death. Backed with testimonies of defence as well as hostile prosecution witnesses, the defence counsel told the court that Savitri was a "stubborn woman", and was upset because Akhilesh had not taken her along with him to Madhya Pradesh.

As the trial continued, five of the 13 witnesses of the prosecution turned hostile. Savitri's brother, Ram Avatar, on whose complaint Akhilesh was arrested for murder, also turned hostile. The couple's eldest son, who was five years old when his mother died, however, remained steadfast.

He told the court that the night before his mother was found dead, she had made bhindi sabzi, which he, his two siblings, and his parents had for dinner.

"My father goes to Gabbhana daily to sell paint. He leaves the house around 5 am and returns by 10 am. The day my mother

died, he went to sell paint in Gabbhana. That morning after having food, I went to play.

When police came in the afternoon, then I came to know my mother had died... The night my mother died, she had cooked bhindi sabzi. I, my brothers, father, and mother all had bhindi sabzi. After having food, I went to sleep. In the morning, I, my father and brothers had the same sabzi. My mother did not eat," he told the court.

Taking note of the child's statement, the court, while convicting Akhilesh of murder said

in its order on Monday: "The deceased's son, who appeared as prosecution witness and testified as a child witness, clearly stated that on the night his mother died, she had prepared bhindi sabzi, which he, his father, and his brother had eaten. The leftover curry was also later consumed by him, his brother, and his father. The witness further stated that on the day of his mother's death, his father had left to sell paint in Gabbhana, as he regularly did."

Noting that the court recorded the testimony of the child witness "after being satisfied with his level of understanding", it further said: "The defence failed to present any material to challenge the witness's understanding. Likewise, during cross-examination, the accused could not elicit any contradictory facts

from the (child) witness."

According to court, the five-year-old's statement "clearly establishes that the accused, Akhilesh, was not in Madhya Pradesh at the time of the incident but was present at his residence... completely contradicting the testimony of the prosecution's declared hostile witnesses, who stated that the accused was not present at the scene of the incident... along with the testimonies of defence witnesses."

Additional District and Session Judge Sanjay Kumar Yadav sentenced Akhilesh, who is in his 40s, to life imprisonment and a fine of Rs 20,000 for murder.

The court also directed that a case be registered against Ram Avatar, the main complainant, for "deliberately giving false testimony before the court".

"The testimony of the five-year-old son confirmed that his father was present in the house, placing him at the scene of the crime around the time of the woman's death. This testimony played a crucial role in securing the conviction," Additional District Government Counsel (Aligarh) JP Rajpoot told The Indian Express.

Akhilesh, who was out on bail, was taken into custody after the court's judgment and sent to jail.

The son and his two siblings live with their grandmother.

issued last year, but were stayed by the Supreme Court.

The fresh directive, it said, "couched under the garb of 'lawful license requirements' is a breach of privacy rights".

The plea contended that "the

directive license is a self-contained certificate, which although reveals the name of the owner, is displayed inside the premises at a place where it may be accessed.

Equating this requirement to display a normal-sized license with the directive to display name of owner, manager and other employees on billboards outside, or to not give eaters names which do not reflect the religious identity of the owner are dehors the licence requirements."

It said that "vague and overbroad directives deliberately mix up the licensing requirements with the other unlawful demand to display religious identity, and leave scope for violent enforcement of such a manifestly arbitrary demand both by vigilante groups and by authorities on the ground".

The application sought a "stay" of all "further actions taken pursuant to or in furtherance of directives requiring or facilitating public disclosure of ownership/employee identity of food vendors along Kanwar Yatra routes in the States of UP and Uttarakhand..."

The application cited news reports that the state administration had issued a directive making it mandatory for the eaters to display the QR codes.

It also referred to a "press note dated 25.06.2024 issued by the Chief Minister of U.P." and said "it expressly calls for shop keeper names to be clearly displayed during the Yatra".

The application said that similar directives to display names of owners outside the shops along the Kanwar Yatra route were also

equated to the directive.

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TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of Regional Railway Manager, Sr. Regional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Karwar, invites through Indian Railway E-Procurement System (IREPS) for "Provision of Wind Alarm System (Anemometer) on 04 bridges in KR route : Zuri bridge, Mondovi bridge, Sharavati bridge and Panval Vaiduct (In KARWAR region - 03 no's & RATNAGIRI region - 01 no's)." **Tender Notice No: KRA-KAWR-SG-ET-2025-07, dtt 16.07.2025.**
Cost of work: Rs. 42,31,450/- (including GST). **Last date & time for submission of bids:** 06.08.2025 up to 15:30 Hrs. For further details contact Office of Sr. Regional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., Shirwad, Karwar-581306 (Karnataka State). For Details visit website: www.ireps.gov.in

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (e-Procurement Systems)

NIT No.	256409RT
Name of Work and its location	Tender for "AMC of UFD machine at RCNK/SNP."
Approx. Cost of Work	Rs. 59,472.00/- including GST (Rs. Fifty-Nine Thousand Four Hundred Seventy-Two Only)
Earliest Money	Rs. 1,200/-
Completion Period of Work	12 Months
Cost of Tender document on cash/by post	NIL
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs. on 05.08.2025
Website particulars, notice board location, complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
No.: 256409RT Dated: 15.07.2025	2136/2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Office of the Secretary, J&K Sports Council
Administrative Block Bakhshi Stadium Srinagar
Email ID: jkstatesports council@gmail.com

DATED: 11.07.2025

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble LG, J&K UT, e-tender are invited from the reputed registered Agencies for fixation of rate contract of Hiring of Event Management Services for the year 2025-26:-

S. No.	Particulars	Cost of Tender Document	Cost of Earnest Money
1.	Fixation of rate contract for Hiring of Event Management Services for the year 2025-26	Rs.2000/-	10000/-

The tender documents along with other Terms and Conditions of the NIT and relevant documents can be downloaded from the website <https://jktdenders.gov.in>. The Tender shall be uploaded in electronic format on the website <https://jktdenders.gov.in> w.e.f. 11.07.2025 to 19.07.2025 upto 05.00 PM. (MSME exemption of EMID/Tender cost document not allowed) the bidders shall have to Upload scanned copies of all necessary documents mentioned in the e-NIT.

The cost of tender document only shall be deposited in the J&K Bank bearing Account No.: 0067040100006185, IFSC Code: JAKA0STREET, Branch: Hari Singh High Street. The cost of tender document is non refundable.

Sd/-
SECRETARY,
JKSportsCouncil,
No.SC/4402/3000-3007
Dated: 11-07-2025
DATE: 15.07.2025

DIPK-NB-1148/25 DATE: 15.07.2025

ई-जाहीर निविदा
कार्यालयाचे नाव चिपलूण नगर
परिषद, ता. चिपलूण, जि. रत्नागिरी
ई-निविदा मागविणारी सूचना क्र.
४४ सन २०२५-२६

चिपलूण नगर परिषदेकडील ई-निविदा सूचना क्रमांक ४४ सन २०२५-२६ अंतर्वे नागरी स्थानिक स्वराजी संस्थांच्या परिषेकांना अधिसूचित विशिष्ट नागरी सेवा च सुविधा पुरविणारीसाठी खाली अंतर्गत चिपलूण नगर परिषदेकडील मुरादतूर ते पेटेडा या भगाल जोडाऱ्या वाशिशी नदीवरील पुलाचे पोंच सर्व रस्ते बोधकाम करणे या कामासाठी योग्य त्या कंकादारोकरंग ई-निविदा प्रणालीद्वारे खुली ई-निविदा मागविण्यात येत आहेत. सदर निविदाबाबतचा सविस्तर तप्पील अटी व शरी महाराष्ट्र शासनाचे <https://www.mahatenders.gov.in/> या संकेतस्थावर दिनांक १७.०७.२०२५ रोजीपासून पालावयास उपलब्ध करून देण्यात आलेली आहे. निविदा सादर कराऱ्याची अंतिम तारीख दिनांक ३१.०७.२०२५ रोजीपासून सायंकाळी ५.०० वाजेपूर्वी राहील.

दिनांक: १५.०७.२०२५

सही/-

प्रशासक

तथा सुभाषिकारी

चिपलूण नगर परिषद

Name of ancient and historical monuments

Name of archaeological sites and remains

Name of village/temple

Name of tehsil/district

Revenue Khasra/ Kita number protection.

Area to be protected Kand-Maria

Ownership

Remarks

Name of ancient and historical monuments

Name of archaeological sites and remains

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GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES
MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DME), MEGHALAYA
PASTEUR HILLS, SHILLONG
Email ID: pasteurinstituteshil@gmail.com
Tel No. 0364-2591510/94851 06663

CORRIGENDUM

In partial modification of the Bid Document No. DHSME&R/SMC/TENDER/180/2025/547, dated 20th June 2025, issued by the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME), Meghalaya, for "Supply and Installation of set of Equipment/Items for Anatomy Department as per NMC at Shillong Medical College, Shillong under the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME)", the following corrigendum is hereby notified:

"The last date and time for submission of the bid document is hereby extended from 15/07/2025 up to 1300 Hrs to 22/07/2025 up to 1300 Hrs."

All other terms and conditions of the EOI shall remain unchanged.

The detailed corrigendum and the Tender document are available on the departmental websites: meghealth.gov.in and nhmmeghalaya.nic.in.

(Sd/-)

Director of Health Services
Medical Education & Research (DME)
Meghalaya, Pasteur Hills, Shillong

MIPR No.: 1110
Dt. 15.07.2025

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES
MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DME), MEGHALAYA
PASTEUR HILLS, SHILLONG
Email ID: pasteurinstituteshil@gmail.com
Tel No. 0364-2591510/94851 06663

CORRIGENDUM

In partial modification of the Bid Document No. DIHSME&R/SMC/TENDER/127/2025/543, dated 20th June 2025, issued by the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME), Meghalaya, for "Supply and Installation of set of Equipment/Items for Physiology Department as per NMC at Shillong Medical College, Shillong under the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME)", the bid submission timeline is hereby extended as:

"The last date and time for submission of the bid document is hereby extended from 15/07/2025 up to 1300 Hrs to 22/07/2025 up to 1300 Hrs."

All other terms and conditions of the EOI shall remain unchanged.

The detailed corrigendum and the Tender document are available on the departmental websites: meghealth.gov.in and nhmmeghalaya.nic.in.

(Sd/-)

Director of Health Services
Medical Education & Research (DME)
Meghalaya, Pasteur Hills, Shillong

MIPR No.: 1110
Dt. 15.07.2025

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING
THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED**
(See Section 82 Cr. PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Bidhan Biswas S/o Basman Biswas (Baman) R/o D-337, Mangolpuri, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 1179/2024 U/s 27 DMC Act at P.S.: Mangol Puri, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **Bidhan Biswas** could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Bidhan Biswas** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person **Bidhan Biswas of FIR No. 1179/2024 U/s 27 DMC Act of P.S.: Mangol Puri, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 18.08.2025. By order Reetika Jain**

Judicial Magistrate First Class-05
North West Court No.105,
Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/9301/OD/2025

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES
MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DME), MEGHALAYA
PASTEUR HILLS, SHILLONG
Email ID: pasteurinstituteshil@gmail.com
Tel No. 0364-2591510/94851 06663

CORRIGENDUM

In partial modification of the Bid Document No. DHSME&R/SMC/TENDER/61/2025/539, dated 20th June 2025, issued by the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME), Meghalaya, for "Supply and Installation of set of Equipment/Items for Biochemistry Department as per NMC at Shillong Medical College, Shillong under the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME)", the following corrigendum is hereby notified:

"The last date and time for submission of the bid document is hereby extended from 15/07/2025 up to 1300 Hrs to 22/07/2025 up to 1300 Hrs."

All other terms and conditions of the EOI shall remain unchanged.

The detailed corrigendum and the Tender document are available on the departmental websites: meghealth.gov.in and nhmmeghalaya.nic.in.

(Sd/-)

Director of Health Services
Medical Education & Research (DME)
Meghalaya, Pasteur Hills, Shillong

MIPR No.: 1110
Dt. 15.07.2025

RURAL WORKS DEPARTMENT
Office of the Engineer-in-Chief,
Rural Works Department, Bihar
5th floor, Visvesvaraya Bhawan, Nehru Path, Patna-800015

DETAILED NOTICE INVITING TENDER (through e-procurement mode only <http://pmgstytendersbih.gov.in>)

for Construction and 06 year Routine Maintenance work (output and performance based) for Rural Road/Bridge under component of Mukhya Mantri Gram Sampark Yojana (AWSESH-SC).

Short Notice Inviting Re-Tender.(No.-RWD/MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)/HQ/ET/2025-26/16(R))

- Designation and Address of the Advertiser : Engineer-in-chief, Rural Works Department, Govt. of Bihar
- Date of Notice Inviting Tender : 11.07.2025
- Period for download of Tender Document : From 22.07.2025 to 29.07.2025 up to 15:00 hrs
- Date, Time & Place of Pre-Bid meeting : Date 23.07.2025 at Concerned office of SE from 11:00 hrs
- Last Date & Time for uploading tender documents by bidder : Date 29.07.2025 till 15:00 hrs. <http://pmgstytendersbih.gov.in>
- Date and time of opening of Technical Bid : Date 29.07.2025 Time 15:30 hrs.

9. Details of Works and Services:

Sl. No.	Package	Description of the Works [CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF ROADS/BRIDGE]		Length (km/m)	Construction cost (in lakh)	Cost of Routine Maintenance for 72 Months Period (in lakh)	Total Amount (in lakh)	Earnest Money/ Bid Security (in lakh)
		From	To					
1	1 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Hilsa-286	Lehradak Road	Momnippur Utaripuvl	0.570	102.259	4.752	107.011	10.34
	Maheshpur	Chamar bigha	0.735	95.325	8.039	103.364		
	Majid Pur	Salawatur	0.610	89.665	7.235	96.900		
	Rasapur Road	Bardhi Bigha	1.030	87.971	7.885	95.856		
	Sohrapur Marwa Main Road	Harihar Khandha Tola Tak	0.400	62.976	3.550	66.526		
	Hasanpur Rwd Road	Baldev Mod Ka Tola tak	0.300	42.988	3.973	46.961		
	Total	6		3.645	481.184	35.434	516.618	10.34
2	2 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Barh-290	Gautra Daulatpur Beldariya Road	Chauhan Tola	1.610	163.391	18.214	181.605	
	Daulatpur Middle School	Beldariya School	1.500	145.201	22.260	167.461		
	Sirshi Dumriya Baghachak Road	Jaunpur	1.400	121.480	17.438	138.918		
	NH-31	Sitaram Bagi	0.650	58.635	7.521	66.156		
	Mubarakpur Pmgsy Road	Mubarakpur Mahadalit Tola	0.750	69.051	8.766	77.817		
	Primary School Raily Diyara	Raily Paschim Tola (Near Late Alakhdeo Singh Well)	0.425	38.449	3.161	41.610		
	Total	6		6.335	596.207	77.360	673.567	13.48
3	3 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Chapra-2-310	Bangla	Ibrahim	1.436	127.711	12.436	140.147	5.49
	Sohai Gajan(Rameshwari Singh Ka Ghar	Nagdiha Village	1.230	124.839	9.325	134.164		
	Total	2		2.666	252.550	21.761	274.311	5.49
4	4 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Chapra-2-311	NHS531	Tole Rangal	1.222	122.267	10.383	132.650	2.66
	Total	1		1.222	122.267	10.383	132.650	2.66
5	5 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Jahanabad-356	Belai Pokhar	Between Jhaman Bigha and Ahiyasha	1.600	197.107	21.067	218.174	4.37
	Total	1		1.600	197.107	21.067	218.174	4.37
6	6 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Jahanabad-358	Mahadevpur(Aulya Chak Bhadsara Road)	Pali Pokhar Mahadalit Tola	1.300	163.339	15.449	178.788	6.25
	Lakhtakiya Puli	Dhangama	1.070	119.454	14.051	133.505		
	Total	2		2.370	282.793	29.500	312.293	6.25
7	7 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Nawada-364	Kendua Yadav Tola	Arhri High School	1.400	142.146	17.211	159.357	
	Nawada Gaya Road	Chitraghatti Maha Dalit Tola	1.600	135.641	20.052	155.693		
	Tungi Chak	Bihari Bigha	1.100	101.194	13.826	115.020		
	Kedar More	Dargah Tak	0.600	47.704	6.521	54.225		
	Sharma Line Hotel	Kendua Yadav Tola	0.450	41.837	3.068	44.905		
	Total	5		5.150	468.522	60.678	529.200	10.59
8	8 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Dehri-375	Rwd Road Bisupura	Dhudhmi Village Tola	1.080	82.480	9.571	92.051	1.85
	Total	1		1.080	82.480	9.571	92.051	1.85
9	9 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Manjhul-Bakhari-391	Eidgah near RCD road	musahari ward 6	0.900	83.370	10.130	93.500	1.87
	Total	1		0.900	83.370	10.130	93.500	1.87
10	10 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Teghra-394	Bisaua Bridge	Mohamadpur	1.450	227.470	9.650	237.120	7.69
	Total	2		2.670	366.340	17.770	384.110	7.69
11	11 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Bhagalpur-394	Kila Ghat	Darapur (Shankarpur)	2.260	412.970	27.760	440.730	8.12
	Total	1		2.260	412.970	27.760	440.730	8.12
12	12 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Jahjha-397	Gangra BajrangBali To Pritamtanr Near Kali Mandir	Gangra Dakshin Mushari Tola	1.900	154.980	20.540	175.520	3.51
	Total	1		1.900	154.980	20.540	175.520	3.51
13	13 MMGSY(AWSESH-SC)-Jahjha-399	Chuchnariya Nawka Dih Gauri Shankar Dham	Barajor Paswan Chowk Satan Pouli Form	5.350	488.480	30.380	558.860	19.65
	Mandap Tola	Dhaphri	4.000	374.470	48.710	423.180		
	Total </td							

Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is for general information that I, Rohit S/o Hukam Singh Residing at H.No.255,Gali No.5,Jwala Nagar,Shahdara Delhi-110032,declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Rohit Pal and Shivpal in my Education Documents.The actual name of mine and my father are Rohit and Hukam Singh respectively,which may be amended accordingly

0040799756-8

It is for general information that I, Manish Kumar S/o Sukhad Singh R/o Vill-Jangipur, Post Ps-Nagar Untari, VTC-Nagaruntari, PO-Nagar Untari, DIST-Garhwa, Jharkhand-82121, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Sukhandi Saw in my 10th Class School Certificate Cum Marksheets.The actual name of my father is Sukhad Singh, which may be amended accordingly.

0070978292-1

I, ASMAT JAHAN,W/O-BARI MIAN R/O,R-57/1,4TH FLOOR,JOGA BAI EXT,JAMIA-NAGAR,NEW DELHI-110025,IN MY PASSPORT MY-FATHER AND HUSBAND-NAME ARE WRONGLY-WRITTEN AS ABDUL QADAR KHAN AND ABDUL VARI CORRECT-NAME ARE ABDUL KADIR KHAN AND BARI MIAN.

0040799756-5

It is for General Information that I, Pushp Lata Sharma w/o Late Shri Ram Gopal Deveshwar, R/o No.105, Sai Madan Comforts, 3rd Cross, Channasandra, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bangalore South, Bengaluru-560098, declare that my name has been wrongly written as Pushp Lata in Pension Payment Order (PPO). The actual and correct name of mine is Pushp Lata Sharma, which may be amended accordingly.

0040799719-1

I,hitherto known as PREETI DEVI,Daughter of,ACHCHHE LAL,residing at,H.No.-188, Salehpur Bindki,Distt. Fatehpur,Uttar Pradesh-212631,have changed my name and shall hereinafter be known as PREETI SINGH.

0040799739-3

I,VISHNU PRASAD,S/O SURENDER PRASAD GUPTA, R/O B-301,CHHATTERPUR-EXTN.NEAR NANDA-HOSPITAL DELHI-110074.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VISHNU PRASAD GUPTA,FOR ALL PURPOSES.

0040799744-1

I,VIPIN JAIN,S/o Krishan Kumar Jain R/o,House No.35,A, Veer Nagar,Jain Colony Delhi-110007,have changed my name to VIPIN KUMAR JAIN

0040799774-8

I,VINAY GAKHAR S/O-JAGDISH CHANDER GAKHAR R/O-B-6, ORIENTAL APPARTMENT, NEAR DC CHOWK, SECTOR-9,ROHINI, DELHI-110085 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VINAY KUMAR GAKHAR.

0040799774-1

I,Sanjeev Jain S/o,Sh. K.C. Jain R/o,House No.IX/6415, Mukherji Gali, Gandhi-Nagar, East-Delhi, Delhi-110031,have changed my name to Sanjeev Kumar Jain.

0040799770-7

I,SUNIL KUMAR S/o-Jaduveer-R/o Juggi, J-24A,Saraswati Camp Sector-3,R.K.Puram Po.RK Puram Sector-5,Delhi-110022,have changed my minor son name SAHIL alias MAYANK SRIVASTAV aged-15-years to MAYANK SRIVASTAV.

0040799756-2

I,SHWETA HARNEJA W/O- ASHISH KHANNA ADDRESS-Y-111,REGENCY PARK-2,HAMILTON COURT ROAD GALLERIA MARKET DLF PHASE-4,GURGAON HARYANA-122009,HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO SHWETA KHANNA

0040799778-3

I,SHUBHI PRIYANKA SHUKLA,W/O- PRIYANKA SHUKLA,resident of,1206 12TH FLOOR,TOWER-B3 PANCHSHEEL-GREENS 2 GREATER NOIDA-WEST,GAUTAM-BUDH NAGAR,UTTAR PRADESH-2013018,have changed my name to SHUBHI TRIPATHI, permanently.

0040799771-1

I,SHARDHA W/O-RAM KUMAR KASHYAP,R/O HNO.323-323,3RD-FLOOR PKT-9 SECTOR-21,ROHINI DELHI-110086.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHARDA KASHYAP.

0040799744-4

I,SALEEM AHMED,S/O-ABDUL AHMED,R/O,HOSUE.NO-309,OLD NO-83,-AGLI NO-4,KARDAMPURI,DELHI-110094,Have Changed My Name To SALEEM AHMAD,For All Future Purposes.

0040799767-2

I,Mahabir Singh,s/o late.Sh.Badlu ram,R/o H.No.430 pana udhyani, Narela Delhi 110040,have changed my name,from Mahavir Singh Khatri to Mahabir Singh,for all,future purposes.

0040799739-1

I,Shabana W/o Rashid Imtiaz R/o 181, Shaheed Gate, Meerut have changed my name to Shabana Parveen.

0040798406-1

I,SALEEM AHMED,S/O-ABDUL AHMED,R/O,HOSUE.NO-309,OLD NO-83,-AGLI NO-4,KARDAMPURI,DELHI-110094,Have Changed My Name To SALEEM AHMAD,For All,Future Purposes

0040799739-7

I,Ruchi Mehta W/o-Vipin Nasa R/o, 521-B,Second Floor,Aryan Hospital, Rattan Garden,Gurgaon (Haryana)-122001,have changed my name to Ruchi,for all Purposes.

0040799739-10

I,Rajni Sood alias Neelam Sood,D/o,Radha Krishan W/o,Vinod Kumar Sood R/o-64C,Block-AJ,Shalimar-Bagh, North-West Delhi, Delhi-110088,have changed my name to Neelam Sood.

0040799770-5

I,RAM KUMAR,S/O BHOJRAJ KASHYAP,R/O-HNO.322-323 3RD-FLOOR PKT-9 SECTOR-21,ROHINI DELHI-110086.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAM KUMAR KASHYAP.

0040799744-3

I,RAJEEV JINDAL, S/o Ajay Kumar Jindal,R/o-B7/62/2, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029, have changed my name to RAJIV JINDAL, for all future purposes.

0040799744-8

I,RAINA W/O-RAKESH KUMAR BHUTANI,R/O-196,TARUN ENCLAVE,PITAM PURA,DELHI-110034 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAINA BHUTANI

0040799774-2

I,Preeti D/o-Sh.Madan Lal Gulati,R/o-60, House, 692, Sector-31,Jharsa, Gurugram,Haryana,have changed my name to Preeti Gulati,for all future purposes.

0040799767-5

I,Mukesh Wasan,S/o-Late Amit Lal Wasan,R/o P8-03-FF, Park Elite-Floors,Sec-75, Faridabad,Haryana-121004,have changed my name,from Mukesh Wasan to Mukesh Kumar Wasan,for all purposes.

0040799771-2

I,Mohd Zahid S/o Ziauddin Qureshi,R/o-492,Gali Bahar-Wall Chatta,Lal Mian Delhi-Gate, Darya-Ganj, Delhi-110002,have changed my name to Zahid.

0040799770-4

I,Mohd Rashid/Rashid,S/O-Razi Ahmed,R/O-A-119,Second Floor Gali-No.9-Near Jagat Puri Thana Radhey Shyam Park Krishna Nagar Delhi-110051,Have Changed My Name To Mohammad Rashid, Permanently

0040799774-3

I,Manu Bal Singh,W/O-Pawan Kumar,R/o-SD-382 FIRST FLOOR,SHASTRI-NAGAR, GHAZIABAD,UTTAR PRADESH-201002,have changed My Name To Mohini Singh my name to permanently.

0040799774-7

I,Maneesh Kumar S/o Chande Ram R/o-T/F,RF-Z5-C/1, Kh.No.303-304, Sainik-Apartment, Gali-No.2B, Kamal-Park, Sagarpur, New Delhi-110045,have changed my name to Manish Kumar Ram.

0040799770-7

I,Deepshika Arjun Naidu,W/o-Rohit Singh R/o HNo.5/28, Nehru Nagar,Srinivaspuri, South Delhi-110065,have changed my name to Shikha Mishra for all Purposes.

0040799767-3

I,Anil Sehgal,S/o Om Prakash Sehgal,R/o-X/1731,Street,No-21, Rajgarh Colony,Gandhi Nagar Delhi-110031,have change name of my daughter name Nirjala to Nirjala Sharma.

0040799739-11

I,MD AMAN S/O-ANEES AHMED R/o-6202,PAKKI GANI,NEAR DISPENSARY,BARA HINDU RAO, DELHI-110006,have changed my name to MOHD AMAN,S/O-ANEES AHMED,for all,future Purposes.

0040799739-5

I,MANJEET KAUR W/o Gurmukh Singh Parmar,R/O K-367,Kangra Niketan Vikas Puri West Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Manjeet Kaur.

0040799778-4

I,MAHIMA,D/O KISHAN LAL AGGARWAL R/O HNO.59A KHERI-KALAN SUNRISE-COLONY MAWAI FARIDABAD HARYANA-121002.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MAHIMA AGGARWAL.

0040799756-3

I,KISHAN CHOUDHARY,S/O JABHAR MAL,R/O-MOUJA MAWAI SUNRISE COLONY KHERI-KALAN FARIDABAD,HARYANA-121002.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KISHAN LAL AGGARWAL.

0040799756-4

I,KIRAN DEEP W/O BHUPINDER SINGH R/O/WZ-606 RISHI NAGAR RANI BAGH SHAKUR BASTI,DELHI-110034.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KIRAN DEEP KAUR

0040799774-4

I,Jasvant jatav,S/o Lalaram Add-PO: Jada, Dist: Alwar,Rajasthan-321607, have changed my name to Jaswant Singh,for all purposes.

0040799774-5

I,KHADIJA SULAIMAN,W/O ROOHN AHMED,R/O HNO.31, GALI CHAH SHIRIN FARASHKHANA DELHI-110006,have CHANGED MY NAME TO KHADIJA SULEMAN.

0040799744-5

I,JYOTI,R/O H NO-1726, FIRST FLOOR SECTOR-52,GURGAON HARYANA-122003, HAVE CHANGED MY MINOR DAUGHTER NAME PRIYANSI GOYAT TO AVIKA GOYAT

0040799778-2

I,KARTIKESH KUMAR,S/O- PARAU THAKUR,R/O-C-11,BLOCK-C, DILSHAD-COLONY NEW SEMAPURI,JHILMIL SHAHDARA DELHI-110094,Have Changed My Name To SALEEM AHMAD,For All,Future Purposes

I,ALOK KUMAR ARORA,S/o Sh.Ram Lal,R/o House No.1125, Sector-10A,Gurugram, Haryana-122001,have changed my name,from ALOK KUMAR to ALOK KUMAR ARORA,for all purposes.

0040799767-4

I,Virendra Singh s/o Sh. Dilip Singh R/o 61, Vill, Gurkanday, Hawal Bagh Farm, Hawalbagh, Almora, Uttarakhand c/o House No.15, Krishna Nagar , Near Bell Public School, Sec-10, Gurugram, Haryana, declare that my minor son name has been written as Bhaumik Singh is mentioned in my son Adhar record. I confirm that Bhaumik Singh and Bhavyansh Singh refer to the same person.

0040799744-9

I,Hitesh S/o Ravinder Kumar R/o BQ-54 Third Floor Shalimar Bagh,Delhi-110088 have changed my name to Hitesh Arora for all purposes.

0040799774-10

I,Rajni Sood alias Neelam Sood,D/o,Radha Krishan W/o,Vinod Kumar Sood R/o-64C,Block-AJ,Shalimar-Bagh, North-West Delhi, Delhi-110088,have changed my name to Neelam Sood.

0040799770-5

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SENSEX: 82,570.91 ▲ 317.45 (0.39%) NIFTY: 25,195.80 ▲ 113.50 (0.45%) NIKKEI: 39,678.02 ▲ 218.40 HANG SENG: 24,590.12 ▲ 386.80 FTSE: 8,999.90 ▲ 1.84 DAX: 24,205.56 ▲ 44.92



GOLD

₹99,370



USD RATE

₹85.76



OIL

\$72.06



SILVER

₹1,12,000

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) per barrel as of July 14

International market data till 1900 IST

'NEGOTIATIONS BASED ON TERMS OF REFERENCE DECIDED IN APRIL'

Wider US tariffs off the table in trade talks for now, says official

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

WHILE RELIEF on US reciprocal tariffs is among the key demands from Indian negotiators in exchange for opening up the Indian market to American goods, wider US tariffs — such as those on metals, a likely duty on BRICS countries, and on buyers of Russian oil — are not part of the ongoing trade negotiations with the US yet, an official said on Tuesday.

"As of now, India and the US are negotiating on the basis of the terms of reference (ToR) that were finalised [in April]," the official said responding to a question on whether wider US tariffs are part of the negotiations. The official added that the negotiations will continue with the US and the goal remains a bilateral trade agreement (BTA) by the year end.

The official said that, currently, only US baseline tariffs of 10 per cent and sectoral tariffs on steel and aluminium — along with fentanyl-related tariffs on China — have come into effect.

US President Donald Trump has continued to announce fresh tariffs on countries despite the US having trade deals with some of them, such as Canada and Mexico.

While sectoral tariffs — such as 50 per cent on steel, aluminium and copper — are already disrupting India's exports to the US, Trump has also threatened steep tariffs on BRICS countries over their challenge to the US dollar and has warned of duties on buyers of Russian oil. Notably, India is a top importer of Russian oil.

Trade data shows that the US is India's third-largest copper export market, after Saudi Arabia (26 per cent) and China (18 per cent).

This assumes significance as

NEGOTIATIONS WITH AMERICA TO CONTINUE

THE OFFICIAL added that the negotiations will continue with the US and the goal remains a BTA by the end of the year. The official said that, currently, only US baseline tariffs of 10 per cent and sectoral tariffs on steel and aluminium and fentanyl-related tariffs on China — have come into effect.

TRUMP HAS threatened steep tariffs on BRICS countries over their challenge to the US dollar and has warned of duties on buyers of Russian oil

TRADE DATA show that the US is India's third-largest copper export market, after Saudi Arabia (26%) and China (18%)

However, given copper's status as a critical mineral and its extensive use across infrastructure, energy and manufacturing, India's domestic industry is likely to absorb any decline in US demand resulting from the proposed tariffs.

Exporters have said that US tariffs on steel have already impacted India's steel exports.

Earlier this month, Trump said that tariffs on pharmaceuticals could rise to 200 per cent after a year. This is significant, as the US is India's largest overseas market for pharmaceuticals.

FULL REPORT ON

www.indianexpress.com

India, EU close 7 out of 23 chapters in trade deal

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

AS TRADE negotiations pick up pace amid US tariff threats, India and the EU have managed to close two more chapters in the latest round of talks and narrow gaps in services, a government official said on Tuesday. The two sides have now agreed on seven out of 23 chapters in the ongoing negotiations for what could be the largest trade agreement India has ever entered into.

L Satya Srinivas, special secretary in the Department of Commerce, said the last (12th) round of talks concluded last week in Brussels. "We have exchanged our offers on services and non-services... there were discussions on that. We also discussed key interests in market access related to goods as well... The next round of talks [will be held] in the first week of September," Srinivas said. However, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is not part of the EU trade negotiations, Hervé Delphin, EU

Ambassador to India, told *The Indian Express* last month. "I have come to discover that CBAM is one of the best-known acronyms in India. First, CBAM is not a trade measure. It is not part of trade and the FTA. It's about compliance with our climate agenda to accelerate decarbonisation," he said.

On February 28, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the European Commission President agreed to seal an FTA deal by year-end.

ASEAN deal

Special Secretary in the Department of Commerce Rajesh Agrawal said that the 10th and 11th rounds of talks are likely to be held in August here and in October in Malaysia. "We are engaged in the negotiations. Nine rounds of talks have been concluded so far... The progress so far has been chequered — not what it could have been — but the good part is that we are moving forward on many aspects, especially on customs and trade facilitation," Agrawal said. FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

BRIEFLY

Exports remain flat in June

New Delhi: Exports remained flat at \$35.14 billion in June, while trade deficit narrowed to a four-month low of \$18.78 billion, the data showed. PTI

Khattar launches ADEETIE Scheme

Panipat: In a bid to catalyse the adoption of energy-efficient technologies among MSMEs, Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has launched the ADEETIE scheme. PTI

SMBC seeks RBI nod for YES stake

Mumbai: Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation has sought approval from the RBI to acquire an additional 4.9 per cent stake in Yes Bank to take its total ownership in the bank to just under 25 per cent, two sources said. REUTERS

SBI staff donate 89k units of blood

Mumbai: To commemorate its 70th foundation day, SBI held a nation-wide blood-donation drive. SBI employees and their families participated in the drive to drive collection of 89,680 blood units across the country. ENS

Apple inks \$500-mn deal for rare earth magnets with MP Materials

Houston: Apple has signed a \$500-million deal with Pentagon-backed MP Materials for the supply of rare earth magnets, an agreement underscoring corporate America's growing alignment with US industrial policy support for critical minerals projects.

MP shares jumped 19 per cent on Tuesday morning to an all-time high, while Apple's stock gained just under 1 per cent. The multi-year supply deal, announced on Tuesday, is part of a broader push by Apple to bring iPhone production to the US amid a push from the Trump administration to produce fewer electronics in China. MP last week agreed to a multibillion-dollar deal with the US Department of Defense that will see the Pentagon become MP's largest shareholder.

Apple will pre-pay Las Vegas-based MP Materials \$200 million for a supply of magnets slated to begin in 2027. REUTERS

US President Donald Trump has continued to announce fresh tariffs on countries despite the US having trade deals with some of them, such as Canada and Mexico.

While sectoral tariffs — such as 50 per cent on steel, aluminium and copper — are already disrupting India's exports to the US, Trump has also threatened steep tariffs on BRICS countries over their challenge to the US dollar and has warned of duties on buyers of Russian oil. Notably, India is a top importer of Russian oil.

Trade data shows that the US is India's third-largest copper export market, after Saudi Arabia (26%) and China (18%).

This assumes significance as

UK AVIATION REGULATOR SAYS SAFETY NOTICE A DECADE OLD

'Boeing jet fuel valves notice reposted in May only to reflect contact information change'

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

THE BRITISH aviation regulator, UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), did not issue any safety notice in May this year mandating inspection of Boeing aircraft due to concerns over fuel shut-off valves.

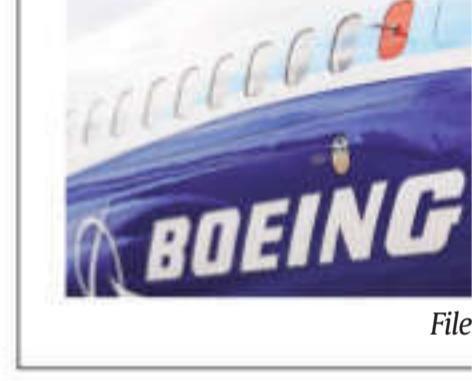
The notice that has been quoted in some reports and is doing rounds on social media was originally issued in 2015, and was re-uploaded on the CAA website on May 15 this year to just reflect a change in the agency's contact information, the CAA clarified to *The Indian Express*.

The CAA also said that it has no technical concern about Boeing aircraft and has not asked British operators of Boeing planes for any action following the preliminary report into the June 12 crash of an Air India Boeing 787-8 aircraft in Ahmedabad.

The notice that has been quoted in some reports and is doing rounds on social media was originally issued in 2015, and was re-uploaded on the CAA website on May 15 this year to just reflect a change in the agency's contact information, the CAA clarified to *The Indian Express*.

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'NO TECHNICAL CONCERN ABOUT BOEING PLANES'



THE UKCAA told *The Indian Express* it has not asked British operators of Boeing planes for any action following the preliminary report into the June 12 crash of an Air India Boeing 787-8 aircraft in Ahmedabad.

Given the public discourse around the Air India crash and the recently-released preliminary investigation report that identified fuel supply cut-off as the primary trigger for the accident, the said safety notice pertaining to fuel shut-off valves on various Boeing aircraft including the 787 led to considerable speculation in sections of the Indian news media and social media.

The Indian Express compared both versions of the safety notice

SN-2015/005, and found them to be the same, with the exception of the email address mentioned.

"Whilst the Air India accident investigation is ongoing, we do not have any technical concern with regards to Boeing products and we do not require any additional actions from UK operators," the CAA spokesperson said in response to queries on whether the UK regulator is going to direct British carriers to conduct checks on their Boeing aircraft.

With the probe into the Air India crash focusing on the engine fuel control switches, India's aviation safety regulator, the DGCA has asked for inspection of the switches' locking mechanism on most of the India-registered Boeing commercial aircraft by July 21 in line with the SAIB issued by the US Federal FAA in December 2018.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

June unemployment rate steady at 5.6%, but fewer people searched for jobs

SIDDHARTH UPASANI
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

SEASONAL FACTORS again weighed on India's labour market in June as the unemployment rate remained unchanged at 5.6 per cent, although the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) declined to 54.2 per cent in June from 54.8 per cent in May, suggesting fewer people looked for jobs last month.

According to the Statistics Ministry's latest monthly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report, released on Tuesday, while the unemployment rate (UR) for Indians aged 15 years and above was flat month-on-month in June at 5.6 per cent, there was a marginal decline in UR to 5.6 per cent from 5.8 per cent in May for females, while that for males remained at 5.6 per cent.

The monthly jobs data is based on the Current Weekly Status (CWS) approach. Under this approach, the activity status of a person is measured for the seven days preceding the date of survey.

Although the headline unemployment number was steady, the figures for rural and urban areas moved in opposite directions. While rural unemployment declined by 20 basis points (bps) to 4.9 per cent in June, urban unemployment rose by 20 bps to 7.1 per cent for those aged 15 years and above.

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Imple-

mation (MoSPI), the decrease in the unemployment rate among rural males and females in June was due to a rise in share of own-account workers, with seasonal factors prompting individuals to engage in small-scale or self-initiated activities" such as petty trade, repair work, or services.

Meanwhile, an increase in urban unemployment was particularly pronounced among the youth, with the jobless rate increasing to 18.8 per cent from 17.9 per cent in May for those in the 15-29 years age bracket. Female youth unemployment rose by 140 bps to 25.8 per cent, while for

males the increase was 80 bps to 16.6 per cent. At an all-India level, youth unemployment rose by 30 bps to 15.3 per cent in June.

Summer pangs

While the all-India unemployment rate was steady at 5.6 per cent after posting a 50 bps increase in May, the LFPR declined for the second month in a row for most segments of the population in rural and urban areas.

The biggest fall in LFPR was seen among young females in rural areas, for whom the ratio decreased by 240 bps to 20.5 per cent. The fall among males in ru-

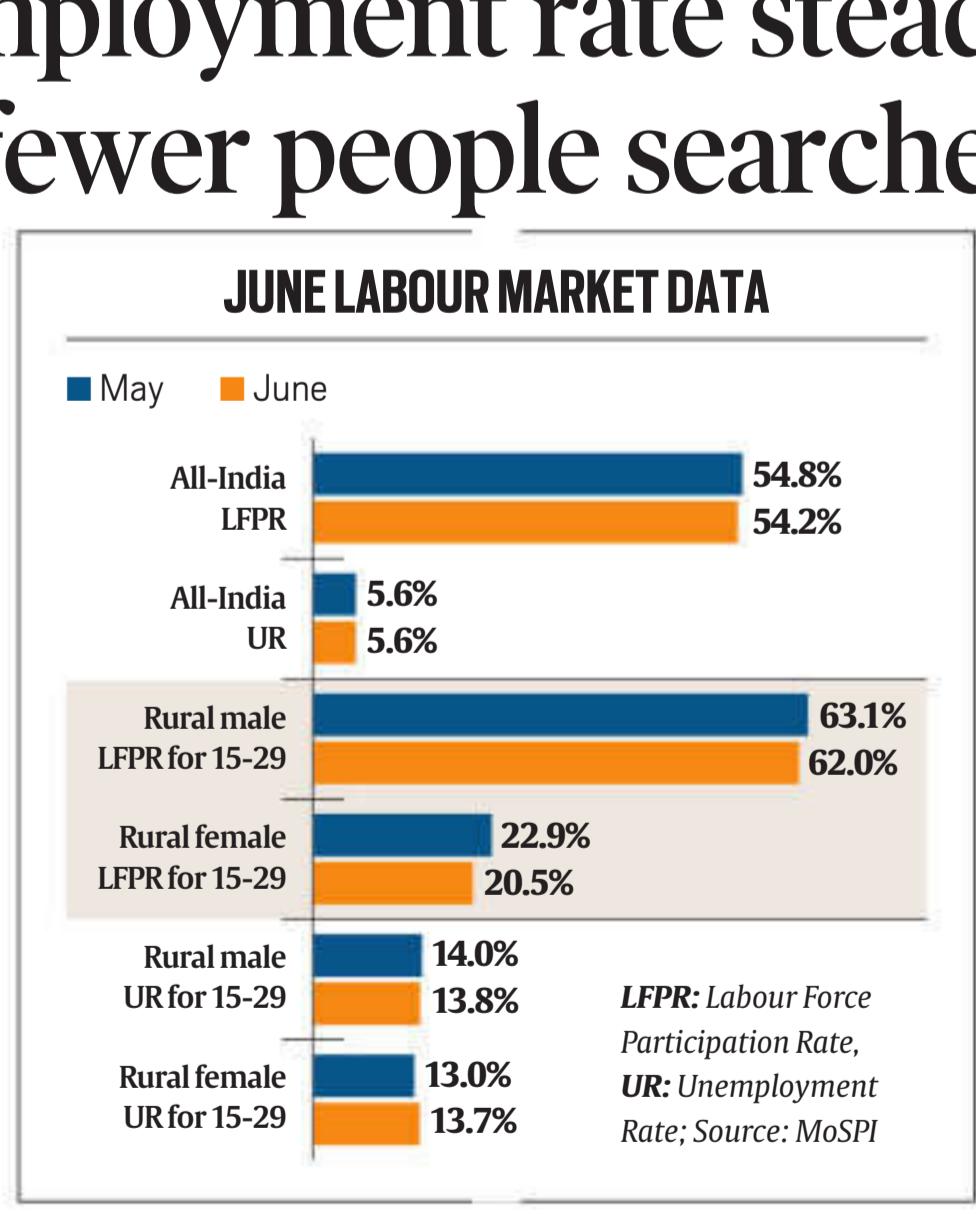
ral areas in the 15-29 years age bracket was approximately half that, at 110 bps, as their LFPR declined to 62.0 per cent. The decline seen in the Worker Population Ratio (WPR) was similar: at an all-India level, the WPR declined by 50 bps to 51.2 per cent.

The LFPR is the fraction of the population that is seeking or available for work, while the WPR is the percentage of employed persons in the population.

According to MoSPI, the fall in LFPR and WPR in June was "largely influenced by seasonal agricultural patterns, intense summer heat limiting outdoor physical work, and a shift of some unpaid helpers, particularly from higher-income rural households, towards domestic chores".

The June PLFS report is the third-ever monthly labour market data from the statistics ministry. Back in June, while detailing data for May, MoSPI had cautioned that a rise in the unemployment rate did not necessarily reflect "secular trends" as changes were to be expected in the monthly data on account of increased frequency of the survey and seasonal, academic, and labour market factors. A total of 3.8 lakh persons were surveyed by MoSPI in June, roughly the same as in April and May. As part of the revamped survey design for the PLFS, a rotational panel sampling design is being used.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com



net loss of Rs 3,302 crore and an operating income of just Rs 728.47 crore.

The company acknowledged in its FY24 annual report that it has accumulated heavy losses, its net worth has been fully or substantially eroded, and it has faced net and cash losses in both the current and previous financial years. Additionally, the company's current liabilities exceed its current assets, according to the report. MTNL shares fell 4.22 per cent to Rs 49.92 on the BSE on Tuesday. The total market value of its shares is at Rs 3,145 crore and the government holds 56.25 per cent stake in the company.

MTNL's financial health remains poor. For the financial year ended March 2024, it reported a

'Tesla has arrived in the right city and state', says Maharashtra CM Fadnavis

ENR ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JULY 15

INAUGURATING TESLA'S first India showroom in Mumbai Tuesday, which he described as an important day in the country's automobile sector. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said the company "stands for innovation and sustainability."

Tesla also rolled out its Model Y electric car — the first product to be available in the country under Elon Musk's brand — with a price tag starting at Rs 60 lakh.

Speaking at the Tesla Experience Centre at the Bandra-Kurla Complex, Fadnavis said, "This is not just the inauguration of an experience centre but a statement that Tesla has arrived, in the right city and state, that is Mumbai, Maharashtra. Mumbai stands for innovation and sustainability." Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik was also present.

"It is very important for Maharashtra that Tesla launched its first experience centre in Mumbai," Fadnavis said, and emphasised how the state has moved towards a dynamic electric vehicle and electric mobility policy. "A great moment for

Maharashtra, and specially Mumbai, with the world's smartest car Tesla arriving in India," the chief minister added. Tesla is also coming up with charging facilities in the region.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Brazil ex-President Jair Bolsonaro.

BRAZIL
Bolsonaro echoes Trump, calls trial a 'witch hunt'

Rio De Janeiro: Brazil's chief prosecutor has called for a guilty verdict in the case of far-right former president Jair Bolsonaro, who is on trial accused of leading an alleged coup plot. "The evidence is clear: the defendant acted systematically, throughout his mandate and after his defeat at the polls, to incite insurrection and the destabilization of the democratic rule of law," Prosecutor-General Paulo Gonet said in a 517-long page document released late on Monday. Bolsonaro is accused of seeking to overturn the 2022 election in which he was defeated by a left-wing rival. Bolsonaro, a former military officer, openly defied Brazil's judicial system during his 2019-2022 term in office. AP

FRANCE
French PM wants to scrap 2 public holidays

Paris: French PM Francois Bayrou proposed scrapping two public holidays and freezing most public spending as part of a 43.8 billion euro budget squeeze he outlined Tuesday. Bayrou's plan involves freezing welfare spending and tax brackets in 2026 at 2025 levels, which was immediately criticised by left-wing and far-right politicians. Defence spending, however, will increase. France saw its budget deficit hit 5.8% of GDP last year, nearly double the official EU limit of 3% of GDP, as a political crisis left four successive governments paralysed and incapable of tackling an unexpected drop in tax income and surge in spending for a second year. REUTERS

UNITED KINGDOM
2 jailed for felling iconic 'Sycamore Gap' tree

London: Two men were each jailed for over four years on Tuesday for cutting down Britain's 'Sycamore Gap' tree, a much-loved and well-known global landmark whose dramatic silhouette had featured in a Hollywood movie. The sycamore, estimated to be almost 200 years old, stood at the centre of a dramatic dip in the landscape alongside the historic Hadrian's Wall, making it a popular spot for photographers, hikers and even marriage proposals. Daniel Graham and Adam Carruthers were found guilty last month of cutting it down with a chainsaw. REUTERS

SAMI PEOPLE WERE OPPRESSED FOR CENTURIES BY THE POWERS THAT RULED AND EXPLOITED THEIR LANDS

A rap festival near the Arctic Ocean delights crowds under the midnight sun

HELI SIVUNEN

UTSJOKI (FINLAND), JULY 15

IT WAS well past midnight when Mihkku Laiti appeared on stage to perform at an open-air music festival in the Finnish village of Utsjoki, north of the Arctic circle. Despite the time, Lapland's famous midnight sun was still up. During the summer months the sun doesn't go down at all in Utsjoki, which is less than 50 kilometers (30 miles) from the Arctic Ocean.

In the glow of blue spotlights, Laiti rapped while a crowd of

more than 300 listened, some of them singing along and dancing.

Like the majority of Utsjoki's residents, Laiti is a member of the Sami — Europe's only recognized Indigenous people — and he rapped in his native Sami language.

Laiti, also known by his stage name "Yungmiqui," is the founder of the Loktafeasta rap festival. He first found fame on the television show Talent Finland, where he surprised the judges by rapping in the gakti, the traditional dress of the Sami.

It is brightly colored and often characterised by plaits, pewter

embroidery and a high collar.

The festival brought Laiti's Indigenous culture to the spotlight, though some of his fans could not understand what he was saying. That didn't seem to bother anyone at the Loktafeasta as the festival mixed performances from artists in both Sami language and Finnish.

Some drank beer and ate sausages and the crowd seemed to enjoy the summer festival atmosphere despite spells of rain.

"When I rap about my culture ... I want to show how being Sami is like from my point of view," Laiti told AP.



Artist Talonpoika Lalli performs at the Loktafeasta rap festival in Utsjoki village, Finland. AP

Because there are many stereotypes about Sami people and I want to like normalize ... the basic stuff we do and not romanticize those things," he said. He added that he has not worn the gakti for performances for about a year now to show people that it is possible to be Sami and wear whatever you want.

Only recognised indigenous people

The Sami traditionally live in Lapland, which stretches from northern parts of Norway to Sweden and Finland to Russia. However, of the roughly 10,000

modern lifestyles. The few who still tend reindeer do so with modern vehicles, digital tools and regulated land use.

At the festival, Laiti mostly wanted his fans to be happy and enjoy the music.

"I want people to feel joy, of course, and I just want people to be happy that we have this kind of festival here in Utsjoki," he said with a smile.

Among the other acts was a duo comprised of self-confessed old school tango crooner Jaakko Laitinen and rapper Jouni J. They also reside in Lapland and perform in Finnish.

THAILAND

WOMAN HELD FOR 'ENTICING' BUDDHIST MONKS

Police in Thailand arrested a woman Tuesday who allegedly enticed a string of Buddhist monks into sexual relationships and then pressured them into making large payments to cover up their intimacy. The possible violation of the celibacy rule for monks has rocked Buddhist institutions and gripped public attention in Thailand in recent weeks.

AP

Netanyahu under mounting pressure as religious party quits govt coalition

REUTERS
JERUSALEM, JULY 15

A RELIGIOUS party has quit Israel's ruling coalition in a dispute over military service, leaving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with a razor-thin majority in parliament but still enough political support to secure a potential Gaza ceasefire.

Six members of United Torah Judaism (UTJ) handed in resignation letters overnight from posts in parliamentary committees and government ministries, in protest against lawmakers' failure to guarantee future exemption from military conscription for ultra-Orthodox religious students.

Beijing has lodged protests with Japan, Lin said, defending China's military activities as "legitimate and reasonable." He urged Japan to reflect on its wartime past and "stop hyping tension in the region and China-related issues as a pretext to justify its military buildup."



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the Knesset on Monday. AP

tween Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas aim to halt fighting in Gaza for 60 days to allow half of remaining hostages held by Hamas to be released and aid to flow into the battered enclave. It would also open a further phase of talks on ending the war entirely.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich want Israel to press on with the war, but Netanyahu would still be likely to have enough cabinet votes to secure a ceasefire without them.

Israelis have become increasingly weary of the 21-month war in Gaza, which began with a surprise attack by Hamas on October 7, 2023 that led to Israel's single deadliest day with 1,200 killed and 251 taken hostage by the Palestinian militants. Israel's subsequent offensive against Hamas has since reportedly killed more than 58,000 Palestinians.

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EXPLAINED GLOBAL

THE PATRIOT MISSILE SYSTEM, AND HOW IT IS HELPING UKRAINE IN WAR



Patriot missile defence system in Slovakia. Reuters File

shoot down a Russian Kinzhal missile, which Moscow claims is hypersonic.

How widely is it used?

Raytheon has built and delivered more than 240 Patriot fire units, according to its website. These have been shipped to 19 countries, according to Raytheon, including the US, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Japan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

In January, Axios reported the US had transferred about 90 Patriot interceptors from Israel to Ukraine.

How much does it cost?

A newly produced single Patriot battery costs more than \$1 billion, including \$400 million for the system and \$690 million for the missiles in a battery, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Patriot interceptors are estimated at around \$4 million per missile, CSIS says.

Why does Ukraine want more Patriot systems?

Kyiv has consistently asked Western allies for more air defences to protect critical infrastructure and civilian areas from frequent Russian missile and drone attacks.

Ukrainian officials say Patriot systems are essential to defending key targets from Russia's escalating long-range attacks.

REUTERS

EXPLAINED SCIENCE

WHY THE EARTH IS SPINNING FASTER THAN BEFORE—FOR NOW

IT would not be summer without the stretched out days. But when it comes to the full astronomical day—a single rotation of planet Earth in which the hour hand moves twice around a standard clock—some of this year's shortest will be in July and August.

Last week has seen the shortest days of the year so far. According to data posted on July 11 from the US Naval Observatory and the International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service, rotation on July 9 was about 1.34 milliseconds less than 24 hours.

Not all days are equal

This is not completely out of the ordinary: Earth's spins have been faster than usual lately. The average day has mostly shortened over the past decade, and within the past five years or so, the full rotation has clocked in at a hair less than 24 hours more often than not. Factors driving the change include movements at Earth's core, atmospheric changes and the Moon's position.

But long-term trends do not suggest that the days will shorten in perpetuity. In fact, it is just the opposite. For many millennia, days have been growing longer. A Tyrannosaurus rex that lived 70 million years ago would have experienced an average daily rotation of about 23 1/2 hours, studies have found.

The lengthening trend is expected to continue, according to researchers.

Tug of the Moon

The main reason has to do with en-

THE NYT

ergy lost from the tides. The Moon's gravitational tug is responsible for tidal changes on Earth. Tidal currents heat the ocean very slightly, dissipating energy, which slows the rotation of Earth and lets the Moon move farther away as time passes. (At the moment, the rate of retreat is around 4 cm each year.)

In other words, the Moon and Earth can be thought of as a single system whose total angular momentum—a measurement of its rotation—is constant. As the Moon expands its orbit, and its angular momentum increases, Earth's angular momentum must decrease. That's why the days grow longer. But that is a process that takes billions of years and is complicated by short-term fluctuations.

In the short-term

Centuries of data show that the speed of Earth's rotation has never been steady. There have been slow periods, like the early 1990s or 1970s, when the length of a day regularly surpassed 24 hours by more than 2 milliseconds. And there have been faster periods, like now.

Many factors within and above Earth drive these changes. These include movement of materials within the planet, from the core to the mantle to the crust.

Recent studies have shown that climate change could also become a key driver of longer days. When ice melts into the sea, it spreads water away from the poles and toward the Equator. That makes the planet more oblate, which can slow its rotation.

THE NYT

enough time for it to decelerate to speeds that are suitable for a vertical landing on the ground. Additional braking systems, and structures like landing legs would be required.

It is safer to land a spacecraft in water even when it is travelling at 25–30 km per hour—the speed of the Axion-4 spacecraft at the time of splashdown. The low viscosity and high density of water provides much greater cushion. While it does not ensure a completely smooth landing, it absorbs enough shock from the impact to avoid damage to the spacecraft's structure, payload, or the crew inside.

The other reason is the availability of vast open spaces. On the ground, the landing location has to be precisely defined; in the ocean, there is no danger of hitting something else even if the spacecraft is dragged a bit off-course by air or water currents.

The capsules are designed to float on water. They are conical in shape, and either their top or bottom (depending on how they land) is rounded metal, which works

like the hull of a ship, and keeps them bobbing on the surface.

How landing is executed

When a spacecraft re-enters the Earth's atmosphere, it experiences deceleration due to friction. But additional measures are required to slow it to safe speeds. One such method is the use of parachutes. Spacecraft usually deploy two drag (or drogue) parachutes first, which stabilise the vehicle following re-entry, and reduce speed. The Dragon spacecraft deploys these parachutes at around 18,000 feet. At about 6,500 feet, the drogue parachutes are detached, and the four main parachutes are released, which continue to slow the spacecraft further. The spacecraft does not travel vertically to Earth, but glides down at an angle. From the point of re-entry to touchdown, it traverses a distance of 5,000–7,000 km. During this time, its speed comes down to about 25–30 km per hour, which is safe for a splashdown in the ocean.

EXPLAINED SCIENCE

Recovery after space journey

Shubhanshu Shukla, the first Indian on the ISS, is back to Earth, but it will be a few days before he can be his normal self. The body is impacted by microgravity, and needs to readjust to conditions on Earth

ANONNA DUTT

NEW DELHI, JULY 15

AS SHUBHANSHU Shukla and his colleagues on the Axiom-4 mission took their first steps on the recovery boat after coming out of the space capsule, they needed some assistance.

It will be some days before Shukla, who returned to Earth on Tuesday after spending 20 days in space—18 of which were spent on the International Space Station—can get back to normal life. Bodies of astronauts undergo various stresses in space, and require time to recover.

Space environment

The human body is under stress in space due to microgravity conditions and exposure to certain radiations that are absent or benign on Earth. The impact of these stresses depends on the length of the astronaut's stay in space.

During one of his interactions from the ISS, Shukla had said he did not feel his usual self in the first few days.

"It's the first time for me, so I don't know what to expect [upon return]. ... I did have some symptoms coming up, so I am hoping that I will not have it going down," he said.

Mission commander Peggy Whitson, who was on her fifth trip to space, said: "Some people get space motion sickness coming uphill and some people get it going downhill. I am a downhill person where I don't really adjust... [as] well to gravity as I adjust to microgravity".

Getting back to normal

The first thing that the four astronauts, back in Earth's air after almost three weeks, did after walking out of the Grace space capsule was to undergo a health check. They were then taken by helicopter to the NASA Space Centre in Houston, where they will rest for the next few days.

The astronauts' health parameters will be monitored closely—and based on the readings, personalised reconditioning plans will be worked out for each. The recovery plan will focus on improving mobility, balance, flexibility, aerobic conditioning, strength, endurance, and the body's ability to sense its position and movement.

Detailed post-flight medical checks usually continue for a week or longer after return. Impacts on the functioning of the heart, bones, eyes, and immune system are watched, apart from things like sleep disorder and headaches.

Astronauts experience space sickness in their initial days as the brain is confused by the gravity and acceleration information it receives from the inner ear—information that is essential for maintaining balance on Earth. Living in microgravity teaches the brain to not listen to the inner ear, which becomes a challenge when the astronauts return to Earth, as they face difficulty in standing up and walking.

Also, bodily fluids tend to shift because of microgravity conditions, and usually move to the upper part of the body in space—as a result, astronauts experience light-headedness or dizziness after they return.

All these symptoms are likely to be less severe in Shukla and his crew mates who spent just 18 days on the ISS. Astronauts on previous Axiom missions have been able to resume normal lives a week or two after their return.

Need for reconditioning

Astronauts need reconditioning after coming back to Earth to deal with their symptoms such as problems with balance, fixing their gaze, and difficulty standing up.

The reconditioning process includes training the astronauts to start listening to their inner ear again, helping with motion control, and taking care of conditions they face while standing. It also deals with their perception of movement of their own bodies, strength, and endurance.

According to NASA, around 92% of astronauts experience post-flight injuries. They may suffer muscle sprains, tendon-related injuries, and fractures.

From a probability distribution at any step. The subsequent tokens will be generated based on this new sequence.

There are two major sources of the uncontrollability of output, Bender said.

The first deals with system design. Chatbots achieve great apparent fluency by mimicking word-use patterns in huge datasets. There are bound to be some abhorrent patterns in the training data if the data collection during the pre-training stage "wasn't done with care"—or if it was done with the assumption that including all the bigotry online somehow produces a more "objective" or "unbiased" outcome, Bender said.

The data used by chatbots when answering questions also matters. Grok has been instructed to use data on X, and this is one reason why it reflects opinions that are

widely expressed on the platform.

The second source of uncontrollability is user context. During the training stage, a model's parameters are adjusted so that it learns to perform tasks well. Once the model is deployed, these parameters are fixed—and the only type of learning thereafter is in-context learning.

"Even if the system is constrained to output only a few fixed phrases, users can always set up a context, deliberately or not, that will make the output harmful," Bender said.

Post-deployment controls

On Saturday, xAI said it had removed a set of hard-coded instructions that caused Grok to veer off course. However, some users said the newly released Grok 4 continues to return antisemitic propaganda.

In traditional software, fixing a bug

might involve writing code or rolling out an updated module. However, LLMs are not typically modified once deployed. Most adjustments can only be made superficially.

"The deeper it is in the pipeline—the deepest being pre-training data, then post-training, and query time—the harder it is to change the model's behaviour," Nirant Kasliwal, an AI/Machine Learning engineer and founder of LLM consultancy firm ScaledFocus, told *The Indian Express*. He said it was unlikely that Grok's base model would now be changed.

Some band-aid solutions are generally used to realign a chatbot's behaviour:

■ **Hard-coded conversations:** LLMs can be trained to provide predetermined responses to questions such as "What model are you?". If a few hundred such conversations are added in the training data, the model

can be expected to parrot these responses.



1 Crew Dragon autonomously undocks from the ISS, and uses its boosters to move away from the space laboratory. Illustration/NASA



2 Before re-entering the Earth's atmosphere, Dragon detaches its trunk to reduce mass and save fuel. Illustration/SpaceX



3 Dragon's two drogue parachutes are deployed at an altitude of 18,000 feet, followed by four main parachutes at 6,500 feet (right). NASA



4 The four main parachutes reduce Dragon's speed drastically as it glides down at an angle for a safe splashdown. NASA

The Axiom-4 crew were assisted out of the Dragon spacecraft onto the recovery vehicle, after their return from the ISS on Tuesday. Axiom Space/ANI

Simpler, safer: Why spacecraft prefer splashdowns over landing on ground

ALIND CHAUHAN

NEW DELHI, JULY 15

THE SPACECRAFT carrying Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and his three colleagues on the Axiom-4 mission splashed down in the Pacific Ocean on Tuesday after a 20-hour journey from the International Space Station.

Landing in the ocean is the preferred way to bring back astronauts from space, though some spacecraft also make a landing on a runway like an aircraft. But the latter has specific requirements, needs more sophisticated systems, and is usually costlier.

For its Gaganyaan programme, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has designed a crew module that will land on sea.

Why water is preferred

Splashdown is generally a simpler and safer option. When a spacecraft begins to re-enter the Earth's atmosphere, at an altitude of 110–120 km, it is usually travelling at speeds up to 27,359 km per hour. There isn't



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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

Grok's praise for Hitler is part of a deeper AI problem. Here's the reason why

KARAN MAHADIK

NEW DELHI, JULY 15

ELON MUSK'S artificial intelligence (AI) company xAI has apologised for the "horrid behaviour" of its chatbot, Grok, which last week posted praise for Adolf Hitler.

This March, the behaviour of Grok, which was integrated into Musk's social media platform X in 2023, drew the attention of India's IT Ministry after it returned responses containing expletives and misogynistic slurs in Hindi slang.

Determinants of AI behaviour

There have been problems with output from other chatbots too. For instance, Google's Gemini recently generated historically inaccurate images.

Large Language Models (LLMs) are often

assumed to possess a form of human-like intelligence due to their ability to generate coherent and conversational language. In 2021, a now-famous research had equated the current crop of generative AI tools to stochastic—probabilistic or random-function—systems.

These systems are built on "synthetic text extruding machines", according to Emily M Bender, a professor of linguistics at the University of Washington and co-author of the paper (*On the dangers of stochastic parrots: Can language models be too big?*). "These systems aren't 'saying' anything per se, but rather outputting sequences of words based on their training data," Bender told *The Indian Express*.

Their probabilistic nature also explains why users rarely receive the same output twice. Even if the input token (a word or characters) is the same, the model could sample a slightly different output token

from a probability distribution at any step. The subsequent tokens will be generated based on this new sequence.

There are two major sources of the uncontrollability of output, Bender said.

The first deals with system design. Chatbots achieve great apparent fluency by mimicking word-use patterns in huge datasets. There are bound to be some abhorrent patterns in the training data if the data collection during the pre-training stage "wasn't done with care"—or if it was done with the assumption that including all the bigotry online somehow produces a more "objective" or "unbiased" outcome, Bender said.

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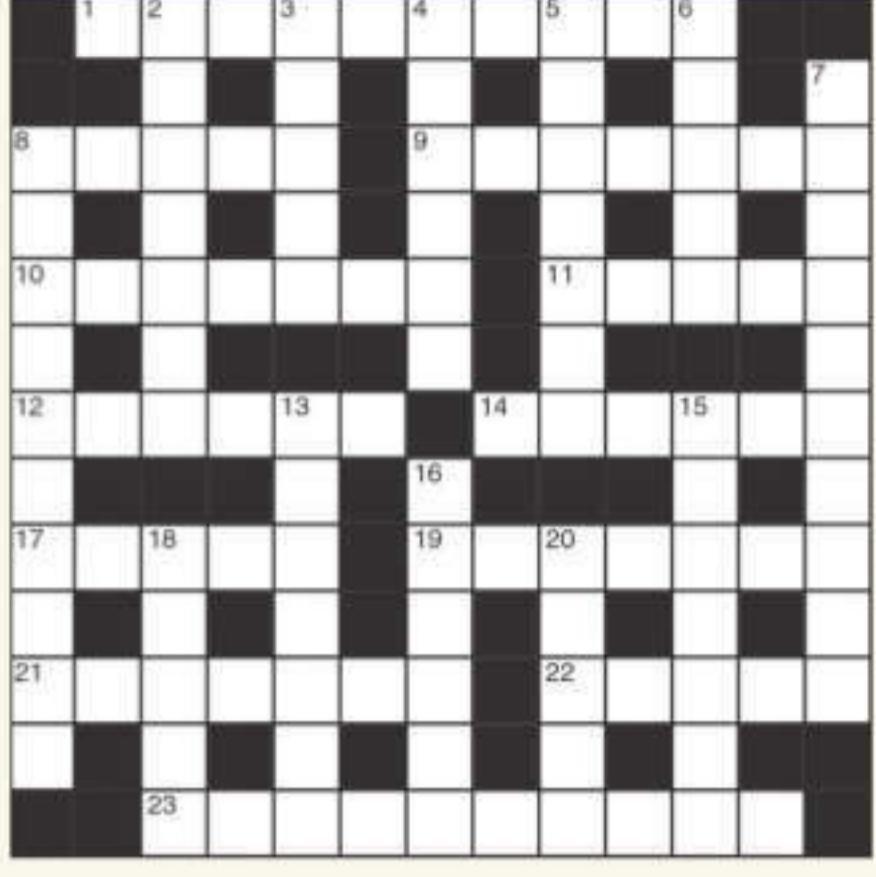
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In traditional software, fixing a bug

CROSSWORD 5729



- ACROSS**
- Old man provides me with so sound a return (10)
 - Not a crime to be coolly carried out (5)
 - I've returned in time to take a different course (7)
 - Local rules developed by Wales (7)
 - Room at the top in backward Italian city (5)
 - A tense amendment for a governing body (6)
 - Vessel - showing its nationality? (6)
 - A trap set outside a second time (5)
 - House holding an orchid (7)
 - That's what you think! (7)
 - Not all the pianist plays (5)
 - Unhealthy antagonism? (3,7)
 - Force plane to land (5)
- DOWN**
- Point behind the ship towards sunrise (7)
 - Layer on article turned to shade of red (5)
 - Presumably he likes painstaking people (6)
 - Indecisive plea for universal charity (4,3)
 - Centre of the earthquake (5)
 - A cut in decimal rates (10)
 - Sam's abroad ordered to represent his country (10)
 - Alice's top drawer? (7)
 - Bitterness associated with an age old craft (7)
 - Drive to a meeting place? (6)
 - After getting bail somehow I find an excuse (5)
 - Force plane to land (5)

Solutions Crossword 5728 Across: 1 Enough, 4 Append, 9 Nostrum, 10 Chasm, 11 Satin, 12 Lengths, 13 Fidel Castro, 18 Signora, 20 Elver, 22 Avail, 23 Gallo, 24 Events, 25 Gyrate Down: 1 Ernest, 2 Onset, 3 Gironde, 5 Pecan, 6 Exactor, 7 Damask, 8 Small change, 14 Ingrate, 15 Shelley, 16 Estate, 17 Groove, 19 Owlet, 21 Villa

JUMBLED WORDS

Below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

The pine stays green in winter... wisdom in _____. - Norman Douglas (8)

DLYAR
AENXDP
EXITS
GILYHH

Answers: LAIRD, EXIT, EXPAND, HIGHLY
Solutions: LAIRD, EXIT, EXPAND, HIGHLY - Norman Douglas

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

NIT No.	292226RT
Name of Work and its location	Tender for "Annual maintenance contract of Road weigh bridge at RCNM/SNP."
Approx Cost of work	Tender Cost: Rs. 59,000/- including GST (Rs. Fifty Nine Thousand Only)
Earnest Money	Rs.1200/-
Completion period of Work	24 months of date of LOA
Cost of Tender document on cash/by post	NIL
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs. on 05.08.2025 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs.
Website particulars notice board location	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
complete details of tender can be seen	No. 292226RT Date : 15.07.2025 2135/2025

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BENGALURU METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT CORPORATION
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NOTICE INVITING TENDER

B.M.T.C invites tender for procurement of the following Goods & Services through Kpp Portal:

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Description	Last Date for Bid Submission in KPP Portal
Regular Tender			

1	BMTC/2024-25/IND014/ CALL-2	Procurement of Expandable Vinyl Coated Fabric & Volvo Seat Fabric	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
2	BMTC/2025-26/IND0179/ CALL-2	Procurement of Water Pump and Parts.	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
3	BMTC/2025-26/IND018/ CALL-2	Procurement of Automotive Batteries	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
4	BMTC/2025-26/SE0907	Collection and Disposal of Hazardous Waste (Oil Soaked Cotton Waste) generated at depots and workshops of BMTC.	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
5	BMTC/2025-26/IND0198	Procurement of Window Flock Nylon EPDM Rubber Channel suitable for Bus.	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
6	BMTC/2025-26/IND0199	Procurement of ETM Thermal Paper Rolls.	18.08.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
7	BMTC/2025-26/IND0200	Procurement of Synthetic Adhesive SR 998 or Equilavent Adhesive.	30.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
8	BMTC/2025-26/IND0201	Procurement of Fuel Injection pipes and leak off pipes.	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
9	BMTC/2025-26/IND0202	Procurement of Fasteners	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
10	BMTC/2025-26/IND0203	Procurement of Volvo Air Suspension Spares	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
11	BMTC/2025-26/IND0204	Procurement of Volvo Brake and Brake Parts.	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
12	BMTC/2025-26/IND0205	Procurement of Volvo Radiator Assembly	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
13	BMTC/2025-26/IND0206	Procurement of Volvo Engine Spares	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
14	BMTC/2025-26/IND0207	Procurement of Volvo Filters.	18.08.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
15	BMTC/2025-26/IND0208	Procurement of Volvo Electrical Spares	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs
16	BMTC/2025-26/IND0209	Procurement of Head Lamp Assembly & Accessories	31.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs

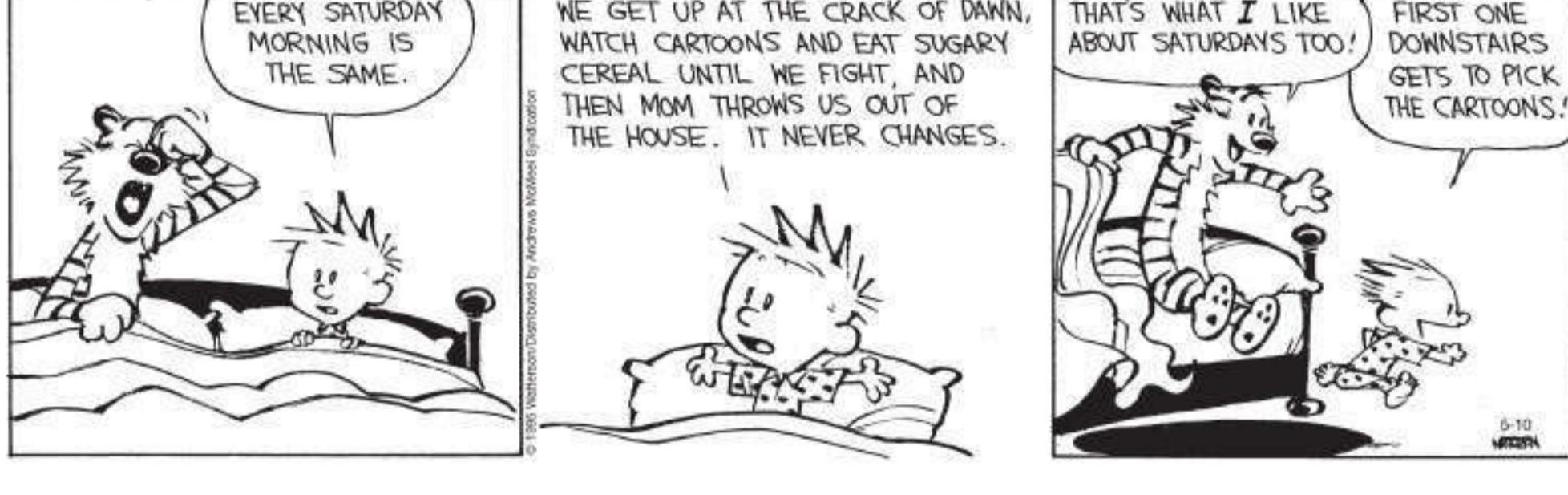
The above mentioned tender details can be obtained from <https://kpp.karnataka.gov.in>. Further, any addendum / corrigendum in respect of change in calendar of events, specification, other tender terms and conditions etc. will be uploaded/published through kpp portal only. Note: Interested Bidders need to register in the e-procurement portal. For further information Log on to <https://kpp.karnataka.gov.in> in case of further assistance, contact e-procurement cell phone No: 080-2230960, 080-22234115, may also contact e-procurement for training on bid submission. Mail to support@eprochelpdesk.com for further information required.

Sd/- CONTROLLER OF STORES & PURCHASES (Tender Inviting Authority)

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

In spite of your best efforts, domestic affairs seem determined to follow their independent course. Don't be distracted, as in the long run you're on the right track. Some sort of social or group enterprise could turn out to be most beneficial.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

There's no escape from your deeply emotional nature. This is a day to accept that your instincts are correct and that logic and reason may in fact be unreliable guides to healthy living. In fact, I'd say it's time to stick to the straight and narrow!

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Get your private affairs sorted out today, and don't let side issues distract you from important matters. It's likely you'll be engaged in activities which are your sole concern, and nothing to do with other people, so don't let them meddle!

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

A special personal plan is about to come to fruition, so set the pace yourself, and don't allow anyone else to rush you into doing something you suspect you'll live to regret. There's no reason why you should accept pointless delays.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

You have a public reputation to maintain, although you pride yourself on your independence.

Remember that, in the final analysis, some of your most treasured ambitions will only be attained if other people back you. Not only that, you should expect support to do as well as words.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

In general, this should be a sociable period, even though you're all too likely to take on responsibilities that you'll later find burdensome. Try to be more selective than usual. After all, if there is any time this year when you need to look after yourself, this is it.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Among the possibilities coming your way is a strong likelihood of long-distance travel. There should be a pleasant voyage in the near future but it could be a journey of the spirit as much as of the body.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

You might have been the victim of some underhand dealings at work. In any event, there's someone around whose motives make you rather uneasy. Such fears can easily be dispelled if you open yourself. After all, honesty breeds honesty.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

Lose no time if important matters are brewing. It's necessary that you take great pains to persuade supporters that your plans will have beneficial results for everyone. Plus, if you're on the look-out for a new job, a social contact could open a door.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

You should pay attention to your financial situation. Even if you've been concentrating on business matters, you've certainly overlooked important details. But, then, perhaps this is a day when you can afford to take time off from trivia and contemplate the larger picture.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Events should move along quite smoothly today, your task being to tackle issues that you would normally ignore. You may receive discreet support from relatives and other people close to you. If you're uncertain about the outcome, you may want to slow down and wait until after the weekend.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

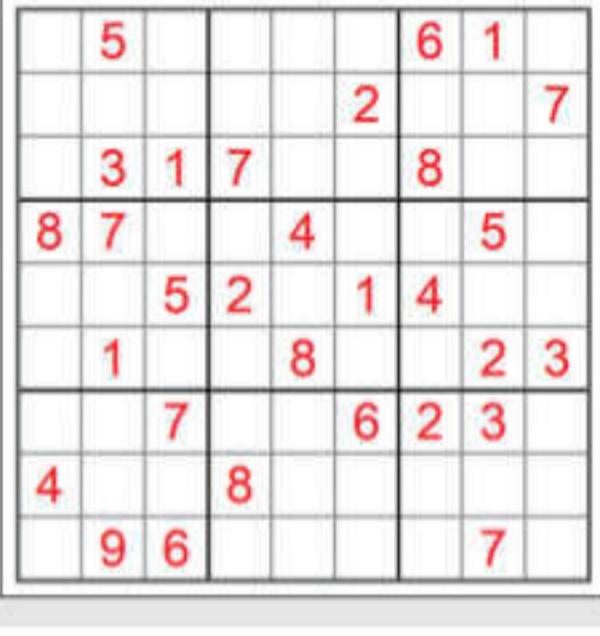
There's still an atmosphere of suspicion at work and you'll easily become embroiled in rumours. It's much better for you to bring everything out into the open, and make a start by asking partners how they feel.

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SUDOKU 6016

Difficulty Level 2
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.



By Order

Sh. Vinod Kumar Meena
Additional District Sessions Judge
(South- West), Dwarka
Dwarka Court, New Delhi

DP/9284/DW/2025 (Court Matter)

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By CE/Substation Design/ TS Organization, PSPCL, C-1, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Manufacture, Testing, Supply & Delivery of 85 nos. 11kV Residual Voltage Transformers (RVTs). For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 16.07.2025 onwards.

Note:- Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> on 16.07.2025 onwards.

For financial eligibility criteria, experience with respect to similar nature of work, etc, please refer to detailed tender notice available on website www.concorindia.com, but the complete tender document can be downloaded from website www.tenderwizard.com only. Further, Corrigendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on website www.concorindia.com, www.tenderwizard.com and Central Procurement Portal (CPP) only. Newspaper press advertisement shall not be issued for the same.

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A company incorporated in India
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NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (E-Tendering Mode only)

CONCOR invites E-tender in Single Packet System of Tendering for the following work:-

Tender No. CON/ICD/TKD/WH/Fire Fighting Works/A-I/E-7203/2025

Name of Work Augmentation for Provision of Water Sprinkler System for Mezzanine floor of Export Warehouse, hydrant/Water pipe line for bounded warehouse no.02 and Hazardous Container at ICD/TKD, New Delhi.

Estimated Cost Rs. 1,06,42,529.68 (inclusive of all)

Completion Period 09 Months

Earliest Money Deposit Rs. 2,03,213/- (through e-payment)

Cost of Tender Document Nil

Tender Processing Fee (Non-refundable) 3540/- (inclusive of all taxes & through e-payment



DAWSON REPLACES BASHIR
London: Left-arm spinner Liam Dawson has replaced injured Shoaib Bashir in England's 14-player squad for the fourth Test of the five-match series against India, the England and Wales Cricket Board said on Tuesday. **REUTERS**

RELENTLESS FIGHTER FOR THE TEAM'S CAUSE

Celebrate, don't criticise Jadeja

Pujara points out how the soft ball, sluggish pitch, fields set, and lack of partners dictated low strike rate



EXPRESS IN ENGLAND

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
LONDON, JULY 15

THERE IS this scorecard from the 2008 Ranji Trophy game between Saurashtra and Orissa that has a strange connection with the just concluded India-England Test at Lord's. It has the following entries: No. 4 Cheteshwar Pujara (302), No. 5 Sitanshu Kotak (37) and No. 6 Ravindra Jadeja (232). Pujara and Jadeja that day shared a record 5th wicket partnership of 520-runs – a mark that still stands.

That same Saurashtra middle-order was differently arranged at Lord's on Monday. Pujara was in the commentators box as an expert, Kotak was in the Indian dressing room as the batting coach and Jadeja was in the middle just 22 runs away from a miracle.

Jadeja didn't quite succeed but the all-rounder's 181-ball 61 was an embodiment of courage and patience – the two qualities that India's top-order can borrow from him the next time they pad up to chase a tricky fourth innings total.

Pujara doesn't agree with the nit-picking over Jadeja's slow crawl when batting with the tailenders. He also doesn't see strength in the argument that the No.10 and No.11 couldn't be expected to survive for that long. Or that Jasprit Bumrah (54 balls), Mohammed Siraj (30 balls) – were sure to fall in case the game stretched.

"He couldn't have scored faster on that track. I felt that it was because the ball was soft, and the pitch was on the slower side. I guess, Jadeja would have thought that the tailenders were batting well and the team was getting close to the total. And once they were a little closer he would have taken his chances. I thought he was batting well. It was very difficult to score runs on that pitch," says Pujara. Actually, Jadeja had already started taking chances. Just before Siraj got out, he had slashed at a ball that flew over the slips for four, and swung Ben Stokes to backward square-leg boundary.

Pujara had one suggestion, though a difficult one. "The only thing he could have done better is to look to score down the ground. Like there was a gap between mid-off and cover," he says.

Things might have been different had Nitish Reddy not got out, just when Jadeja might have thought about taking that next step. Batting with tailenders comes with its own share of tightrope walks, even if Jadeja has been chaperoning India's valiant bowlers who get invariably lumped with the task of salvaging top order crumbles on tricky wickets. The top 5 lasted 118 balls, while the bottom 5 fought for 322, but Jadeja who walked in at 71/5 helplessly watched KL Rahul, Washington Sundar and Nitish lose their wickets, and was in one right corner having to balance not folding up and still inching towards the target.

The aftermath saw the likes of Herschelle Gibbs question the Indian batsmen's intent in pushing for a win and Sanjay Manjrekar



Cheteshwar Pujara (below) praised his batting partner since his under-14 days for toiling hard at Lord's on Monday. PTI/Sportzpics

He couldn't have scored faster on that track. I felt that it was because the ball was soft, and the pitch was on the slower side. He would have thought that the tailenders were batting well and the team was getting close to the total. And once they were a little closer, he would have taken his chances."

ON THE PACE OF JADEJA'S INNINGS

wondering if Jadeja ought to have taken more risks. But even his fiercest critics would admit that India were 112/8 chasing 193, and losing a partner hung like a constant sword on his head.

It would have taken a natural big hitter to feel confident of clearing the field with this soft ball as Stokes had deep-set fielders. One risk that went awry from Jadeja would have killed the contest right there and then. And with the slow ball and the slowness of the pitch, it wasn't easy either to punch and push for twos. Stokes had smartly set the fielders deep, but not always on the boundary to allow easy two's.

Jadeja has nurtured patience as a virtue, having to curb his natural hitting T20 instinct for the team. With growing years, Jadeja's batting numbers, especially abroad, have seen a significant spike. In the last 5 years, his batting average is 46. On this tour, with three not outs, he averages over 100 in three Tests. Pujara, who has seen his long-time batting partner since they played un-



For the last five years, he has improved, especially abroad. He has been working hard. If you notice, even on the match day, he does his net practice... He has shown improvement when playing pace. He is now able to face seamers and spinners equally well."

ON JADEJA'S VALUE TO TEAM INDIA

der-14, gives the reason.

"For the last five years, he has improved, especially abroad. He has been working hard. If you notice, even on the match day, he does his net practice. He has shown improvement when playing pace," says Pujara about the cricketer who has been his team mate in the u-14 Saurashtra team, the u-19 India World Cup squad, for Ranji Trophy and senior Team India.

The other big difference is maturity. "Earlier it was the case of him not converting his good starts to big scores at the highest level. See one can't get 300 in first class cricket without skills. But you need to convert, like you do at first-class level, at international level," says Pujara.

The other big change is Jadeja's comfort level in facing seamers. "He is now able to face seamers and spinners equally well. Earlier, he was a good player of spin but lacked a little bit of strength against seamers, which is not the case now," says Pujara.

The other noticeable aspect of Pujara's

batting in England has been his ability to leave balls. Many times, it would seem that the ball has missed Jadeja's bat and he has been beaten by the movement. But replays would show that was not the case – Jadeja was in control of the shot and had read the ball's trajectory right.

"That is because he is looking to play close to the body. He doesn't go at a ball. He plays close to the body. And that is the reason, he lets the ball come to him. And this is also the reason why he plays the ball under the eyes. This comes naturally as you have decided to play the ball close to the body," says Pujara.

The one-time India No.3 recalls that record Ranji partnership with Jadeja. "I would normally bat at number 3 or 4. He came later on.

But we ended up scoring at the same rate since that was the time we had to declare," recalls Pujara. Did they talk, exchange ideas? "Nothing much. I mean, it was more of casual talk," he says. Even back in the day, Jadeja had a mind of his own, that of a batsman.

Man who walks into a storm and repels it

SANDIP G
JULY 15

HARRY BROOK placed an arm of comfort around Ravindra Jadeja, crouched on the grass near the 22-yard strip. Jadeja responded with a nod and half a smile. A brave smile of defiance that hid the hurt simmering inside him. As he slowly made his way back to the pavilion, Ben Stokes gave him a tight warm hug. The Indian emerged from the embrace with the defiant smile on his again.

Television cameras zoomed in on his face, to see if he had shed a tear, or if his eyes were moist. A raging stillness of the pupils met them. Fighters don't weep, flinch or shed excessive emotion, even if the battle has been lost. And there has been no bigger fighter for India in Test cricket than Jadeja in his time. No one refuses to surrender as vehemently as he does. On Monday, too, he remained undefeated, literally and metaphorically.

In a sense, Jadeja alone could have produced a knock of such stirring character as his unconquered 61 off 181 balls. There has never been a moment when Jadeja has not given everything he had in the cause of victory. On Day 5 at Lord's as well, he walked into a storm, resisted and repelled it. He restored the hopes of the faithful, and breathed belief into his Nos 10 and 11.

Some would question Jadeja's approach.

Should he have been more aggressive?

Should he have counter-attacked? But like a wizened, pragmatic schemer aware of his flaws and strengths, the left-hander chose the path that best suited him and the team; to

win the game with dour defence and through grit and graft. The ball was soft, there were men on the fence, he was running out of partners, and the deck was tired. A reckless stroke

could have sealed India's defeat. A younger, carefree Jadeja would have uncorked strokes of daring. The wiser version desired.

The surface, by then, was benign, but the match situation was such that the mind played more tricks than the pitch. But there was hope, because it was Jadeja. Because he would fight till the end. Because in every fight, he sees the fights that have made him.

It's the story of his career, even life. The un-defeat-able. Off the field, he flaunts his royal heritage and regal tastes. The thoroughbreds and luxury cars; the mansions and sprawling farmhouses. He puts pictures on X and Instagram in full Rajput attire. On the field, he wields the bat-sword celebration.

But he is not a pampered prince born with a silver spoon, and came through a life of hardships, his mind steeled by the death of his mother, a nurse at a government hospital. To

understand the prince when he was a commoner, and the spirit that has made him a great of the game, a rwind is seldom irrelevant.

More gifted but less tenacious men would have withered en route. In his late teenage, traditionalists accused him of taking life too casually, of getting intoxicated by sudden fame and fortune; he was easy fodder for memes and trolls, some perceived him as the embodiment of all the ills that fill the IPL milieu, some pundits questioned his skillset and demeaned his skillset.

Jadeja didn't seem to care, and dismissed the memestars as "fukre" (idle). Rather, he just kept fighting, an advice of his father – "Ground mein perform karo, bus baat khataan (Perform on the field and the chatter ends there) – always hissing between his ears, and emerged as the ultimate survival artist of his time. He had his moments of doubt and vulnerability, but subdued the demons with his characteristic doggedness.

Great survivor

He has lasted 13 years in Test cricket, bagged more wickets than the holy spin quartet, scored more runs than several specialist batsmen, mustered a better batting and bowling average than the most decorated all-rounder of the country (Kapil Dev), outlasted more celebrated peers of his time – Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Ravichandran Ashwin and Cheteshwar Pujara – and played under five different coaches.

Not only because he was gifted, but also because he fought every battle he could to stay relevant, to recalibrate his craft, to assert his value and virtuosity. Every successful cricketer would have battled their own battles to reach the top, but Jadeja emanates the feeling that no one has fought harder than he has.

He does not boast over his success. He carries his greatness lightly, even with a sense of detachment. "People keep judging you all the time, they say that's all he will do, he will not improve, he has limitations. They don't understand a simple principle that with time, one improves. I was the worst when I started. So I was just saying that I will improve and once I do, your opinion about me will change. That's when you will say 'This is the all-rounder India is' he once told this newspaper.

Few dispute his stature these days. The scepticism and sarcasm have given way to affection and respect, as evidenced by the overflowing sympathy after India's heartbreak.

Jadeja lost the fight in the final session at Lord's, but not because he stopped fighting. Rather, the match would be remembered because he fought till the end. This is how posterity would remember him too. The prince who fought.



Ravindra Jadeja scored a defiant, unbeaten 181-ball 61 on Monday. PTI

100 TESTS, 402 WICKETS

Starc's transformation from 'softie' to poster boy of swing bowling

SRIRAM VEERA
JULY 15

THERE IS something so devilishly simple about Mitchell Starc's inswinging baozkas with which he dismantled three West Indians in his first over, and two more by his fifteenth delivery, to go past 400 Test wickets in his 10th Test on Monday.

It's fast, it curves, and it stings either the pad or the stumps. There is no surprise. No batsman can claim to be caught unaware of what he is going to receive from Starc with the new ball, especially if the conditions are going to abet swing. And yet, many end up being utterly embarrassed, watching the pacer's pockmarked face running past them with a raised arm. 23 batsmen have seen that blury sight after being dismissed in the first over of a Test match by the Australian.

That inswinging Starc delivery is a landmark of modern-day cricket. It would be tempting for some to try adding Shaheen Afridi's version to it, but its lack of consistency reduces it to just a footnote, especially in Test match cricket.

He hasn't quite publicly agreed yet, but in the circle of former Australian players, Starc's turnaround apparently came after the stinging criticism from Shane Warne in 2014. "He is too soft," Warne had reportedly claimed, and the criticism seemed to be shared by the then-Australian management as Starc was dropped. Australia's bowling coach, then, was Craig McDermott, who

would term it as "presence". "It was something we have talked about even before Warne got stuck into him," Dermott had said.

Around this time, in a hotel in Dubai, former South African pacer Allan Donald called over Starc for a chat. They were both in Bengaluru's IPL team – Donald the coach, Starc the young fast bowler from Australia. Donald wanted to know whether Starc had it in him to take the next step as a fast bowler and become a leader.

"I felt he had it, but wanted to hear from him. I asked him, 'Are you ready to become a leader?' Donald had once recalled that episode while speaking to *The Indian Express*.

Leadership, Donald believes, is what separates the ones who can merely bowl quick and the fastmen who go on to become great bowlers. It's about having control over the art of fast bowling but goes beyond that – "work ethic, hunger, desire to become great, ruthless, ability and keenness to set an example to other bowlers in the team, and be a mongrel of sorts on field..." Donald listed them out with feverish passion.

Donald remembered Starc looking up at him that day to say, "Yes, I would love to do that". But being nice came easier to Starc. There is this video of Glen Maxwell interviewing Virat Kohli where the talk swerves to Starc and Kohli pipes up, "He is such a wonderful human being", and Maxwell chips in with, "Yeah he is a softie!"

Not often do you hear stories of a child-hood romance coming to fruition in adult-



Against West Indies on Monday, Mitchell Starc took a five-for in just 15 deliveries, ending with figures of 6/9. AP

hood. Starc was 9 when he walked into an academy with dreams of becoming a wicketkeeper. His chief competition in that selection camp was Alyssa Healy, before she moved away from the boys' camp. Years later, they would marry, to complete an aww-in-

HISTORY-MAKER

15

Mitchell Starc registered the fastest Test five-wicket haul by a bowler in history, bettering a joint record held by Ernie Toshack (v India, 1947), Stuart Broad (v Australia, 2015) and Scott Boland (v England, 2021) in 19 deliveries.

2 Starc is the second quickest bowler to reach 400 wickets after Dale Steyn (16,634) in only 19,626 deliveries. No other bowler has managed the feat within 20,000 deliveries.

LALITH KALIDAS

ducing story, worthy of a rom-com.

Natural action

It was one of the coaches in an under-15 camp who saw him bowl medium pace and told him to forget keeping and use his height and natural action to start bowling fast. The first thing one notices is the rhythmic run-up. With some fast bowlers, one tends to notice the odd things – the bobbing head, flailing arms, the lack of fluidity in the run – with things falling in place only at the last instant

at the crease, which sets these oddities right. Not with Starc. Everything seems perfectly synced, and the result seems like an obvious culmination of sorts.

Wasim Akram had once talked about how, after watching Starc bowl for the first time, he got so excited that he had a half-hour chat with the Australian, leaving behind one advice in particular: Snap the wrist at release to get more swing. That wrist-snap injected an extra dose of venom into Starc's art.

It was to Akram that Donald himself would return when he became Australia's bowling consultant for a brief while. By this time, post the days of the Dubai chat, if anything, the softie had turned cold-blooded. So much so that he had started to throw the balls back at the batsmen and Steve Smith had to once pull him up publicly for his behaviour. Even McDermott wanted his man to hold back a bit. "I have seen him go the other way now - sometimes he can go a little bit too far. You don't want to get too over-aggressive because you forget what you are trying to do with the ball and what you are trying to do with the batsmen."

During one of his initial chats, Donald, who was talking about the angles of release and how late the ball should start moving in the air to create havoc, realised it was better tell Starc to observe the master instead.

"I told him, if there is one bowler you want to watch and learn about all these things, it is Wasim Akram. What a bowler he was – he had everything and more." Inspired by Akram's videos, and close monitoring

from Donald, the ball began to do Starc's bidding; the art of reverse swing no longer felt as uncontrollable as it once did.

Donald believes Starc managed to tap into his inner mongrel more productively. "He bowls a lot more bouncers now than what he did in his initial years. We have talked about it in the past - Get the aggro going, let the batsmen know he can't come forward, and let the menace always be there."

"There aren't many fast bowlers who can bowl yorkers with the new ball as he does. Unlike many, he doesn't hesitate to bowl the new ball really full, more often than not. That's when, combined with the short deliveries, you are going to get the edges and hit the stumps. He can reverse from over and round the stumps. He can hurt you with the new and the old ball."

Donald then nailed that one Starc trait of 'attitude' that Pat Cummins too recently raved about. "You can't coach a guy to be a leader if he doesn't want to. There are some who just bowl and go. Starc is one guy who wants it badly. He is like McGrath, Shane Warne and wants to be that person who loves the ball and be a man all the time. You can't coach star like that. Starc has it. He is very special. If I have to describe him in one word – attitude. He is a proper one-hundred-percenter. He will walk through the wall for his team."

Shooters shot with new rules

Near-perfect scores, 'penguin walks' in big tournaments have made world body put forward new proposals

SHASHANK NAIR
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

TIRED OF near perfect shooting scores, and 'penguin walks' in high profile tournaments like the World Championships and Olympics in tightly wound together jackets raising eyebrows, the world body of shooting has proposed some radical changes. These intend to put the onus of technique back in the hands of rifle shooters and their level of training, rather than the gear doing all the work for them.

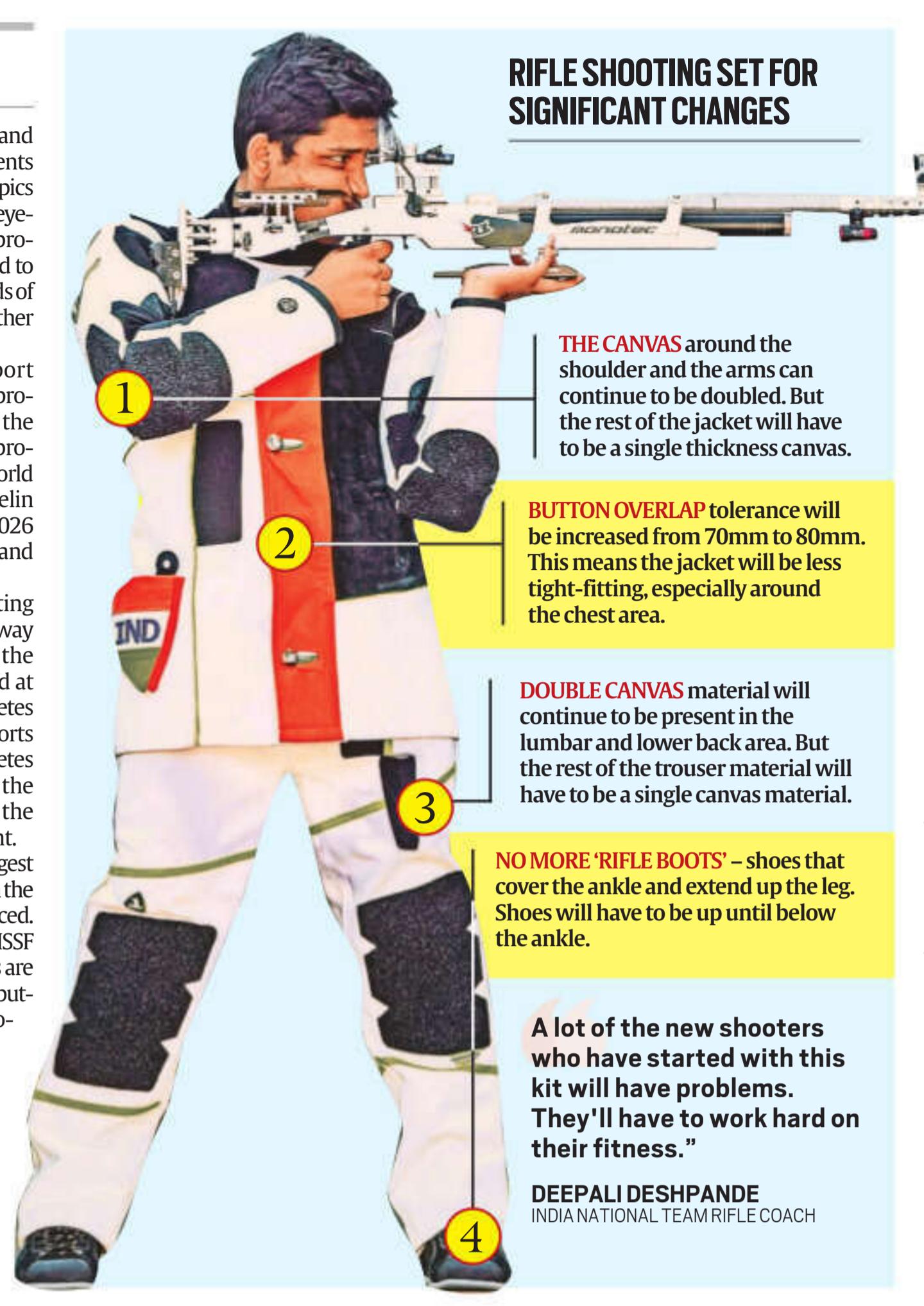
The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) has put forward these proposals after shooters started achieving the peak of scores possible in the sport. The proposal also hints at a rejig of the current world records, similar to how the sport of javelin underwent — and will start from the 2026 season, possibly to give manufacturers and shooters time to align with ISSF rules.

The ISSF, in a report tabled by Sporting Director Peter Underhill noted that the way the sport was being presented due to the clothing of athletes was being discussed at 'the highest levels of IOC.' Currently, athletes being unable to walk properly in their sports clothing and the whole image of our athletes encased in suits of iron risks bringing the sport into disrepute," the ISSF said on the 2025 Rifle Clothing Workshop document.

If ratified, the change would be the biggest in the Olympic discipline since 2012 when the decimal point scoring system was introduced. The chief area of change proposed by the ISSF is towards the rifle jacket. Modern jackets are made of two layers of canvas all over, with button holes and straps that tightly bind together the body of the shooter in an ideal position — and keep that position consistent over the period of a competition. This kind of clothing was leading to what Indian rifle coach Deepali Deshpande described as 'technical doping'.

"They have not asked to reduce the thickness of the jacket. The new rules will have some effect on the back and shooter's stability. The scores will no longer go as high as they do currently," said Deshpande to *The Indian Express*. "As mentioned in the document, it's currently like technical doping. The only issue is that changing gear will cost athletes money."

Other than the issue of cost (the ISSF document mentions that current gear can be



RIFLE SHOOTING SET FOR SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

THE CANVAS around the shoulder and the arms can continue to be doubled. But the rest of the jacket will have to be a single thickness canvas.

BUTTON OVERLAP tolerance will be increased from 70mm to 80mm. This means the jacket will be less tight-fitting, especially around the chest area.

DOUBLE CANVAS material will continue to be present in the lumbar and lower back area. But the rest of the trouser material will have to be a single canvas material.

NO MORE 'RIFLE BOOTS' — shoes that cover the ankle and extend up the leg. Shoes will have to be up until below the ankle.

A lot of the new shooters who have started with this kit will have problems. They'll have to work hard on their fitness."

DEEPALEI DESHPANDE
INDIA NATIONAL TEAM RIFLE COACH

lower than what they usually expect. Those consistent 10.8s and 10.9s might be a relic of the past. "A lot of the new shooters who have started with this kit will have problems. They'll have to work hard on their fitness."

Earlier shooters were making it to the Indian team within 2-3 years. They will have to really work hard to maintain their spot," said Deshpande, who is the coach of Paris Olympics bronze medallist Swapnil Kusale. Stiffer jackets allowed shooters to use heavier rifles, which allowed more stability, which in turn led to higher scores. But these new rules would lead to changes across the board. Shooters like Arjun Babta and Rudrankksh Patil, who use lighter rifles, may have to adjust, while shooters with heavier rifles might have to go for newer equipment.

"By default, these rifles are heavy and there really isn't much that can be done in making them lighter. That way, it may be an expensive affair. Even rifle manufacturing companies will have to come up with something different," said Deshpande. She also said that the old guard of Indian shooting might not be as affected. Anjum Moudgil, a former World Championship medalist and staple Olympian of the Indian shooting team continues to be one of the few shooters domestically who still wear a single canvas jacket. For Moudgil, sticking to her single layered jacket came from a place of wanting to be the best in her discipline, without the help of a stiff jacket putting her in ideal spots. "I was never tempted to use double layered jackets because I knew it was the jacket that was helping athletes," said Moudgil.

"Many coaches in the past have asked me to use these jackets but somewhere, being in this sport for so many years and not being dependent on the equipment but my body and my training, gave me a lot of confidence. I may not have shot high scores but I knew that I could be consistent. In warm weather the jacket can get loose but those factors don't affect me like other shooters," added the 31-year-old Olympian.

Welcoming the move, 2016 Rio Olympic gold medalist Virginia Thrasher said on her Instagram: "This will hopefully help athletes and coaches see the need for robust positions (rather than dangerous positions that shoot well). We will undoubtedly see changes in what a 'good' position is and those who are the most open to change will reap the rewards."

A happy headache for India ahead of World Cup at home

VINAYAK MOHANARANGAN
JULY 15



India captain Harmanpreet Kaur (R) with head coach Amol Muzumdar. *Sportspics/BCCI*

AFTER A confidence-boosting T20I series win, the real test is here for Harmanpreet Kaur's side as they take on England in three crucial ODIs in the lead-up to the World Cup which is just over two months away. With only three matches left on their schedule — at home against Australia in September just before the marquee home tournament — this series is pretty much the last opportunity for the Indian management to nail down their combinations. And Harmanpreet sees it as a 'good headache' to have after a while, with quite a few players enjoying a good run of form.

For starters, Pratika Rawal is expected to slot right back into the XI after not being part of the T20I squad. The Delhi opener has struck a dream combination with Smriti Mandhana at the top of the order. In 11 matches together, they have scored 968 runs for the opening partnership at an average of 88, with four 100-run stands. It is already in the top 10 for partnerships total for India in women's ODIs, and better than Mandhana and Shafali Verma's tally of 893 runs in 25 matches.

With head coach Amol Muzumdar saying Shafali is also still in the mix for the World Cup, after her good run in the T20I series, Pratika will have the chance to remind why she deserves to keep her spot in the top order.

The captain also had plenty of praise for her two left-arm spinners Sree Charan and Radha Yadav, the rookie and the returning veteran. While Charan has risen to the ranks quickly in both white-ball formats, Radha's bowling and fielding during the T20Is augurs well too, after being drafted into the squad in place of the injured Shuchi Upadhyay.

"Everything is quite settled and everybody knows their roles, what they're going to do and (understand about) their positions. A lot of clarity is there compared to what we had previously," Harmanpreet said in the pre-series press conference. "After a long time, it's a (good) headache that everyone is doing well and we are getting an option to choose the best team. Before this, we didn't have so many options. (The) credit goes to Pratika (Rawal) and Shafali (Verma), the kind of performances they are coming up with. Harleen, too, whenever she has gotten the opportunity, has shown that she can be good for the team and bat responsibly."

For Pratika, a first international series away from the subcontinent will be the biggest challenge of her brief career. And she has been in England for over a week now to get acclimated. "I came on July 6, and I had my first net session in Manchester, when I was batting there, I sensed that the ball was skidding," Pratika told BCCI.tv.

"Also, the bounce was a bit more as compared to the Indian wickets. So, I was able to assess in which areas I could place the ball and score runs accordingly. Also, back home, I was practising on astro (turf) wickets so that I could get used to the bounce. I have had a lot of conversations with Harmanpreet, Smriti, and Amol sir, to understand conditions better, and strategically which areas I can play according to my strengths so that I can counter the English pace bowlers."

From the squad that won the Tri-Series in Sri Lanka recently, India are likely to retain a majority of the XI as Harmanpreet hinted at retaining a four-pronged spin attack that worked in the T20Is too and possibly a toss-up between Arundhati Reddy and Kranti Goud for the second seamer spot alongside the impressive Amanjot Kaur. Whoever does make the cut for the playing XI in these three matches will be auditioning for their spots in the World Cup squad, adding heft to what should be a hard-fought series between two of the top three teams in the world.

India's ODI Squad: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana (VC), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (WK), Yastika Bhatia (WK), Teja Hasabnis, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Sree Charan, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Goud, Sayali Satgare, Radha Yadav.

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