

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



Merely living inside markaz not violation of orders: HC in Tablighi case



The Nizamuddin Markaz in New Delhi. File

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

MERELY LIVING in a markaz did not amount to violation of prohibitory orders issued by the Government curtailing movement during the onset of Covid, the Delhi High Court has ruled while quashing 16 FIRs and related chargesheets against 70 Indians associated with the Tablighi Jamaat.

The Jamaat was accused of spreading Covid by organising an international congregation at the Nizamuddin Markaz in Delhi between March 13 and 15, 2020. In its July 17 order, which was made public Friday, the court ruled that no offence is "even prima facie made out in the chargesheets". It observed that the "continuation of these chargesheets would tantamount be abuse of the process and also is not in the interest of justice."

Noting that the accused were rendered "helpless" with the announcement of a sudden

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CASH ROW: FACES IMPEACHMENT

Justice Varma moves SC, challenges inquiry report indicting him

'Parallel, extra-constitutional mechanism'

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

Justice Yashwant Varma

FACING AN impeachment motion following a probe into allegations of cash being found at his official residence in New Delhi, former Delhi High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma moved the Supreme Court Friday, calling its in-house inquiry mechanism that indicted him as a "parallel, extra-constitutional mechanism".

"Primarily, the In-House Procedure, adopted via a 1999 Full Court Resolution to handle complaints against judges and preserve judicial independence while maintaining public faith, unjustifiably extends beyond the intended scope of self-regulation and fact-finding. By culminating

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LOK SABHA TO TAKE UP MOTION SEEKING JUSTICE VARMA'S REMOVAL PAGE 6

in recommendations for removal from constitutional office, it creates a parallel, extra-constitutional mechanism that derogates from the mandatory framework under Articles 124

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ANCHOR

Self-defence teacher, aapda mitra: Odisha student's life snuffed out

"When she got admission into a five-year integrated course in the college, she proudly remembered the eminent persons who had studied there. She was happy being a student of such a reputed institution," her father said, describing her as "strong-willed and industrious".

He recalled her affinity to activism and her desire to both help and teach others. "My daughter was brave, which is why she raised her voice against the injustice done to her. She fought against the system until her last breath. I will never get back what I have lost, but other parents shouldn't suffer like me," he said.

The younger of two siblings, the woman had associated herself with the ABVP, the student affiliate of the RSS, since school. Even before formally joining the organisation, she would participate in every ABVP programme near her village.

Locals recalled how proactive she was during cyclones in the area in her capacity as an Aapda Mitra (friend during disaster).

"She probably learnt nationalism and volunteerism because of her association with ABVP — always happy to help others and motivating them never to give up," said her friend, who shared a room with her in a private mess

Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena. Speaking at the Indian Express event, Saxena said, "Today, there is a need for ease of doing business... People should not have to come to the government; the government should go to the people. We have ended the licencing system in the city. We have allowed the three-star and four-star hotels to operate 24 hours... If we talk about

the MCD licence, I would like to tell you that it was cleared in the last meeting... MCD licences will not be required for restaurants."

The MCD issues a Health Trade Licence to restaurants, which is mandatory for operation and is renewed annually. Last month, the L-G had passed a notification that Delhi Police clearances would not be required

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A statewide bandh was called on Thursday by Opposition parties in Odisha to protest the student's death. PTI

in Balasore for the past two years.

Barely a month ago, they shifted to a new mess, where the woman celebrated her birthday. "We've known each other for four years as we were in the same institute during higher secondary," the friend said.

Her roommate said the woman had been "tense and upset" since June 30, the day she submitted a complaint to the college principal against the professor. "Though we didn't belong to the same course, she used to call me didi and shared almost everything. She was distraught the evening before she set herself on fire. Around 8 pm, she called her

mother and shared her ordeal. Her mother asked me to console her," said her friend.

Until late night, the woman was on the phone, crying. She refused dinner. "She was awake until 3 am that night," her friend said. "She told me about her meeting with the principal and checked if I could join her. I couldn't as I had a class."

"We rely on food from a small eatery near our mess. They deliver food around 2.30 pm every day, but she asked them to send it by 1 pm that day. Why would someone plan lunch before setting herself ablaze? I am still looking for an answer," she said. The accused

assistant professor, Samir Kumar Sahu, and principal, Dillip Kumar Ghose, have been arrested.

Batchmates said the woman was a trained self-defence expert and would teach other women on campus. "She was an all-rounder. A good painter, singer, actor and human being," said a batchmate. Students recalled she had been facing attendance issues for several reasons, including her mother's surgery and a grandparent's death. Her friends claimed she was being bullied online ever since she complained against the professor. "That possibly added to her mental pressure," said a friend.

A LASHKAR PROXY, TRF OWNED UP ATTACK

Pahalgam attack outfit TRF placed on US terror list, boosts India efforts

Strong affirmation of counter-terror cooperation, says Jaishankar

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

IN A significant move that strengthens India's fight against cross-border terror, the US State Department Friday designated The Resistance Front, a shadow outfit of Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba that had claimed responsibility for the Pahalgam terror attack, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT).

In first remarks after Washington's move, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar described it as a "strong affirmation of India-US counter-terrorism cooperation".

In a post on X with the hashtag Op Sindoor, he appreciated the decision of Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the State Department, pointing out that the TRF was a LeT "proxy" and had "claimed responsibility for the April 22 Pahalgam attack". He said there is "zero tolerance for terrorism".

Designating an outfit as an FTO makes financing, aiding, advising and helping such an organisation a crime under US law.

Sources said this designation will support efforts to curb terrorism financing and to

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Twenty-six people were killed in the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, a popular tourist destination in J&K, on April 22

As lines between terror outfits blur in Valley, challenges on ground

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, JULY 18

THE DECISION by the US to designate The Resistance Front (TRF) as a terrorist organisation is a diplomatic win for India and a message to Pakistan, but its impact on the ground remains to be seen, top security officials in the Valley said Friday.

Designating an outfit as an FTO makes financing, aiding, advising and helping such an organisation a crime under US law.

Sources said this designation will support efforts to curb terrorism financing and to

the NIA concluded during its investigation that all three attackers were Pakistani nationals.

"It is a diplomatic win and puts Pakistan in a tight spot, but as far as the militancy is concerned, we will have to wait and watch. We have enough examples from the past — Lashkar, Jaish and even Hizb. All of them have been designated as terrorist organisations, yet they continued their attacks," said a senior police officer, who has been part of Jammu and Kashmir Police's counter-in-surgency grid.

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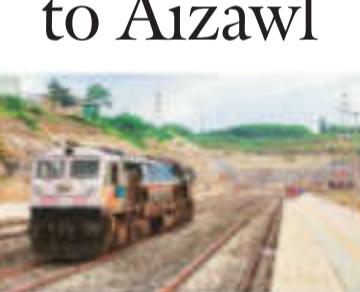
EXPLAINED

Liquor 'scam' probe: ED arrests Baghel's son Chaitanya, gets his custody for 5 days

BIG PICTURE

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When a train comes to Aizawl



A 51-km rail line comes to the Mizoram capital, bringing both hope and a sense of foreboding

INSIDE



Chaitanya Baghel, son of Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel, being produced at the PMLA court in Raipur on Friday. ANI

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU
RAIPUR, JULY 18

CHAITANYA BAGHEL, son of former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister and Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel, was arrested on Friday by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on charges of money laundering in connection with the alleged Rs 2,161-crore liquor scam.

He was subsequently produced before a special Prevention

of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Raipur and remanded in ED custody for five days.

According to the ED, the alleged scam involved a syndicate of senior state bureaucrats, politicians, and excise department officials who are accused of running a "parallel" excise department, wherein liquor was sold to the public, but no money came to the state exchequer, causing the government a loss of

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Raj Thackeray says MNS will shut down schools if Hindi imposed on students

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JULY 18

MNS CHIEF Raj Thackeray on Friday warned that if Hindi was made mandatory for Classes I to 5 in schools in Maharashtra, his party will "shut down schools".

The MNS remarks came a day after Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis stressed upon his resolve to implement the three-language policy in school curriculum. He had, however, stated that the third language will be optional and would be based on the recommendation of the committee formed.

Speaking at a public rally in Mira-Bhayandar, Thackeray said, "If the government wants to commit suicide, let it. We won't stop it." In a 40-minute speech, Thackeray reiterated that Marathi language and culture were "non-negotiable".

"I will never compromise on the Marathi person, the Marathi language, or the Marathi identity. Those living here must learn Marathi. If you want to live peacefully in Maharashtra, respect the language and the people."

Thackeray accused unnamed forces of attempting to politically and culturally align these areas with neighbouring Gujarat. "They want to annex this entire stretch to Gujarat – it's not new, it's a long-running agenda," he claimed.

Bid to defame kanwariyas, Yatra going on peacefully: Yogi

Lucknow: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Friday said that some people are "labelling" kanwariyas as "miscreants" and emphasised that they have been taking out the Yatra "peacefully and with full of devotion". Adityanath also pointed out that attempts are being made to incite caste conflict through fake social media accounts. The CM was addressing an event in Varanasi, where he inaugurated a national seminar on tribal icon Birsia Munda.

He said that Yatra embodies unity transcending caste, creed, and sect. "Today, the Yatra is progressing peacefully, yet some label it as unruly. These are the same forces that try to mislead and provoke tribal communities. We must remain alert to such divisive elements," he said.

ENS

For ease of business, restaurants won't need key MCD licence: L-G

for businesses such as hotels and restaurants.

Saxena and India's G20 Sherpa and former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant were guests at the Express on Culture. The session was moderated by *The Indian Express* National Opinion Editor Vandita Mishra.

While Saxena asserted that Delhi is a complex city where governance is tough, Kant identified two issues, which he said, plague the national capital: encroachment and freebies.

"Even to repair a small patch of road, multiple departments have to be involved, as the road might belong to the PWD and the central verge might be under the DDA," Saxena said.

Asked about his image as a non-bureaucrat L-G and the related challenges, Saxena said, "I am from the corporate sector. I believe that every bureaucrat should undergo training in the corporate sector for at least six months. There is a need to understand the difference between the corporate and the government working system. In the private sector, decisions worth crores are taken quickly in seconds... their focus is on quality and timely execution of the projects... we are trying to fix this responsibility, so as to promote quality."

Speaking about urbanisation, Kant said, "Politicians have actively encouraged encroachments in Delhi. Before every election, they legalise encroachments."

PM reaches out to Bihar youth with Rs 15,000 incentive for first-time pvt sector employees

presented in July 2024. The duration of the scheme is two years from August 1, 2025, to July 31, 2027.

Modi said the Bihar government had appointed lakhs of youth "fairly and transparently" and the Centre was working "shoulder-to-shoulder" with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. "Those in the RJD can never give you jobs. They are the ones who seize your land in exchange for job promises. Remember, one side was the old Bihar stuck in the era of lanterns (a reference to the RJD's symbol), and on the other side is this vibrant Bihar full of new hope and

ambition. This transformation has happened by walking hand-in-hand with the NDA. Therefore, Bihar's resolve is firm, every movement with the NDA."

The PM's comments appear to be a counter to nullify the RJD's jobs pitch, which is cited for its success in the 2020 Assembly elections. RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav had centred that campaign around creating 10 lakh jobs, and the party emerged as the single-largest party with 75 seats out of 243. Tejashwi repeated the strategy in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, claiming that in the 17 months as Deputy CM – before

FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Pahalgam attack outfit TRF on US terror list

encourage other nations to do the same. It stigmatizes and isolates the TRF internationally, deters donations or contributions to and economic transactions with it, increases public awareness and signals to other governments on the concern about TRF, sources said, adding that the designation will help India to push for listing TRF at the UN as well.

The US State Department, in a statement, said, "Today, the Department of State is adding The Resistance Front (TRF) as a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). We acknowledge and appreciate the leadership of Secretary of State Mr Marco Rubio in this regard."

The TRF, a proxy of the Pakistan-based terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), has been involved in numerous terror-related activities, including the heinous attack on civilians in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, on 22 April 2025 for which it twice claimed responsibility."

"India has consistently emphasized the need for global cooperation in the fight against terrorism and the dismantling of terror infrastructure. The designation of TRF is a timely and important step reflecting the deep cooperation between India and the United States on counter-terrorism," the MEA said.

It said India remains committed to a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and will continue to work closely with its international partners to ensure that terrorist organisations and their

proxies are held accountable. The designation follows India's consistent efforts for naming TRF in the UNSC statements, which was stymied by Pakistan at the UNSC.

President Trump was the first foreign leader to call up Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the Pahalgam terror attack, which took place when Vice President JD Vance was in India.

While India and the US have developed a strong relationship on counter-terrorism, the US President's outreach to Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir last month had caused some discomfiture in Delhi.

Besides, Trump's repeated assertions – at least 20 times now – on how he had mediated a ceasefire between India and Pakistan during Operation Sindo had riled Delhi. So much so that India rejected the claim and Prime Minister Modi also countered it during a phone call with Trump.

Detailed the 35-minute phone conversation between the two leaders – Modi was in Kananaskis in Canada for the G7 Summit – Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri quoted the PM as telling Trump: "At no point... was there any discussion, at any level, on an India-US trade deal, or any

proposal for a mediation by the US between India and Pakistan. The discussion to cease military action took place directly between India and Pakistan through the existing channels of communication between the two armed forces, and it was initiated at Pakistan's request... India does not and will never accept mediation. There is complete political consensus in India on this matter."

The TRF and other associated aliases have been added to LeT's designation as a FTO and SDGT pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and Executive Order 13224, respectively. The Department of State has also reviewed and maintained the FTO designation of LeT.

Amendments to FTO designations go into effect upon publication in the Federal Register.

Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) are foreign organisations that are designated by the Secretary of State in accordance with Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), as amended.

"FTO designations play a critical role in our fight against terrorism and are an effective means of curtailing support for terrorist activities and pressuring groups to get out of the terrorism business," the US State Department said.

● Liquor 'scam' probe: ED arrests Baghel's son, gets his custody for 5 days

around Rs 2,161 crore. It is alleged to have taken place between 2019 and 2022, during the previous Congress government in Chhattisgarh that was helmed by Bhupesh Baghel.

Around 7 am on Friday, the ED began searches at the Baghel residence at Bhilai city in Durg district. At around noon, the agency arrested Chaitanya.

Speaking to the media, Chaitanya's lawyer Faisal Rizvi said, "This matter has been going on since 2022. The first prosecution complaint (filed by the ED) was submitted in court, following which three more supplementary prosecution complaints were submitted... but neither was Chaitanya's name mentioned nor was his statement recorded in them."

The ED had not summoned Chaitanya for questioning. "There is one Papu Bansal (Laxminarayan Bansal) against whom a non-bailable warrant was issued on May 16 this year by the special court. After this, Papu Bansal gave a statement, and based on his statement, Chaitanya has been arrested on his birthday when he was offering pooja at home..."

On one hand, in Bihar, with the help of the Election Commission, voters are being removed (from the voters list), and democracy is being stripped. On the other hand, they are using ED, I-T, CBI, and DRI to suppress Opposition leaders. However, our country's people are now well aware. ED has come in the past as well and raided my place and found Rs 33 lakh in my house. Now they have come again. What does this mean? We will fully cooperate, regardless of whether they trust us or not; we believe in democracy and the judiciary. They (BJP) are misusing the agency, but we will cooperate with them," Baghel said.

He also questioned the timing of the ED raids, which coincided with his son's birthday.

In a post in Hindi on X, Baghel

said, "The kind of birthday gift that Modi and Shah ji give, no one else in any democracy in the world can give. On my birthday, both highly respected leaders sent ED to the homes of my advisor and two OSDs. And now, on my son Chaitanya's birthday, an ED team is raiding my house. Thank you for these gifts. They will be remembered for a lifetime."

Justice Varma moves SC, challenges inquiry report indicting him

and 218 of the Constitution, which exclusively vest powers for removal of judges of the High Courts in Parliament through an address supported by a special majority, following an inquiry under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, Justice Varma's plea states.

The *Indian Express* had reported that on May 4, the then Chief Justice of India, Sanjiv Khanna, forwarded the report of the three-member inquiry panel of judges, along with the reply from Justice Varma, to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The report was prefaced with a recommendation to the President to initiate the process to remove Justice Varma.

Justice Varma's plea underlines that the administrative or self-regulating procedures adopted by the Supreme Court "cannot circumvent or override the constitutionally protected tenure of High Court judges or imbue the Hon'ble CJ with unregulated authority to act as the arbiter of the fate of other judges of the High Courts/this Hon'ble Court". Constitutionally, the Supreme Court does not exercise supervisory powers over High Courts.

In Justice Varma's case, the top court had also issued a statement that the then CJ had "asked" the Chief Justice of Delhi High Court not to assign any judicial work to the judge.

Justice Varma has also raised questions over the Supreme Court decision to make public the purported video showing wads of burnt currency notes at his residence as being "ex facie disproportionate and violative of the law". The plea states that this disclosure gave rise to a media trial, which the Supreme Court itself in its rulings had barred.

Amrit Bharat trains that will cater to regions with a migration rate to metros: Rajendra Nagar Terminal (Patna) to New Delhi, Bapudham Motihari to Delhi (Anand Vihar Terminal), Darbhanga to Lucknow (Gomti Nagar), and Malda Town to Lucknow (Gomti Nagar) via Bhagalpur.

He said the eastern states would be the next engine of the country's growth story and appealed to voters to allow the NDA to continue to work for Bihar's progress. "You have already freed this land from the shackles of the RJD and the Congress. You made the impossible possible. Now that Bihar is on the path of progress, it must continue with the NDA. That

is your pledge, NDA at every step. We will build a new Bihar, and once again, an NDA government."

The "younger generation must be made aware of the despair in which Bihar was mired until two decades ago" and it is essential to "protect Bihar against the ill intentions (burjiyat)" of the Congress-RJD combine, the PM told the crowd.

In his speech, CM Nitish Kumar said the decision to provide 125 units of free power in the state starting August 1, announced on Thursday, was "in keeping with the advice" of the PM. Later in the day, the state Cabinet cleared the proposal.

— WITH ENS DELHI INPUTS

Merely living inside markaz not violation of orders: HC in Tablighi case

lockdown on March 24, 2020, the court observed that they had congregated before the issuance of prohibitory orders and did not violate any condition thereafter.

In the ruling, Justice Neena Bansal Krishna recorded that "merely because they were living in a Markaz, it did not amount to a violation" of conditions in the prohibitory orders.

"In the present case... there is not a whisper in the FIRs or the chargesheets that petitioners (accused) were found Covid-19 positive or they had moved out negligently or unlawfully with intent or knowledge to spread the disease of COVID-19, which was dangerous to human life," the court ruled while dismissing the allegations levelled by Delhi Police and the prosecution.

While seeking quashing of criminal proceedings, the defence had pointed out that the congregation was scheduled before the pandemic.

Thereafter, the accused told the court, they were left "remediless" with imposition of prohibitory orders under CrPC Section 144 and a janta curfew banning movement of people on March 22, 2020, followed by a 21-day lockdown from March 25, 2020. This left them with no recourse but to continue staying inside the masjid, until taken into institutional quarantine, the defence argued.

The court also took into consideration that "all cases that were registered during the Covid-19 period" under similar provisions before various courts across the country "ended either in acquittal or discharge of the accused persons."

The Delhi Police's Crime Branch initially registered an FIR under Section 3 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and Sections 51 and 58 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, against seven Indians.

The Crime Branch then filed 48 chargesheets and 11 supplementary chargesheets, including under Section 14(b) of the Foreigners Act, 1946, against 955 foreign nationals, of whom 908 entered plea bargains before the magistrate court.

Eight of them were discharged in August 2020, and 36 others acquitted in December 2020. No action was taken against three others who were identified as foreign national juveniles.

The Government began a crackdown on Tablighi mem-

'INGREDIENTS FOR OFFENCES NOT MADE OUT'

WHAT DELHI HC SAID ON KEY CHARGES:

IPC SECTION 188 (disobedience of order promulgated by public servant): "There is no averment whatsoever to show that any information was actually conveyed to the petitioners (regarding prohibitory orders)... The essential ingredient of promulgation to constitute an offence under Section 188 IPC has, therefore, not even been established."

SECTION 3, EPIDEMIC DISEASES ACT, 1897 (violence against healthcare personnel) & Section 51, Disaster Management Act, 2005 (obstruction related to disaster management efforts): "...no averment of any government official being obstructed or there being any refusal to comply with any directions issued by the government... It is not shown that there was any criminal act, whether under the Disaster Management Act or the Epidemic Diseases Act, committed by the petitioners."

SECTION 144 CRPC (prohibitory orders): "The congregation had not been (held) subsequent to the notification under Section 144 CrPC. They were helpless people, confined on account of the lockdown... merely because they were living in a Markaz, it did not amount to a violation of any of the...activities which were prescribed by the notification..."

bers after an Indonesian man who had allegedly attended the gathering in Nizamuddin was detected with Covid in Telangana. Over 950 foreign nationals, including diplomats, were subsequently blacklisted and accused of contravening emergency rules.

Singapore."

Modi said many women did not even have bank accounts before his government rolled out the Jan Dhan scheme. "Modi understands what the dignity of the poor means. I asked the banks: 'How can you keep your doors shut for the poor?' We launched a massive campaign and opened Jan Dhan accounts. Today, about 3.5 crore women in Bihar have these accounts, allowing direct transfer of government scheme benefits." He also applauded the Bihar government's recent decision to increase pensions.

The PM promised further support for Bihar's agro-based economy and flagged off four new

— WITH ENS DELHI INPUTS

DELHI AGAIN: FOURTH TIME IN LAST FIVE DAYS

'Explosives hidden in plastic bags': 42 schools, 3 colleges get hoax bomb threats

ALOK SINGH
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

MORE THAN 40 schools and three colleges in Delhi received a bomb threat by email on Friday morning – the fourth time in the last five days – which said that “several explosive devices have been hidden in classrooms”, prompting authorities to conduct searches on their premises. The threats later turned out to be a hoax.

According to sources in the police, the email was received by 42 schools at 10.53 pm on Thursday. The school administrations informed the police and other authorities after discovering the email – allegedly sent from a web-based email service based in Estonia – in their in-boxes on Friday.

Among these schools were Richmond Global School in Pashim Vihar, Abhinav Public School and Sovereign School in Rohini, Bharati Public School in Preet Vihar, and St Xavier's Senior Secondary School in Civil Lines. Raja Banthia, DCP (North



Police personnel at Heritage School in Rohini, Friday. PTI

Delhi), said PP College for Women, Hindu College, and Shri Ram College of Commerce also received the threat email.

It stated, “Hello, I am writing to let you know that I have placed several explosive devices (Trinitrotoluene) within school classrooms. The explosives are skilfully hidden in black plastic bags.”

The police, along with bomb detection and disposal squads

and Delhi Fire Services personnel, conducted searches but failed to find anything suspicious on the premises.

The day also saw at least 40 private schools in Bengaluru receiving bomb threats via email, with the same claim that explosive devices had been planted in classrooms.

Former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal slammed the BJP over the matter. “More than 20 schools

have received bomb threats today! Think of the trauma that children, parents and teachers would be going through... BJP controls all 4-engines of governance in Delhi, and is yet not able to provide any safety or security to our children! Shocking!” she said in a post on X.

Seven schools, including St Thomas School in Dwarka, Vasant Valley in Vasant Kunj, Richmond Global School in Paschim Vihar, Mother's International in Hauz Khas and Sardar Patel Vidyalaya in Lodhi Estate, had received bomb threat emails on Wednesday, which were later declared a hoax.

On Wednesday only, the police had briefly apprehended a 12-year-old boy for allegedly sending fake bomb threats to St Stephen's College and St Thomas School on Tuesday.

Since last May, several Delhi schools have been receiving bomb threats. More than 200 schools received bomb threats on their official email IDs in May 2024. Similar threat emails were also sent to several hospitals, colleges, and the Delhi Airport.

Brother alleges foul play after man dies of electrocution, FIR lodged

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

DAYS AFTER a 36-year-old man died of “accidental electrocution” in Dwarka’s Uttam Nagar, his brother has approached the police alleging that it was a potential case of foul play, police said on Friday, adding that an FIR has been lodged in the matter.

On July 13, the Mata Rooprami Maggo Hospital in Uttam Nagar had informed the police that one Karan Dev had reportedly died from electrocution.

He was declared brought dead at the hospital, as per the Medico-Legal Case (MLC) report filed at the hospital.

The patient was declared dead on arrival... and was shifted to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital for postmortem. At that time, no allegations were raised by family members, who did not wish to go ahead with the post-mortem. However, taking into account the age of the deceased and to rule out any unnatural circumstances, a postmortem examination was conducted,” said Dwarka DCP Ankit Singh.

On July 16, the deceased’s brother, Kunal, approached the police allegedly with concerns about the role of Karan’s wife and his cousin in the death, said police.

Acting on his statement, a preliminary inquiry was launched. “Based on the findings of the probe and materials gathered during the inquest proceedings, a murder case was registered,” said an officer.

Police said that they are still questioning the two. “We suspect they wrapped a naked wire around his wrist and electrocuted him,” said an officer.

Brother of the deceased has approached the police allegedly with concerns about the role of Karan’s wife and his cousin in the death

TO STOP ‘TOUTS’ FROM POSING AS LAWYERS
Non-lawyers can’t wear white shirt, black pant in Rohini court

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

IN A move to stop touts from posing as lawyers and “misleading” litigants, the Rohini Court Bar Association (RCBA) has issued a notice reserving white shirts and black pants only for advocates practicing in the court premises.

“It is hereby notified that no clerk, litigant, or member of the general public is permitted to wear a white shirt and black pants during their visit to the court complex,” read the notice issued by RCBA on July 15. “This attire is strictly reserved for respected lawyers/advocates as a mark of professional identity and dignity of the legal fraternity,” it added.

The move comes after RCBA had issued another notice, flagging concerns about “touts” posing as advocates.

“The Executive Committee of the RCBA... has found that a number of touts are falsely representing themselves as official advocates or clerks of advocates. These individuals are misleading and defrauding uneducated litigants under a false pretense,” it had stated.

Earlier, the RCBA had also made it mandatory for every advocate to obtain authorised ID cards for their clerks. Failing to follow norms may lead to disciplinary action.

“Many times, miscreants and accused persons wear the clothes of lawyers... they even take up the parking space reserved for lawyers. They are constantly duping litigants,” said Advocate Rajiv Tehlan, president of RCBA. He added that the RCBA has changed the parking norms by adopting QR codes, where upon scanning, details of the ad-

vocates appear. Advocate Pravesh Dabas, who practices regularly in Rohini court, said, “This is a pragmatic step... We have instances of the general public dressed in uniform... (posing) as practicing lawyers... Common litigants are induced by these touts standing at the entrance of courts.”

“In the past, we had witnessed the infamous shootout of gangster Gogi in court premises... this could only happen as the assailants were wearing a lawyer’s uniform,” he added.

Advocate Dhir Singh Kasana, former Saket Court Bar Association secretary, said, “In Saket court, there is no proper checking. This step is good for security purposes. It should happen in every court. Otherwise, thousands wearing black and white clothes enter everyday... I feel that this can curb the entry of fraudsters.”

Police may use reasonable force if rape accused refuses to give blood sample: HC

DNA test is almost compulsory in rape cases, says bench

**SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, JULY 18**

MAINTAINING THAT DNA test is “almost compulsory in rape cases”, the Delhi High Court has held that in case the accused “declines or resists” providing a blood sample, the investigating officer “may use reasonable force for the purpose.”

Justice Neena Bansal Krishna issued the directions on July 17 while deciding a plea filed by a rape survivor who challenged the accused’s refusal to provide his DNA sample to the police.

The accused, booked under sections 354 (criminal assault and outraging modesty of a woman), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 509 (insulting modesty of a woman) of the Indian Penal Code initially, was also later charged with rape. The man has also been accused of attempting to forcibly get the complainant to abort their child.

According to the plea, at the

time of the probe and medical examination, he had refused to give his blood sample. The Delhi Police had then moved the magistrate court seeking permission to get his DNA sample to match it with the foetus.

While a magistrate court had allowed the same in June 2022, the order was challenged by the accused before a sessions court.

The sessions court had overturned the magistrate’s order in April 2023, denying the prosecution permission to match his DNA with that of the foetus. The complainant had then challenged the sessions court order before the HC.

The accused had contended that the complainant “habitually” levels rape and sexual assault allegations on various persons, with five similar FIRs being lodged earlier.

Justice Neena Bansal Krishna said, “In appropriate cases, especially those involving allegations of sexual assault, recourse to DNA testing is not only permissi-

bility but imperative.” She further noted that requests for DNA analysis must not be declined, especially when, after 2006, Section 53A (examination of rape accused by medical practitioner) of the CrPC has been introduced, “making it almost compulsory in rape cases”.

“It is not that a DNA test works only in favour of the victim but in many cases, may lead to honourable acquittal of the accused... There can be no better evidence to prove or disprove the commission of the offence,” the court held.

Underlining that according to Section 53A of the CrPC, when the accused is non-cooperative, reasonable force may be used as is necessary for the purpose, the court upheld the magistrate court’s order, and directed the accused to present himself to provide a blood sample. It also instructed that in case the accused “declines or resists, the Investigating Officer may use reasonable force for the purpose.”

In a first, Delhi’s IGI Airport gets ‘Net Zero Waste to Landfill’ Platinum certification

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

DELHI’S INDIRA Gandhi International (IGI) Airport has received the ‘Net Zero Waste to Landfill’ Platinum certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for all its terminals. The certification was awarded for the operations phase, making it the first airport in the country to receive this recognition.

The airport, operated by the Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), said that around 95% of its solid waste, including food and recyclables, is diverted away from landfills. This is achieved through source segregation, recycling, and in-house composting.

“Delhi Airport embeds Environmental, Social and Governance principles holistically across its operations, from green energy and emission reduction to inclusive community development. This recognition is not just a certification; it is validation of DIAL’s unwavering commitment to building a future-ready, climate-resilient airport ecosystem. We are proud to set the benchmark for Indian aviation in responsible waste management and environmental governance. Our adaptability and proactive approach ensure that we remain at the forefront of responsible and sustainable aviation,” said Videh Kumar Jaipuria, DIAL CEO.

According to the operator, the waste management system at the airport includes real-time waste tracking mechanisms, two-bin and four-bin segregation models, material recovery facilities, and organic waste composters. These measures are aimed at minimising landfill use and maximising resource recovery. The airport also treats and reuses 100 per cent of its wastewater on site.

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HOUSING PROJECT IN MORPHOLOGICAL RIDGE

Fake permission issued in Forest dept’s name to fell trees, SC toldANANTHAKRISHNANG
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

THE DELHI Forest department has told the Supreme Court that “fake permission” was issued in the name of the office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests or the Tree Officer (West Division) to fell trees in a “morphological ridge” land – an ecologically sensitive zone – in Vasant Kunj for a housing project.

This came to light in a July 10 counter affidavit filed before the SC by the Department of Forests and Wildlife’s Deputy Conservator of Forests/Tree Officer (West Division) in response to a plea seeking contempt of court proceedings against it for felling trees and levelling a piece of land in Vasant Kunj for the project.

Responding to this, the counter affidavit filed by the Tree Officer (West Division) said the land on

which the alleged construction activities were being carried out falls in the South Forest Division. It is pertinent to mention that it had come to attention... that a fake permission was issued for tree felling in the name of the office of Deputy Conservator of Forests/Tree Officer West Forest Division, which was found issued to the owner of the plot... it added.

It further said that the West Division official “had written to the Vasant Kunj police station SHO to take cognizance of the issue and register an FIR under Section 173 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The affidavit added that a reply was received on February 17 from the SHO, “through Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI)... that the alleged forged permission is illegible”.

The affidavit added, “...it is also informed by the ASI that the location cannot be found.”

During questioning, the plot owner “refused the allegation regarding forged permission for felling/damaging of trees”, the department said.

“The ASI has requested the original copy of the forged permission to process the matter further; otherwise, the complaint shall be closed,” it added.

“It is pertinent to mention that in response to the report of the ASI, a letter has been issued to the SHO... on 13.03.2025... stating that the earlier provided copy of the forged permission/documents is the only copy which is available in this office,” the department said.

The court will hear the matter next on July 21.

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Total Installed Capacity

242.4 GW
Non-Fossil Fuel Capacity

Five Years Before The 2030 Target Committed Under The Paris Agreement

India's energy transition is not just a national endeavour; it is shaping the future of global energy dynamics

“

“

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

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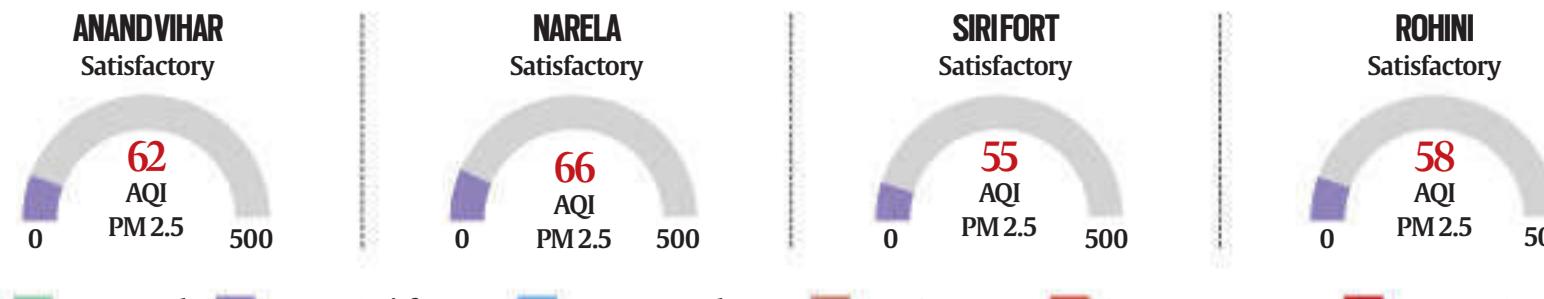
“Delhi Airport embeds Environmental, Social and Governance principles holistically across its operations, from green energy and emission reduction to inclusive community development. This recognition is not just a certification; it is validation of DIAL’s unwavering commitment to building a future-ready, climate-resilient airport ecosystem. We are proud to set the benchmark for Indian aviation in responsible waste management and environmental governance. Our adaptability and proactive approach ensure that we remain at the forefront of responsible and sustainable aviation,” said Videh Kumar Jaipuria, DIAL CEO.

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SKY WATCH
FORECAST: July 19
Generally cloudy sky;
very light to light rain

MAX: 34-36
.8°C above normal

MIN: 23-25
2.2°C below normal

PROPOSAL UNDER DISCUSSION, SAY OFFICIALS

Soon, a new Delhi-Gurgaon route could axe travel time by 30 minutes

Part of 2 projects aimed at reducing traffic in Lutyens' area, Central Delhi

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

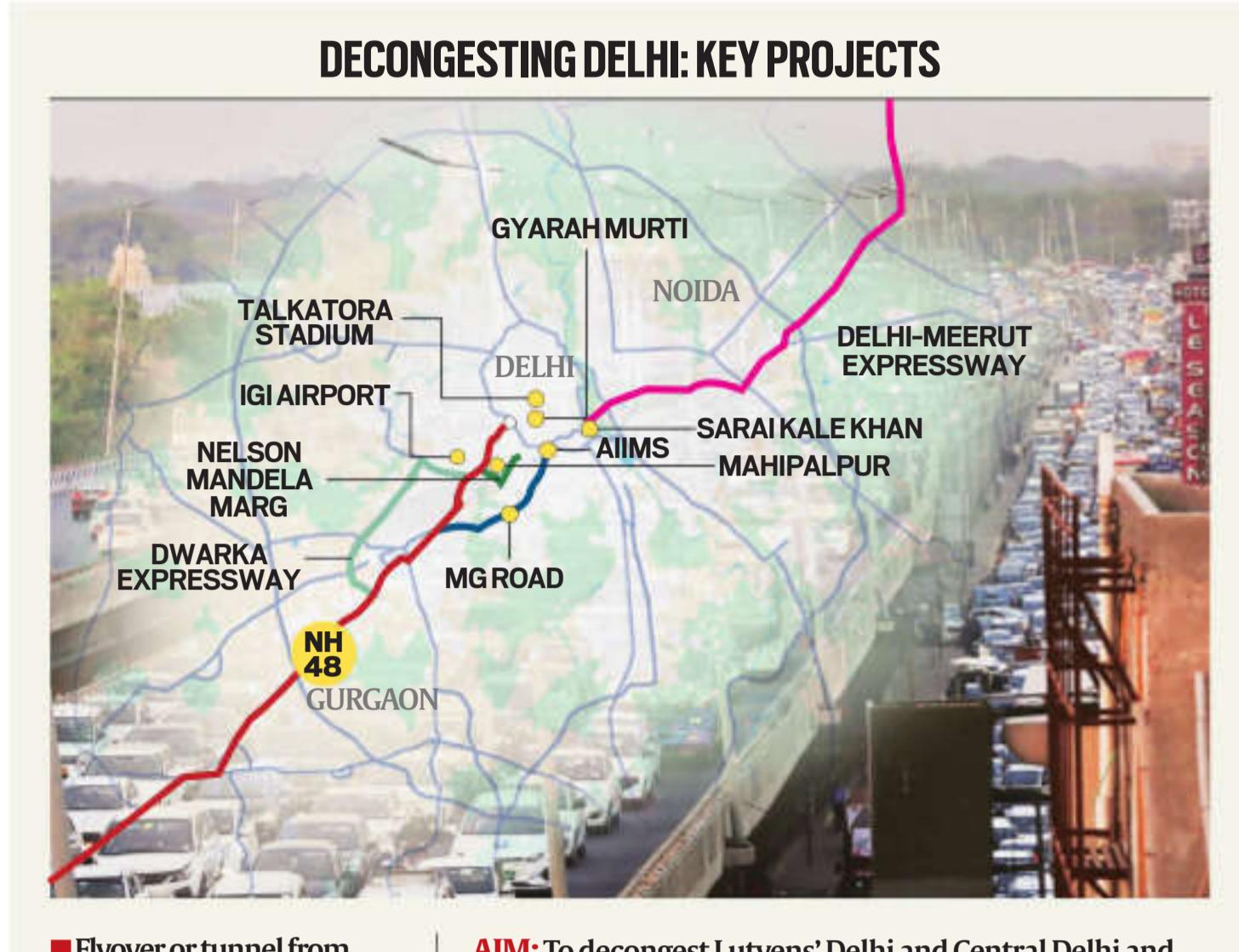
SOON, THOSE commuting between Delhi and Gurgaon may be able to skip the daily traffic snarls on NH-48 and MG Road. A new route, starting at either Gyarah Murti or Talkatora Stadium, is under discussion, said officials.

Currently, it takes a commuter over an hour to go from the Capital to Gurgaon or vice versa via the usual routes. With this proposed link, commuters can cover the 30-km journey faster as travel time will be cut to 25-30 minutes, said officials.

The project is part of two proposals to decongest the Capital – especially Lutyens' area and Central Delhi.

The second proposal, a key project under discussion, officials said, is an elevated corridor or tunnel connecting the termination point of the Delhi-Meerut Expressway to the proposed elevated corridor from AIIMS to the Mahipalpur Bypass.

The two proposals were taken up at a high-level meeting chaired by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari with Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and senior officials in June, where the National Highways Authority of



■ Flyover or tunnel from Delhi-Meerut Expressway terminus to the proposed AIIMS Mahipalpur Bypass

■ Link from Gyarah Murti or Talkatora Stadium to Gurgaon

AIM: To decongest Lutyens' Delhi and Central Delhi and improve connectivity

STATUS: Feasibility study directed.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has directed that these proposed corridors be incorporated into the bids for the elevated corridor from AIIMS to Mahipalpur Bypass. The latter's cost is estimated to be Rs 5,000 crore

India (NHAI) was directed to come up with a plan to comprehensively address congestion in these two areas.

The central government had earlier proposed a 20-km-long elevated corridor from AIIMS to the Mahipalpur Bypass, further extending into the Gurgaon-Faridabad Road. This, too, is ex-

pected to act as a parallel route to the NH-48 to decongest the Mehrauli-Gurgaon and Ring Road stretches.

"The current plan involves an elevated corridor from AIIMS to Mahipalpur... The Minister expressed concerns that this alone will not fully resolve traffic congestion in the New Delhi

Municipal Council area and Central Delhi," said officials present at the meeting.

Currently, the Delhi-Meerut Expressway and Delhi-Dehradun Expressway terminate near Sarai Kale Khan on the Ring Road. Soon, the DND-Sohna (Jewar) link of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway is also set to open.

With these three key expressways converging in the area, it is expected that the traffic volume will increase significantly. As a result, additional traffic is likely to spill over into Lutyens' Delhi and Central Delhi.

To address the issue, Gadkari directed the NHAI to explore the feasibility of the two projects (Delhi-Meerut Expressway to AIIMS-Mahipalpur corridor and Gyarah Murti or Talkatora to Gurgaon).

"The Minister has directed that these corridors be incorporated into the bids for the elevated corridor from AIIMS to Mahipalpur Bypass," the minutes of the meeting stated.

The AIIMS-Mahipalpur Bypass corridor project is estimated to cost Rs 5,000 crore.

It will start from AIIMS and connect to Nelson Mandela Marg in Vasant Kunj via Ring Road. At Nelson Mandela Marg, the Centre is planning to construct a 5-km-long tunnel, which will connect to the IGI Airport and Dwarka Expressway.

"This corridor will be merged via a tunnel, and another corridor will be constructed towards Gurgaon and Faridabad Road," said a senior NHAI official.

"The elevated corridor from AIIMS to Nelson Mandela Marg, further connecting to Mehrauli-Gurgaon Road and Gurgaon-Faridabad Road, will act as a parallel corridor between Delhi and Gurgaon," the official said.

Bids have been invited for preparing the Detailed Project Report (DPR), they added.

THE DELHI Police has lodged an FIR into the alleged fraudulent use of the Aadhaar ecosystem after an employee with the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) filed a complaint against several individuals – including his colleagues.

The FIR was lodged on July 10 at the Cyber police station in New Delhi district based on a complaint filed by Ravinder Rawal, the Assistant Section Officer in the Enforcement Division of the UIDAI Head Office.

The FIR named two multi-tasking operators (MTOs) at UIDAI's Regional Office (RO) in Delhi, two Aadhaar operators, and other unknown individuals as the primary accused.

According to the FIR, the MTO – who was granted controlled access to Aadhaar-related information for quality audit and review tasks – admitted that another MTO frequently used his login credentials for the RO portal and requested one-time passwords (OTPs) to access it. While some access was for official work, the other MTO also used his portal for unauthorised data searches, it added.

The FIR said that further investigation revealed that the other MTO did not have access to the RO portal and admitted to using the login credentials of his colleagues.

He also disclosed his connection with an Aadhaar operator, who reportedly approached him because his system couldn't provide UID details using EIDs or phone numbers. The operator allegedly told the MTO that his Aadhaar centre was often visited by people who asked for such details.

According to the FIR, a deal was struck – the operator would

send EIDs or mobile numbers to the MTO, who would then retrieve the UIDs from the RO portal and share the same. In return, the operator paid the MTO Rs 50 per transaction. These payments were often made to the MTO's wife, who would then transfer the funds to her husband's account.

The FIR added that a similar arrangement was discovered in relation to another alleged Aadhaar operator, who also sent resident details to the MTO for information retrieval from the RO portal, for which payments were made.

The FIR included detailed transaction records from April 2023 to February 2025, showing money transferred to the MTO.

Additionally, the MTO disclosed making payments to two former MTOs at UIDAI-Head Office in Delhi, who are already under investigation for fraudulently updating Aadhaar update activities, said the FIR.

"The aforesaid act... shows that they have conspired and intentionally carried out fraudulent updates and transmitted identity information of individuals. They dishonestly used the Aadhaar ecosystem, cheated individuals by deceiving them through an illegal Aadhaar update process, and created false documents using a computer, dishonestly and fraudulently in lieu of undue financial advantage," Rawal said in his complaint.



CNG pump owner robbed: Mastermind nabbed after shootout

New Delhi: Weeks after a CNG pump owner was robbed at gunpoint at his Ghitora farmhouse, police arrested the mastermind following a brief exchange of fire on Najafgarh flyover on Friday.

At 1.45 am, the Special Staff laid a trap near the Bijwasan-Najafgarh road, close to the Dwarka Expressway Flyover in Bijwasan. The primary accused, Dinesh Verma (40), was spotted and asked to stop," DCP (Southwest) Amit Goel said.

Verma, instead, opened fire at the police while trying to flee on his bike. The police fired back, hitting his right leg, leading to him falling off his two-wheeler.

"During questioning, Verma, the mastermind of the robbery, admitted to orchestrating the dacoity and supplying arms to his associates. He has a documented criminal history and was previously involved in seven heinous cases of robbery and murder, and cases under the Arms Act," DCP Goel said.

Police also arrested his three associates, Ashish, Vikash Chaudhary and Arvind.

The robbery had taken place on the night of June 23. Karan Chopra, who has multiple CNG filling stations across NCR, was at his farmhouse when a man knocked on his door posing as a delivery boy. When he opened the door, four men barged in, claiming they had guns. They then robbed the house of jewellery and cash, before taking Chopra hostage and driving him to his office on MG Road in Gurgaon. They fled with Rs 30 lakh cash and some jewellery, officers had said. ENS

MONSOON BLUES

Rain at India Gate, Friday. Weather forecasts indicate that light rain is expected on Saturday as well. Praveen Khanna

NIA officer robbed of Rs 95,000: 'Thak Thak gang member' arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels, essential for aquatic life, which have witnessed a significant drop over the past month.

It has dipped even at Palla and Wazirabad, where DO levels usually remain above the safe limit.

At Wazirabad, DO levels have plummeted from 6.3 mg/l in June to just 3.4 mg/l in July, below the minimum safe threshold. Further downstream, oxygen levels fall to zero, and only slightly recover to 0.9 mg/l at Asgarpur. The near-total depletion of oxygen renders large stretches of the Yamuna uninhabitable for aquatic organisms.

The most alarming figures, however, are the faecal coliform levels. At ITO Bridge, it was recorded at 92,000 MPN/100 ml – over 4,000 times the permissible limit.

Across most locations, the faecal coliform count has worsened since June. Palla recorded 2,700 MPN/100 ml in July (up from 2,100), and Wazirabad 3,900 (up from 2,600). Downstream, the levels were more than 1,000 times the maximum permissible limit, (see box)

The July report also reveals a steep year-on-year rise in contamination. For instance, while Asgarpur recorded the worst contamination levels in July 2024, ITO records the highest pollution levels this year.

The DPCC has been submitting these monthly reports, after analysing water samples at eight locations on Delhi's stretch of the Yamuna, in compliance with National Green Tribunal directives.

Equally concerning are the

drains open directly into the river, out of which a few remain partially tapped, according to official records.

In June, BOD levels at the same sites were significantly lower: 5 mg/l at Palla, 8 mg/l at Wazirabad, 31 mg/l at ISBT, 46 mg/l at ITO, 40 mg/l at Nizamuddin, 30 mg/l at Okhla Barrage, 38 mg/l at Agra Canal, and 44 mg/l at Asgarpur.

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stop his car... When the NIA officer rolled down his window, Rohit pointed at the fuel tank, signalling it was leaking. The officer ordered his driver to stop," police said.

"As the car stopped on the flyover and the officer got out, Rohit also stopped his bike and started pouring oil into the engine of the officer's vehicle. He was trying to show there was a problem with the car... In the meantime, two more bike-borne men arrived. They pushed the officer to the ground and fled with his bag that was kept in the car, which contained a laptop and Rs 95,000 in cash," an officer said.

Police said after sometime, the robbers returned from the opposite lane of the flyover to place the bag on the divider. The bag, however, only had the laptop and no cash.

When contacted, the NIA Public Relations Officer refused to comment on the issue.

staying here since I started working for him. This is a godown where he keeps cement bags," she added.

A few houses ahead, Ganesh (65), who has been staying in the slums with his family of six since 1982, has no idea what to do next: "Where will I go in this monsoon? They say 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' but it is 'sabka saath, sabka vikas'... What happened to the promise of 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahan Makhan'?"

In the run-up to the Delhi polls, "Jahan Jhuggi, Wahan Makhan" – building houses for slum dwellers at the original location – was a key poll promise of both the BJP and AAP.

CPWD ISSUES EVICTION NOTICES

We have all IDs, still asked to vacate homes: Slum residents at R K Puram's Sector 7

DRISHTI JAIN
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

FOR THE last seven days, women living in unauthorised slums located around the Type 1 quarters in R K Puram's Sector 7 have not gone to work, fearing bulldozers would raze their houses while they are out earning a livelihood.

The reason: The deadline, set by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD), to vacate their homes ended on Friday.

On July 11, the CPWD had pasted notices on their doors stating that they should vacate the houses within seven days, else they would be forcibly

evicted. The same notice was sent to the "unauthorised" residents of the Type 1 quarters, too.

"It is to be informed that the Type 1 quarters of Sector 7, R K Puram, which falls under the category of 'damaged quarters', is being unauthorisedly occupied by some persons and illegal construction has been carried out. Information has been given verbally and in writing several times in the past, but till date no action has been taken by the parties concerned. It is, therefore, final warning given to all unauthorised occupants to vacate the respective quarters," it stated.

According to the CPWD, the quarters are dilapidated and can

collapse anytime, harming the jhuggi jhodis that have mushroomed around them.

"Even after multiple warnings, people continue to live in the quarters," an official said.

The official, however, denied that they planned to demolish the jhuggis and the quarters. "We have just asked them to vacate the place... But nobody has left," he added.

Many slum dwellers, however, have started looking for accommodation elsewhere.

"We left the jhuggi and shifted to the quarters after the notice was issued. Since then, we have been looking for houses... If we don't find any, we will return



The jhuggis are home to eight families. Express

to Bihar," said a woman who did not wish to be named.

"They should have issued the notice during the school's summer break. If we change houses now, my daughter will lose out on her academic year," she added.

Mostly located at the centre of the quarters, the jhuggis are home to eight families, said residents. While some of these brick houses have only one room and a kitchen, some also have a hall. The others are double-storey houses with washrooms.

All the slum dwellers, as well as those who live in the quarters, mostly hail from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. While

they primarily work as construction labourers, some also work as domestic help in nearby homes.

"We were sleeping when the officers pasted the notices

BIHAR ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION

Forms of 90% electors received, 36 lakh not found at their addresses, says poll panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, PATNA, JULY 18

THE ELECTION Commission has said that it received enumeration forms of 90.12% of Bihar's electors ahead of the July 25 deadline for its special intensive revision (SIR) of the state's electoral roll, and that over 36 lakh were found "not at their addresses".

The EC had ordered the SIR on

June 24 and launched it the next day. The commission said in the order that it has decided to conduct the exercise for the whole country and was starting with Bihar as Assembly elections are due in the state. The EC order said that all 7.8 crore registered electors of Bihar would be required to submit enumeration forms by July 25 to make it to the draft roll to be published on August 1.

On Friday, the EC said 7.11

crore forms had been received so far and 6.85 crore of them had been digitised. The EC also said 36.86 lakh electors (a little over 4.67% of total voters) had been found to be "probably" deceased, permanently shifted or enrolled at multiple places. It said 6,978, or 0.01% of the electors, were "not traceable".

The commission said the lists of the "probably" deceased, shifted and untraceable electors

were being shared with district presidents of political parties and their booth level agents "to ascertain the exact status of each such elector before July 25". The electors and parties would have from August 1 to September 1 to file claims and objections on the draft roll. Electoral Registration Officers would have till September 25 to dispose of these claims and objections before the final electoral roll is published on September 30.

"As per the SIR order, each of the more than 1.5 lakh BLAs (booth level agents) can submit up to 50 forms a day after certifying them. This step is in line with the EC's commitment that no eligible elector is left out," the EC said.

Several booth level officers (BLOs) told *The Indian Express* that they have been working to complete the SIR exercise "two-three days before" the July 25 deadline.

PM failed to reopen sugar mills... only has empty slogans: Tejashwi

HIMANSHU HARSH
MOTIHARI, JULY 18

AFTER NARENDRA Modi targeted the RJD on Friday, saying the Opposition party can never provide people with jobs as its leaders "seize land" in exchange for job promises, Bihar Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav hit back at the Prime Minister.

The RJD leader and former Deputy Chief Minister posted on X: "Prime Minister, as per your

promise, you have not been able to reopen even a single sugar mill in Bihar. There is no point in expecting anything when it comes to other industries. The Prime Minister has shifted everything to Gujarat and visits Bihar only with empty slogans."

Congress spokesperson Gyan Ranjan Gupta also responded to the PM's comments at the rally in Motihari in East Champaran district. "He promised Kashi (Varanasi) would become Kyoto. Where is that? In Bihar, there are, on average, 229 murders each

month. Paper leaks are routine. The PM who couldn't restart a single sugar mill now talks of making Motihari like Mumbai. The biggest promise is always a 'jumla' (empty slogan)."

Earlier in the day, Congress and RJD workers in Motihari protested against the PM, saying he failed to keep his 2014 election campaign promise to revive the Motihari and Chapatia sugar mills. In the town's Gandhi Chowk area, the Opposition workers set up a stall serving "feeki chai" (sugarless tea).

No outsiders, only Nimisha Priya family should talk to victim's kin, Centre tells SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

THE CENTRE Friday told the Supreme Court that only the family of Nimisha Priya, the Kerala nurse sentenced to death in Yemen for murder, should be involved in the discussions with the victim's kin to secure a pardon as an intervention by any other organisation could be counterproductive.

Attorney General R Venkataramani said this before a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta as Senior Advocate Raghubir Basant, appearing for the Save Nimisha Priya International Action Council, sought permission to send a delegation to Yemen that could negotiate with the family of the victim for a pardon.

The bench allowed the organisation to approach the government and seek travel permission. "Once that representation is made, the government would consider it on its own merits," it said.

Venkataramani said: "I would personally advise... Her family has engaged a power of attorney.

AAP TO SKIP ONLINE MEET, SAYS NOT PART OF BLOC; TMC'S ABHISHEK TO TAKE PART

Day before INDIA bloc meeting, Rahul's remarks spark Cong-CPM war of words

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

Cong leader Rahul Gandhi at a remembrance event for former Kerala CM Oommen Chandy in Kottayam. PTI

have feelings for people, you are not ready to connect and hug people, you will not be a leader." The CPI(M) said that Gandhi's

statements were absurd. "In his absurd and condemnable comment equating the RSS and the CPI(M), Rahul Gandhi forgets who is fighting the RSS in Kerala—the CPI(M), which has lost countless dedicated workers in resisting saffron terror. Meanwhile, in Kerala, the Congress and the RSS continue to echo each other in expressing anti-communist sentiments. As soon as he steps into Kerala, Rahul Gandhi speaks that language too," said the Left party in a statement.

Saturday's INDIA block meeting, meanwhile, will see the participation of the TMC which had initially decided to skip it. The TMC has said its MP Abhishek

Banerjee will join the online meeting.

The AAP is not attending the meeting, maintaining that it is no longer part of an alliance formed ahead of last year's general elections against the BJP.

In a statement on Friday, AAP Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh said: "The INDIA alliance coalition was formed for the Lok Sabha elections. Post that, we contested alone in the Haryana and Delhi, as well as the Punjab bypolls. We are now contesting alone in the upcoming Bihar elections as well. The AAP is not part of the INDIA alliance. However, we will oppose the government whenever we feel it is wrong."

Courts will have to release NIA and UAPA accused if spl courts not set up: SC to Centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

der: "If the authority fails to establish courts with requisite infrastructure for conducting speedy trial under the NIA Act and other special statutes, the court would invariably be forced to release the accused on bail..."

The bench told Additional Solicitor General Rajkumar Bhaskar Thakre, appearing for the Centre and Maharashtra government, that

designating the existing courts as special courts amounted to "coercing" the high court to relabel them.

"...no effective or visible steps have been taken to set up special courts for speedy trials in cases under NIA Act and other special statutes. It goes without saying that setting up of special courts would require creation of posts for superior judicial officers, staff,

courtroom and basic amenities," the bench said.

The court said an impression was created that the designation of an existing court as special court would be sufficient compliance of its directives.

"We are outrightly rejecting this plea taken by the respondents (Centre and Maharashtra government)," the bench said.

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KHADI FOR FASHION
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In 2024–25, Khadi and Village Industries achieved record sales of ₹1.70 lakh crore - a 450% increase compared to 2013–14

In 2024–25, Khadi and Village Industries recorded a production value of ₹1.16 lakh crore - a 350% increase compared to 2013–14

KVIC is providing employment to approximately 2.00 crore persons across the country

Khadi artisans have seen a remarkable 275% increase in their remuneration over the last 11 years

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VOCAL FOR LOCAL

Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Govt. of India

QR code: CEC25103/15/0005/2526

For more details follow @kvicindia | kvic.gov.in |

On this special occasion of 19th July, we extend our warmest wishes and heartfelt congratulations to our Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Rekha Gupta Ji, on her birthday.

Smt. Rekha Gupta has emerged as one of the most dynamic and impactful leaders of our time. Her tenure as Chief Minister has brought a renewed sense of purpose, accountability, and action-oriented governance to the National Capital. Her commitment to the people of Delhi, particularly in resolving deep-rooted civic issues, deserves both admiration and gratitude.

Tackling Civic Challenges Head-On

Delhi, as one of the fastest-growing metropolitan cities, has long struggled with civic challenges ranging from sanitation, solid waste management, traffic congestion, and water supply to pollution control and unauthorized constructions. However, under the visionary leadership of CM Smt. Rekha Gupta Ji, there has been a perceptible shift in how these issues are being addressed.

She has ensured that civic development is not reduced to hollow promises, but becomes an actionable agenda of daily governance. Her policies reflect an understanding of both grassroots realities and long-term urban planning needs. Regular jan sunvis (public hearings), surprise inspections, and her insistence on departmental accountability

have led to significant improvements across various urban sectors.

Cleanliness and Sanitation as Top Priorities

One of the most noticeable transformations under her leadership has been the focused approach towards cleanliness and sanitation. Delhi's cleanliness rankings have improved remarkably, and initiatives like ward-level waste segregation, decentralized composting, and citizen participation drives have started to bear fruit.

By empowering local bodies and introducing performance-based incentives for civic agencies, she has instilled a culture of pride and professionalism in basic civic work, something often overlooked in larger governance narratives.

People-Centric Leadership

What sets Smt. Rekha Gupta Ji apart is her genuine connect with the people. She listens, understands, and acts. Whether it's waterlogging in a particular area or grievances of RWAs (Resident Welfare Associations), she responds with swift administrative action. Her grassroots grounding has given her the unique ability to translate the concerns of everyday citizens into effective policy decisions.

Her governance style is one of inclusiveness and responsiveness, a rarity in today's political landscape. She is equally comfortable discussing complex infrastructure projects in a boardroom as she

is walking through the narrow bylanes of Delhi, engaging with local residents.

A Woman of Resolve and Vision

As a proud Indian and Delhite, we feel particularly inspired by the rise of Rekha Gupta Ji as a strong woman leader. In a city where civic and administrative challenges are complex and layered, she has brought grace, determination, and vision to the Chief Minister's office. Her clear stance on transparency, digital governance, and environmental sustainability will shape Delhi's future for generations to come.

On This Special Day...

On behalf of Naredco Delhi, we extend our sincere wishes to Hon'ble Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Ji on her birthday. May she continue to lead Delhi with the same courage, wisdom, and unwavering commitment that she has consistently demonstrated.

We are confident that under her leadership, Delhi will not only overcome its civic challenges but emerge as a model city for sustainable and inclusive urban development.

Happy Birthday, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Ji!

May you be blessed with good health, happiness, and continued success in all your endeavours for the betterment of our beloved city.

Harsh Vardhan Bansal,
President, Naredco Delhi;
Vice Chairman, CII Delhi;
Co-Founder, Unity Group



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



HEAVY HITTERS

SENIOR ADVOCATE Kapil Sibal is learnt to be leading the battery of lawyers appearing for Justice Yashwant Varma in the challenge against in-house inquiry mechanism that indicted him. Sibal will be joined by former Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi, and Senior Advocates Siddharth Luthra and Siddharth Agarwal. Both Sibal and Luthra have handled impeachment proceedings in the past. While Sibal appeared for Justice V Ramaswami in 1993 and spearheaded the motion against former CJI Dipak Misra, Luthra appeared for Justice SK Gangele.

SOFT DIPLOMACY

MANY DELEGATES, who were part of the post-Operation Sindoora global outreach, had called for more soft diplomacy and exchange programmes. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seems to have taken this up. During a meeting Friday with a South Korean delegation led by former prime minister Kim Boo Kyum, Birla proposed the idea of parliamentary friendship groups from the Indian side. Such groups from both sides are expected to have interactions in future.

QUICK EXIT

MANY OFFICIALS and politicians tend to overstaying in their official bungalows long after demitting office. Former IAS officer Amitabh Kant, however, vacated his official bungalow at 6, New Moti Bagh within a month of resigning as India's G20 Sherpa on June 15.

ED CHARGESHEET IN GURGAON LAND DEAL

Rahul aware of Vadra's dark deeds: BJP on his witch-hunt allegation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

A DAY after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed a chargesheet against businessman Robert Vadra, husband of Congress Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in a money laundering case linked to a Gurgaon land deal, the BJP on Friday targeted Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of being aware of the alleged irregularities in his brother-in-law's dealings.

Gandhi in a post on X said, "My brother-in-law has been hounded by this government for the last 10 years. This latest chargesheet is a continuation of that witch hunt. I stand with Robert, Priyanka and their children as they face yet another onslaught of malicious, politically motivated slander and harassment. I know that they are all brave enough to withstand any kind of persecution and they will continue to do so with dignity. The truth will eventually prevail."

Hitting back, BJP national spokesperson Tuhin Sinha alleged that Rahul Gandhi's support for Vadra indicated that "he may have been involved in the alleged scam perpetrated by

Vadra himself".

"Today, one thing has become clear: either Rahul Gandhi had full knowledge of Robert Vadra's dark deeds, or it's possible that he was completely involved in them... they seem to be partners in all this..." Sinha said and cited charges against him in the National Herald case.

Accusing Gandhi and his party of being "unable to move beyond the Emergency mindset", Sinha, referring to LoP's comments during a meeting in Assam recently, alleged that he threatened Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma with arrest.

In a statement on Thursday, Vadra's office maintained that the present proceedings were "nothing more than an extension of the political witch hunt by the present government" against Vadra.

Congress general secretary in charge (organisation) K C Venugopal also said that "it seems the Modi-Shah duo has given the ED a monthly assignment to go after the Congress senior leadership and their family."

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SMT. REKHA GUPTA
Chief Minister, Delhi

REKHA GUPTA

A Visionary Leader

Wishing Rekha Gupta Ji
a very happy

Birthday

Celebrating 1st Birthday
after becoming CM of Delhi

Brand Kalra Hospital is About Perseverance With Magical Personal Touche

What keeps you so fit at this age and work with the same passion for so many decades?

I start my day with meditation and gratitude to God for his benign blessings. Daily walk in the park or light exercise at home is also part of my daily regimen that keeps me fit. I joined the medical profession in 1967 and ever since from my medical student days and internship, I have worked from 9 am to 9 pm every day, and beyond i.e., 18 hours in a day. Even today after more than seven decades of my life, I work for 16 hours every day because my profession is my passion from where I draw my strength and inspiration to work for long hours. My availability, my affinity to patients and a personal touche, is of utmost importance to me and differentiates Kalra Hospitals from the rest.

Could you share your life's journey to becoming a doctor?

When I was a child, there were no facilities to educate children the way it is today. At the most, my father used to enquire about my test marks and the report card, but my teachers saw potential in me. They took me under their wings, gave special attention and made extra efforts to tutor me for which I had to reach their house at 5 am! Those days, the best courses were considered to be engineering or medical. I scored well and took admission in non-medical subjects at DAV College, Jalandhar. But my uncle told me to quit engineering and take up medical course. I pleaded and tried to excuse myself saying that I was scared to dissect even a frog, but he did not relent. I had to give in to his wish. My father was keen that I join his business and thought after a couple of months in the medical college, he would try to shift my focus. I was adamant that since I have taken up medicine, I have to study for long hours and



have no time or interest in business. I chose to become a cardiologist.

What inspired you to build Kalra Hospital and how have you kept abreast with becoming a doctor?

I had this personal dream and desire to set up a hospital of my own where I can give the best treatment to my patients at a reasonable cost. I keep on updating myself with the latest findings in the medical profession and ensure to equip Kalra Hospital with the best infra structure and technology-backed facilities such as the state-of-the-art Cath lab. The competition is tough out there, leaving no room for laxity. I, therefore, ensure that Kalra is at par with the best of the best in cardiac care. Personally, I feel that only infrastructure and technology does not guarantee success for any hospital. What sets us apart is the personal touch or to say the individual attention that we give to patients, establishing mutual trust.

When it comes to my staff, I ensure to provide them with opportunities to learn and grow in their profession. More than 80 percent of the staff are old-timers, who have been with Kalra hospital for years and have driven the hospital's vision and mission taking it to the position to where it is today.

What are the expansion plans for Kalra Hospital?

Kalra hospital was inaugurated by the then Chief Minister of Delhi, Late Shri Madan Lal Khurana, and Union Minister Late Shri P.



A physician and cardiologist of repute, **Dr. R.N. Kalra**, Medical Director CEO R&D of Kalra Hospital, began an illustrious journey, building a landmark centre of excellence in healthcare.

Kalra Hospital, in the national capital for which he has been recognised with several awards and honours.

Gaining from

Dr Kalra's experience of over 4 decades as a physician & cardiologist, and under his guidance, his sons,

Dr Ankur Kalra and

Dr Ankit Kalra, along

with a team of highly

experienced specialists are

taking forward the vision

and mission of Kalra

Hospitals to its next level of

global standards.



Upendra. Over the years, it has evolved into a multi-specialty institution recognized for its advanced technology, experienced clinicians, and unwavering ethical values. Kalra Hospital started as a 25 bedded hospital and as the demand grew, we increased the bed count in the main hospital here in Kirti Nagar, New Delhi. Thereafter, we built two branches of Kalra Hospital, one each in Dwarka More, New Delhi and Noida. We are planning to expand 500 bedded hospital in the next 2 to 3 years.

One of the crowning achievements of Dr. Kalra's career is his pioneering support of the Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY scheme. Kalra Hospital was the first private hospital in India to begin admitting Ayushman Bharat empaneled patients and conducting complex cardiac procedures, bypass surgeries and other Super Speciality services under the scheme. This marked a turning point for equitable health access in the country. Dr. Kalra not only facilitated treatment but also vocally advocated for the expansion of government-public-private partnerships in tertiary care. His efforts have laid the groundwork for private hospitals to actively align with national health missions and make India a healthier, more inclusive nation.

Carrying forward this legacy is Dr. Ankur Kalra, an accomplished interventional cardiologist with a stellar academic record—both MD and DNB in Cardiology earned with Gold Medals. A Fellow of the American College of Cardiology (FACC) and Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP 1), Dr. Ankur Kalra is known for his expertise in advanced and complex cardiac procedures. His work continues to elevate the hospital's clinical standards, while reinforcing its patient-first philosophy.

Adding an international dimension to the Kalra legacy is Dr. Ankur Kalra, currently serving as the Division Chief of Cardiology and Associate Professor of Medicine at SUNY Upstate Medical University Center and Norton College of Medicine in Syracuse, NY. He is also Director of the Barry J. Maron Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Cen-

ter in New Delhi. Founder of the non-profit startup MakeADent.org and host of the acclaimed Parallax podcast, Dr. Ankur Kalra is a globally recognized voice in cardiology and research. His leadership bridges innovation, education, and global collaboration in cardiovascular medicine.

How is Kalra Hospital spreading awareness about heart health in cluster dwellings?

We hold regular camps in neighbourhood slum clusters and give free medicines to those who are found to be sick. Even after the camp is wound up, we call them to the hospital and continue their treatment free of cost. A 50 percent rebate is given to senior citizens and those who are admitted to our hospital and cannot afford the treatment, we give free treatment and do not discharge them untreated. The neighbourhood camps have been temporarily put on hold due to the Covid pandemic.

In India, what is leading to increase in heart problems, particularly, the youth?

The number of heart patients have increased significantly in India. Lifestyle, family history, smoking, alcohol, tobacco, lack of sleep due to late night parties, lack of exercise, are among various factors that has led to sharp rise in heart problems. To the youth, I would say, that start living a healthy life, control their diet and weight, do regular exercise for 20-30 minutes daily, keep away from tobacco and smoking or any kind of substance abuse. They should get their lipid profile done annually and correct it with medicines if required.

Your message to young doctors and the success mantra?

Join the profession only if you are passionate about it and have the desire to serve the society. Keep yourself fit to take on the pressures of a doctor's duty, which is very stressful.

Be honest and compassionate to your patients and success shall follow.

Faulty Kannada translations:
Meta apologises after CM's post,
says issue fixed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, JULY 18

AFTER KARNATAKA Chief Minister Siddaramaiah flagged the problem of flawed Kannada-to-English translations on Meta platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, the social media giant on Thursday issued an apology, saying that it had "fixed an issue that briefly caused this..."

In a post on X on Thursday, Siddaramaiah had said that such faulty translations were "misleading" and "dangerous," especially when they involved official government communication.

Responding to the concerns, a Meta spokesperson said, "We fixed an issue that briefly caused this inaccurate Kannada translation. We apologize that this happened." Machine translation models on Meta's platforms are used to provide users with automated translations of biographical information and specific content. However, in the case of Kannada, the AI-generated translation had allegedly produced errors that distorted the original meaning of the posts and official statements.

"Faulty auto-translation of Kannada content on Meta platforms is distorting facts and misleading users. This is especially dangerous when it comes to official communication," Siddaramaiah posted on X, adding that his media advisor had written to Meta, "urging immediate correction."

In the complaint dated July 16, KV Prabhakar, Media Advisor to Siddaramaiah, said, "Auto-translation from Kannada to English is frequently inaccurate and, in some cases, grossly misleading. This poses a significant risk, especially when public communications or important messages from the Chief Minister and the government are incorrectly translated."

"Given the sensitivity of public communication, especially from a constitutional functionary like the CM, such misrepresentations due to flawed translation mechanisms are unacceptable," the letter added.

Odisha varsity withdraws order restricting stay time for women staff, students

Bhubaneswar: Cuttack's premier Ravenshaw University has withdrawn its order asking women faculty, staff and students not to stay on campus past 5.30 pm in the face of a backlash.

The order, issued by the registrar of the 157-year-old storied institution but withdrawn hours later, said: "No female faculty, staff and students are permitted to remain in the workplace or on campus after 5.30 pm. This decision will remain in place until a formal Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) is issued, which will outline the necessary guidelines and protocols for work hours and safety measures".

It was withdrawn through a separate order.

According to sources, university authorities may have been prompted to take the step in the wake of a student's suicide following alleged sexual harassment at a college in Odisha.

"However, the higher education department interfered saying that such an order would send the wrong message," one official said. When contacted, the university's registrar refused to comment, saying only that the order stood withdrawn. **ENS**

Himanta blames Congress for clash at Assam eviction site, says 'can summon Rahul, Kharge'

SUKRITA BARUAH
GUWAHATI, JULY 18

THE BJP government in Assam is linking the recent visit of Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge to the state, to the clashes in Goalpara on Thursday, which led to the death of a 19-year-old. The violence erupted five days after an eviction exercise targeting homes of 1,080 families, including the killed teenager's, had passed off without incident.

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma has accused the Congress of "instigating" the evicted families, while the Opposition has slammed the administration for "inhumane treatment" towards the families left homeless.

The massive eviction drive in Goalpara district on July 12 had razed homes of 1,080 families across 140 hectares. Many of the affected families had not moved out of the site yet but made makeshift arrangements, like tarpaulin tents, claiming they

had nowhere else to go.

On Thursday, when the authorities were trying to cut off the main access road to the bulldozed settlement, a violent confrontation started between the families and police and forest guards. Shawkar Ali died while two others received bullet injuries when police opened fire. More than a dozen police and forest guards were injured in the clash.

Later, local MP Rakibul Hussain and MLA Abul Kalam Rasheed Alam, both of the Congress, visited the affected families and attended the final rites of Ali, even carrying the coffin for some time.

Forest official Sunnydeo Indradeo Choudhury said the Forest Department aimed to cut off all access except one to the eviction site, to stop people from coming to it. According to him, even people not from the settlement were setting up camp there so that they could claim compensation.

On Friday, Goalpara Superintendent of Police



Assam Chief Minister
Himanta Biswa Sarma. File

Nabaneet Mahanta said nine people had been arrested in connection with Thursday's violence, while one more person – also among those evicted – had been held for making "threatening statements" against CM Sarma.

During their one-day visit to Guwahati, one of the issues raised by Gandhi and Kharge was the large-scale eviction drives carried out by the Sarma government. Kharge said that if the Congress came to power in next year's Assembly elections, it would rebuild the razed homes.

Sarma said that with their speeches, the Congress leaders had "instigated" the evicted fam-

ilies, and that their local party workers had added fuel to the fire.

"On Wednesday night, the families were provoked by district Congress members. In the morning, police and forest officials on duty were attacked brutally by the families, with bricks, sticks, machetes. The whole night, preparations were made," the CM said Thursday evening, adding that a case had been registered and the "conspirators" would be booked. "If required, we will summon Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge for questioning."

MLA Alam said that it were the authorities who were responsible for the eruption of violence at the eviction site. "No food or alternative shelter had been given to the people, and then they dug up the road via which concerned people were providing them food and water, cutting off relief. And when the people got agitated, they shot to kill. I suspect that this was deliberate to create fear," Alam told The Indian Express, pointing out that the eviction site had emp-

tied out after the violence.

"Not a single person remains, and when the voter list is updated now, since there will be no houses and no people, they will be removed from the voter list. It is a political conspiracy to remove people from voter lists," Alam said.

Last month, 660-odd families had been evicted from Hasila Beela village, also in Alam's Goalpara East constituency.

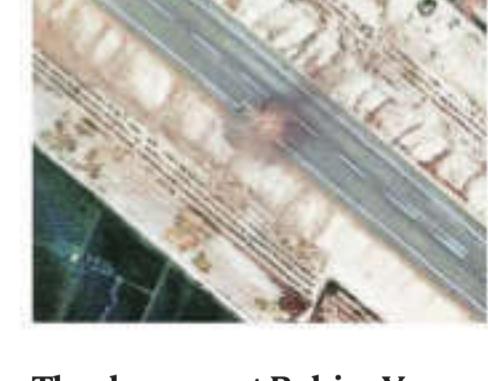
AIUDF MLA Rafiqul Islam likened the actions of the Sarma government in trying to cut off relief to the affected families by destroying access roads to what is happening in Gaza.

People had not reacted even when thousands of them were evicted, Islam pointed out. "They had wept and emptied their homes and watched as the houses were destroyed. There was no commotion. But even after that, the authorities were coming, removing their tents and pushing them to leave the area, when they have nowhere else to go. And then they cut off the road so that they could not receive relief."

OPERATION SINDOOR

Pak extends runway closure at airbase hit by India on May 10

SUKPAL SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 18



The damage at Rahim Yar Khan airbase. It was among the six Pakistani military sites that India hit during Operation Sindoor. AP/FILE

a building at the airbase.

"RWY NOT ABL FOR FLT OPS DUE WIP" stated the latest NOTAM, which has been reviewed by The Indian Express.

According to the International Civil Aviation Organization, use of the code 'WIP' in a NOTAM refers to work in progress. As per the US Federal Aviation Administration, 'WIP' describes any work being done on the airport surface. Given that the NOTAM specifically mentions the runway at the airbase, it indicates that work in progress is on the runway itself.

The airbase's sole runway – Runway 01/19 – has a bituminous surface and is 3,000 metres or 9,843 feet in length, per airport data available on FlightRadar24.

The airbase was one of the multiple key Pakistani military targets that India hit amid a military conflict that lasted four days. It was among the six Pakistani military targets hit on May 10 – Rafiqi, Murid, Chaklala, Sukkur and Jundiya being the other five – by India using "air-launched precision weapons" from fighter aircraft. The Indian response followed Pakistan's "escalatory" and "provocative" actions in which it attempted air intrusions.

2023 DHANGRI KILLINGS

NIA court frames charges against 2 for sheltering terrorists, acting as their guide

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 18

THE NIA court has framed charges against two persons under various Sections of the IPC and UAPA for not only harboring and providing food to terrorists involved in the killing of seven people in the twin terror attacks at Dhangri near Rajouri town on January 1 and 2, 2023, but also acting as their guide and helping them return to their hideout after the killings.

Identified as Nisar Ahmed alias Haji Nisar and Mushtaq Hussain alias Chacha, the accused are lodged in the high security Kot Bhalwal jail in Jammu.

The court also charged them under provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act for utilising the services of a minor for illegal activities.

The NIA told the court that on January 1, 2023, some terrorists entered some houses at Dhangri and opened fire, killing four people and injuring seven others. One more succumbed to injuries.

The next morning, two children were killed and some others injured in an IED explosion at the house of one of the victims. The IED was planted by the terrorists before they left after the firing.

Initially, an FIR was registered at Rajouri police station, but later

the accused were in contact with the terrorists for approximately three months and they did not tell anybody about them despite getting many opportunities, the judge observed, quoting the NIA investigation.

The judge on Thursday charged Nisar Ahmed for commission of offences under Sections 120-B and 201 of the IPC, Sections 18, 19, 20, 38 and 39 of the UAPA, besides Section 83 of the Juvenile Justice Act.

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In January 2024, the man approached the police seeking his estranged wife's Call Data Record (CDR) and also filed a similar application in the family court saying he suspected her of having an "illicit relationship" with her sister's husband and "call detail records are necessary to substantiate allegations of adultery".

The man claims that he went to fetch her back in September and October that year but she refused, following which he ap-

proached a lower court for restoration of conjugal rights (including the right to live together, companionship, and sexual relations) under section 9 of the Hindu Marriage Act. A week later, the woman filed a police complaint, and subsequently an application in court.

In January 2024, the man approached the police seeking his estranged wife's Call Data Record (CDR) and also filed a similar application in the family court saying he suspected her of having an "illicit relationship" with her sister's husband and "call detail records are necessary to substantiate allegations of adultery".

When the family court dismissed the petition, he ap-



SAWAN SANGAM

Devotees gather to collect Ganga water during the Kanwar Yatra at Har Ki Pauri in Haridwar on Friday. ANI

JUNE 4 BENGALURU STAMPEDE

No big event at Chinnaswamy without safety measures: Panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, JULY 18

A JUDICIAL commission set up to probe the June 4 stampede at the M Chinnaswamy Cricket Stadium that led to the death of 11 people has blamed Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB), the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA), and the Bengaluru police for the incident, and has recommended that no major public events

should be held at the venue till safety measures are installed.

The Karnataka government had set up a one-man judicial commission of retired high court judge Justice Michael D'Cunha on June 5. The commission has recommended introduction of several measures, including adequate entry and exit gates, integration with public transport facilities, and infrastructure for emergency responses, before conducting any public event.

"Until such infrastructural changes are made, continuing to host high attendance events at the cricket stadium located in the heart of Bengaluru on MG Road, it would not be appropriate to hold large public events there.

The commission strongly recommends that stadium authorities consider relocating events that are expected to attract large crowds to venues that are better suited for such large gatherings," the report has stated.

The commission has stated that without addressing "systemic limitations" at the cricket stadium located in the heart of Bengaluru on MG Road, it would not be appropriate to hold large public events there.

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Uttarakhand Nivesh Utsav

Groundbreaking Ceremony
marking

Investment of
₹1 Lakh Crore +

Inauguration
by

Chief Guest

Amit Shah

Union Minister, Home Affairs &
Cooperation, Government of India

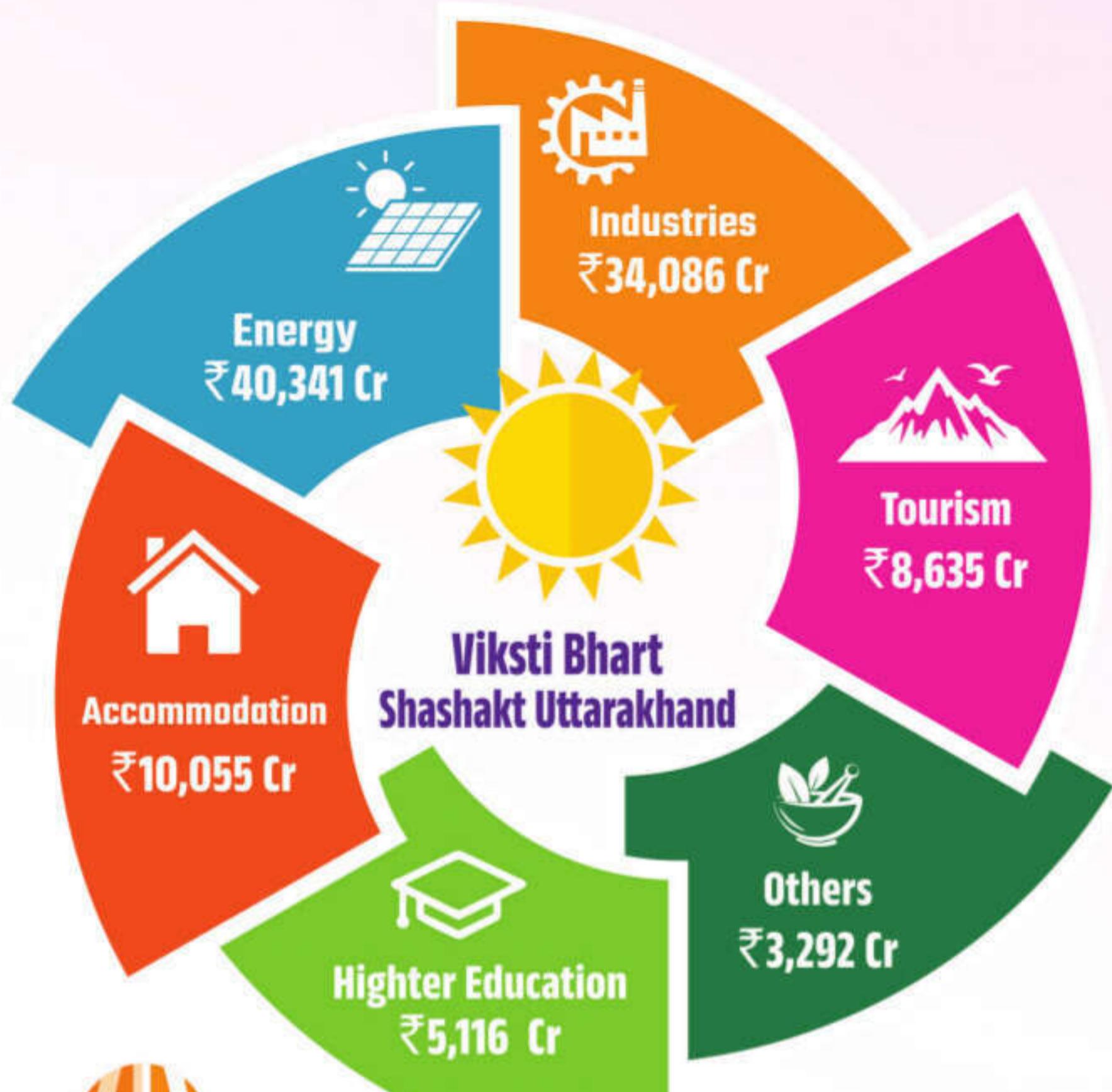
Gracious presence

Pushkar Singh Dhami

Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

Date: July 19, 2025 | Time: 12:00 PM

Venue: Sports Stadium, Rudrapur, Uttarakhand



- A renewed push to industrial activities in the State
- Creating an environment of 'Business, Development & Trust' in the state
- A favourable atmosphere for investment and accelerated economic growth
- Establishing Uttarakhand as a preferred and trustworthy investment destination
- Direct engagement and encouragement from the government to all investors
- Promotion of investment and employment generation in sectors such as: - Energy, Industry, Tourism, Housing and Urban Development, Healthcare and Family Welfare, Food Processing, AYUSH and Wellness & Various other key areas
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FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

A SUPPLY SHOCK

Export restrictions imposed by China should lead to a rethink on fertiliser pricing

A GOOD MONSOON, with India overall receiving 8.4 per cent above average rain for the current season from June 1 till July 18, has led to brisk sowing of most *kharif* crops. The comfortable water situation — rainfall was a whooping 106.4 per cent surplus even in May due to the monsoon arriving eight days before schedule — has, however, had a flip side: Reports from the ground suggest shortages of both di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and urea fertilisers. This is also reflected in stocks of DAP, at 1.3 million tonnes (MT) as on June 30, being lower than the 1.9 MT for the same date in 2024. Urea stocks, too, at 6.1 MT, have been below the corresponding year-ago level of 10.3 MT. Lower stocks relative to higher demand from farmers, courtesy of the monsoon's early onset and good rains thereafter conducive to sowing, have created supply shortfalls and long queues at many distribution centres.

It's, however, not just the monsoon-induced demand. No less significant is the China factor. In 2023-24, China supplied 2.3 mt out of the total 5.6 mt DAP imported by India. It also accounted for 2.1 mt out of India's 8 mt of urea imports. But in the following financial year, imports of both DAP and urea fell to 4.6 mt and 6.9 mt, with those from China falling even more to 0.8 mt and 0.1 mt respectively. Simply put, China's unpredictable export restrictions have caused a global supply squeeze not only in rare earth elements and magnets used in electric vehicles and consumer electronic devices, but also nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilisers that are essential for crop growth and development. And these hurt India, which imports fertilisers in either finished form or as intermediates or raw materials for domestic manufacture: The country has hardly any mineable rock phosphate or potash reserves, while more than half of its natural gas, the main feedstock in urea, is imported.

If import dependence is a given, the policy response, too, must adjust to that reality. Unfortunately, that has not been the case with fertilisers, where political considerations have engendered the most perverse outcomes. The underpricing of urea and DAP — farmers are paying for the former almost the same as what they were some 12 years ago — has resulted in their over-application. Also, it has hindered the introduction of new products that allow the same nutrients to be better absorbed by the plants and converted into biomass (yield) or are customised to meet the specific requirements of a crop, soil type and local climate. Compare this with the increasing adoption of electric vehicles, solar pumps and rooftop panels: Would this have been possible had petrol and diesel remained super-subsidised? That lesson is as relevant for fertilisers. The China supply shock presents an opportunity to learn and reform.

UPSC'S HELPING HAND

Initiative to help those who can't make it to government services find jobs is welcome. Labour market needs more reforms

EVERY YEAR, LAKHS of people prepare for and sit the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination. In 2024, for instance, 9.9 lakh had applied for the examination conducted on June 16. Of these, 5.8 lakh appeared for the examination. However, of all those who appeared, only 14,627 candidates qualified for the written (main) examination, of which just 1,009 were recommended by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for appointment to the services. The lakhs who don't make the list each year either opt for another attempt — in the general category, candidates have six attempts — or start their professional life, often belatedly. There are several challenges posed by a late entry into the job market. Some of the candidates have competition from younger counterparts and the lack of work experience makes their predicament even more difficult. The spin-offs on lifetime earnings are not difficult to gauge, especially because many end up employed in occupations that are either not in line with their qualifications or possibly at junior levels. An initiative by the UPSC is now providing pathways to the unsuccessful candidates for securing gainful employment.

Under the Public Disclosure Scheme, called PRATIBHA Setu now, the Commission has started publicly disclosing information on the non-recommended, willing candidates of the exams it conducts. The UPSC conducts several exams every year — some of the examinations, other than the Civil Services Examination, included under this scheme are the Indian Forest Service Examination, the Indian Economic Service/Indian Statistical Service Examination, and the Combined Medical Services Examination. The non-recommended candidates are those "who qualify the written examinations but are not recommended after the interview". The portal provides information on these candidates. According to a report in this newspaper, it also provides subject- and discipline-wise search facilities to organisations, enabling them to pick out candidates who meet their requirements. By doing so, this facility is helping match candidates available in the labour market with prospective employers.

Initially, this scheme — it was launched in 2018 — had little success in placing candidates in government organisations and public sector entities, as per a report in this paper. Extending it now to the private sector helps cast a wider net, increasing the odds of the candidates being absorbed. Prospective employers now include PSUs, autonomous government organisations and private entities. This is indeed a welcome step. However, the problems in the labour markets in India require deeper and far-reaching policy changes.

FOR A SACK OF FLOUR

In the hungriest place on Earth, a writer offers his library in exchange for food

ASSENTENCE IS not a loaf of bread, releasing steam as it is torn apart and dipped into fresh olive oil and zaatar. A beautiful metaphor offers little where the fragrance of a fresh meal is in danger of becoming a memory, and even the coldest can of beans does more for a hungry stomach than any word in any language can. And so, Omar Hamad — pharmacist, tailor, writer and eyewitness to the death and starvation in Gaza — shares an appeal on social media, offering his library in exchange for a sack of flour.

Because what place do books have in a land where access to food is now wielded like a weapon? "I once plucked roses from language," Hamad recalls in a short essay on LitHub. But even for a writer, books can qualify as a necessity only when the sharp edge of hunger is sheathed — not when there are mouths to feed, wounds to salve, bodies to count.

Twenty-one months of conflict have made Gaza, as United Nations officials have reported, "the hungriest place on Earth". From rice to lentils to baby formula, even the most staple of foods have been made scarce by Israeli blockades and reports emerge every day of desperate, hungry people being crushed to death by others who are just as famished and just as desperate, begging for relief at aid hubs.

This is the double tragedy of Gaza where, for millennia, olive trees and poetry grew in equal profusion. Literature may be immortal, but for an entire population that faces starvation, books, too, have been reduced to mere possessions, emergency currency to be exchanged for food. The cultural devastation of Gaza since October 2023 is heartbreaking, with libraries, museums and ancient cultural sites destroyed by bombing. But as hunger stalks through the Strip, there will come a time when the world must reckon with a greater, incalculable loss.



SUJAN R CHINOY

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN India-China relations, including high-level meetings, suggest that ties are on the mend after prolonged estrangement caused by the bloodletting at Galwan in 2020. The meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping at the 16th BRICS summit at Kazan on October 23, 2024, gave new direction to ties.

The resumption of patrolling and grazing activities in eastern Ladakh at the remaining friction points paved the way for disengagement. During recent visits to China for SCO meetings, both Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar have spoken of the need for early de-escalation in the border areas to facilitate normalisation of ties.

The resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra this year after a gap of five years has been well-received across India. Yet several key issues remain to be addressed, such as direct flights, stationing of journalists, business visas and the issue of upper riparian river waters data. Initial statements from China after the April 22 terrorist attack in Pahalgam had disappointed India. At the SCO defence ministers' forum in June, Rajnath Singh held firm in rejecting any document that failed to condemn cross-border terrorism. In a positive turnaround, the BRICS Joint Declaration issued following the summit meeting in Brazil, attended by PM Modi, specifically condemns the terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir. It censures terrorism, rejects safe havens and calls out the double standards in countering terrorism.

This is the first time that a BRICS statement has specifically condemned any terrorist attack in J&K. This vindicates Modi's proactive stance on combating terrorism as well as the dispatching of all-party delegations to sensitise key nations about Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and Operation Sindoora. It should be recalled that the horrendous 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack had failed to find a place in the then BRIC Countries' Leaders Joint Statement the following year. There was only a generic condemnation of "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations". It was in the BRICS Leaders Declaration of September 2017 that mention was made of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad for the first time.

This shows that India and China can reach

Perceptions drive India-China relations. Beijing must not breach Delhi's red lines if ties are to improve

a consensus on terrorism as part of a broader multilateral context. It may instil confidence at the bilateral level. In the past, China has placed technical blocks on listing Pakistan-based terrorists at the UN. However, the forthcoming SCO summit declaration may not reflect the BRICS formula on terrorism, given Pakistan's membership of the grouping.

Going by the statements made by the Indian leadership in recent months, it is evident that peace and tranquillity on the border remain integral to the normalisation of ties. It took years to rebuild ties after the border war in 1962. Subsequent developments, unfortunately, belied early hopes of forging a mutually beneficial trade and economic partnership or maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas. Frequent tensions have only served to reinforce negative perceptions of one another.

In recent years, the adverse balance of trade with China and the lack of reciprocal market access have shaped public and political opinion in India. Fresh concerns have recently arisen over restrictions placed by China on the export of rare earth magnets for EVs to India, wind turbines and electronics, besides tunnel boring machines and certain high-value fertilisers.

After the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Communist Party of China (CPC) had a jaundiced view of India. Jawaharlal Nehru was maligned as an "imperial lackey". China failed to appreciate India's civilisational ethos and the value attached to peace and non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi's pacifist teachings stood in sharp contrast to Mao Zedong's advocacy of class struggle and violent means to bring about change. The CPC's Marxist lens, unfortunately, disregarded the teachings of Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism, which were part of China's heritage. They provided a better civilisational connect with India.

Even today, Chinese assessments betray deep suspicion about India's ties with the US. Beijing views the Quad as an "exclusive clique" that seeks to contain China. Recently, China convened a trilateral meeting with Pakistan and Bangladesh during the China-South Asia Cooperation Forum in Kunming. China's expanding footprint in South Asia lacks trans-

parency and plays a role in widening the existing fault lines.

China's "all-weather friendship" with Pakistan has soured bilateral ties with India. The strategic cooperation with Pakistan, including in the defence and nuclear fields, is a case in point. As Operation Sindoora unfolded, Chinese analysts undertook misinformation campaigns to question India's military success and cast aspersions on its equipment and tactics.

India's non-participation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Beijing's three Global Initiatives is for a valid reason. The CPEC, a flagship project of the BRI, traverses Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and violates India's sovereignty. Lack of consultation and transparency in regard to China's growing presence in the region, including the Indian Ocean, is cause enough for misgivings.

Equality and mutual respect should form the bedrock of bilateral relations. Respect for core concerns cannot be one-sided. China frequently seeks reaffirmation from India of the One China principle with regard to Taiwan and Tibet. The presence of the Dalai Lama in India and the succession question are viewed by Beijing as sensitive issues. Yet, Beijing has failed to reciprocate on India's core interests, whether on Jammu & Kashmir or its nexus with Pakistan.

On the question of equality, it is noteworthy that China considered itself an equal of the US in the 1950s and 1960s at a time when the Chinese economy was but a fraction of what it is today. The moot question is whether China is willing to follow the same logic today in dealing with others, regardless of asymmetries in power.

Perceptions matter. They play a major role in India-China relations. The positive signs in India-China relations are encouraging. The deep deficit of trust, however, calls for sustained efforts. The two sides must move forward with realistic expectations. The road ahead is arduous. Yet, forging a stable and cooperative relationship between the two Asian neighbours is a goal worth pursuing.

The writer is a former ambassador and director general of the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.

Views are personal



PINKY ANAND

IT HAS HAPPENED again. This time, in the quiet district of Balasore, Odisha. A 19-year-old woman, a BEd student, set herself on fire in the college hostel. She battled for almost three days with 90 per cent burns. She did not survive. Yet again, we are left with the smouldering remains of our conscience.

The student had allegedly been sexually harassed by a professor, also the head of the department she was affiliated to. A man in authority, trusted to lead and protect young women aspiring to educate others, instead allegedly abused his position of power. The survivor filed a complaint, her statement recorded on her hospital bed, but justice didn't come knocking. At least not fast enough. Not with the force it should have. As of now, the principal has been arrested and the college authorities have been suspended. But all this happened after she was gone.

Every time a woman speaks out against sexual harassment, she sets herself up for more than just legal battle. She exposes herself to ridicule, character assassination, silence from the institution, and a burden of proof that is rarely matched by sensitivity. The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), mandated under the law to be a woman's first line of support in a college or workplace, is either inactive or complicit in many institutions. In this case, what was the ICC doing when the student first voiced her discomfort? Were there mechanisms to hear her out? Why were her complaints met with disbelief and inaction? These

AN INSTITUTIONAL BETRAYAL

In Balasore sexual harassment case, a failure of enforcement, empathy and ethics

As a woman and a lawyer, I say this with anguish: The law is not enough if it remains only on paper. Our judiciary, law enforcement, institutions — all must learn not just to hear, but to listen. Not just to act, but to act swiftly and justly. When complaints gather dust or are dismissed as exaggerations, the message we send is clear: 'We don't believe you.'

are not procedural lapses, they are acts of institutional betrayal.

One must ask how alone, how abandoned, how desperate a young woman must feel to believe that the only way to be heard is by setting herself on fire.

We are told our homes are the safest. But women know that this is a myth. From schools to workplaces, hostels to offices, from families to institutions, women are asked to "adjust", "ignore", "stay quiet" for the sake of reputation, marks, jobs, and peace. When she dares to raise her voice, she is warned of "consequences". When she doesn't, she is blamed for tolerating it for too long.

How far have we truly come since the laws were amended after Nirbhaya? Section 9 of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013, mandates that any woman, including students, can file a complaint within three months of the incident. Section 4 mandates every institution to set up an ICC to inquire into such complaints fairly and confidentially. But how many colleges treat these provisions as sacrosanct, rather than paperwork to be ticked off during inspections?

The failure in Balasore is not one of law, it is of enforcement, empathy, and ethics. It is a failure of the college, its administration, the ICC, the police machinery, and society at large. What stops institutions from ensuring their ICCs are trained, equipped, and functional? What stops them from supporting a complainant instead of shielding a predator?

Each case like this chips away at a parent's confidence. Every time a daughter leaves home for education, there's a silent prayer whispered behind her. That she will return safe. That her ambition won't be her undoing. And yet, we are forced to confront the reality: That the most unsafe place for a woman is often the very place meant to empower her.

As a woman and a lawyer, I say this with anguish: The law is not enough if it remains only on paper. Our judiciary, law enforcement, institutions — all must learn not just to hear, but to listen. Not just to act, but to act swiftly and justly. When complaints gather dust or are dismissed as exaggerations, the message we send is clear: "We don't believe you."

Sexual harassment is not a "misunderstanding". It is violence. And institutions that ignore and trivialise it become complicit. The principal of the Balasore college should face the strictest punishment under the law. So should those who allowed this culture of silence to fester, every authority figure who dismissed the woman, every mechanism that lay dormant until it was too late. A woman should not have to light herself on fire to make people pay attention. But she did. And now, we must carry the weight of her silence. We must ensure no other woman has to choose death over dignity. Justice, delayed or denied, is not just a legal failure, it is a human tragedy.

The writer is senior advocate and former Additional Solicitor General of India



JULY 19, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

GUJARAT ACCORD

THE ANTI-RESERVATION agitation in Gujarat is likely to be withdrawn following an agreement between the government and anti-reservation leaders. The Amarsinh Chaudhary government has agreed not to implement the Solanki cabinet's decision to increase the reservation quota of non-Harijan and non-Advisi backward-class students for admission in medical and technical institutions to 28 per cent.

PAK, CHINA & SIACHEN

PAKISTANIS COORDINATING its military activi-

ties with China in a bid to capture the strategic Siachen Glacier in Ladakh. Pakistani and Chinese air force jet fighters recently conducted joint reconnaissance missions over the glacier and the Indian Nubra Valley. Defence experts say Pakistan is trying to secure advantageous positions in the glacier to secure a common border with China to facilitate a closer military link-up in the event of a war with India.

SAFARNAMA' DERAILED

SAFARNAMA, THE NEW TV serial presented at the initiative of the railway ministry, has been derailed. Doordarshan authorities have decided to suspend it on the ground that the third episode was "not only below standard but vul-

gar in dialogue at places". The move has caused surprise in Rail Bhawan, where officials point out that Doordarshan brought the alleged vulgarity to their attention only after the telecast.

CONGRESS VS CONGRESS

THE ONGOING TUSSELE between the Congress (I) and Congress (S) for office accommodation in Parliament House took a serious turn when the former made an unsuccessful bid to "capture" the adjoining Congress (S) office. After removing all sign boards of the Congress (S) office, Congress (I) men allegedly broke open the connecting door between the two party offices and took away some files and papers.

THE IDEAS PAGE

A turnaround for banks

A decline in non-performing assets has meant that credit is more readily available for industry, especially MSMEs



SOUMYA KANTI GHOSH

THE CREDIT GROWTH of scheduled commercial banks, a bellwether of economic resilience, weakened to 9.5 per cent for the fortnight ended June 27 vis-à-vis last year's growth of 17.4 per cent. Credit growth has, however, been declining since May 2024, due to a confluence of myriad reasons.

One, the RBI's decision to increase risk weights on certain segments of consumer credit and bank lending to the NBFCs towards the end of 2023 saw loan growth in these two sectors fall sharply, ensuring a much-desired slowdown in unsecured loan growth. Unsecured credit, constituting 25 per cent of retail loans, has seen growth plummet to 7.9 per cent in March 2025 and 7.8 per cent in May 2025 from 28.3 per cent in March 2023.

Along similar lines, credit to NBFCs, making up roughly a third of services credit, declined to 5.7 per cent in March and (-) 0.3 per cent in May. The efficacy and rationale of the RBI's directives can be gauged from the fact that even after curtailing the exuberance for a year and a half, NPAs in unsecured retail loans jumped to 1.8 per cent in March this year from 1.5 per cent the year before.

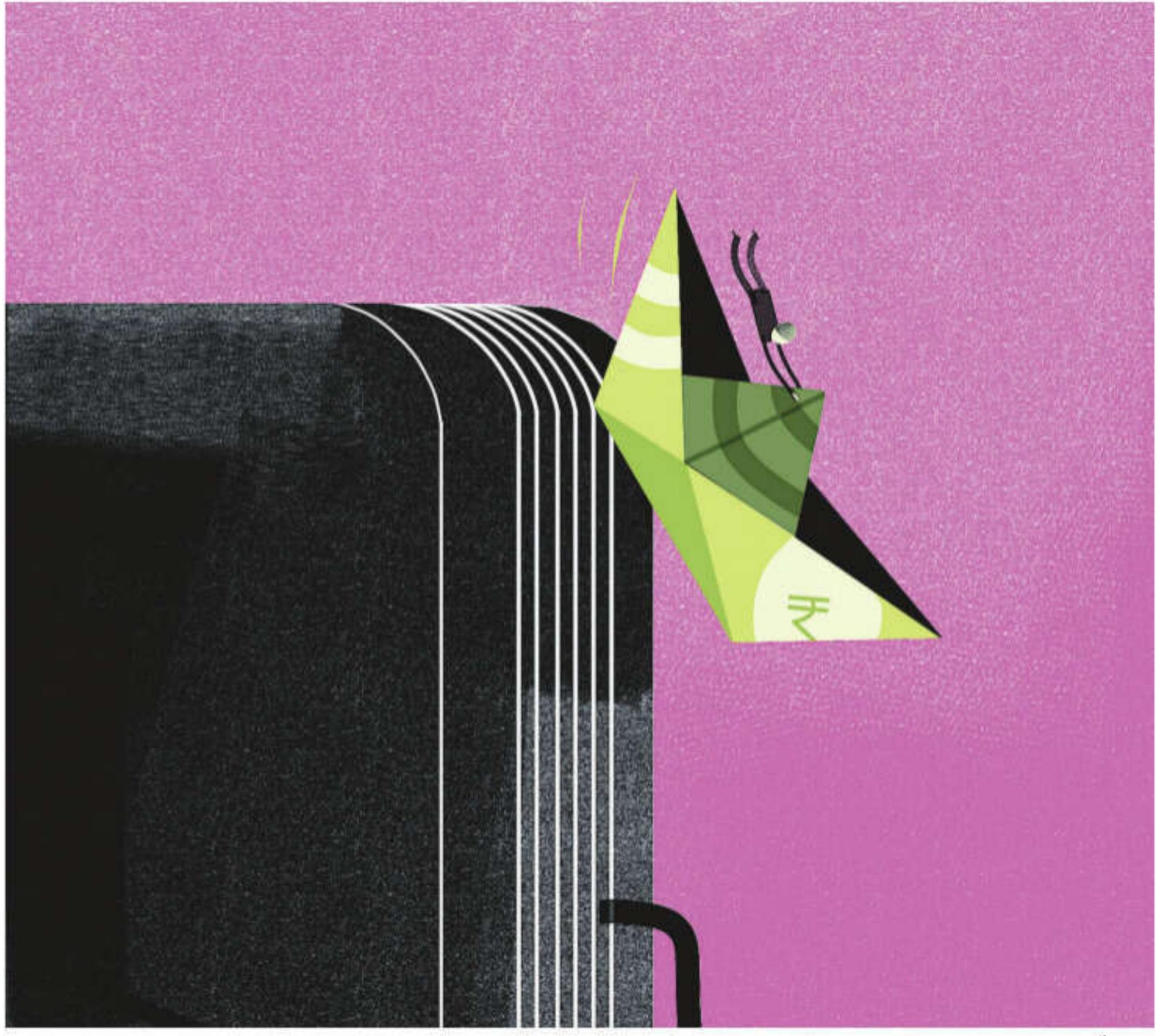
Two, the relatively low share of floating loans by private sector banks in retail loans causes friction in the transmission of low interest rates to borrowers. Private banks' retail portfolio benchmarked to EBLR (external benchmark lending rate) is 54.7 per cent, while for public sector banks (PSBs) it is 59.8 per cent.

Three, there is a seemingly visible shift in balance from the private to public banks. PSBs showed stable growth of 12.2 per cent in 2024-25 compared to 13.6 per cent in 2023-24. However, the credit growth of private banks declined to 9.5 per cent – the lowest since 2020-21. Further, the share of PSBs in incremental credit has also increased to 56.9 per cent in FY25 from merely 20 per cent in FY18, reaping rich dividends from the government's strategy of recognition, resolution, recapitalisation and reforms.

Banks' gross NPA (GNPA) ratio has declined to a multi-decadal low of 2.3 per cent with the provision coverage ratio of 76.3 per cent in March 2025, as services and industry GNPs declined significantly. The decline in industry NPAs, to 2.3 per cent in March 2025 from around 4 per cent in September 2023, is mainly due to the decline in MSME NPAs to 3.6 per cent in March 2025 from 10.8 per cent in March 2021. With a fall in NPA, credit to industry, led by MSME, has been growing steadily and its growth has outpaced those of other sectors during FY25. The share of industry credit in overall incremental credit growth has increased to 17 per cent in FY25 from 11 per cent in FY24. There is a turnaround story for MSME credit that needs to be told in detail. MSME credit, which grew by merely 5-7 per cent during 2011-2013, is now growing in double digits at around 18 per cent in May 2025.

Let us ponder over this shift.

There has been an increase in the supply of credit to existing borrowers in the MSME sector, because of an improvement in their



C R Sasikumar

balance sheet. Serious delinquencies – measured as 90 to 120 days past due (DPD) and reported as "substandard", have dropped to a five-year low of 1.8 per cent. Additionally, the revised definition of MSME, with increased investment and turnover limits, will increase credit growth further.

The formalisation of MSMEs with the help of URN seeding is giving a necessary fillip to credit growth. The government has taken great initiative in providing enhanced guarantee cover to various categories of MSME borrowers, facilitating them in unblocking working capital by converting trade receivables into cash. Alongside, the turnover threshold for buyers' mandatory onboarding on the TReDS platform has been reduced from Rs 500 crore to Rs 250 crore. The MSME Samadhaan portal is also being reimagined for cash flow efficiency.

MSMEs could thus benefit from a plethora of overlapping factors, capacity expansion in a benign regime when public policies are getting increasingly reoriented for their welfare. MSMEs depend greatly on large corporates through backward integration (and at times, forward integration) and hence their activity level could be a latent gauge of corporate activities. Promoting technological excellence tailored according to their requirements at optimal costs, mitigating information asymmetry and ironing out supply-chain issues could prove to be the tipping point at the next stage.

We are also witnessing diversification and broadening of credit markets in India. Private credit markets are making rapid inroads with flexibly structured deals as

MSMEs depend greatly on large corporates through backward integration (and at times, forward integration) and hence their activity level could be a latent gauge of corporate activities.

Promoting technological excellence tailored according to their requirements at optimal costs, mitigating information asymmetry and ironing out supply chain issues could prove to be the tipping point at the next stage.

global biggies join hands. Hence, the evolving trajectories of India's burgeoning credit markets would necessitate a pivot in regulatory attention sooner than later. In the US, lawmakers are asking for stress testing, as also questioning exuberant rating rationales. Further, corporates are increasingly tapping off-bank channels such as commercial papers, ECBs and capital markets instruments to optimise their borrowing mix.

Lastly, India Inc has significantly deleveraged its balance sheet, while increasing cash holdings. In the last two fiscals (FY24 and FY25), the cash and bank balance of corporates has jumped by around 18-19 per cent. Major sectors reporting increased cash holdings include IT, automobiles, refineries, power, and pharma. The cash and bank balances of India Inc, excluding BFSI, is estimated at around Rs 13.5 lakh crore in FY25, indicating cash accruals are a potential vector in funding capex plans.

So, what does the future hold? We believe that going forward, the sources of credit origination through bank deposits (primarily household savings in bank deposits) need to be keenly watched. The financialisation of household savings has gained significant momentum (the share of equities in household savings has increased from 2.5 percent in FY20 to 5.1 percent in FY24; China is at 9 percent) and this will have crucial implications for banking sector credit growth.

The writer is member, 16th Finance Commission and group chief economic advisor, State Bank of India. Views are personal

The Energy Premier League

Rise of India's renewables sector mirrors that of the IPL. It is poised to leap

In 2008, CRICKET saw the birth of the Indian Premier League (IPL), a bold, fast-paced reinvention of the game that challenged tradition and captivated a new generation. Interestingly, that era was also marked by another audacious leap: India's early steps toward embracing clean energy. Both moves, in their own domains, signalled a shift toward innovation, risk-taking and long-term transformation.

Both ideas that challenged the tried and tested were greeted initially with scepticism. Traditionalists scoffed at the IPL's flashy format, fearing it would dilute the game's soul. Likewise, energy veterans questioned whether renewable power could ever rival the affordability and reliability of fossil-fuel power. Two decades later, the IPL and India's renewable energy sector have redefined their respective domains.

The IPL auction, for instance, is perhaps the clearest expression of how far things have come. Balancing budgets, betting on form and future, and placing bold bets on untested potential. It's remarkably similar to how we make investment decisions in clean energy: Weighing long-term returns, assessing risk, and blending proven technologies with next-generation innovations. The fact that the 2025 IPL auction went up to nearly Rs 640 crore, around four times the value from when it first started, is testimony to the sustained interest in the IPL. A similar bold ap-

proach is reflected in how tariffs for renewable power have declined. Solar bids have decreased from above Rs 10 in 2015 to around Rs 2.4 currently.

The IPL has transformed into a multibillion-dollar franchise. Owners invest in academies, brand-building and talent pipelines, and look far beyond the boundary ropes. Revenue from IPL 2025 is projected to reach nearly Rs 20,000 crore, up 30 times from around Rs 650 crore in its launch year. This evolution mirrors our journey in renewables, from isolated pilot projects to a dominant source of new power capacity addition. From a mere 3 GW two decades ago, India now boasts around 180 GW of renewables capacity (excluding hydro), giving India the distinction of having the world's fourth-largest RE capacity.

The IPL-T20 format has been synonymous with relentless innovation in cricket, which has led to its continued success and popularity. Creative rule changes, such as "Impact Player", have sustained interest. Similarly, continuous innovations in modules, batteries and wind turbines have ensured dramatic improvements in RE power cost and reliability, ensuring sustained growth of the sector. Innovation isn't optional for either; it's crucial to survival.

Their growth trajectories speak for themselves. According to Brandirectory, the IPL's brand value has surged from \$2.1 billion in

2008 to over \$12 billion in 2025. In comparison, according to the IEA World Energy Investment 2025 report, India's annual renewable investments have grown from under \$2 billion a decade ago to around \$33 billion in 2024. These numbers aren't just impressive, they reveal what's possible when execution meets vision.

Just as teams exploit field restrictions in cricket's powerplay overs to accelerate scoring, the renewable sector must seize its own powerplay windows – policy momentum, falling tech costs, and shifting global demand. With geopolitical tensions accelerating the global pivot to energy security, we are in the midst of our most crucial innings. Talent from all corners of the cricketing world coming together elevates the IPL to a higher level. India's renewable space now has a similar global magnetism. FDI has crossed \$3.5 billion, and international developers are lining up to participate in mega auctions. We've gone from domestic play to global destination.

Modern franchises are powered by data. Every delivery is dissected, every move backed by analytics. Renewable energy has followed suit. AI tools optimise wind turbine maintenance and energy dispatch. Weather models predict solar and wind output with over 95 per cent accuracy. Satellite imagery aids site selection. This is no longer a sector powered by sunshine and hope, it is driven

by AI and precision.

The employment impact is no less remarkable. During tournament months, the IPL supports over 40,000 direct jobs and countless indirect jobs, whereas India's renewable sector employs 1.1 million people today and is poised to create 3.4 million jobs by 2030. This is about more than gigawatts; it's about livelihoods and inclusive growth.

What separates serial winners from also-rans isn't just talent, it's culture. Long-term orientation, disciplined systems, and a relentless commitment to excellence. That's exactly what India's renewable energy mission demands. Our 2030 target of 500 GW is a national imperative. One that calls for patient capital, policy consistency, and unshakeable conviction.

The climate clock is ticking. The global spotlight is on. Economic competitiveness, energy security, and environmental responsibility now intersect. Like finishing a match with calculated aggression, the renewable sector must execute transition with boldness and urgency.

The IPL and India's clean energy sector have shown the world that India can innovate, lead, and inspire, driven by its ingenuity. The match is on. And India is ready to lead.

The writer is chairman and managing director of Hero Future Energies

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Flattering Putin while mistreating the Ukrainian President has not succeeded in softening the Russian leader. There is no reason to think the threat of sanctions, whose scope remains unclear, will impress him any more." — LE MONDE, FRANCE

How to spot a leader

RSS has given top roles to youngsters. But it continues to give weightage to experience and believes that dynamism is not a function of age

also insisted on seniors taking a backseat and promoting youngsters, and set a personal example. Encouraged by the support of such elders, Bhagwat set in motion the process of assigning important organisational roles to youngsters. I was myself an example of that transformation when I became the public face of the organisation as its spokesperson at 36. Guarded by relatively older leaders in the past, the RSS has metamorphosed into a body led more and more by younger people in the past two decades. Many provincial organisers are under 50 today while several national-level functionaries are under 60.

That said, I must add that while there has been a concerted effort to rope in younger leaders at various levels in the organisation, there was never any "rule" to deny the job to any functionary in the name of an age limit. No *sarsanghchalak* or *sarkaryavah* was asked to leave at 79. Founder K B Hedgewar and his successor, M S Golwalkar, passed away prematurely due to ill-health when they were 51 and 68, respectively. The next three chiefs – Balasaheb Deoras, Raju Bhaiyya and Sudarshan – opted to relinquish their position on health grounds at the age of 79, 78 and 79, respectively. Bhagwat will turn 75 later this year. He is in sound health, and the organisation certainly needs his stewardship for many more years.

In public life, the argument about age works both ways. Many global statesmen in the last century, like Mahatma Gandhi, Franklin D Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Lee Kuan Yew, Deng Xiaoping and Nelson Mandela, who transformed their countries, led an active political life well into the evening of their lives. On the other hand, younger leaders like John F Kennedy, Angela Merkel, Barack Obama, Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi, too, made yeoman contributions in their respective countries in recent decades. It proves what Walt Disney once said: "Imagination has no age."

Former US president Ronald Reagan was famous for his humour. In the presidential election in 1984, Reagan's age, 73, became an issue. During one presidential debate, when asked whether he was worried about his age becoming a stumbling block in leading the country, Reagan responded by saying, "Not at all. I also will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit for political purposes my opponent's youth and inexperience." In governance, what counts is the experience and maturity of a leader.

Bhagwat's comment may be understood in general as openness in allowing younger leaders to come forward. But to interpret it as directed toward a particular leader would amount to a misunderstanding of the nature of public life. In fact, our countrymen chose the current leadership despite "younger" options being available on the other side since they believed that age cannot be the sole criterion. Given their dynamism and vision, besides the respect that they command among the masses, both Modi and Bhagwat are expected to lead in their respective roles for many more years to come. In fact, they must. After all, "age doesn't matter, unless you are a cheese".

The writer, president, India Foundation, is with the BJP. Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DOUBLE STANDARD

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The sanctions stick' (IE, July 18). The West has always had these "double standards". It accuses India of financing the Russia-Ukraine War, disregarding the fact that Europe imported LNG at record levels from Russia last year. India is pursuing its national interest, like Western nations, by purchasing Russian oil at discounted rates. India should pay no heed to the sanctions threat, instead diversifying its crude source slate. Energy security is key for development and India can't afford to cut out oil imports from Russia amid geopolitical tensions. India must walk its own path regardless of the threats from the West.

Indrajeet Shukla, Lucknow

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The sanctions stick' (IE, July 18). The NATO chief's comment on sanctions has raised hackles in New Delhi, which not only cautioned the West against applying "double standards" on the issue but also asserted its strategic autonomy by indicating its openness to reviving trilateral talks with Beijing and Moscow. Brushing aside criticism from the US and other countries, New Delhi clarified that it has never purchased sanctioned cargo and that Russian oil was not under global sanctions. India has diversified its supply sources and is therefore not concerned about any potential disruption in supply from Russia.

SS Paul, Nadia

FUELLING DIVISION

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Language is a distraction' (IE, July 18). It rightly highlights how linguistic tensions are being needlessly inflamed while urgent language-based identity politics is not just cultural – it's strategic. It fuels vote-bank polarisation, distracts from economic distress, and deepens communal fault lines. We've seen attacks on migrant workers and discrimination against non-native speakers escalate. Instead of encouraging multilingualism, political discourse is turning language into a weapon of exclusion. Linguistic nationalism threatens the very idea of India.

Zainab Irshad, Patna

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'When every question counts' (IE, July 18). Concerns about the devaluation of Parliament's authority and failing standards present a disturbing scenario. According to PRS Legislative Research, during the 16th Lok Sabha, only 77 per cent of the scheduled time in the Lok Sabha and 47 per cent in the Rajya Sabha was dedicated to questions. A mechanism to utilise Question Hour effectively is needed. International practices, such as holding Prime Minister's questions weekly, or the Opposition deciding the agenda for Parliament and forming a shadow cabinet to scrutinise and suggest alternative programmes, can also be adopted.

Vaibhav Goyal, Chandigarh



RAHUL MUNJAL

IN 2008, CRICKET saw the birth of the Indian Premier League (IPL), a bold, fast-paced reinvention of the game that challenged tradition and captivated a new generation. Interestingly, that era was also marked by another audacious leap: India's early steps toward embracing clean energy. Both moves, in their own domains, signalled a shift toward innovation, risk-taking and long-term transformation.

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FOURTH DEATH SINCE JANUARY

IIT-Kharagpur student found dead in hostel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 18

A 21-YEAR-OLD mechanical engineering student at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur in West Bengal was found hanging in his hostel room on Friday morning, with preliminary investigations suggesting death by suicide, police said.

According to police, Ritam Mondal, a fourth-year student, had returned to the institute on Wednesday after spending summer vacation at his Kolkata home.

"Having returned to the campus after the long summer vacation, Mondal had resumed his classes on Thursday. As per the records reviewed from the Institute's SARTH Counselling Centre, there were no prior indicators of mental health concerns. The faculty advisor from the department also mentioned that there were no apparent academic and non-academic issues that caught their attention," the IIT-Kharagpur said in a release.

The institute also said that it has initiated the process of filing an FIR.

"The institute is extending full cooperation to facilitate the process.

Additionally, the institute has constituted a fact-finding committee to examine the incident further and report at the earliest," said the release.

Meanwhile, police have also started an investigation into the incident.

This is the fourth unnatural death at IIT-Kharagpur since January this year.

On January 12, third-year electrical engineering student Shaon Malik was found hanging in his hostel room. On April 20, a final-year student of Ocean Engineering, Aniket Walker, was found dead. On May 4, third-year B-Tech student Mohammad Asif Qamar was found dead in his hostel.

All Indians in Niger are advised to remain vigilant," said the post.

Karmali was working on a transmission line in Dosso city when he was caught in a crossfire between local police and the militant group that launched the attack. He died on the spot, state officials have learnt.

The activist, Sikandar Ali, said that the abducted worker was one Ranjit Singh from Jammu & Kashmir.

Shyamal Dhakad (45) was the vice president of the BJP's Budha Mandal in the Malhargash Assembly constituency, which is represented by Deputy Chief Minister and four-time MLA Jagdish Devda.

Dhakad was found dead by his son when he went to his father's room, built on the terrace of their house, to give him tea.

Mandsaur SP Abhishek Anand said the deceased was likely repeatedly attacked with a sharp-edged weapon, "causing multiple wounds, leading to his death". The autopsy report is awaited, he said. Police suspect that the assassin gained entry into Dhakad's room through a shed that was had been constructed on the premises of his house.

S.E. RAILWAY – TENDER
Tender Notice No. CKP-GSU-2025-26-GS-3, Dated : 17.07.2025. e-Tender against Open Tender is invited by Dy. Chief Project Manager/Gatl Shakti Unit, Chakradharpur for & on behalf of the President of India for the following work. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Name of work: Execution of balance work in connection with Soft upgradation work of existing infrastructure of Booking Counter-cum-Waiting Hall at ground level and new Running Station at Jaroli station. **Tender Value :** ₹ 1,66,15,905.39. **Earliest Money:** ₹ 2,33,100/- **Cost of Tender form:** 0.00. **Date of opening :** 12.08.2025. The tender can be viewed at Website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. The tender/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered under on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering. Note: e-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (Authority-Railway Board's letter No. 2020/CE-II/CT/3E/GCC/Policy dtd. 16.07.2020). (PR-413)

PUBLIC NOTICE
GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA
EXCISE & TAXATION DEPARTMENT

NOTICE FOR INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR THE ALLOTMENT OF WHOLESALE LICENSE OF IMFL (L-1) AND COUNTRY LIQUOR (L-13) FOR THE POLICY YEAR 2025-27 IN TWENTY (20) DISTRICTS OF THE STATE.

The applications are hereby invited for grant of wholesale licenses of IMFL in the form of L-1 and wholesale license of Country Liquor in form of L-13 for Twenty (20) districts in the State. The Wholesale license of IMFL (L-1) and Country Liquor (L-13) shall be granted to the applicant amongst the retail outlet allottees/licensees of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (L-2) and Country Liquor (L-14A) respectively. The L-1 and L-13 licenses shall be granted on the basis of quota contribution of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (L-2) and Country Liquor (L-14A) (of the policy year 2025-27), amongst the applicant allottees/licensees of retail zones within an Excise district. The quota contribution for the purpose of grant of L-1 & L-13 licenses shall be calculated on the basis of retail liquor zones allotted as on 21.07.2025 for receiving such applications for grant of L-1/L-13. The 1-L-13 license(s) shall be granted only to those eligible applicants who apply for the License(s) within the date fixed/extended by the Excise and Taxation Commissioner, Haryana. The Excise Policy provides that the Excise and Taxation Commissioner may invite applications for such number of L-1/L-13 licenses as he may deem fit. The Excise and Taxation Commissioner may also conduct the process of allotment in multiple rounds of inviting applications. The number of wholesale licenses of IMFL (L-1) and Country Liquor (L-13) in the district for which the applications are being invited in 5th round shall be as under:-

2 Indian migrants killed in Niger terror attack on worksite, another abducted

SHUBHAM TIGGA
RANCHI, JULY 18

TWO INDIAN migrant workers were killed in the West African country of Niger and another was abducted after a terror attack on their worksite on Tuesday, officials said.

One of the deceased workers was Ganesh Karmali, 39, from Jharkhand's Bokaro district, a state government official said. The other has been identified only as Krishan from a southern India state, said an activist from Jharkhand who has been working on the repatriation of the bodies.

The activist, Sikandar Ali, said that the abducted worker was one Ranjit Singh from Jammu & Kashmir.

The Indian Embassy in Niger confirmed the deaths and the abduction in a post on X but did not share details. "In a heinous terror attack on 15 July in Niger's Dosso region, two Indian nationals tragically lost their lives and one was abducted. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Mission in Niamey is in touch with local authorities to repatriate mortal remains and ensure safe release of the abducted Indian."

Karmali, a resident of Karipanivillage under Tilaiya panchayat in Gomia block, was employed by



Ganesh Karmali from Jharkhand, one of the deceased

Transrail Lighting Ltd, an India-based company that undertakes power transmission projects abroad. He had been working in Dosso for about a year.

Shikha Lakra, head of the State Migrant Workers Control Room under the Labour Department, confirmed the developments and said: "The matter is being handled by the Indian Embassy in Niger. The body has already been taken into custody by the embassy, and a no-objective certificate has been received from the family." She said: "He died in the crossfire. His brother-in-law was also injured but is safe and under protection. The remaining four workers from Jharkhand are safe and want to return. We've initiated the official process and written to the Embassy."

Lakra said the state Labour Department is coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs for the swift repatriation of the body.

Sapna Kumari, Ganesh Karmali's 20-year-old daughter, said her father had assured the family that his company insurance cover was worth ₹40 lakh. "But now the contractor is saying they will only give us ₹12 lakh. Before I could even reach home, they got papers signed from us under pressure," she alleged.

"We haven't even been contacted by the company directly. Only the contractor is speaking to us. We just want justice and for my father's body to return with dignity," she said.

Sapna, who got married earlier this month on July 2, said her father had not attended the wedding but had promised to come on July 20. "I have a two-year-old brother and a four-year-old sister. My mother Yashoda Devi is in shock," she said.

Ali, the local activist, visited the family and said: "I was told the company was pressuring them not to share any information."

On April 25 this year, workers from Jharkhand were caught in a crossfire between police forces in Niger and hundreds of armed militants on motorbikes. While trying to flee the scene, five workers were abducted by the group.

Quote to media: HC reinstates IIT-B research student

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JULY 18

THE BOMBAY High Court has ordered that the suspension of an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bombay research scholar, issued on April 28 for allegedly giving a quote to the media, will cease to be effective from July 25, reinstating him as research student.

Akhay M Sawant, a PhD student in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the IIT-Bombay and a member of the Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle (APPSC), an informal student collective active on campus, was suspended in April this year following allegations that he gave an "unauthorised" statement to a news outlet in February regarding his department's initiative to make arrangements for Ramadan.

Sawant moved the Bombay High Court against the suspension order issued by the institute which stated that he is suspended until December

31, 2025, an action taken as per the recommendations by the disciplinary action committee.

Sawant's plea stated that he had addressed a detailed written communication to the IIT-Bombay explaining how charges levelled against him were unfounded but the institute's committees failed to consider the same.

Arguing that the suspension would have a "severe and adverse impact" on his academic and career prospects, the petition sought that

the "arbitrary" April 28 suspension order be quashed and set aside.

On July 15, the petitioner gave an undertaking to the high court that he would abide by all institute Rules and Regulations.

Disposing of the plea, the bench further clarified that the order was passed "in the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case so that the academic career of the petitioner should not be jeopardised".

IIT Bombay administration said it will follow the court's order.

17 Maoists killed this year in Jharkhand, say police

SHUBHAM TIGGA
RANCHI, JULY 18

SEVENTEEN PEOPLE were killed and close to 200 people arrested in multiple anti-insurgency operations in Jharkhand in the last six months, police said Friday.

According to data shared by Jharkhand Police during a press conference, 197 Naxals were arrested in various operations between January and June 2025. Among them were some leaders of various banned groups—including members of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), Tritiya Sammelan Prastuti Committee (TSPC), People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI), and Jharkhand Jan Mukti Parishad.

Those arrested include Aakraman Ganjhu, a Regional Committee Member of TSPC with a reward of ₹15 lakh on his head, and Ranvijay Mahato, another CPI (Maoist) leader with a ₹15 lakh reward on his head. The list also features several zonal and area commanders who had been active in multiple districts for years, Inspector General (Operations) Michael Raj said.

"Maoists have had a presence in Jharkhand for many years, and the police have been continuously acting against them," he said. "Out of the 17 Maoists, over 10 were killed in operations carried out in Bokaro alone."

"Around 10 Maoists have surrendered in the past six months. During this period, security forces also seized 113 weapons, around 8,500 rounds of ammunition, and 176.5 kg of explosive substances," he said. "Those who are still taking up arms should come forward and surrender to the government... Our operations against extremism will continue in the years to come."

SIX MAOISTS KILLED IN ABUJHMAJ ENCOUNTER

Rajpur: Six Maoists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Abujhmad area of Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district on Friday, authorities said. This takes the total number of Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh to 221 including 204 in Bastar region. The encounter broke out in the afternoon in an undisclosed location in Abujhmad. Based on intelligence inputs, joint teams of security forces launched a search operation.

belong to the CPI (Maoist), while the rest are from the JMP, the TSPC, the Tritiya Prastuti Committee (TPC), and the PLFI. The top four Maoists on the list each carry a bounty of ₹1 crore, followed by four others with ₹5 lakh.

"Maoists have had a presence in Jharkhand for many years, and the police have been continuously acting against them," he said. "Out of the 17 Maoists, over 10 were killed in operations carried out in Bokaro alone."

"Around 10 Maoists have surrendered in the past six months. During this period, security forces also seized 113 weapons, around 8,500 rounds of ammunition, and 176.5 kg of explosive substances," he said. "Those who are still taking up arms should come forward and surrender to the government... Our operations against extremism will continue in the years to come."

Chased, 3 elephants mowed down by train in Jhargram

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 18

AN ATTEMPT by people to drive away a herd of elephants in West Bengal's Jhargram district late Thursday night ended in a tragedy as three elephants—including a mother and her calf—were killed after being hit by a train.

The state Forest Department has ordered a probe.

The incident took place around 145 am near Bansital railway station under the Kharagpur division of South Eastern Railways, around 14 km from Jhargram town. The herd was crossing the railway tracks after being driven away by the hula party from a human settlement when Kharagpur-bound Janshatabdhi Express hit the elephants.

The hula party is a group of local youth hired by the state Forest Department to drive away elephants that stray into villages and farmlands.

State Forest Minister Birbaha Hansda told *The Indian Express* that the Railways was informed hours earlier of an elephant drive in the area. "At around 11 pm, we alerted the Railways... despite this, the incident occurred," she added.

Police identified the slain gangster only as Manu. SP, Fatehgarh, Arti Singh, said Manu had a "long criminal history", including cases of murder and kidnapping for ransom. Two policemen suffered minor injuries in the shootout, officers said.

According to the police, they received a tip-off on Sunday about Manu's location.

When the police reached the spot, the accused tried to flee. He pulled out a pistol and opened fire. The police retaliated, and Manu was hit by two bullets.

Later, he was taken to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead during treatment, the SP said.

Manu was wanted by the police in connection with the rape and murder of a minor girl, whose body was found in a field on June 28.

Wanted gangster shot dead in UP encounter: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, JULY 18

THE FATEHGANJ police on Friday gunned down a gangster carrying a reward of ₹1 lakh on his head in an encounter. He was wanted in several cases, including the rape and murder of a minor girl recently, police said.

Police identified the slain gangster only as Manu. SP, Fatehgarh, Arti Singh, said Manu had a "long criminal history", including cases of murder and kidnapping for ransom. Two policemen suffered minor injuries in the shootout, officers said.

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लघु जल संसाधन विभाग
“हर चेत तक दिलाई का पानी”

कार्यक्रम पुनर्निवाद आयोग सूचना संख्या-02/2025-26

केवल इन निविदा पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर संवेदन से प्रतिशोध दर्शन प्राप्ति

Detailed NIT can be seen on website www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar or www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in or the notice board of the office of the undersigned Executive Engineer

RCD, Road Division,
Lakhisarai.

PR. NO. 008964 (RCD) 25-26

नशामुक्त हो जाए विहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।

जल संसाधन विभाग

“हर चेत तक दिलाई का पानी”

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RCD, Road Division,
Lakhis

When a train comes to Aizawl

A 51-km railway line is set to connect the Mizoram capital to the Indian Railways' grid for the first time. DHEERAJ MISHRA travels along the new line, a project with deep strategic value for a landlocked state, where the arrival of the train is marked by both hope and a sense of foreboding



Photos: Dheeraj Mishra

LALHMACHHUANI, 45, has never left Mizoram. She runs a small eatery out of her home in Sairang, 20 km from capital Aizawl, and rarely gets to step out. But these days, with all the talk of a train coming to the nearby Sairang station, Lalhmachhuani finds herself dreaming of a journey. "Delhi a zin a fan kual ka chak (I want to travel to Delhi, explore the city)," she smiles.

"I have never been on the train. I have only seen them in movies. We plan to go see the train when it comes to Sairang station," says the mother of four.

The soon-to-be-launched Bairabi-Sairang line links Bairabi on Mizoram's northern border to Sairang near Aizawl, bringing the Indian Railways to the state capital for the first time. Work on the 51.38-km line was completed in June this year. With that, Aizawl becomes the fourth northeastern capital after Guwahati, Agartala and Itanagar to be linked to the Indian Railways' grid. With the trial run conducted on May 1, 2025, operations on the line are expected to begin by September, officials said.

"I have never been on the train. I have only seen them in movies. We plan to go see the train when it comes to Sairang station," says the mother of four.

The challenges began soon after, with officials saying that around 44 per cent of the line had to be blasted through mountains.

Vinod Kumar, chief engineer of Bairabi-Sairang line who worked for over five years on the project, says, "This will be counted among the most difficult projects of the Indian Railways. The hills here are of shale formation - ye mitti ke pahad hain. We had a very short window since the working season is limited to 4-5 months a year, from November to March. It's impossible to work from April to October due to the prolonged monsoon. The alignment traverses through hilly terrain, deep valleys and gorges, so we had to build a lot of tunnels, bridges and viaducts."

The line, which runs along the east bank of river Tlawng, has 48 tunnels, 55 major bridges, 87 minor bridges,

five Road over Bridges and six Road Under Bridges, of which Bridge No. 196 or the Kurung Bridge is the highest at 114 metres, 42 metres taller than the Qutub Minar. On August 23, 2023, a steel girder on the Kurung bridge collapsed, killing at least 23 workers.

Kumar says the frequent blockades on the National Highway between Guwahati and Silchar meant transportation of materials was a big challenge.

Currently, the only access the rest of India has to the Northeast is through the Siliguri Corridor, a strip of land called the 'Chicken's Neck'. But its geography and proximity to neighbouring countries makes the corridor vulnerable, especially in times of conflict.

In March, Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of Bangladesh's interim government, had said in Beijing that Northeast India was "landlocked" and called Dhaka the "only guardian of the ocean for all this region" — a remark that invited a sharp rebuttal from India.

The need for a line

National Highway-6, which runs along the new railway line, is currently the lifeline of Mizoram. It connects Silchar in Assam to Aizawl. Most of the essential supplies that come to the state, including vegetables and construction material, take this route.

But the road journeys are often long and hard, with the highway witnessing landslides and blockages during the monsoons. While it takes around five hours from Sairang to Bairabi by this road, the train is expected to cut travel time to 1.5 hours.

But Mizoram's geography meant it took a long time for the Railways to enter the state. It's landlocked, with Myanmar to its east and

south and Bangladesh on the west. It also shares its northern boundary with Assam, Tripura and Manipur. It was only in May 2016 that the 84-km-long narrow gauge line between Katalhal (Assam) and Bairabi (Mizoram) was brought on the broad gauge network of the Indian Railways.

On September 22, 1999, the Railway Board sanctioned a Preliminary Engineering cum-Traffic Survey to explore the feasibility of extending the railway line beyond Bairabi. "But the survey work could not be completed as the proposed alignment passes through thick forest areas with poor visibility. Besides, there were protests from residents," said a senior official in the Ministry of Railways.

In March 2006, the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), the railway zone under which this line falls, carried out another survey for the Bairabi-Sairang line, following which the Centre declared it a 'national project' in 2008. On November 29, 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the line, following which construction began in 2015-16.

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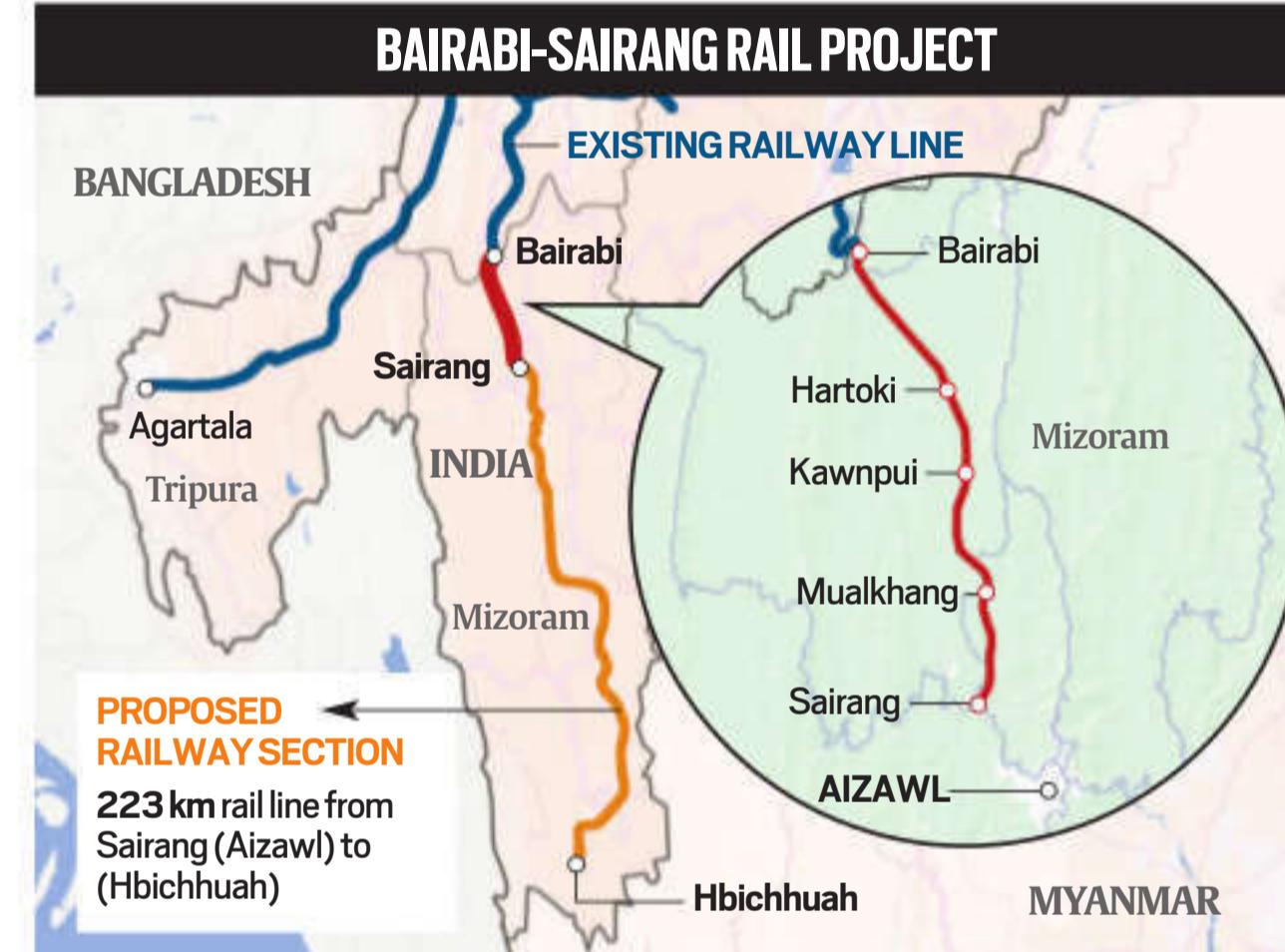
With a significant section of the line held up by piers, for most part of the journey, it's a dreamy ride through clouds and blue skies

Some of the construction material too had to be transported from Assam, West Bengal and other states.

Now that the line is finally ready and waiting to be launched, officials say an extension of the line is underway, with a Final Location Survey being conducted for a proposed 223-km railway line from Sairang (Aizawl) to Hbichhuah in Mizoram, on the border with Myanmar.

'Let us live as we want'

While the train is the talk of Sairang, the anticipation is tinged with a sense of fore-



■ Four new stations on the stretch: Hortoki, Kawnpu, Mualkhong and Sairang
■ Bairabi station currently handles just one passenger train which runs 103 km from Silchar (Assam) to Bairabi in almost four hours

BAIRABI-SAIRANG LINE

100 kmph

Speed potential

Rs 8,100 cr

Cost of project (Initial cost was Rs 5,021.45 cr)

OTHER RAIL PROJECTS IN THE NORTHEAST

The Bairabi-Sairang line is one of many ongoing railway projects in the Northeast

■ DIMAPUR-KOHIMA NEW LINE (DHANSIRI-ZUBZA): Aimed at bringing the railways to Nagaland capital Kohima, this 82.5-km line extends from Dhansiri station in Assam, not far from Dimapur in Nagaland, to Zubza, approximately 15 km from Kohima. The Rs 6,663.20-crore project's targeted date of completion has been revised from March 2026 to December 2029

■ MURKONGSELEK-PASIGHAT NEW LINE: This 26.15-km broad gauge project aims to convert the existing narrow gauge line between Murkongselek in Assam and Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh to broad gauge. The Rs 414.84-crore project is scheduled to be completed by February 2026

■ SIVOK-RANGPO NEW LINE: An ambitious project that seeks to connect Sikkim to the national network for the first time, the 45-km line will link Sivok in West Bengal to Rangpo in Sikkim. The Rs 7,876.92-crore rail project will have 14 tunnels - including the longest (5,300 m) and shortest (542 m) tunnels. Its target date of completion is December 2027

■ JIRIBAM-IMPHAL NEW LINE: Spanning approximately 111 km, the Rs 14,322.79-crore project aims to link Jiribam, currently the only railhead in Manipur, to capital Imphal



One of the tunnels displaying Mizo art; (top) an inspection car sets off from Sairang station to Bairabi.

On tunnels walls, a slice of Mizo art

WOMEN IN the colourful attire performing 'Cheraw', a traditional bamboo dance, to the accompaniment of drums and gongs; the deeply symbolic Seluphan or wooden memorial posts; the warrior class of Pasaltha in their traditional headgear — a ride on the 51.38-km Bairabi-Sairang rail line is a journey through Mizo society and its history.

The images — mostly a slice of Mizo society with images of Mizo villages and their traditions — adorn the walls and portals of the tunnels on the rail line.

Kapinjal Kishore Sharma, Chief Public Relations Officer (Copro) of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), says the Mizo artists reached out to them with the idea of painting the tunnels.

"Initially, we had decided to paint the tunnel portals as usual. But some of the local Mizo artists reached out to us, showed their work and asked for permission to draw. It turned out to be a great idea. Since the line has 48 tunnels, it looks spectacular when you pass them one after another. If you will look closer, it tells a complete story of Mizo society," says Sharma.

Beyond Bairabi, until now the rail-



Lalhmachhuani, who runs an eatery in Sairang, 20 km from Aizawl, hopes to travel to Delhi once the train service starts.

bonding — of 'outsiders' and the need to secure Mizo identity.

"Of course, we are excited to see the train, but there is fear too. There is talk that crimes will rise, local people could be in trouble, etc. Because currently, you can check the ILP (the Inner Line Permit) at road-check points and airports. How will it be checked on the train, that is our concern," says K Chawikimi, 53, who runs a shop selling cement and other construction material at Sairang Bazar.

Chawikimi, whose shop is one of the many women-led businesses in the town, goes on: "There is no doubt that once the train comes, it will be easier and cheaper to get my supplies. Currently, I get them from Kolkata. A kg of iron rod costs me Rs 61 a kg and I sell it for Rs 65. Often, the costs escalate because of the delay in supply due to the road blockades. So I am happy that the train will help in reducing the cost. But the Railways should ensure the protection of our rights. I hope the outsiders understand this too. Let us live as we want."

Mizoram is one of four Northeast states

that requires non-residents to furnish an ILP to enter the state. It's a lightning rod in a region with high anxieties about identity and the alleged influx of outsiders.

Around 6 km far from Sairang, Vanlalriniana, 74, says the Railways is one of the best things that has happened to Mizoram in many years. "However, I would have liked it if they used the line to only bring in goods. Now that they have said there will be passenger trains on this line, the government should look at our concerns regarding outsiders," says Vanlalriniana, who retired in 2019 from the state government department.

Biaikhangi is more hopeful. The 60-year-old sees the train as an opportunity to expand her business — she supplies bamboo shoots, lemon juice and vegetables to different markets in Aizawl.

"In 2008, I bought a shirt in Kolkata for Rs 175 and sold it here for Rs 700. So I know what Mizo people like. Once the transportation is taken care of, I will get things from Delhi and Kolkata at cheaper rates and bring it here. You never know, I might get rich," she laughs.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2025



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Has China beaten US tariffs: Reading GDP growth data

Rishika Singh asked an analyst of the Chinese economy to unpack the official numbers, place them in context, and identify persisting areas of concern


**EXPLAINED
INTERVIEW**

LIZZI C LEE

On July 15, China's National Bureau of Statistics released GDP growth numbers for the first half of the year, including new data for the April-June period. The growth rate in the first quarter (January-March) was 5.4% year-on-year, and 5.2% in the second quarter.

Has the Chinese economy weathered the worst of US tariffs?

Not quite, but it's proven more resilient than many expected. The 5.2% growth and robust trade figures reflect a combination of front-loaded exports (ensuring they were shipped out before the tariffs came into effect), adaptive supply chains, and targeted policy support – not yet a clean bill of health.

Much of the pain from tariffs is delayed thanks to stockpiling, supplier renegotiations, and the tariff truce that US and Chinese officials agreed to after talks in Geneva in May. A 90-day deadline was agreed to, which will end on August 12. The real test will come when inventories run out and the truce expires. So, it's more a temporary reprieve than a final victory.

What do these data say about Chinese domestic demand and consumption?

Domestic demand remains the Achilles' heel for the Chinese economy. The data confirms strong external demand but tepid internal momentum. It underscores caution among households amid deflationary pressures, that is, factors contributing to a fall in the general price level. Additionally, property value has declined following a housing crisis, and job insecurity remains a concern.

These issues go back much further than the Covid-19 pandemic or the tariffs. They're the result of structural choices made decades ago.

For a long time, the economy focused on growth above all else, channelling a large share of national income into investment, say, on

building infrastructure. Wages and household incomes were kept relatively low, which helped sustain high savings and high investment.

That worked well when the investment was quite productive, but over time, capacity continued to grow faster than demand, and business margins thinned. Even before the pandemic, growth was slowing and the economy was showing signs of what economists call a growth recession – still expanding, but at a slower, less healthy pace, with weak prices and hesitant hiring.

At the same time, households were saving more due to uncertainty about the future and limited social safety nets. The pandemic and trade tensions worsened existing problems.

Addressing them will require raising incomes, improving confidence, and shifting the growth model to rely more on domestic demand.

In an official release, Chinese policymakers have admitted that "effective demand is insufficient". Without stronger consumer confidence and income growth, the recovery risks being export-heavy, but fragile at home.

What is the incentive to move away from

the current economic model?

China's export-driven growth has been incredibly successful for decades, but it has also created some serious vulnerabilities.

With the US tariffs, it is clear that relying heavily on exports leaves the economy exposed to geopolitical risks. Internally, we're seeing what people in China now call "inflation" – a cycle of extreme competition among Chinese firms, which has led to relentless price-cutting to appeal to consumers.

That hurts firms' ability to invest, keeps wages low, and again holds back domestic demand.

Meanwhile, the European Union and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have become more important trading partners for China, and they do help cushion the blow from US tariffs. Exports to these regions have grown in double digits in some categories.

However, the EU is increasingly wary of Chinese industrial overcapacity and unfair competition in the form of state subsidies, especially in green tech and Electric Vehicles. ASEAN is growing fast, but its demand is still uneven and more price-sensitive than the US market. Neither can fully replace the scale and

strategic weight of the US relationship.

There's also growing resistance from other countries to cheap Chinese exports flooding their markets. If China keeps doubling down on this model, it risks even more trade barriers and damage to its reputation and relationships overseas. There is now a push to produce higher-quality goods and compete more on innovation than just on low prices.

But making that shift is not easy or painless. Cutting excess capacity will slow growth in some industries and prices of certain goods will rise. Some firms with thin margins will have to exit the market, leading to job losses. Reforming the model is clearly necessary for the long term, but it comes with real short-term costs that are hard to ignore.

Could a massive stimulus be on the way?

China tends to approach stimulus very carefully, and usually waits to see clear signs of weakness before stepping in aggressively.

Given the current economic reality, intervention is weighed against the risk of piling up too much debt, fueling another housing bubble, or creating financial instability down

the road. That caution also allows them to keep some policy tools in reserve.

Right now, growth has actually been a little above the government's target, so they don't feel much urgency to roll out big, sweeping measures yet. What we've seen so far (modest fiscal spending, targeted subsidies, some selective credit easing) has helped keep the economy on track, but hasn't addressed the deeper problems.

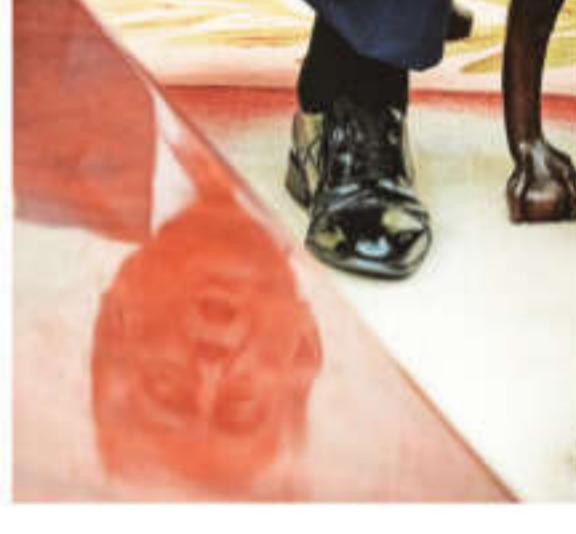
Many see the stimulus extended so far as falling short. It has stabilised things on the surface but hasn't meaningfully boosted confidence among households or businesses. The government seems to be waiting for more decisive evidence before it commits to a more coordinated response.

It's also because putting together a comprehensive package of reforms is politically and institutionally complicated. We'll likely see stronger measures later in the year if the data shows growth starting to slip more clearly.

Lizzi C. Lee is a Fellow on Chinese Economy at the Center for China Analysis, Asia Society Policy Institute, Washington, DC

EXPLAINED HEALTH

TRUMP DIAGNOSED WITH CHRONIC VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY. WHAT IS IT?



Trump's swollen ankle during a meeting at the White House on Wednesday. *The NY Times*

THE WHITE HOUSE said on Thursday that US President Donald Trump had been diagnosed with chronic venous insufficiency (CVI). It is a fairly common condition in people older than 70. (Trump is 79.)

Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, told the media that the diagnosis was made while doctors were addressing swelling in Trump's legs and bruising on his hand in recent weeks.

Dr Sean P Barbabella, the physician to the President, said in a memo that Trump had noticed mild swelling in his lower legs and underwent a comprehensive evaluation which revealed the condition. He said that Trump had some bruising on his hand as well. This was due to irritation caused by repeated hand-shaking and to the use of aspirin, which the President takes as part of his heart health regimen.

Trump also had his blood work done and underwent an echocardiogram, Barbabella said. All of the results were within normal limits and revealed no cardiac, renal or systemic issues. "President Trump remains in excellent health," he wrote.

What is chronic venous insufficiency?

CVI is a condition that occurs when veins have trouble moving blood back to the heart. It occurs most often in the legs, and can cause swelling, as Trump experienced.

Other symptoms can include varicose veins, pain, discomfort and, in rare cases, venous ulcers, sores that take unusually long to heal, said Dr Prakash Krishnan, director of endovascular services at the Mount Sinai Fuster Heart Hospital in New York.

What can lead to chronic venous insufficiency?

According to Krishnan, smoking, obesity, and pregnancy can cause CVI. People who have to stand for long periods of time on the job are also at greater risk.

This is because veins, particularly in

the legs, have to pump blood against gravity back up to the heart. They use one-way valves and muscles to help them do that, Krishnan said. But when too much blood pools, as can happen during prolonged standing, the pressure causes veins to dilate and the valves can stretch and become leaky, causing venous insufficiency.

How is the condition treated?

Doctors typically start with conservative treatments, such as compression stockings to squeeze the legs and help blood move back up to the heart.

They also often recommend that patients keep their legs elevated for at least 30 minutes three times a day, and sometimes advise patients to lose weight or perform resistance exercises to improve blood flow.

If those measures fail, doctors might try more intensive treatments, such as a procedure called sclerotherapy, which involves injecting a chemical solution into the affected veins to collapse them. They can also use heat to seal a vein, including with laser treatment. The body will then reroute the blood through other, healthier veins.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

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AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

THE INDIAN Navy on Friday commissioned INS *Nistar* at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam.

Indigenously designed and constructed by Hindustan Shipyard Limited, *Nistar* is the first of two diving support vessels (DSVs) that were ordered by the Navy in 2018. Its sister ship, *Nipun*, was launched in 2022, and is expected to be commissioned in the near future.

Meant to support deep-sea diving and submarine rescue operations, these DSVs will enhance India's operational preparedness in the underwater domain and reinforce the country's strategic maritime posture across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the Navy said.

Nistar & its capabilities

The original INS *Nistar* was a submarine rescue vessel acquired by the Indian Navy from the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1969, and commissioned in 1971. It remained in service till 1989, during which time it was the centrepiece of the Navy's diving and submarine rescue operations.

The new *Nistar* will carry forward this legacy. But unlike its predecessor, it comprises more than 80% indigenous content, with about 120 MSMEs having participated in its construction. This makes *Nistar* the first indigenously designed and constructed diving support and submarine rescue vessel in India.

"Nistar is testimony to the growing capability and maturity of our maritime industrial base, and another shining example of *Aatmanirbhar Bharat*," Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi said during the commissioning ceremony.

With a displacement of around 10,500 tonnes, length of almost 120 metres, beam of more than 20 metres, and an endurance of more than 60 days at sea, the new *Nistar* is also larger and more capable than its 800-tonne predecessor.

According to the Navy, *Nistar*'s specialised onboard diving complex has both air and saturation diving systems, which are complemented by underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and side scan SONARs. Moreover, *Nistar* will be the mothership of an advanced deep submergence rescue vehicle (DSRV). The Indian Navy acquired two DSRVs from the UK's M/S James Fisher & Sons in 2018 and 2019 – one each for *Nistar* and *Nipun*.

Nistar can also carry a 15-tonne subsea crane, and support helicopter operations. Aboard *Nistar* is an operation theatre, an in-

EXPLAINED DEFENCE

Saving lives in the deep

INS *Nistar*, commissioned on Friday, and its sister ship *Nipun*, along with their DSRVs, will provide the Navy the niche and critical capability of conducting deep-sea rescues of trapped submariners

HOW DEEP-SEA RESCUE OPS WORK



(Clockwise from top) *Nistar* at Visakhapatnam port; DSRV being lowered; inside DSRV. *Indian Navy*

DSRV equipped with robotic arms and other equipment can try to free it.

But the rescue window is small, and the priority is to save personnel stuck underwater. This is where the DSRV comes in. It can attach to the disabled sub's hatch, allowing the crew to be evacuated. India's DSRVs can rescue 14 trapped personnel at a time.

Nistar is also a dive-support ship, with air diving capabilities for shallower depths, and more complex saturation diving capabilities for greater depths. Nistar can support prolonged saturation dives up to 100 metres.

DSRVs is a major milestone for India's deep-sea capabilities.

With the Navy continuing to expand its submarine arm, it has to reckon with increased operational risks of operating in the deep sea. These risks demand a technologically capable platform for submarine rescue operations – the primary mandate of the

Nistar-class vessels.

Officials told *The Indian Express* that *Nistar* is built to be both a diving support and a submarine rescue vessel, making it a strategic platform which strengthens India's position as a net maritime security provider within the IOR and beyond.

With the induction of the two DSRVs in 2018-19, India entered a group of only 12 nations with these dedicated capabilities, and one of the very few possessing DSRVs that can be requisitioned by another country and airlifted for rapid international deployment during emergencies.

Until now, however, the Navy relied on commercially leased platforms for the deployment of DSRVs, limiting its instant-deployment capabilities and round-the-clock rescue readiness. *Nistar* (and *Nipun*) will change this.

The vessel's dynamic positioning and diving support features mean that the vessel can operate autonomously in the high seas. Officials said that its high transit speed ensures rapid deployment during emergencies, drastically reducing response time in scenarios where every minute counts.

Based in Visakhapatnam, *Nistar* will serve as the DSRV mothership in the Eastern Seaboard, and *Nipun*, based in Mumbai, will serve in the Western Seaboard, completing the Navy's dual-coast operational posture.

This arrangement guarantees simultaneous, high-readiness submarine rescue coverage across both maritime frontiers. This strategic capability would be particularly crucial in various maritime humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations carried out by the Navy.

For greater good

Through bilateral agreements and Memorandums of Understanding with other navies, India has committed to sharing its submarine rescue expertise, and providing actual rescue support during emergencies worldwide.

"It positions India as a credible first responder in undersea contingencies and amplifies its soft power through the projection of maritime goodwill," an official told *The Indian Express*. The officer added that the development sends a signal that India's growing naval capabilities are aligned with the shared security interests of its partners and neighbours.

"In a world where underwater operations are becoming more complex and risks more unpredictable, INS *Nistar* ensures that India not only safeguards its own interests but is also ready and equipped to serve the greater good of global maritime safety," the official said.

Feeding strays: question of compassion & public order, the position in law

Background of case

The president of the Residents' Welfare Association of the petitioner's society had allegedly broken some pots in which she had kept water for stray animals, harassed her, and killed 10 sterilised stray dogs. Local authorities had taken no action on her complaints, and had instead asked her to not place the pots again.

The woman had then approached Allahabad High Court, which had dismissed her petition in the interest of the "common man".

The court had said that the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 (ABC Rules) did warrant the protection of street dogs, but "the authorities will have to bear in mind the concern of common man, such that their movement on streets are not hampered by

attacks by these street dogs".

The ABC Rules, 2023, notified under The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, seek to control stray dog populations through sterilisation, and to curb the spread of rabies by vaccinating them. The Rules lay down protocols to ensure that the feeding of dogs respects both animal welfare and public safety.

'Stray' to 'community'

The ABC Rules, which replaced the Animal Birth Control (Dog) Rules, 2001, use the expression "community animals" instead of "stray dogs" – recognising that these dogs are not ownerless intruders but territorial beings that inhabit and belong to their local environments.

The Supreme Court has interpreted the constitutionally guaranteed right to life and liberty as extending to animals as well.

In its verdict in the 2014 *Jallikattu* case, the top court held that animal life falls within the meaning of Article 21 of the Constitution (*Animal Welfare Board of India vs. A. Nagaraja*).

Also, Article 51A(g) places a fundamental duty on citizens to "have compassion for living creatures". All this means that the presence of dogs in residential areas cannot automatically be considered unlawful. Nor can those who feed them be considered offenders unless their actions violate specific behavioural and spatial guidelines set by the law.

Rules for feeding dogs

Rule 20 of the ABC Rules, 2023 ("Feeding of Community Animals") states that "it shall be

Haryana Public Service Commission

Bays No. 1-10, Block B, Sector-4, Panchkula

ANNOUNCEMENT

It is hereby announced for the information of all the candidates that the following Subject Knowledge Tests which were scheduled to be held on 20.07.2025, stands postponed :-

Sr. No.	Name of the Post & Department	Advt. No.
1.	Assistant Professor (College Cadre) in the subject of Political Science in Higher Education Department, Haryana	62/2024
2.	Assistant Professor (College Cadre) in the subject of History in Higher Education Department, Haryana	53/2024

The fresh date of the Subject Knowledge Tests shall be announced in due course. The candidates are advised to keep visiting the Commission's website for updates.

Sd/-
Secretary
Haryana Public Service Commission
Panchkula
No. 36733/HRY

"IMPORTANT"

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By Orders of the Managing Director
Haryana Financial Corporation
Chandigarh 160 017
No. 36748/HP

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas North Star Towers Pvt. Ltd registered office at Plot No.77, Sector 44 Gurugram-122003 has applied to Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana for permission to set up Group Housing colony under T.O.D. over area measuring 6.4166 acres in Village Batha & Nawada Fatehpur, Sector 90, Gurugram. And whereas the office of Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh had required us to inform all the existing Allottees of the colony regarding the change of Developer. If any allottee has any objection on the proposed change of Developer, he/she may file objections with the Director, Town & Country Planning, HUDA Complex, Sector 14, Gurugram within 30 days of the issuance of this notice, failing which it shall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed change of Developer. A copy of the in-principle approval issued by DTCP vide Memo No. 26878 dated 16.7.2025 is available for perusal on our website www.ssgroup-india.com. Given on 19 July, 2025.

Sd/-
Bijmol Mani
Sr. Business Manager
North Star Towers Private Limited

यमुना एक्सप्रेस-वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण
प्रथम तला, कॉम्पोनेंट लॉब्यूलेस, पी-2, सेक्टर 180, अमेगा-1, ग्रेट रोड, जनपद-गोतमगढ़ नगर, उत्तर प्रदेश-283001
Toll Free No. 18001808296 वेबसाइट: www.yamunaexpresswayauthority.com

दिनांक: 15.07.2025

सार्वजनिक सुचना

निम्नलिखित भूमि यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण द्वारा आपसी सहमति के आधार पर प्रकाशित करायी गई है। क्रय हेतु काश्तकार, गाटा सख्ता, क्षेत्रफल व काश्तकार का हिस्सा निम्नलिखित तालिका में अंकित हैं।-

ग्राम आकलपुर, सेक्टर-05 व 09 के अन्तर्गत

क्रम सं.	काश्तकार का नाम	खाता संख्या	खसरा संख्या	खसरे का क्षेत्रफल (हे.मे.)	काश्तकार हिस्सा का क्षेत्रफल (हे.मे.)
1.	चन्द्रवती पल्ली धर्मवीर नि. ग्राम	131	230	0.3920	में से 0.0123
			236	0.4680	0.0147
			226	0.4810	0.0151
			227	0.7080	0.0295
2.	रामकुमार पुत्र धर्मवीर नि. ग्राम	131	230	0.3920	में से 0.0122
			236	0.4680	0.0146
			226	0.4810	0.0150
			227	0.7080	0.0295
3.	सदीप कुमार पुत्र धर्मवीर नि. ग्राम	131	230	0.3920	में से 0.0123
			236	0.4680	0.0146
			226	0.4810	0.0150
			227	0.7080	0.0295
4.	राजकुमार पुत्र रतन सिंह नि. ग्राम आकलपुर	150	119	1.7890	में से 0.2214
5.	राजू पुत्र नैम सिंह नि. ग्राम आकलपुर	213	309/2	1.1050	में से 0.0789
			209/8	1.1050	0.0789
6.	आर्थना अग्रवाल पल्ली मोहित अग्रवाल नि. ग्राम आकलपुर	105	268	0.4940	में से 0.1235
			25	248	0.1230
7.	रिकू कुमार पुत्र भरहमजीत नि. ग्राम आकलपुर	117	280	1.3720	में से 0.2286
8.	सतेन्द्रपाल पुत्र ब्रह्मनजीत नि. ग्राम आकलपुर	117	280	1.3720	में से 0.2286
9.	रजनी पल्ली सतेन्द्रपाल नि. ग्राम आकलपुर	213	309/2	1.1050	में से 0.0395

प्रतिवित भूमि प्राधिकरण के नियोजित टैक्टर-05 व 09 के अन्तर्गत होने के कारण क्रय हेतु प्रस्तावित है। उपरोक्त भूमि क्रय किये जाने में यदि किसी व्यक्ति को कोई आपत्ति है तो वह लिखित रूप में 15 दिवस के अंदर यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण कार्यालय / सी.आर.सैल. में अपनी आपत्ति प्रस्तुत कर सकता है। विशेष कार्यालयकारी

यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण महत्वपूर्ण सूचना: यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण के अधिसूचित सौन्दर्य के प्राधिकरण द्वारा स्वीकृत मास्टर प्लान के अंतर्गत जॉन अंतरिक्ष प्लॉटिंग/हाउसिंग/कॉर्पोरेशन या किसी भी प्रकार का ज्या निर्माण पूरी तरह से बंद है। सामाजिक इस प्रकार की स्कैम्परिंग वाली जॉन एवं इस प्रकार की खारेंदरीकरण से पूर्ण संबंध रखते रहते कांसोनाइजर के खाम विज्ञापनों से बंद हैं। अधिक जानकारी के लिए प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.yamunaexpresswayauthority.com देखें।

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Regional Passport Office, Delhi

VACANCY CIRCULAR

Subject: Engagement of Young Professional (01 post) on contract basis in Passport Office, Delhi
Passport Office Delhi invites applications from eligible interested individuals for engagement of Young Professionals (01 post), purely on contract basis as per the details mentioned below:

S.No.	Name of the Post	Particulars
a.	Young Professional (01 post)	Essential Qualifications: At least Graduate or equivalent from a recognized University Experience: Experience of 1 year or above in Government will be given preference. Scope of duties: Young Professional shall perform the duties assigned by the Passport Officer/Head of Office which may include but not restricted to work related to administration, accounts, legal and social media.
b.	Name of Post	Terms and Conditions of engagement
c.	Number of Vacancy	01 (one)
d.	Period of Engagement	Initially, Young Professionals will be engaged for a period of 1 year. After the period of 1 year, if the performance of the Young Professionals is found satisfactory based on his/her Annual Performance, the same can be extended up to maximum tenure of 3 years with the approval of the competent authority in the Ministry of External Affairs.
e.	Nature of Engagement	The appointment of Young Professionals will be of temporary nature and the Ministry can cancel the appointment at any time without providing any reason for it.
f.	Place of Posting	Regional Passport Office Delhi
g.	Age limit	Below 40 years as on the date of Advertisement.
h.	Monthly Remuneration	Graduate 50000/- Post Graduate - 60000/-
i.	Allowance	No other allowances will be admissible to the Young Professional.
j.	Leave	The Young Professionals shall be entitled for 08 days of Casual Leave in a calendar year on pro-rata basis and 02 Restricted Holidays. Apart from this, women Young Professionals may be eligible for maternity leave as per provisions contained in the Maternity Benefit Act 1961 read with Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017.
k.	Termination of Contract	The Ministry can terminate the contract at any time without prior notice and without providing any reasons for it. However, in the normal course it will provide one month's notice to the Young Professional. The Young Professional can also seek for termination of the contract upon giving three months' notice to the Ministry.
l.	Confidentiality Clause	The Young Professionals would be subject to the provisions of the Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923. The Young Professionals shall not, except with the previous sanction of the Ministry/Passport Office or in the bona fide discharge of his or her duties, publish a book or a compilation of articles or participate in radio broadcast or contribute an article or write a letter in any newspaper or periodical either in his own name or anonymously or pseudonymously in the name of any other person, if such book, article, broadcast or letter relates to subject matter assigned to him by the Ministry/Passport Office.
m.	Working hours	As per the guidelines of the Regional Passport Office, Delhi. However, the Young Professional may sometimes have to work beyond office hours in public interest.
n.	TA/DA	The Young Professionals may require to undertake domestic tours as part of their official duties in the Ministry/Passport Office subject to the approval of the competent authority and they will be allowed following TA/DA:
	Position	Mode of Journey
	Young Professionals	Air in Economy class or by Rail in AC Two Tier
		Reimbursement of Hotel, Taxi and Food Bills

2. Interested candidates may apply through mail at rpo.delhi@mea.gov.in or send application by post in enclosed proforma as per Annexure-I addressed to the Senior Superintendent (Admin), Regional Passport Office, Delhi, Hduco Trinkot-3, Bhikaji Cama Place, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-110066.

3. The Passport Office Delhi reserves the right to accept or reject the applications without assigning any reasons.

4. The applicant should have a valid personal email ID, which should be kept active at least till the completion of this engagement process. Passport office shall send all communication to the said email ID.

In case, a candidate does not have a valid personal email ID, he/she should create one before applying for the advertisement post.

5. The last date for receipt of application is 21 days from the date of publication of the advertisement.

6. This issues are with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Annexure-1				
APPLICATION FOR ENGAGEMENT AS YOUNG PROFESSIONAL				
Paste here Latest Passport Size Photograph				
11. Professional Qualification				
Course				
Subject				
University/Institute				
Year of Passing				
Division/Class				
12				

Old Wine in Older Bottle



SHUBHRA GUPTA

KRISH (AHAAN Panday) is a hotheaded wannabe composer. Vaani (Aneet Padda) is an earnest wannabe journalist. We know this because Krish gets into a scuffle almost as soon as the film opens and stomps off, leaving the chance of a lucrative gig behind. And Vaani gets smirked at in her new workplace because she has no idea of how many Instagram followers she has as she has deleted her account.

That these two very different characters will clash, meet and come together is ordained, because this is a Mohit Suri film. That it will have soulful ballad-y music all over it is also expected, for the same reason.

The question really is — given the director's track-record, of which *Aashiqui 2* has been the most memorable hit — is *Saiyara* going to be *Aashiqui 3*? Can Suri hit a refresh button and create a crackling contemporary romance?

First things first, the two newcomers, Aneet Padda, who has done some acting work before, and Ahaan Panday, show promise. The latter — Chunky Panday's nephew or should one call him Ananya's cousin — gets early lines in which he calls out 'nepo kids' and their entitlement, getting it out of the way, telling us that this Aditya Chopra production is very much a part of the current discourse. Ahaan's delivery starts off unimpressive and he needs

more work on it but he does manage to get into his part.

Dressed in regular chikan kurtas and jeans, Aneet is not as made-up as Yashraj heroines can be, even if her spiky eyelashes stay distractingly so through the film. But there's a pleasing groundedness to her, even though I had to strain to hear some of her mumbled words: staying natural doesn't mean that you eat your words.

What's nice is that the two appear invested in each other and there's a spark between them, something that Bollywood love stories find hard to create, the leading pair coming off more annoyingly fraternal than anything else.

But the freshness of this *jodi* is weighed under by Suri's familiar treatment which feels dated; the same old teary sequences laden by emo lyrics: what starts as passionate soon becomes cloying. Here are the wounds that Krish lives with, his childhood blighted by an alcoholic father, who gets a couple of redeeming lines. There is Vaani, with major trouble looming over her horizon, a past relationship depicted clunkily. The plot tries to touch upon the socially-mediated aspects of a popular rockstar's life but gets over-run by the flailings of faceless band members, except for the one who gets all the lines as well as some prettified portions shot by the sea and in the mountains.

Result: What could have been a bitter-sweet love story, and that's what the film is clearly going for, is done in by its dialogue-heavy, inconsistent bits.



I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER ★★

Director: Jennifer Kaytin Robinson **Cast:** Madelyn Cline, Chase Sui Wonders, Jonah Hauer-King, Tyriq Withers, Sarah Pidgeon, Freddie Prinze Jr, Jennifer Love Hewitt

A Slasher Gone South

SHALINI LANGER

CLEARLY THE men and women behind this slasher flick didn't think ahead. For, before this franchise ran out of steam, it ran out of words to add to its title. So you had *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, 1997; *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer*, 1998; and a straight-to-video sequel in 2006 that didn't feature the original's characters, *I Will Always Know What You Did Last Summer*.

What comes after 'Always' and a TV series adaptation? This film where, 28 years after the 1997 serial killings, we are back to where — and how — it all started. In Southport. With a road incident leading to

a death. And with a group of teenagers who look very, very groomed before they end up very, very dead.

For old time's sake, Freddie Prinze Jr and Jennifer Love Hewitt reprise their roles (even Sarah Gellar gets a cameo), as the wisened survivors of the first film, here to offer their advice to their counterparts — for whatever it's worth, given that this is a killer who doesn't show mercy, explanation, face or discernment in either victims or weapons (but mostly a hook).

Madelyn Cline, Chase Sui Wonders, Jonah Hauer-King and Sarah Pidgeon have all done notable work in different TV series but are not really required to do much here. If they actually were, a film of this kind prob-

ably would not survive the cold light of logic.

Their characters, along with Withers's Terry, were involved last summer in a car accident caused more by silliness than any real malice. A year later, Cline, who plays 'Croaker Queen' Danica, has moved on from rich fiance Terry to another rich fiance. The new one is dispensed with by the killer quickly enough to not matter, though he dies in a manner that is the most blood-curdling (the film never comes close to that again).

Back in Southport, Danica and Terry's friends-of-that-night Ava (Wonders), Milo (Hauer-King) and Stevie (Pidgeon) find themselves being haunted by the killer, who is out for revenge. Guessing who dies first, in what sequence, and who does not, may

keep you hooked — no pun intended. Though clearly, the killer hasn't spent much thought on planning, given how many times the victims fight back and get away.

For the new audiences, there are some references to new-age therapy, particularly that provided by a 'claircognisant empath'.

And then, there is an interesting true crime podcaster who is determined to peel the band-aid off the 1997 grisly killings, which could be bad for business for the now gentrified and tourist-friendly Southport. Rushing headlong into forbidden territory, she is just the kind of crazy this film needs.

And not the cloaked, hooded crazy it would have us fear, who hasn't improvised in nearly 30 summers.

Winsome with a bit of whimsy

SHUBHRA GUPTA

THE WAY you will respond to a film which goes down a much less beaten path in Bollywood — placing a young woman with autism at the centre of the narrative — will depend upon a couple of things. Your ability to suspend disbelief, and how much, or how little, you know about the condition, which Tanvi (Shubhangi Dutt) lives with.

Only the most curmudgeonly will refuse to smile back at Tanvi when she decides on the impossible: join the Indian Army and salute the flag at the stunningly beautiful, formidably out-of-reach Siachen outpost. It was her father's (Karan Tacker) dream, and now that he isn't in this world, she makes it her mission. Will her bemused grandfather, retired Army man Col Raina (Anupam Kher) help her, or hinder her?

It's not that *Tanvi The Great*, in which Kher plays a pivotal role, along with assuming director duties, doesn't try hard to be winsome. Dutt takes on the near-impossible job of portraying a disability which is, perhaps, the

hardest of all for a 'normal' person because of its complex nature. And does well enough, within the constraints of a mainstream film, and the plot's implausible leaps.

We meet Tanvi as she is trying to find her feet, quite literally, in a situation that is strange for her. She has had to move temporarily to her dadu's house in Lansdowne, even if she decides to address him as Colonel Raina, while her 'autism expert' mom (Pallavi Joshi) is away on an extended trip to the US for a conference. The transition is not easy, but the fact that after a few bumps, Tanvi manages to settle in, tells us that she can navigate human interaction, one of the most difficult things for people on the autism spectrum, however capable they may be in other spheres.

Kher, who returns to direction after more than 20 years (*Om Jai Jagdish* came out in 2002) adopts a fuss-free approach and a welcome restraint, at least in the first half, where he learns the ways of her granddaughter, with initial trepidation (*kaise handle karoonga*, he tells his daughter-in-law, *turn apni trip postpone kar do*), and then cautious acceptance. The clinical 'handling' turns

to something warmer, more a connection than just caretaking.

The ensemble cast — Boman Irani as a music teacher, Arvind Swamy as a tough Army trainer, Jackie Shroff as a senior Army official, Nassar as the benign officer in charge of recruitment, as well as *Games Of Thrones* actor Iain Glen — is drawn sketchily; their only job is to act as enablers for Tanvi and for her to realise her dreams.

Kher is a good enough actor to keep us with him, even if he and his writing team dream up occasional exaggerations in place of realistic capabilities. There's a post-interval meander, making us feel the stretch, while grappling with the question: can a person with autism join the forces? You see the film's cutsey, simplistic arcs but you also see that it has heart, just like the recent neurodivergence-celebrating *Sitaare Zameen*

Par, even if it keeps darting off into patriotic flourishes.

It's the kind of film which leaves you conflicted. You can be gobsmacked at the enormity of Tanvi's achievements (spoiler alert: for a person who has trouble getting over a doorsill, Tanvi leaping into a car teetering on the edge of a cliff to save the life of a driver, boggles the mind). And yet you end up rooting for her and those like her: if she can do it, maybe someone else can too.

You hope that this — warmth and acceptance — is pretty much the sentiment that the film will leave the viewers with, even if Tanvi appears more eccentric and awkward than straight-up challenged in places, with the ability to set aside those difficulties for the job at hand, which is hard to swallow. But then she gets there and you want to say good job, Tanvi, well done.

In the Safe Zone

ROHAN NAHAR

THROTTLED BY his government and abandoned by his peers — inanimate objects and abstract ideas get more support than Indian comedians — Vir Das seems to be in conflict with his past. His sixth stand-up special for Netflix, *Fool Volume*, combines his trademark self-effacing delivery with his signature ambition. *Fool Volume* was filmed in Mumbai, London and New York, at venues of different shapes and sizes, in front of crowds with different thresholds of tolerance. But the elaborate production and occasional filmmaking flourish isn't the most impressive thing about the one-hour special. It's the comedian's ability to spin a story, to structure a narrative that serves as yet another reminder of his skill.

There isn't a dull moment in the set,

which Das says was rewritten after he lost his voice, literally, six weeks before he was supposed to perform it. He abandoned the material that Netflix had paid him for, and, either by chance or by design, found himself gravitating towards the style of comedy that he does best. In *Fool Volume*, Das gazes inward; he glances at the world around him, and then, he gets down to business. The show isn't so much about a comedian finding his voice again as it is about a middle-aged Indian man finding a new voice.

Unwritten restrictions, in a way, are scarier than laws. While Das doesn't entirely abandon the political humour that got him into trouble a few months before his Emmy-winning *Landing*, he certainly seems to be distancing himself from that persona. There is, however, a great bit directed at the Indian middle-class for "worshipping false heroes and celebrating

a lack of intelligence" because it is "obsessed with consumption and a cult of power."

But, having built a career on the back of jokes directed at 'uncles', Das doesn't quite realise that he might be turning into one himself. Any time someone begins a sentence with, "Here's the problem with your

generation," and ends it with, "I don't want to patronise you," you know they've gone over the bend. Or, at least, they've started to. Das makes the unforgivable mistake of invoking his past struggles. He tells a story about when he used to work as a dishwasher at a restaurant. In Chicago. In fair-

ness, the point of this story isn't to remind audiences about the power of Brown people with a dream (and money). It is to illustrate the power of kindness.

Midway through the special, he turns the house lights off. In darkness, the crowd experiences something that it probably hasn't at a comedy show in a while: freedom. It's like a version of online anonymity. Those in power aren't afraid of what comedians say, Das tells the crowds; they're afraid of how the audience reacts.

Comedy shows are oddly comforting. For about an hour, you feel as if you've finally found your tribe, people who share similar anxieties and fears. You realise that, deep down, everyone wants the same thing. For about an hour, you feel empowered to laugh about stuff that you probably wouldn't laugh about in regular life. Perhaps you're policing, or simply protecting, yourself. The belief is slightly irrational. The moment you walk out into the real world, the illusion breaks. There's some guy barking at you for standing in their way or not driving as fast as they think you should. This is the world far removed from the cocoon of the Kedarnath Sahni Auditorium; this is where



STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



THE MONK AND THE GUN

PRIME VIDEO
DIRECTED BY Pawo Choyning Dorji, this is a playful ensemble drama that explores the clash between tradition and modernity. Set in 2006, as the Kingdom of Bhutan was on the brink of transition to democracy, the film premiered at the 2023 Toronto International Film Festival. Dorji earlier directed the 2019 Academy Award-nominated *Lunana: A Yak in the Classroom*.



UNTAMED

NFLIX
THIS LIMITED series is a character-driven mystery thriller that follows Kyle Turner (Eric Bana), a special agent in an elite branch of the National Parks Service who works to enforce human law in nature's vast wilderness. The investigation of a brutal death sends Turner on a collision course with the dark secrets within the park, and in his own past.



THE SUMMER I TURNED PRETTY S3

PRIME VIDEO
IT'S THE end of the junior year of college and Belly is looking forward to another summer in Cousins with her soulmate Jeremiah. Her future seems set, until her first love Conrad comes back into her life. Now on the brink of adulthood, Belly finds herself at a crossroads and must decide where her heart lies.



REMATCH

LIONSGATE PLAY
IN 1997, the unthinkable happened: a supercomputer beat the greatest chess mind alive. *Rematch* recreates the historic showdown between world champion Garry Kasparov and IBM's pioneering supercomputer Deep Blue, in a gripping psychological drama that explores the limits of human intellect in an age of rising machines.

you can get killed for having grown a moustache that doesn't 'belong' to your culture.

Fool Volume is a relatively lighthearted special, though. Das does the Bollywood thing of name-dropping Shah Rukh Khan; the 'King' apparently told Das that he's proud of him. While you'd assume that it was for speaking truth to power, it could've honestly been for anything else. Das also takes a potshot at Kangana Ranaut, by the way, but she'd probably need to utilise the collective intelligence of every person in her constituency to explain the joke to her.

Fool Volume finds India's most gifted comedian — you cannot compare him to the casually misogynistic Zakir Khan or the casually cruel Samay Raina — throwing everything at the wall to see what sticks. It's an artistic representation of the stages of panic he went through when he lost his voice — he tried homeopathy, paid for an expensive therapist; he even tried praying. But he'll never know which strategy really worked. His voice just... came back one day. *Fool Volume* is Das in the throat-clearing phase of his recovery. He'll find his new voice soon enough. Throat-clearing isn't just a sign of hesitation, you see; it is also warning.



₹98,770

₹86.16

\$69.89

₹1,10,500

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market; gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) per barrel as of July 17

International market data till 1900 IST

SENSEX: 81,757.73 ▼ 501.51 (0.61%) NIFTY: 24,968.40 ▼ 143.05 (0.57%) NIKKEI: 39,819.11 ▼ 82.08 HANG SENG: 24,825.66 ▲ 326.71 FTSE: 8,979.05 ▲ 6.41 DAX: 24,366.24 ▼ 4.69

Tata Sons sets up ₹500 crore AI-171 Memorial Trust for crash victims

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, JULY 18

TATA SONS has formally set up a public charitable trust — The AI-171 Memorial and Welfare Trust — to support the victims and families affected by the tragic Air India AI-171 Dreamliner crash in Ahmedabad.

The group has pledged a total of Rs 500 crore towards the trust, with Tata Sons and Tata Trusts, headed by Noel Tata, contributing Rs 250 crore each. The trust will provide financial and rehabilitation support, including a Rs 1 crore ex-gratia payment to the families of the deceased, medical assistance to those seriously injured, and aid for rebuilding the B.J. Medical College hostel, which was damaged during the crash.

The horrific incident, which occurred on June 12, claimed the lives of 241 out of the 242 passengers on board, as well as several individuals on the ground. "The Trust will be funded and will commence its work in all earnestness after necessary registration with the tax authorities and other operational formalities, currently underway, are completed," it said in a statement.

The Trust will provide both immediate and continuing support to the dependents/next-of-kin of the deceased, to those who were injured, and to all others who are directly or collaterally affected by the accident.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

BRIEFLY

SBI gets 'World's Best Consumer Bank' 2025 award

Mumbai: The State Bank of India has been adjudged the World's Best Consumer Bank for 2025 by Global Finance magazine. The evaluation was based on the publication's comprehensive research and analysis, enriched by insights from corporate finance executives, analysts, and bankers across the globe.

PTI

Torrent seeks CCI nod to buy stake in JB Chemicals

New Delhi: Torrent Pharmaceuticals has sought CCI's clearance to acquire a majority stake in JB Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals in a Rs 19,500-crore deal. After the completion, Torrent will become India's second most valued pharma company.

PTI

Reliance buys Kelvinator from Electrolux

New Delhi: Reliance Industries has said its retail arm has bought the Kelvinator brand in India from Sweden's Electrolux, for its portfolio in electronics and appliances. **REUTERS**

Beware of tax refund phishing emails: I-T dept

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department in a post on X cautioned the public against phishing emails relating to tax refund and asked them not to click on suspicious links. **PTI**

BOOST FOR STABLECOINS AND DIGITAL ASSETS

US President Trump signs GENIUS Act into law

2 BILLS REACH SENATE

■ The US Senate will now discuss the CLARITY ACT and the Anti-CBDC Surveillance Act passed by the House

Trump said while addressing the press before the signing of the law which faced initial hurdles in the US House of Representatives. The bill was passed with majority vote after the pres-

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INTERVIEW: SOHAM DESAI

'Small team must prepare Bumrah for surgical strikes a few times a year'

Former Strength & Conditioning coach debunks assumptions about Rohit's fitness, praises Kohli's drive

SANDEEP DWIVEDI & DEVENDRA PANDEY
MANCHESTER, MUMBAI, JULY 18

FOR FIVE years, strength and conditioning coach Soham Desai was the behind-the-scenes man for several of India's conquests. The man from Valsad talks to *The Indian Express* about the human touch behind the data and analytics of ensuring players stay optimally fit for important series, conditioning Jasprit Bumrah and the workings of different head coaches. **Excerpts:**

What is the achievement you relish during your stint?

First, there was this natural and gradual relationship getting cultivated with the current crop of players (Rishabh Pant, Shubman Gill, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, etc) right from India A tours, NCA days and the Indian team. It helped me understand them better as individuals, based on which I was able to formulate plans to groom them.

The goal was to make them independent, self-aware and autonomous—self-sufficient to handle themselves as high performing athletes, knowing when to do what and identifying the red flags early. To start sleeping at 10.30, wear health bands, check recoveries, basically adopting elite high-performance athletes' lifestyle and routine. Over four successive ICC tournaments since 2022, we had 100% player availability. We set plans 6-8 months, 9 months, at times 12 months in advance, so that they peak at the right time for the right games in the right venues.

How much pressure is it to handle someone like Bumrah?

I have been with him since 2014, when he was on RTP from his ACL injury, from his Gujarat days. He is special, a gifted guy who has worked immensely to become one of a kind. To manage guys like him we need a cohesive, collective and collaborative approach with a long-term vision driving the decisions, and ideally with great consistency in personnel around him. Bumrah is an asset and needs to be handled smartly. A small team needs to handle him, prepare him for surgical strikes a few times a year and be smart with him at other times.

What were the approaches of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to fitness?

People assume Rohit doesn't work hard on his fitness. Given his history, for him to lead at the highest level for four years with a game or two missed is significant. He cannot do that by fluke, right? He must be doing something right. Can he get better? Yes, 100%. He will be the first one to say that. But to assume that he doesn't work hard is a bit much.

What should I say about Virat? It has been an honour to coach a student like him. A model athlete. He started out wanting to be the best, he got there through sheer will. He was aggressive, hungry and wanted to be number one. Both Rohit and Virat had the same team vision—to dominate world cricket—they approached it differently.

When was your knowledge tested the



Jasprit Bumrah missed the second Test to manage his workload. (Above-Right)
Soham Desai with India ODI captain Rohit Sharma.

AP/Special Arrangement

most professionally?

During the 2021 Test tour of England, we had three weeks of complete off and a 15-day prep camp in Durham. There was a clear directive from Ravi Shastri that he wanted all the fast bowlers ready to play all five Tests. During a conversation with Ravi bhai, I mentioned a different plan. Something on the lines of, "Baaki sab toh theek hai, but can we be smart with Mohammed Shami and Ishant Sharma?"

For their maximum impact, we need to plan for 3/5 games, Umesh and Bumrah for 4/5 and Siraj going for 5/5." This was just to have all guys operating at 100% for all games and to use them at venues where their skillset is more suited. We set out with this plan.

How different were Shastri and Dravid?

They are different individuals with different approaches but with eye on similar end goals—building a culture/team that dominates world cricket. Ravi bhai used to be precise, direct and clear in his requirements.

Then it was up to us to work with (Bharat) Arun sir and (R) Sridhar sir and get things done. But he will notice everything.

Rahul bhai will first lay out a plan, explain what we are trying to do as a team, this is how we are going to do it, this is where you come in, etc. Then it is up to us to make plans that complement the team's plan and if there is a situation that may impact it, we would communicate and he would always be receptive. He

had a bird's eye view on the entire operation.

What is the method for predicting or anticipating an injury and stopping them?

Anticipating an injury is something reasonably possible if we have multiple data points correlating and pointing in the same direction.

So I have reference points around these guys. I know how a 100% fit Hardik (Pandya), Siraj, Gill, Axar or Bumrah would move and look like. I have seen them operate under fatigue, the problems they face when they come into a series/game having not done enough, etc etc. So, based on these, along with being fully involved, observant and aware, you can infer if something is not looking ideal.

When do you anticipate the players are fatigued?

If a player is fatigued, he will start to develop tightness around a particular spot. That's a sign. Another guy has this one adductor, which will start to show up if his reserves are depleted. He will be on the physio table frequently, etc, etc. Everyone has a give-away sign.

What do you track on GPS? How do you then communicate to the players what they should do?

Let's say, Shubman has scored 80 today and was on the field too, his GPS will have all the running data. Total distance covered, dis-



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ON ROHIT SHARMA'S FITNESS

Bumrah is an asset and needs to be handled smartly. He is special, a gifted guy who has worked immensely to become one of a kind. To manage guys like him we need a cohesive approach with a long-term vision."

ON MANAGING JASPRIT BUMRAH

tance covered in various zones (walking, jogging, striding, sprinting) at various speeds. Gill's high-speed running ceiling, his best on record is say 32 kph, then we will see how much he has run around that mark. This reveals if he is pushed or not, if yes how much and what exact intensity at which he has accumulated the day's running loads. Based on this, his recovery plans for that evening are put in place. If there is too much volume around his peak speed, then we have different interventions. If it is moderate or low, then the plan changes. Over years we know what to do in a particular situation.

How do you work with contracted guys but not in the squad? For instance Siraj at the start of the year...

Whether they are prepping for an ongoing series or they are in the loop to be featured in the upcoming one, they need to be on a plant to be fully ready. Siraj had a tough start to the year.

He was devastated and unmotivated. In these moments, the relationship built over the years comes into play. We are able to have those honest/tough conversations and move forward with intent. A proper nine-week plan was laid out. It covered the one-off Ranji game, a break from training and bowling, then gradually built up to IPL whilst also being ready as standby for Champions Trophy.

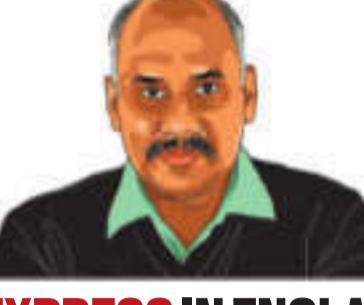
During the Gabba Test of 2021, Pujara was hit on his finger and it was decided not to go for a scan as it can have a psychological impact...

Pujara himself and maybe Nitin Patel took the call. Many times calls are taken in the best interest of the team. In the Champions Trophy a player hurt his hamstring. But he played three games and had a major impact. When the real time comes, these guys dig deep and have always stood up for the team. So have the physios who support these decisions, which can easily backfire.

DUKES BALL TO BE EXAMINED

London: In the eye of a storm, the manufacturer of the Dukes ball on Friday said it will conduct a thorough review following widespread criticism of the "soft" balls used in the first three Tests between India and England, according to a report in the BBC. PTI

Those in India's waiting room get attention so as to be match-ready



EXPRESS IN ENGLAND

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
MANCHESTER, JULY 18

SPINNER KULDEEP Yadav, pacer Arshdeep Singh and batsman Abhimanyu Easwaran have been constant companions on this tour. In the squad of 18, they are the three players who haven't yet got a game. They bowl at the nets to those in the playing XI on non-match days. During Tests, they are seen doing sprint-drills at lunch and tea intervals, they also run on the field with towels over their shoulders clutching drinks and gloves. That dressing room is bound to give the perpetual extras the feeling of a 'waiting room'.

For any professional sportsperson, this isn't a great space to be. At Lord's when the 'extras' were running on the storied turf during the break, it wouldn't have given them an inspiring feeling or memories of a lifetime. Mortals feel blessed when stepping on the Lord's turf, the high for a player is to be on the central square and the honours boards.

Before the series, Kuldeep was asked about the only Test he had played at Lord's. On that 2018 tour, it was a truly forgettable outing. Just 23, he was a raw wrist spinner with skills but no guile. He bowled nine overs, conceded 44 runs, and got no wickets. It was a disastrous Test for India, they lost by an innings, there was no second innings for Kuldeep the bowler.

Now 30, Kuldeep is wiser about life and his bowling.

"Now, I have become much better in controlling the game, setting up batsmen and approaching a particular situation. Now I read batsmen much better and know where and how to bowl and what field to set," he had told *The Indian Express* before flying to England.

For the past month-and-a-half, Kuldeep has been "setting up" and "reading" batsmen of his own team. On some days, he, and Arshdeep, are bowling to Easwaran, a fellow non-playing member of the team so far in the series.

The support staff, however, give them company, they don't leave them alone. Bowling coach Morne Morkel spent a lot of time with both Kuldeep and Arshdeep. They train hard, they joke. Morkel, with a baseball mitt in hand, stands behind the plastic stumps as the two try to pitch the ball in the

pre-decided zone marked by cones. Once in a while, Arshdeep wears the mitt and asks the coach to land in the "good areas".

Staying fit and prepared

Indian captain Shubman Gill loves to face the combination of Arshdeep and Kuldeep on match eves. It is the day when India's main pacers – Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep – take it easy, preserving themselves for the Test match grind.

Batting coach Shitanshu Kotak, after working with the main batters, makes it a point to gather the net bowlers and ask them to bowl to Kuldeep and Arshdeep. Every sweetly-timed stroke by Easwaran has Kotak shouting 'great shot' and clapping. On a long tour, where injuries and emergencies can happen any time, every hand needs to be on the deck, and they need to be fit and prepared.

"We have a 18-member squad, which is a bit larger. So for us it is about giving as much attention and care to the guys who aren't playing and making sure they get quality practice between Tests," says the team's assistant coach Ryan Ten Doeschate.

"Talking to them about why we are going with certain combinations, why we are not... hoping that they're in the right frame of mind and obviously physically and technically ready to play Test cricket when the chance comes."

The former Dutch player went on to say, "We have 18 quality players so there will be guys coming on tour and not playing a Test. But certainly managing the team environment is very important to keep everyone ready to play but also to keep the mood in the dressing room good."

At the Kent county ground, just outside London, the Indian team had their first full net session after the Lord's loss. After the session, on a wooden bench sat Kuldeep and head coach Gautam Gambhir. This can't be seen as a sign of the wrist spinner finally getting a game and the Indian team ready to play the trump card they have hidden up their sleeve. It was more about an important team player, not fitting in the combination, being made to feel a part of the team.

Unlike any other sport, cricket is about one-long wait after another. Even those in the playing XI deal with this. When an opener gets out early, he twiddles his thumb and watches his mates bat. In heart-of-hearts, he is wanting the inning to end so that he can have a second go.

The Extras have it worse, for there is no time limit to the prolonged periods of boredom and anxiety. For Easwaran it has lasted several years. It's tough, once you are made to sit out for years and then expected to leap out of the waiting room and hit the ground running.



India's backup opener Abhimanyu Easwaran (second from right) in a training drill on Thursday. He is yet to get a chance in the Anderson-Tedulkar Trophy.

FOUR INDIANS REACH QUARTERS

Divya, 19, reaffirms status as one of country's best young chess stars

MAYANK
JULY 18

DIVYA DESHMUKH remains the only Indian contender yet to achieve the prestigious Grandmaster title among the four left in the fray at FIDE Women's World Cup 2025. The 19-year-old from Nagpur is also the youngest of the final four Indian players, but the teenager reaffirmed her position as one of the country's best rising talents after knocking out World No. 4 and tournament second seed China's Zhu Jiner on Friday to secure her maiden quarterfinal berth.

She is joined by all the Indians who made it through the previous round: Koneru Humpy, Harika Dronavalli, and R. Vaishali, who each won their respective tiebreaks in the fourth round, making it only the first time multiple Indians have advanced to the quarterfinals in the tournament's history.

Previously, only Harika had reached this stage in 2023. Now, in the event's third edition, India holds an unpreceded 50% representation in the last eight and with Divya and Harika drawn in the same bracket, an all-Indian clash guarantees at least one semifinalist for the first time.

Divya came all guns blazing against a

tough Chinese opponent. She knew the consequences of a single slip-up. An overambitious Divya had already let Zhu slip from her grip the day before and could not afford to repeat her mistakes. She had stunned the Chinese player in the first leg of their Classical match, upsetting Zhu with white pieces to take a 1-0 lead in the two-legged round.

All Divya had to do was play safe, force a draw in the second leg, and avoid the pressure of tiebreaks. But the very thing she dreaded happened as she lost the following leg with black, pushing the match into a tricky series of tiebreaks played under shorter time controls.

In the tiebreaks, Divya had to start the dark pieces. The odds favoured the Chinese, but Zhu's decision to exchange queens in an equal position, opting for a tricky, draw-prone rook endgame, backfired badly. When Zhu mistimed her pawn push, Divya seized the chance and converted swiftly to a 1-0 lead. She remained rock-solid in the second leg of the first tiebreak, refusing to budge and denying Zhu any inroads, winning the round 1.5-0.5.

Interestingly, the loss in the Classical round turned out to be a boon for Divya, who didn't have time to second-guess her decisions this time. "I wasn't so much in the



Divya Deshmukh defeated Zhu Jiner at the FIDE World Cup.

FIDE/Anna Shtourman

mood to prepare after yesterday, so I just figured that whatever happens on the board, I'll manage and it worked," Divya told the official broadcasters after the match. "Yesterday, I was thinking all the right moves, but I second-guessed myself. I was my own enemy. I could have easily drawn, but of course, she's a great player. Still, it was more

like I was the one who was lacking. So today, no time to overthink... it's rapid," Divya said with a big laugh.

When asked if she had expected the tiebreaks to go so well, she replied, "This is the result I wanted. After yesterday, it was a bit tough because I had a great position out of the opening and just played horribly. But I'm

Erigaisi into Las Vegas Freestyle SF

New Delhi: Arjun Erigaisi on Friday became the only Indian to enter the semi-final of the Las Vegas leg of the Freestyle Chess Grand Slam Tour. He made the last 4 with after prevailing over Nodirbek Abdusattorov in a straightforward two-game contest at the Wynn casino hotel. However, Arjun's his good friend Praggnanandhaa couldn't get past Caruana in his own match of the day. The Indian played out a seven-game royal rumble against the American GM that lasted just over 10 hours, eventually finishing just short.

But nothing came close to the roller-coaster tiebreak between Vaishali and Kazakhstan's IM Meruert Kamalideneva. Had Vaishali failed to advance to the quarterfinals, she would have had only herself to blame. In multiple winning positions throughout the tiebreaks, she let Kamalideneva claw her way back, as the match stretched from 15+10 to 10+10 and finally to 5+3, where Vaishali, learning from her earlier mistakes, finally dispatched the Kazakh to seal her victory and make it the perfect day for India.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

glad I overcame that today."

Perfect day for India

Just moments after Divya's win, Humpy, the most experienced Indian GM, also defeated GM Alexandra Kosteniuk, an equally strong and seasoned Swiss-Russian. Like Divya, Humpy won the first leg of the rapid

More embarrassment for AIFF, Inter Kashi declared I-League champions

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JULY 18

INAPRIL – three weeks after the final round of matches were played – the All India Football Federation (AIFF) handed over the I-League trophy to Churchill Brothers. Three months on, the federation will have to organise another ceremony – and this time hand over the trophy to Inter Kashi.

The Switzerland-based Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) rejected the AIFF Appeal Committee's decision to award the title to Churchill Brothers of Goa and declared that Kashi, instead, should be declared the second-division champions. The decision, which came on Friday, will end a months-long saga that overshadowed a nail-biting season.

The CAS verdict comes as further embar-

rassment for an under-fire AIFF after its Appeal Committee ruled against Inter Kashi in a matter related to the fielding of an 'ineligible player'. The Varanasi club had ended in second spot after points were deducted from their tally.

However, Inter Kashi approached the CAS, which asked the AIFF to reverse its decision. "The AIFF shall forthwith declare Inter Kashi FC as winner of the I-league 2024-25 season," CAS said in its order. "The appeal filed on 4 June 2025 by Inter Kashi FC against the decision issued on 31 May 2025 by the Appeal Committee of the All-India Football Federation is partially upheld. The decision issued on 31 May 2025 by the Appeal Committee of the All India Football Federation is set aside."

In a statement, AIFF 'congratulated Inter Kashi FC on being adjudged champions of I-League 2024-25'.

On January 13, Namdhari beat Inter Kashi 2-0 in the I-League. After the match was over, Inter Kashi disputed the result, alleging that Namdhari had fielded an ineligible player, Cledson Carvalho da Silva – also known as Dé. They contended that Dé should have been suspended under the AIFF's rules, claiming he had accumulated four yellow cards through the season. The fact that one of his yellow cards led to a sending-off presented a confusing scenario for the parties involved.

It took more than one month for the AIFF's Disciplinary Committee, headed by a former Uttarakhand High Court judge, to announce its verdict. On February 24, the committee upheld Inter Kashi's appeal and handed them a 3-0 win. At that point, it placed Inter Kashi above Churchill Brothers in the title race. Namdhari immediately appealed the decision. The Punjab-based club

Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) rejected the AIFF Appeal Committee's decision to award the title to Churchill Brothers of Goa and declared that Kashi, instead, should be declared the second-division champions.

claimed that the AIFF's portal 'did not show' that the player was suspended for the match.

Another month later, on March 27, the AIFF Appeals Committee, headed by a former Allahabad High Court judge, put the earlier decision in abeyance. It meant that Churchill regained their position at the top of the table. The appeals committee said it would continue hearing the case on April

28, which was after the season was done and dusted.

On April 6, the final day of the I-League, Churchill did just enough against Real Kashmir to finish top of the table with 40 points, whereas Inter Kashi defeated Rajasthan United that afternoon to amass 39 points. Amidst confusion and outcry over the lack of clarity regarding the champions, the appeals committee brought forward the hearing to April 12. And after speaking to all parties, it sided with Namdhari, thus paving the way for Churchill to be crowned the champions on April 20 – two weeks after the league was over.

Then, there was another issue over the registration of Inter Kashi's foreign signing, Marco Barco. The AIFF said in its statement: "After an unsuccessful first procedure initiated by several I-League clubs before the AIFF Disciplinary Committee, the AIFF Appeal

Committee decided on 31 May 2025 that the registration of a foreign player (Marco Barco) by Inter Kashi FC was not valid and stated that all matches played by him should be forfeited by the club. This resulted in the adjustment of the I-League points table with Churchill Brothers FC Goa at the top."

The statement added: "Inter Kashi FC filed an appeal on 23 June 2025 and sought to set aside the AIFF Appeal Committee decision. After a CAS hearing held on 15 July 2025, the CAS Panel ruled that the decision issued on 31 May 2025 by the AIFF is set aside and that the AIFF shall adjust the points table of the I-League 2024-25 season. In line with the CAS ruling, Inter Kashi finish the season on 42 points, Churchill Brothers FC Goa on 40, Real Kashmir FC on 37, and Namdhari FC on 29."

After this, the AIFF will now have to take the trophy back from Churchill and hand it over to Inter Kashi.

Pratika fined, says contact unintentional

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JULY 18

PRATIKA RAWAL was fined 10% of her match fee by the International Cricket Committee for breaching Level 1 of the Code of Conduct during the first ODI against England in Southampton, citing two separate incidents during India's innings. In the 18th over, she made avoidable physical contact with bowler Lauren Fifer while running a single, and after being dismissed in the next over, she made similar avoidable contact with bowler Sophie Ecclestone on her way back to the pavilion, the ICC statement said. In addition to the fine, one demerit point has been added to Pratika's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period.

"It was not intentional. I was just running in my way. And that shoulder barge thing... it was not deliberate in that sense. I don't think there is a reaction to it or maybe a fuss out of it," Pratika said in the press conference on the eve of the second ODI at Lord's.

Focus on series win

After having won the T20I series 3-2, India have their noses front in the ODIs as well and would be looking to continue their good run in the lead-up to the 50-over World Cup at home that starts in just over two months. Pratika, however, insisted that the team's focus is entirely on the here and now, and it is not just a cliché. "Seriously, we are taking just one game at a time. Currently, our prime focus is to win this series. To win the next match and win this series 3-0. That will be great. Keeping it one thing at a time helps with better focus and better concentration," the opening batter said.

With the second ODI to take place at the Lord's Cricket Ground, the 24-year-old said it was a privilege to play for the country at the iconic venue. "Lord's is a lovely ground, a historic one. Definitely, any player who takes up cricket wants to play here at least once. I am very happy that I am here in this squad. Representing my country, playing against England on their home ground. So I am very excited. But I am still holding my nerve as well. And I am looking forward to it," she said.

India won the first ODI on Wednesday by four wickets, successfully chasing down 259 runs with Deepti Sharma and Jemimah Rodrigues starring in the run-chase. Pratika had a decent outing scoring 36 in her first match in English conditions.

NIHAL KOSHIE
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

AFTER 21 months on the sidelines, a period during which he underwent a left-knee surgery for a ruptured patellar tendon, Sreeshankar Murali returned at the Indian Open in Pune last week. A fifth-round jump of 8.05 metres made it a special comeback. He was mildly fretful but wasn't a bundle of nerves.

"Initially, I was a bit anxious about how it would go because I hadn't competed in a while. At the same time I was very calm and composed because I knew I had done it before," Sreeshankar, a Commonwealth Games and Asian Games silver medallist, told *The Indian Express*.

He entertained thoughts of a 8.20 metre jump. First jump, 7.84 metres, the second, 7.99 metres. "I took the first jump far behind the board, so I was like ok 'probably I have an 8-metre plus jump today'. The second jump my toe just touched the board and I did 7.99. But dad (S Murali, his coach) said don't push too much. As long as we get the 8-metre figure we are more than happy. There was a headwind too."

Sreeshankar is used to overcoming adverse conditions.

The 26-year-old casts his mind back to April last year when his Paris Olympics dream went up in smoke. The doctor's diagnosis put a question mark over his future as a long jumper. The patellar tendon connecting the kneecap to the top of the shin bone had ruptured and a part of the bone had chipped off. This was more severe than a 'jumper's knee', which is characterised by inflammation of the patellar tendon.

"The tendon getting inflamed is very common with athletes but the tendon getting ruptured is rare. The doctors told me that this injury you get when you have a high-impact car crash or if you fall from the top of a building or someone forcefully beats your leg and pulls your legs apart. This type of injury can only be expected in near-death situations," Sreeshankar said.

His patellar tendon ruptured following a 'small jump' during practice at his earlier training base in Palghat, Kerala. The out-of-the-blue injury shocked Sreeshankar, though he experienced an inflammation of the tendon in 2023.

Sreeshankar calls the knee and the tendon like the 'bread and butter' for a long jumper. He initially consulted a high-profile doctor in India but the 18-month timeline to start light jogging again and no guarantee of being fit for the 2026 Asian Games made Sreeshankar take a second opinion.

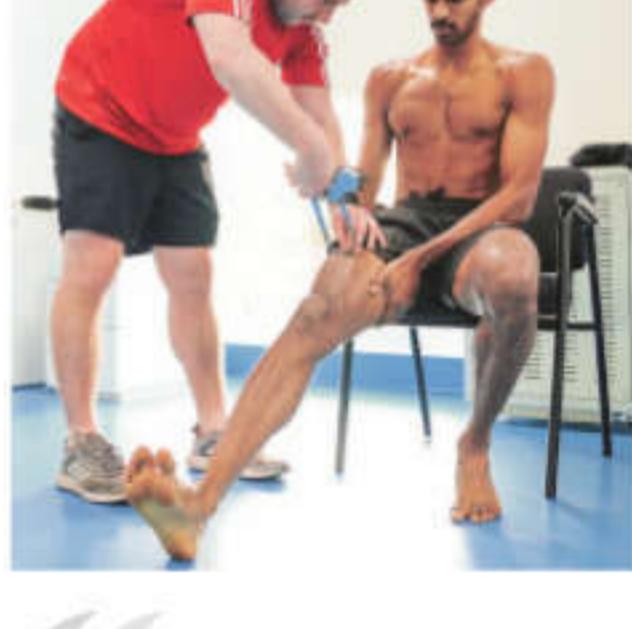
THE PATH TO RECOVERY

Long jump, longer speed bumps

Out after a knee injury ahead of Olympics that required surgery, Sreeshankar made a solid comeback



Sreeshankar Murali training during his rehab. (Right) Samuel A Pullinger, the head of performance science at IIS, doing a skin-fold test. Special Arrangement



I was devastated. Just two days back I was aiming for an Olympic medal and then you hear that your career is almost finished."

SREESHANKAR MURALI
ON THE EMOTIONS AFTER INJURY

Excellence in Thiruvananthapuram, said.

Post surgery, his left knee has become bigger and the position of the knee cap has changed. "The doctor said there will be mechanical changes and you can't expect everything to be 100 percent like before."

The game-changer, according to Sreeshankar, was when he consulted Wayne Lombard, a well-known strength and conditioning coach, who has worked with stars like Neeraj Chopra, Vinesh Phogat and Tejaswin Shankar and India's women's hockey team.

"Wayne trained my knee like how it should be trained for a jumper, it was very sports specific. Tejaswin asked me to get in touch with him. Wayne revamped the strength and conditioning schedule along with Priyam. That changed the game. By the end of February, I took a three-step long jump. I used to do exercises like it was a medicine, like a diabetes patient takes insulin everyday. This is like a new baby knee and I have to take care of it very well."

There is an upside of Sreeshankar having time on hand during his rehabilitation as he became a certified strength and conditioning coach. "I wanted to get myself occupied with something productive to keep my mind from only thinking about my knee. I had done the course in the 2023 off season but was yet to finish the workbook as I didn't find time because I was preparing for the Olympics. During the rehab, I completed it and I have a coaching licence now."

BRIEFLY

Antim wins Ranking Series gold in 53 kg

Budapest: Indian wrestler **Antim Panghal** defeated World number two Natalia Malysheva 7-4 in the final to win gold medal at the Hungary Ranking Series in Budapest. Earlier, she won both her matches by technical superiority. She defeated European medalist Zeynep Yetgil 10-0 and then went on to defeat Felicity Taylor of USA in the semi-final. This is the second gold and third overall medal for India. Yesterday in the men's freestyle Sujeev Kalkal won the gold medal in the 65 kg category and Rahul won the bronze medal. ENS

Srihari betters his 200m butterfly time

Rhine-Ruh: Indian swimmer Srihari Nataraj bettered his 'Best Indian Time' in the 200m freestyle to advance to the semifinals, the women paddlers overcame Netherlands to secure a round-of-16 berth, while the shuttlers lost to Hong Kong in mixed team event on day two of the World University Games in the Rhine-Ruh region of Germany on Friday. Two-time Olympian Nataraj, 24, timed 1:48.22 seconds to top his heats and eclipse his previous mark of 1:48.66 set last month at the Singapore National Swimming Championships. The Bengaluru swimmer qualified fifth overall for the semifinals scheduled later on Friday. The women table tennis players lost the opening rubber before overcoming the Netherlands 3-1 in Group 5. PTI

India start with win at Jr Asia team c'ships

Solo: India notched up a 110-69 win over Sri Lanka in their Group D clash to kick off their campaign at the Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team championships. The mixed doubles combination of Vishnu Kode and Reshika Ubegin India's march with an 11-5 win over Kenneth Aruggoda and Isuri Attanayake in the relay point system where a team had to bag 110 points to win the match. Sisters Gayatri and Mansa Rawat then extended India's lead to 22-14 against Attanayake and Sithumini De Silva before junior world no. 1 Tanvi Sharma stamped her class against Sithuli Ranasinghe to make it 33-21 for India. PTI

A THANKLESS JOB

For badminton coaches, 'giving back' to the game comes with suffering

SHIVANI NAIK
JULY 18

'GIVING BACK to sport' is a noble thought, and sometimes the overwhelming instinct of an athlete, as injuries and natural wear and tear snap at their heels and active careers wind down. India benefitted from its All England champions turning to coaching as an entire phalanx of shuttlers revived the relevance of badminton in the country by producing world beaters since 2009.

But does the nation give back to these coaches or acknowledge their hard work when they go about building the sporting system brick by brick? Or are many former athletes left to rue their decision to share their court experience in building future careers and get into coaching, instead of turning their back on badminton and pursuing a profession that actually pays the bills and brings some comfort after years of the athlete's struggle? It's a grim picture, and specially for a badminton coach.

Recent policy proposals for central assistance to National Sports Federations seek to offer a good pay package to those devoted full-time to coaching, but there's a catch. The caveats - hidden in the gnarled wording of the proposals - are that these contract appointments might be short-term, for a year or so, and might demand a sacrifice - giving up on their PSU jobs, that guarantee athletes a financial safety net in the long term when they commit to sport.

Olympic sports that do not have a hugely lucrative circuit, those like badminton, follow a certain pattern - when juniors start showing potential, they are handed employment opportunities and when they succeed, they get



Does India guarantee financial security to coaches who produce stars? File

flaunted as the pride of the nation, like jewels of the organisation. All "sports quota jobs" come with an inbuilt promise - that when the active playing career stops and they cease to be grinning faces feted for international medals, bringing glory to the nation instead of following conventional money-accumulating careers in their prime of 20s, they will still be taken care of, by a grateful nation.

For a country that doesn't really win a mammoth number of medals in sport, acknowledging the rare ones who do, should not have been too difficult.

But the new coaching proposals - demand this particular pound of flesh, they expect national coaches to choose between long-term financial security or following their ambitions of raising new champions with basics in the

background, like family responsibilities, taken care of. If the safety net of a job disappears, and building champions takes a minimum of 6-7 years to show results (Saina took 6, Sindhu, Srikanth, Satwik-Chirag took 7, Lakshya took 8), why would anyone get conned into accepting just a year-long contract?

Private academies charging coaching fees tend to be resented generally. One of India's best coaches was once asked why he needs to be paid at all, if badminton was his passion. Coaches from some of the more professional sports like cricket or tennis, or even foreign coaches in badminton, will laugh at this strange demand expected of former athletes: that they deserve no remuneration for their efforts, if their wish is to 'give back.'

Even more hysterical has been the belief that most of India's champions over the last decade sprouted out suddenly, solely because they were talented. Elite sport at the highest level is exceedingly tough, and very few have cracked the code, without a coach in corner.

Coach dependencies can slowly be weaned away when you reach Top 10 and are perched there for a while like Viktor Axelsen or Chou Tien Chen have managed, but no one in India is at that level right now. Erasing contributions of grassroots coaches, or intermediate and elite ones entirely, and expecting them to devote

their lives to mentoring without being paid, is simply delusional. Even independent shuttlers like Malvika Bansod and Sankar Muthusamy Subramaniam need coaches to navigate their careers. Don't get fooled by the sight of players coaching each other at the Canada and US Open as something that could work at bigger tournaments.

There's other hazards that follow coaches - pushy parents with unrealistic expectations. And on the other end of the spectrum those parents that demand success but don't buy into the discipline and hard yards required of their wards, clucking at the rigorous regimens.

Parental oversight is always recommended, but interference in issues of technique and tactics has destroyed many careers. Coaches might not always get the credit for success, but the blame for failures inescapably lands at their door. All this combined with limited financial incentives to coach at the National camp, have meant that a robust system cannot take root even if badminton has proven it can succeed.

Up ahead are tough decisions. Giving up on PSU job security while hoping the new generation gets cracking soon, and that somehow keeps the ball rolling. This 'giving back' for India's badminton coaching fraternity has a 'giving in', written in fine print.

Smt. Rekha Gupta

The People's CM



A leader who puts people first

A seasoned leader with deep ties to the city's socio-political fabric, Delhi CM Rekha Gupta has steadily risen through the ranks of public service with the mission of serving people

THE current Chief Minister of Delhi, Rekha Gupta, is not merely a leader by title; she is one by action, presence and purpose. In a city shaped by contrasts and constantly evolving demands, where promises often get lost in the din of politics, she stands apart by turning intent into tangible impact. Her leadership is not confined to grand declarations — it manifests in every park revitalised, every community initiative launched, and every citizen heard. For her, governance is a continuous dialogue with the people and her words find their true meaning through the changes she brings on the ground.

What sets Gupta apart in the bustling landscape of Indian politics is not just the span of her public service but the distinct blend of compassion, clarity of vision and an instinctive understanding of Delhi's evolving needs — all of which she channels into purposeful, visible action. Whether in student leadership or public service through elected office, she has always demonstrated an intuitive understanding of people's aspirations, often before these have been spoken aloud. Her work has touched lives in the lanes of North Delhi, the classrooms of Delhi University and the legislative corridors of the capital. Every role she has embraced — from student leader to municipal councilor, and now as the one helming

the capital — has been marked by a consistent philosophy: listen closely, act sincerely, and lead with purpose. It is this unwavering commitment that defines Rekha Gupta's public life, and today shapes her vision for a more inclusive and empowered Delhi. The journey that brought her here is as inspiring as the vision with which she now steers Delhi forward.

A Political Journey Rooted in Purpose and Vision

Rekha Gupta's foray into politics was not incidental but shaped by conviction and clarity of purpose. It began in student politics, where she emerged as a spirited leader driven by values. As a student at Delhi University, she left an indelible mark by winning the position of President of the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) in 1996–97 — a significant victory that reflected her ability to connect with the youth. Even at that early stage, she demonstrated the core traits that would define her public life: accessibility, sincerity and a capacity to bring people together.

As she transitioned into mainstream politics, she embraced roles within the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with diligence. Her tenure as General Secretary of the Delhi BJP Mahila Morcha and as a member of the party's National Executive showcased her commitment

Gupta's appointment followed the BJP's return to power in the national capital after 27 years. A first-time MLA at the time, she was chosen to become the Delhi CM because of her enduring grassroots connection

to empowering women and elevating their concerns within the party. As she worked closely with communities, she developed a nuanced understanding of urban governance and the pulse of Delhi's neighborhoods.

Rekha Gupta served three terms as a councillor in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. Her tenure was marked by a visible transformation in civic amenities and public engagement. Her electoral victories were not mere political wins but affirmations of trust by the people she served.

In 2025, Gupta's rapport with the people of Delhi culminated in her being sworn in as the Chief Minister. Her appointment followed the BJP's decisive return to power in the national capital after 27 years, with the party securing 48 out of 70 seats in the Assembly. Gupta, a first-time MLA at the time, was chosen to lead this transition — a choice that reflected both trust in her leadership and recognition of her enduring grassroots connection. Her ascent was not sudden but built on years of transparent governance, meaningful outreach and visionary leadership. It was the natural progression of a career carved with purpose — an elevation that came not by ambition alone but by consistent, visible work and the goodwill of communities across the capital. She stepped into the role ready to deliver. What followed were milestones that reflected both intent and impact.

With a steady foundation built on trust and experience and embodying a brand of politics rooted in integrity, commitment and grassroots connection, Gupta leads with resolve, delivering governance that is people-first, purpose-led and deeply responsive to Delhi's evolving aspirations. Her political narrative is grounded not in spectacle, but in steady, result-driven engagement with communities across social and economic spectrums.

MESSAGE



OMAXE
Turning dreams into reality

WARMEST birthday wishes to Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt. Rekha Gupta ji.

On behalf of all of us at Omaxe Group, it's a heartfelt moment to celebrate the remarkable woman you are; a leader who blends strength with sensitivity, vision with action.

Your commitment to building a more progressive and inclusive Delhi has touched countless lives. From infrastructure to governance and especially your relentless focus on women empowerment and women safety; your leadership has inspired hope and created lasting change.

We admire not just what you do, but how you do it — with integrity, empathy, and deep purpose.

May this birthday bring you renewed energy, good health, and continued success in your remarkable journey of public service. We stand with you in building a more inclusive and hopeful future for all.

MOHIT GOEL
Managing Director, Omaxe Group

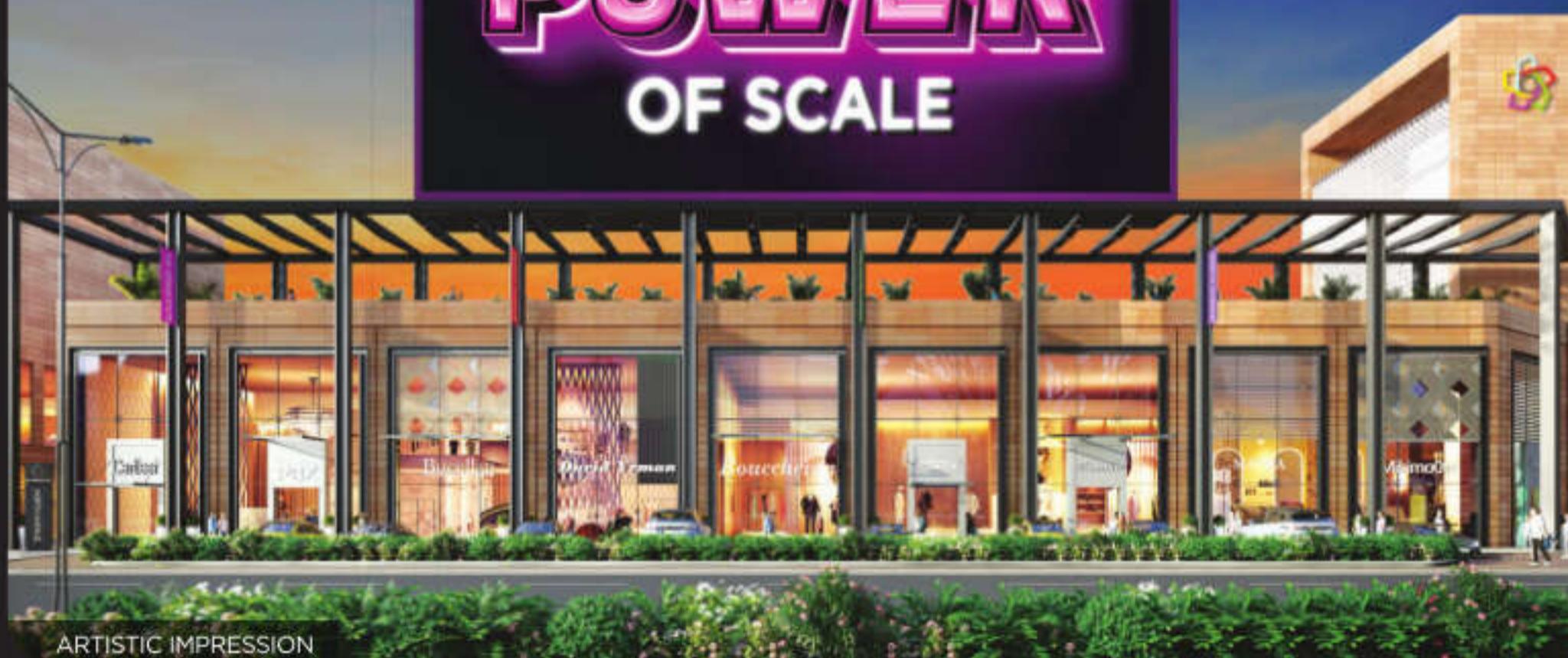
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THE OMAXE STATE



Stephen Colbert in Los Angeles in 2024. File

UNITED STATES

'Late Show with Stephen Colbert' is cancelled, will end in May '26

Washington: CBS is canceling "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" next May, shuttering a decades-old TV institution in a changing media landscape and removing from air one of President Donald Trump's most prominent and persistent late-night critics. CBS said "Late Show" was canceled for financial reasons, not for content. But the timing — three days after Colbert criticized the settlement between Trump and Paramount Global, parent company of CBS, over a "60 Minutes" story — led two US senators to publicly question the motives. Colbert told his audience at New York's Ed Sullivan Theater that he had learned that, after a decade on air, "next year will be our last season." AP

IRAQ
Mall fire: Officials try to identify 18 burnt bodies

Baghdad: Officials struggled Friday to identify more than a dozen bodies pulled from a deadly shopping mall fire in Iraq, amid ongoing investigations into what caused the blaze. An Iraqi medical official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment said the final death toll was 63, including 18 bodies that could not be identified due to the severity of the burns and would undergo DNA testing. Civil defence crews were able to rescue 45 people from the burning building. AP

TAIWAN
Will 'not provoke confrontation' with China: V-P

Taipei: Taiwan will not provoke a confrontation with China, the self-ruled island's vice president said Friday, lamenting Beijing's "aggressive military posturing" against the island democracy that China claims as its own. "We do not seek conflict. We will not provoke confrontation," said Bi-khim Hsiao, adding that her government has urged Beijing to communicate "with parity and respect." Hsiao said her government has seen "a dramatic upturn in provocative and proactive (Chinese Communist Party) efforts to infiltrate, sabotage and divide our society." AP

FORMER AUSTRIAN MILITARY PARACHUTIST CRASHED INTO THE SIDE OF A SWIMMING POOL IN ITALY, OFFICIALS SAID

Baumgartner, 1st skydiver to fall faster than speed of sound, dies in paragliding crash

COLLEEN BARRY & JOHN SEEWER
MILAN, JULY 18

EXTREME ATHLETE Felix Baumgartner, the first skydiver to fall faster than the speed of sound during a 24-mile leap through the stratosphere more than a decade ago, died in a crash Thursday along the eastern coast of Italy. He was 56. Italian firefighters who responded said a paraglider crashed into the side of a swimming pool in the city of Porto Sant'Elpidio.

The city's mayor confirmed Baumgartner's death in a social

THE WORLD

RIGHT-WING BASE RAMPS UP PRESSURE

Trump authorises Attorney General to seek release of some Epstein material

Move after WSJ report on 2003 Trump letter to Epstein with suggestive drawing

GLENN THRUSH
WASHINGTON, JULY 18

PRESIDENT TRUMP announced Thursday night that he was authorizing Attorney General Pam Bondi to seek the public release of grand jury testimony from the prosecution of the disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein, and Bondi said she would make that request in federal court on Friday.

Trump, under intense pressure from his right-wing base after a Justice Department review found no evidence to support conspiracy theories about the sex trafficking case, ordered Bondi to "produce any and all pertinent grand jury testimony, subject to Court approval," in a social media post.

The president cited "the ridiculous amount of publicity given to Jeffrey Epstein" for his directive, which falls far short of demands from some congressional Republicans to make public all investigative files collected by the department and the FBI, not just testimony presented in



A poster showing President Donald Trump and Jeffrey Epstein near the US Embassy in London, Thursday. AP

federal court.

Bondi, a Trump loyalist accused by far-right influencers of abetting a cover-up, responded immediately with a post on social media that undercut the memo the department and FBI drafted this month declaring Mr. Epstein's 2019 jailhouse death a suicide and the case closed.

"President Trump — we are

ready to move the court tomorrow to unseal the grand jury transcripts," she wrote, quickly reversing course. But it was not clear that she would succeed, because secrecy of grand jury transcripts is highly protected.

Trump's request came hours after *The Wall Street Journal* reported on a 50th birthday greeting it said Trump sent Epstein in

2003, including a sexually suggestive drawing, an expression of friendship and a reference to secrets they shared. The president vehemently denied the report, which *The New York Times* has not verified. He warned Rupert Murdoch, the founder of News Corp., the paper's parent company, that he planned to sue.

An angry Trump, referring to himself in the third person in a long Truth Social post, claimed that Mr. Murdoch had agreed to "take care of" the article but apparently lacked the authority to overrule the decisions of the paper's top editor, Emma Tucker. He accused *The Journal* of publishing a "false, malicious and defamatory" report. "President Trump has already beaten George Stephanopoulos/ABC, 60 Minutes/CBS, and others, and looks forward to suing and holding accountable the once great *Wall Street Journal*," he added.

In 2019, Epstein was found dead by hanging in his cell at a Manhattan federal prison while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges.

NYT

White House says Trump diagnosed with vein condition

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, JULY 18

THE WHITE House said on Thursday that US President Donald Trump is experiencing swelling in his lower legs and bruising on his right hand, after photographs emerged of Trump with swollen ankles and makeup covering the afflicted part of his hand.

White House spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt, reading a letter from Trump's doctor at a press briefing, said both ailments were benign. His leg swelling is from a "common" vein condition, and his hand is bruised from shaking so many hands, she told reporters. The disclosure sought to put to rest a raft of internet rumors that Trump might be suffering from a serious ailment based on the photographic evidence. REUTERS



A rocket is fired at Ukrainian positions. AP

EU's new Russia sanctions target its energy sector and shadow fleet

'Security threat': Russian MPs say WhatsApp should prepare to leave country

Moscow: WhatsApp should prepare to leave the Russian market,

a lawmaker who regulates the IT sector said on Friday, warning that the messaging app owned by Meta Platforms was likely to be put on a list of restricted software.

President Vladimir Putin last month signed a law to develop a state-backed messaging app integrated with government services,

as Russia strives to reduce its dependence on platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram.

Anton Gorelkin, deputy head of the lower house of parliament's information technology committee, said in a statement on Telegram that the state-backed app MAX, could gain market share if WhatsApp — used by 68% of Russians daily — left. "It's time for WhatsApp to prepare to leave the Russian market," Gorelkin said, adding that Meta is designated as an extremist organisation.

The company's Facebook and Instagram social media platforms have been banned in Russia since 2022, when Moscow sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine. REUTERS

Druze-Bedouin clashes flare up again after government forces pull out of south Syria



Bedouin fighters in the outskirts of Sweida city, amid clashes with Druze militias on Friday. AP

ployment was delayed, without giving an explanation.

Tens of thousands of people remained displaced by the violence and the UN has been unable to bring in much-needed humanitarian and medical aid because of ongoing clashes.

Clashes began Sunday between Druze militias and local Sunni Muslim Bedouin tribes. Government forces intervened, nominally to restore order, but ended up taking the Bedouins' side against the Druze. Israel later in the week launched airstrikes against Syrian forces in defense of the Druze.

The fighting killed hundreds of people over four days, with allegations that government-affiliated fighters executed Druze civilians and looted and burned homes.

AP

Brazil SC orders Bolsonaro to wear ankle monitor, police raid residence



Jair Bolsonaro after the top court order in Brasilia on Friday. AP

on Thursday thanking Trump for his support. CNN Brasil reported that the court orders targeting Bolsonaro had been motivated by the risk of him fleeing to the United States. His lawyers expressed "surprise and indignation" at what they called "severe precautionary measures im-

posed against him," adding that Bolsonaro has so far complied with court orders.

Bolsonaro would meet with US President Donald Trump if he had access to his passport, he told Reuters in an interview on Friday, following federal police searches of his home. REUTERS

Cardinal brings aid to Gaza after Israeli strike on Catholic church; Netanyahu calls Pope Leo



Jerusalem's Latin Patriarch Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa and Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III in Gaza, Friday

In an interview with Italy's *Corriere della Sera* daily, Pizzaballa said a Catholic presence would remain in Gaza "whatever happens," and expressed doubts about Israel's comments that the strike was a mistake. "We are not

a target. They say it was an error. Even if everybody here believes it wasn't," the cardinal said. It is extremely rare for foreign officials to be allowed entry into Gaza, as Israel has essentially sealed its borders. Pizzaballa was accompa-

nied by Theophilos III, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu blamed "stray ammunition" and said his country was "investigating the incident and remains committed to protecting civilians and holy sites." Netanyahu called Pope Leo on Friday, the Vatican said. Leo renewed appeals for a ceasefire and an end to the war, called for the protection of civilians and places of worship, and expressed fresh concern for "the dramatic humanitarian situation" in Gaza, according to a statement.

Meanwhile, Hamas armed wing spokesperson said Friday that while the group favours reaching an interim truce in the Gaza war, if such an agreement is not reached in current negotiations it could revert to insisting on a full package deal to end the conflict.

REUTERS



Felix Baumgartner in Rio de Janeiro in 1999. Reuters

eastern New Mexico desert.

The altitude he jumped from also was the highest-ever for a skydiver, shattering the previous record set in 1960 by Joe Kittinger, who served as an adviser to Baumgartner during his feat.

Baumgartner's altitude record stood for two years until Google executive Alan Eustace set new marks for the highest free-fall jump and greatest free-fall distance.

In 2012, millions watched YouTube's live stream as Baumgartner coolly flashed a thumbs-up when he came out of the capsule high above Earth and then activated his parachute as

he neared the ground, lifting his arms in victory after he landed.

Baumgartner, a former Austrian military parachutist, made thousands of jumps from planes, bridges, skyscrapers and famed landmarks, including the Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil. The self-styled "God of the Skies" started parachuting as a teenager before taking up the extreme sport of BASE jumping.

In Austria he was also known for courtship controversy with views that included expressing support for dictatorship as a system of government.

Baumgartner was fined 1,500 euros after he punched a

Greek truck driver in the face during a 2010 altercation that broke out in a traffic jam near Salzburg. In 2003, he flew across the English Channel in a carbon fiber wing after being dropped from a plane.

In recent years, he performed with The Flying Bulls as a helicopter stunt pilot in shows across Europe. Baumgartner said after his record-breaking jump in 2012 that traveling faster than sound is "hard to describe because you don't feel it."

"Sometimes we have to get really high to see how small we are," he said.

AP WITH REUTERS INPUTS

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE CITY CIVIL AND
SESSIONS JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-23)
D.S.C. 22/2025

Plaintiff: VIHAAN DIRECT SELLING PVT. LTD. (Delhi
Limited), Address: Chicago avenue, S-203, 2nd floor,
Cunningham Road, Bengaluru-560052 Represented by
director, Sri. Dilip Pukkella
v/s
Defendant: Bharat Prakashan
NOTICE/SUMMONS TO THE DEFENDANT
To, Bharat Prakashan (Delhi) Limited, Plot No. 4B,
District Center, Mayur Vihar Phase 1 Extension New
Delhi-110091

Whereas the plaintiff above named has filed the above
suit for the relief for the Plaintiff before the Court
on 28.07.2025 at 11:00 a.m. in person or through
advocate / pleader to answer the question to the same.
Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as
Ex-Parte.

Given under my hand & seal of the court, this 24th day
of JUN 2025.

By Order Of The Court,

(Senior Sherister) City Civil Court, Bengaluru.

Advocate for Plaintiff: KUTSA LEGAL NO. B-02, Main
height solo -01, 1st cross, JC Road, Bengaluru-
560027

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender

No NWR-AIADMIN(GENS)/45/2025 Dated: 08.07.2025
CPM/GSU/NWR Ajmer on behalf of
The President of India invites E-Tenders for the following work up to
15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date:
Tender No. GSUAI-PH16-DRB-01-2025; Name of work: Construction of Service Building (including all internal and external electrical work), construction of Retaining Wall, extension of minor bridges, earthwork in Formation, Dismantling of BG Track, existing 1 in 12 and 1 in 8.5 turnouts, Supply of Ballast, Transportation of P.W.F. Material, Slewing of BG Track, Laying & Linking of BG Track and other miscellaneous works in connection with Yard remodeling of Debari yard in COR - UDV Section of Ajmer Division. **Approximate cost of work:** Rs. 961700/- (Rs. One Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Three hundred Rupees Only); **4. Last date and time for Submission of e-tender and Opening of e-tender:** 08.08.2025 Up to 15:00 Hrs. and 08.08.2025 after 15:00 Hrs. **5. Web site from e-tender forms can be obtained:** www.ireps.gov.in; **6. Address of the NIT issuing Office:** Office of the CWM, Carriage Workshop, NWR, Jodhpur- 342001 (Rajasthan)

868-AN/25

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

ई-निविदा आवंग्राम सूचना

मंजल रेल प्रबन्धक ई-निविदा रिपोर्ट, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर डिवार के राष्ट्रपीठ के लिये एवं उत्तरी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रवर्तित निम्नों के अनुसार रेल प्रबन्धक ई-निविदा में निविदा निम्नों के लिए क्रमानुसार आवंग्राम की जाती है—

ई-निविदा सूचना सं० 74of2025-26, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: REPLACEMENT OF OLD/DILAPIDATED QUARTERS BY 22 unit Type II Quarters under ADEN/DNA; अनुमानित लागत रुपयः 37796626.40; बयाने की राशि रुपयः 339000.00; ई-निविदा सूचना सं० 77of2025-26, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Provision of new TMC siding including Linking of track, extension of track machine sidings, & other ancillary work at various stations i.e. Gudha, Nawa City, Makrana, Gachipur, Degana, REN, Merta Road, Umed, Asarnada, Banar, Luni, Rohat, Palimarwar, Mandor, Marwar, Mathaniya, Tivari, Haralaya, Marwar Lohawat, Marwar Khara, Ashapura, Gomat, Odhaniya Chacha, Jetha Chandan, Thayati Hamira, Jaisalmir Khajwana, Marwar Mundwa, Alai, Surpura, Deshnokh, Udramsar, Khatu, Khun Khuna, Didwana, Ladnun & Parihare station for new TMC sidings Over Jodhpur Division; अनुमानित लागत रुपयः 199916995.73; बयाने की राशि रुपयः 1149600.00; ई-निविदा सूचना सं० 78of2025-26, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Provision of 8 no. limited height subways at various locations on Phuleria-Merta Road Section over Jodhpur division; अनुमानित लागत रुपयः 32473142.91; बयाने की राशि रुपयः 1312400.00; निविदा सूचना सं० 79of2025-26 (निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 01.08.2025 को 15.00 बजे तक) & 77of2025-26 (निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 07.08.2025 को 15.00 बजे तक) & 78of2025-26 निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 11.08.2025 को 15.00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट का विवरण जहाँ पर ई-निविदा देखी व मरी जा सकती है: www.ireps.gov.in

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NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

E-AUCTION NOTICE

The bids are invited from registered entities on IREPS by Sr.DCM/IZN (ACO) through e-Auction for the PMBKG and miscellaneous contracts. The Catalogue has already been published on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in. The detail of upcoming e-Auctions of Izzatnagar division is as under: **Category:-** Msc-Static-Services-Static General, **Catalogue No.:-** IZN-MFC-2-25, **Asset Detail:-** Auction for leasing of SLRs in Various trains, **Auction Start:-** 24-07-25 12:30:00, **Auction End:-** 24-07-25 13:10:00, **Category:-** Parcel, **Catalogue No.:-** IZN-PLS-6-25, **Asset Detail:-** Auction for leasing of SLRs in Various trains, **Auction Start:-** 28-07-25 12:30:00, **Auction End:-** 28-07-25 17:30:00, **1. Bidders are advised to visit website www.ireps.gov.in for more information related to e-Auction.**, **2. The bids have been invited through e-Auction Leasing module of IREPS website.**, **3. All the e-Auction related information as eligibility, scope of work, contract period terms & conditions of contract etc. are available on IREPS.**, **4. Bidders can participate in e-Auction only as per the date & timing as indicated above.**, **5. All the prospective bidders are requested to visit website www.ireps.gov.in regularly for any corrigendum related to above e-Auctions.**

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