

Meghalaya issues advisory on mushroom poisoning, water contamination risks

Shillong, July 08: The Commissionerate of Food Safety under the Health & Family Welfare Department, Government of Meghalaya, has issued an urgent public health advisory warning residents about the risks of wild mushroom poisoning and chemical contamination of water sources. According to the advisory, every year lives are lost in different districts due to the consumption of toxic wild mushrooms. It stated that the risk has become more unpredictable because of climate change.

The advisory said rising temperatures, erratic monsoon patterns and changing weather conditions have disrupted local eco-



systems. As mushrooms are highly sensitive to environmental changes,

they may produce lethal toxins under stress caused by climatic variations,

unpredictable growing conditions and contamination by wildlife. It further

noted that climate change has altered the timing and locations where fungi grow, making traditional foraging knowledge less reliable. The advisory also stated that there is no instant test to determine whether a wild mushroom is toxic.

Authorities further highlighted that there is no instant test available to determine whether a wild mushroom is toxic. Residents were strongly advised to avoid consuming mushrooms collected from forests or unknown sources. The advisory also warned of chemical contamination in water sources, particularly during the monsoon season, when runoff from agricultural

fields and industrial areas can pollute rivers, streams, and wells. Citizens have been urged to boil or filter drinking water, report suspected poisoning cases immediately to the nearest health facility, and raise awareness within their communities about the dangers of consuming unverified wild produce. Officials emphasized that the advisory is part of a broader effort to strengthen climate-linked health surveillance and protect vulnerable populations. The government reiterated its commitment to safeguarding public health by combining awareness campaigns with stricter monitoring of food and water safety across the State.

Heavy To Very Heavy Rain Likely In Parts Of NE: IMD

Guwahati, July 08: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall across parts of Northeast India over the next few days, with Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya expected to receive intense rainfall as the southwest monsoon remains active. According to the IMD's All India Weather Forecast Bulletin, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. Heavy rainfall is also expected at isolated places over Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

The weather office said the rainfall activity is likely to persist over the region during the coming days, with Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya continuing to remain under the heavy to

very heavy rainfall zone. In addition to rainfall, the IMD has forecast thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds with speeds of 40-60 kmph at isolated places across parts of Northeast India.

The IMD said the southwest monsoon continues to remain active, supporting widespread rainfall across the northeastern states. The weather department has advised people in areas likely to receive heavy rainfall to avoid waterlogged and landslide-prone locations, check weather and traffic updates before travelling, and follow advisories issued by local authorities. Residents have also been urged to remain cautious due to the possibility of localised flooding, reduced visibility and transport disruptions.

Meghalaya govt declares holiday marking Garo Labour Corps Day

Shillong, July 08: The Meghalaya government has declared July 16, 2026 (Thursday) as a local holiday in South West Garo Hills district on the occasion of Garo Labour Corps Day, officials said on Tuesday. According to a notification issued by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, South West Garo Hills, the holiday has been declared in pursuance of the Meghalaya government's notification No. GAA.78/2025/23 dated October 21, 2025.

The holiday marks the annual commemoration of



the Garo Labour Corps, a contingent of men from the Garo Hills who were recruited during World War I to serve overseas. Their contribution and sacrifice remain a significant chapter

in the region's history, symbolizing courage, resilience, and the community's role in global events of the early 20th century. By declaring the holiday, the government seeks to honor the memory

of the Corps and provide an opportunity for the people of South West Garo Hills to reflect on their legacy. Schools, offices, and institutions across the district will remain closed, while cultural and memorial programs are expected to be organized to mark the occasion. Officials noted that the observance of Garo Labour Corps Day has become an important part of the district's calendar, reinforcing collective remembrance and pride in the contributions of the Garo community to the nation's history.

Assam unveils 'Pokkhi', digital bird repository of 372 species

Guwahati, July 08: Assam has taken a significant step in documenting its rich avian diversity with the launch of its first digital bird repository, Pokkhi. Developed by wildlife photographer Chirantanu Saikia and Tezpur University PhD scholar Abhilash Gayan, the bilingual platform features detailed profiles of 376 bird species, both resident and migratory. Each entry includes high-quality photographs, identification guides, species descriptions, IUCN conservation status, and Assamese as well as English names. Forest and Environment Minister Jayanta



Mallabaruah commended the initiative, noting that it not only highlights Assam's ecological wealth but also safeguards its linguistic heritage. He emphasized that the repository invites contributions from birdwatchers,

researchers, and the public to document regional variations in Assamese bird names, thereby creating a collaborative knowledge base that reflects the state's cultural and biological diversity.

PAKYONG HOSTS GREEN WALK EVENT

Pakyong, July 08: The Forest and Environment Department's Pakyong Territorial Division organised a Green Walk in Pakyong on Wednesday as part of the ongoing Sikkim Paryavaran Parva 2026. The two-week statewide environmental campaign is being observed from July 1 to 14 under the theme "Leave a Green Legacy". The initiative aims to promote environmental conservation, sustainable living and collective action towards protecting natural resources.

The Green Walk began from the Community Hall in Pakyong and concluded at Old Pushpanjali Vidyalaya. The rally was organised to raise awareness about environmental protection and encourage public participation in conservation efforts. Addressing participants before the rally, Divisional Forest Officer (Territorial), Pakyong Division, S.P. Bhutia said the Green Walk was one of the activities being conducted during the 14-day observance of the fourth annual Sikkim Paryavaran Parva. He said the campaign seeks to increase public awareness on environmental conservation, promote sustainable practices and encourage collective efforts to reduce pollution and protect the environment.

Bhutia urged people to actively participate in such initiatives and contribute towards building a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future.



THRC Orders Independent Probe into Death of Pregnant Woman at IGM Hospital

Agartala, July 08: The Tripura Human Rights Commission (THRC) has taken suo motu cognizance of the death of a pregnant woman at Indira Gandhi Memorial (IGM) Hospital and ordered an independent inquiry into the incident, expressing serious concern over possible human rights violations and questioning the handling of the case by the health authorities. The Commission initiated the case after several newspapers carried reports on May 30 alleging that the woman died due to the absence of a Medical Officer at the hospital. The reports raised concerns over the condition of emergency healthcare services at IGM Hospital and alleged negligence in the treatment of the patient.

Seeking clarification, the Commission had asked the Director of Health Services to submit a report.



However, in its order, the THRC observed that the Director merely forwarded reports prepared by doctors attached to the same Obstetrics and Gynaecology unit where the incident occurred, instead of constituting an independent inquiry committee.

According to the hospital's report, the deceased, Bibha Debnath (33), wife of Pankaj Debnath of Amtali, was admitted to IGM Hospital on May 28 with abdominal pain and urinary retention. Doctors examined

her and recommended an emergency Lower Segment Caesarean Section (LSCS), explaining the serious risks, including uterine rupture, premature delivery and stillbirth. The report further stated that Bibha Debnath and her husband allegedly refused to give consent for the surgery and opted for a "wait and watch" approach. Hospital authorities claimed that the patient was continuously monitored by specialists and postgraduate trainee doctors throughout the night.

Nirupam Chakma sworn in as Chief Executive Member today

Aizawl, July 08: The newly appointed Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the 11th Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), Nirupam Chakma, was sworn into office on Wednesday at the CADC Art & Cultural Hall in Kamalanagar-II. The oath-taking ceremony was chaired by CADC Executive Secretary Pronit Bikash Chakma. Donny Lalruatsanga, Deputy Commissioner of Lawngtlai, administered the Oath of Office and Secrecy to the new Chief Executive Member.

Earlier, the Executive Secretary read out the government notification appointing Nirupam Chakma as the Chief Executive Member of the 11th CADC before the oath was administered.

Addressing the gathering after taking the oath, Nirupam Chakma thanked the



Governor of Mizoram, the Chief Minister, the Minister for District Council and Minority Affairs, and the Chakma Democratic Alliance Legislature Party for reposing confidence in him. He said his administration would focus on transparency, accountability and public welfare, with priority given to education, healthcare, road infrastructure, youth employment and other de-

velopmental initiatives. He also appealed to Village Councils, civil society organisations, churches and the public to support the Council's development efforts.

Speaking at the event, C. Lalsawivunga, Minister for District Council and Minority Affairs, said the formation of a new government in the CADC marked the end of a prolonged period of Gov-

ernor's Rule. He expressed confidence that the Chakma Democratic Alliance Legislature Party would work towards the development of the Council and extended his best wishes to the new Executive Committee.

The Chakma Autonomous District Council has 20 elected members. The new Executive Committee has been formed by the Chakma Democratic Alliance Legislature Party, comprising 10 members from the Bharatiya Janata Party and nine members from the Zoram People's Movement. The ceremony was attended by Minister C. Lalsawivunga, Devesh Kumar, former MLAs, Members of District Council (MDCs), former MDCs, government officials, leaders of various political parties and other invited guests.

APWWS submits reform proposals to APARC, strengthening governance framework

Itanagar, July 08: The All Arunachal Pradesh Women's Welfare Society (APWWS) on Tuesday met Arunachal Pradesh Administrative Reforms Commission (APARC) Chairman Pramod Jain and submitted a comprehensive memorandum with recommendations to strengthen governance and modernise public service delivery in the state. The APWWS called for a major overhaul of the government recruitment system to make it transparent, merit-based and professionally managed. It stressed that recruitment

requires expertise in talent assessment and competency mapping, and urged greater involvement of trained HR professionals in the selection process.

To ensure officers understand ground realities, the society proposed a mandatory 30 to 60-day district immersion programme for all newly recruited Group 'A' and Group 'B' officers in remote villages and border areas before regular posting. For better workforce management, APWWS recommended shifting from post-based to workload-based staffing,



based on population, geography and service demand.

It also suggested constituting departmental committees with women members to review manpower needs, and developing a real-time digital HR dashboard covering posts, vacancies, transfers and training.

To address shortages in remote districts, the organisation proposed cross-functional training for officers and introduction of outcome-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) focused on service delivery and citizen satisfaction. Other key proposals included a structured mentorship pro-

gramme with retired officers, a "One Government, One Citizen Interface" for integrated service delivery, a five-yearly review of personnel administration, and a digital "Competency Passport" for every government employee. APWWS also advocated outcome-based governance with annual targets published online, proactive disclosure of information, and creation of "NYAYA-SHIELD" a state managed digital grievance platform for all genders. The society proposed a one-year pilot of NYAYA-SHIELD with a budget of ₹1-1.2 crore,

which will includes ₹40-50 lakh for portal development, ₹20 lakh for district-level dashboards and training, and ₹30 lakh for community facilitator support to address workplace harassment and discrimination beyond the scope of POSH, emphasizing on the need for a state-specific, gender-inclusive system that caters to all employees. During the interaction, APWWS President Jarjum Ete also raised concerns over the closure of rural schools leading to long travel for students, and the non-implementation of CCS conduct

rules to check polygamy. The APARC Chairman assured that the recommendations would be examined with the government. He was accompanied by Under Secretary Omei Apang.

Ete was accompanied by General Secretary Samnem Ngemu Lego, Assistant General Secretary Dojum Mara and Health Coordinator Dagrik Gara. APWWS expressed hope that the proposals would help build a more efficient, transparent and citizen centric administrative system in Arunachal Pradesh.

Chief Minister of Assam calls for stringent measures against drug traffickers

Guwahati, July 08: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday urged all political parties to back the government's crackdown on drugs, saying questions raised over the police's "tough action" against drug peddlers in the Assembly dampen the morale of law enforcement agencies. Speaking during a discussion on drug abuse and trafficking in the House, Sarma said all members had pledged support to the fight against drugs, but objections were raised whenever police took "tough action" against traffickers.

"All members in the House have today pledged cooperation in the fight against drugs. But when police take tough action against the criminals, questions are raised in this very Assembly on the police," he said. Maintaining that police resort to force only as a last option, the chief minister, who also holds the Home portfolio, said drug peddlers transporting contraband worth crores of rupees were often armed and open fire when intercepted. "Police have to take tough action only when they have no other option left. The Assembly has to understand and appreciate it. It can scrutinise and analyse every case, if need be. But if the co-operation and support for police sustains, they can perform better. Else, their spirit also goes down," Sarma said.



He said coordinated action by the Centre and neighbouring states had strengthened Assam's efforts to curb drug trafficking routed through Myanmar.

"Backend investigations into most drug trafficking cases lead to Myanmar, sometimes through Mizoram or through Manipur. Now the Centre as well as the governments of these two states are taking steps to fight this menace together," he said. Sarma also stressed the need for rehabilitation of drug abuse victims and referred to reports alleging that some rehabilitation centres had supplied contraband to inmates. "I urge good

NGOs to come forward to work for rehabilitation of the victims and the government will also come up with schemes to help them financially," he said.

Earlier, initiating the discussion, Congress MLA Jakir Hussain Sikdar called for more proactive measures to tackle the growing menace of drug abuse. AIUDF's Badrudin Ajmal and TMC's Sherman Ali Ahmed, among others, also participated in the discussion and stressed the need for intensified crackdown and tough punishment for traffickers.

Replying to the discussion, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pijush

Hazarika highlighted the Myanmar link to trafficking of contraband through the state. "Drugs come to the Northeast from Myanmar, and it is mostly meant for Bangladesh. That is why recovery of drugs is high in the Barak Valley districts (which serve as the transit route)," he said. Asserting that the government had intensified its anti-drug campaign since Sarma assumed office in 2021, Hazarika said the number of drug seizure-related cases had increased from around 150 in 2011 to over 2,200 in 2021 and 3,300 in 2025. Arrests in drug-related cases also rose from over 200 in 2011 to more than 4,900 in 2025, he added.

In a post on X, Sarma said drugs worth more than Rs 3,253 crore had been seized and 26,537 people arrested in the state since 2021.

While 4,175 people were arrested in drug-related cases in 2021, the number increased to 4,901 in 2025. Similarly, drugs worth Rs 383.64 crore were seized in 2021, with the figure going up to Rs 473.46 crore in 2025, he said. "Our relentless war against drugs is delivering decisive results. Under Mission #AssamAgainstDrugs, we have seized narcotics worth over Rs 3,253 crore and arrested more than 26,500 offenders since 2021," he said.

Mizoram museum gets 21st designated repository tag

Aizawl, July 08: The Environment Ministry has designated the Natural History Museum (NHM) in Mizoram as a designated repository, making it the 21st such repository in the country, officials said on Tuesday. Designated repositories constitute an important component of India's biodiversity governance framework by preserving authenticated biological specimens accessed under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. "Based on the recommendation of the National Biodiversity Authority and after due examination of the proposal, the central government notified the institution as a designated repository on June 19, 2026," a senior ministry official said. "With this notification, NHM becomes India's 21st Designated Repository, further strengthening the country's biodiversity conservation and scientific infrastructure," the official said. The NHM will maintain voucher specimens of select flora, including pteridophytes and macrofungi, and fauna such as reptiles, amphibians, fishes, moths, beetles and butterflies, according to the

official. "It will also serve as the designated depository for type specimens of newly discovered species from the region. These authenticated collections will strengthen species identification, traceability and scientific research while safeguarding India's biological resources for long-term conservation. "They will also support future ecological restoration in the event of habitat loss, natural disasters or species decline," the official said.

Established in 2022 under the aegis of Mizoram University, a Central University established by an Act of Parliament, the NHM is uniquely positioned because of its location within the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot and its specialised taxonomic expertise. Mizoram and the wider Northeast region harbour more than 7,500 species of flowering plants and over 2,000 faunal species.

The museum's expertise in pteridophytes, macrofungi, moths, beetles and other lesser-studied taxa fills an important gap in India's network of Designated Repositories and strengthens the



scientific documentation of the region's rich biodiversity.

"The repository will also support the documentation and conservation of endemic species unique to the region, including the recently described amphibian *Leptobranchella tamdil*, discovered in the forests of Mizoram, underscoring the Northeast's global importance as a centre of biodiversity and species discovery," the official said.

"Complementing the existing repositories of the Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India and other notified institutions, the designation advances National Biodiversity Target 4 of India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2024-2030) by strengthening ex situ conservation and the conservation of genetic diversity, in line with Target 4 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework," the official added.

Meghalaya remains resolute in its opposition to Uranium mining

Shillong, July 08: The Meghalaya government has reiterated its stance that it will not allow uranium mining in the State. "We are very clear that we will not allow uranium mining. We are with the people of Meghalaya and that position has not changed," Deputy Chief Minister in-charge Urban Affairs, Sniawbhalang Dhar said. Dhar's statement is significant following the demand by the Khasi Students' Union (KSU) that the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly adopt a resolution against uranium mining in the state. The KSU, which has been spearheading the anti-uranium campaign, claimed that influential individuals, including a former legislator from Ri-Bhoi district, are trying to acquire land in Domiasiat village to sell it to mining companies for uranium extraction. Domiasiat, a small hamlet in South West Khasi Hills district, about 130 km from Meghalaya's capital Shillong, is known for its largest and richest uranium deposit in India. Meghalaya has an estimated 9.22 million tonnes of uranium ore deposits.



Meghalaya is the third uranium-rich state in the country after Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh. However, Dhar said he was not unaware of such claims, but stressed that uranium extraction will not move forward without the support of the people and the whole state is on board. Nonetheless, the Deputy Chief Minister said the government would not ignore the claims and would verify the facts before drawing any conclusions. Refuting claims that villages opposing uranium mining were being denied development, Dhar

said government schemes and infrastructure projects are implemented without linking them to the uranium issue. "There is no question of withholding development because of people's views on uranium mining. The government's responsibility is to ensure development reaches every part of the state and that is exactly what we are doing," he said. Moreover, he said the government is gradually improving connectivity across Meghalaya, although it may not be possible to fulfil every demand immediately. Pre-

vious governments and the Khasi Hill Autonomous District Council have refused to grant mining lease and statutory permission to the state-owned Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) for the open-cast uranium mining and processing plant at Mawthabab area in South West Khasi Hills district after several groups cited radiation effect on human health and environmental degradation.

UCIL plans to produce 375,000 tonnes of uranium ore a year and process 1,500 tonnes of the mineral a day.

On August 29, 2018, the UCIL shut down its offices working in Shillong and Wakhaji temporarily, but maintained that efforts are on for obtaining mining lease and statutory permission from the State government for uranium mining.

The Atomic Mineral Directorate has also stopped its exploratory drilling in uranium-rich deposits in the South West Khasi Hills district after its officials were attacked and machines used for taking sub surface samples were also set on fire.

International University and WCSU Host Career Guidance Event



Kohima, July 08: International University joined forces with the Western Chakhesang Students' Union to host a one-day career guidance event on Tuesday. Students and parents packed the campus at Sodzüluhou and Kozabe Village for the session. The meeting focused on smart aca-

demical planning and local education prospects. Dr. Roopam Bachhil, the registrar for the university, delivered the keynote address. She pushed students to pick paths based on their actual skills and current job trends. She said, "Urged students to make informed academic choices based

on aptitude, interests and emerging employment opportunities." Local education remains a top priority due to lower costs and proximity to family, she noted. Prof. Zavishe Rume laid out the skills needed to survive the modern workforce. He emphasized creativity, problem-solving, and adaptability. Fields like technology, healthcare, and tourism offer the most promise for graduates. Dr. Durga Malakar followed up with a breakdown of internships, scholarships, and admission steps. The event wrapped up with an open floor where families grilled the experts on their career goals. WCSU president Arazo Nyekha thanked the university for the partnership. The program pushed for better youth leadership and clearer education pathways across Nagaland.

MP Supongmeren Jamir Reviews Wokha Development Schemes

Kohima, July 08: Lok Sabha MP Supongmeren Jamir chaired a DISHA meeting in Wokha on July 7 to evaluate local government projects. The meeting brought together district officials to examine service gaps and administrative hurdles. Supongmeren stressed that these meetings serve a clear purpose: they are for "shaping district development."

Agriculture officials reported progress on the National Mission on Natural Farming and oil palm initiatives across 243 hectares. Field staff face significant travel issues in Ralan Block. They want a



new sub-division to handle the load. Moving to Aadhaar-based payments also adds strain to their daily work.

Labor department records show 763 active registrations under the

construction welfare board. Officials noted 8 death claims and hundreds of tool grants. They are pushing awareness campaigns to improve low enrollment in insurance schemes. Meanwhile, meat

production in Wokha lags behind demand. The district produces under 2,000 metric tons against a need for over 3,600. An African Swine Fever outbreak recently killed 374 animals, costing the region over one million rupees.

The group also discussed infrastructure gaps. Poor BSNL coverage threatens census work. They also need to fill vacant Gramin Dak Sevak jobs with local talent. Supongmeren pledged to escalate these problems to higher authorities. The session ended with a promise to push for better results across the district.

BRICS nations have officially adopted Declaration' concerning Drug-related issues

Guwahati, July 08: Heads of anti-drug agencies from BRICS countries on Tuesday adopted the 'Guwahati Declaration' at the end of a two-day meeting here, reaffirming their commitment to strengthen co-operation to combat narcotics trafficking and related transnational organised crimes.

The declaration underscored the need for timely exchange of information, intelligence and best practices among member countries, in accordance with national laws and international obligations, an official release said. The declaration also emphasised the promotion of innovative technologies, digital tools and data-driven approaches to strengthen law enforcement and regulatory efforts against drug trafficking. BRICS countries expressed concern over the evolving nature of drug

trafficking, proliferation of synthetic drugs and New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), the diversion of precursor chemicals, misuse of emerging technologies and virtual assets and exploitation of maritime routes and digital platforms by transnational criminal networks.

During high-level closed-door meeting, India called upon BRICS drug law enforcement agencies to build a partnership founded on speed, mutual trust and seamless real-time intelligence sharing that transcends borders and enables decisive action against transnational drug syndicates.

Leading the Indian delegation, Narcotics Control Bureau Director General Anurag Garg said that the country has adopted a zero-tolerance policy against drugs and a three-year roadmap (2026-2029) based

on a network-centric approach.

Garg highlighted India's proposal of setting up a BRICS Virtual Working Group and enhanced cross-border training initiatives. During the two-day meeting, the member nations deliberated on the prevailing drug situation in their respective countries and participated in thematic sessions focusing on pressing and emerging global challenges. The discussions covered key issues, including leveraging digital technology for real-time drug interdiction, countering drug trafficking through the darknet, tackling the growing threat of NPS and reinforcing global supply chains against precursor diversion and chemical leakage. India's BRICS Chairship in 2026 is guided by the overarching theme — 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sus-

tainability' — and it brought together Brazil, China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia and the United Arab Emirates in the meeting of BRICS Heads of Anti-Drug Agencies in Guwahati. BRICS, initially comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with Indonesia joining in 2025. In addition to the 11 member nations, 10 partner countries joined BRICS in 2025 — Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. uranium-rich deposits in the South West Khasi Hills district after its officials were attacked and machines used for taking sub surface samples were also set on fire.

Clan Elders and Synjuk Demand KHADC Scrap Land Bill

Shillong, July 08: Traditional heads and clan elders rejected the 2026 Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council Land Amendment Bill. They claim the council bypassed the core of Khasi democracy. The group wants an immediate recall of the legislation. They say the council pushed the bill through without asking the traditional custodians of the land. Synjuk general secretary Ralph L. Blah confirmed the group's stance after a meeting of local leaders. They want the KHADC to withdraw the notification and reconsider the bill entirely. "The meeting resolved to



oppose the Amendment Bill and demand that the KHADC withdraw the notification and bring back the Bill for reconsideration," Blah said.

Village authorities, Raid institutions, and Himas now plan to unite against the move. The leaders will send formal requests to the Governor, Chief Minister, and other top officials to force intervention. They also intend to deliver their resolution to the KHADC Chief Executive Member. Blah noted the council ignored key entities that manage land under customary law. The group refuses to approach the council for talks until the officials take the first step. They insist the KHADC acted alone and must now reach out to traditional institutions to fix the mess.

Starting on July 10, the Dima Hasao Ethnic Festival 2026 will promote tourism and highlight culture

Haflong, July 08: The North Cachar Hills Autonom-ous Council (NCHAC) has announced the plan-ning of the Dima Hasao Ethnic Festival 2026 to highlight the district’s rich cultural heritage and further boost tourism in light of the constantly ris-ing number of visitors to Dima Hasao. Joshringdao Phonglo, Chairman of the Tourist Department, made the announcement on Tues-day at a press conference in Haflong.

The festival is scheduled to take place at Haflong Lake on July 10 and 11, at the tourist destination known as “Mini Pahal-gam” in Jatinga on July 31 and August 1, at Shankh Golf Course in Umrangso on July 24 and 25, and at the “I Love Dima Hasao” tourist spot in Jatinga on July 17 and 18. According to Phonglo, the festival’s goal is to acquaint visitors to the customs, traditions, folk culture, indigenous food, and handicrafts of the different ethnic groups that call Dima Hasao home.

Lake Tulsi, Mumbai’s smallest water supply, begins overflowing after heavy rain

Mumbai, July 08: Tulsi Lake, the small-est of the seven reservoirs that supply Mum-bai with drinking water, began to overflow as a result of the city’s and its catchment areas’ persistent rainfall. The Brihanmum-bai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said that Tulsi Lake began overflowing around 11:43 p.m. on Tuesday, contributing to Mumbai’s rising water reserves during the ongoing rainy season.Tulsi Lake burst barely hours after Vihar Lake began overflowing at 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, becoming the first two reservoirs in Mumbai’s water delivery sys-tem to reach full capacity this rainy season. Meanwhile, continuous rainfall in Mumbai and its catchment areas has significantly im-proved the city’s water reserves.According to the BMC, rainfall recorded during the 24-hour period from 6:00 am on July 7 to 6:00 am on July 8, pushed the water stock in the seven reservoirs supplying water to Mumbai to 41.36%.The civic body said res-ervoir levels have increased by 12.44% in the last 24 hours and by 24.44% over the past 48 hours.Despite Vihar and Tulsi lakes nearing full capacity, the entire water stock across Mumbai’s seven reservoirs is cur-rently at 41.43% of their combined storage capacity, significantly improving the city’s water supply position.Tulsi Lake is one of seven lakes that provide drinking water to Mumbai, and it is one of only two reservoirs located inside the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation boundaries.Water overflowing from Tulsi Lake naturally flows into Vihar Lake, a key component of Mumbai’s res-ervoir network that contributes to the city’s



linked water management system. Despite being the smallest of Mumbai’s water sup-ply reservoirs, Tulsi Lake remains a signif-icant source of drinking water for the city. The reservoir has a total live storage capac-ity of 8,046 million liters and provides an average of 18 million litres of water per day. Tulsi Lake is a historic man-made reservoir located in Sanjay Gandhi National Park, ap-proximately 35 miles from the BMC head-quarters.The lake was built in 1879 for a re-ported Rs 40 lakh.When full, the reservoir covers around 6.76 square kilometers and has a water spread area of approximately 1.35 square kilometers. Tulsi Lake over-flowed on August 16, 2025 and August 4, 2024.This year’s overflow happened much earlier, indicating favorable rainfall con-ditions in the lake’s catchment area during the early monsoon season.Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicts a typically cloudy sky with periodic light to moderate rain across Mumbai and its sub-urbs during the day.A high tide of 3.77 me-tres is expected at 5:17 p.m. on Wednesday, with the following high tide of 3.49 metres forecast for 7:00 a.m. on Thursday.

Arunachal Pradesh’s flood and landslide situation is made worse by fresh rain



Itanagar, July 08: Over 94,000 people in 333 vil-lages were impacted by flash floods, landslides, and rockfalls caused by recent periods of intense rain in many districts of Arunachal Pradesh, according to an official report released on Tuesday.Changlang, Upper

Subansiri, and Upper Siang districts had landslides and floods, according to the State Emergency Operation Center, while East Kameng saw rockfall brought on by rain. The recent round of disasters claimed four lives, injured twenty-one, and left two unaccounted

for. The report stated that floods and landslides dam-aged 131 roads, 19 bridges, 21 culverts, water supply systems, power infrastruc-ture, government build-ings and agricultural areas across the state. Two re-lief camps in Keyi Panyor continued to shelter 252 people, while rescue and relief operations remained underway.The India Me-teorological Department (IMD) issued orange alerts for Lohit, Changlang and Tirap districts for Wednes-day, warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall accom-ppanied by thunderstorms and lightning. Several oth-er districts remained under yellow alert.

Raids on Properties Linked to Former Samajwadi Party MLA Deep Narayan Singh Yadav

New Delhi, July 08: The Enforcement Directorate searched various sites in Uttar Pradesh on Wednes-day as part of a money laundering investigation involving a former Sama-jwadi Party MLA and his associates, according to sources.

They claimed the move was taken against Deep Narayan Singh Yadav, an ex-legislator from the Ga-rautha assembly consti-tuency in Jhansi district. The ED conducted raids in Jhansi and Lucknow under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), according to reports.The money laundering inquiry arises from a FIR filed by the UP Vigilance Bureau against the ex-MLA for alleged possession of ex-



cessive assets, along with 23 other accusations. Ac-cording to investigators, a preliminary investigation revealed the generation and laundering of criminal pro-ceeds through a network of companies and LLPs op-erating in real estate, con-struction, and other enter-

prises.Multiple complaints have been filed against the lawmaker, including those involving cheating, forg-ery, extortion, attempted murder, dacoity, and other offenses under the IPC, UP Gangsters Act, and Goon-das Act, according to re-ports.

Bengal Man Beaten To Death For Rape-Murder Horror Was Innocent



Kolkata, July 08: An irate crowd beat a man to death in the Baruipur area of Kolkata after suspecting him of raping and murdering an 11-year-old girl. The police determined that the man, In-drajit Mondal, was innocent. Suwendu Adhikari, the Chief Minister, has visited with his family and told them that they will receive justice.”In-drajit Mondal, the youth who was killed in the mob lynch-ing, was innocent.

This is what the cops told me, not what I said. He (Mondal) will also receive justice. “I’ve also met his family members,” the chief minister told reporters yester-day.Adhikari stated that indi-viduals involved in Mondal’s lynching would face murder charges, and that the police have been urged to take harsh action against hooligans. He also met the police person-nel who were injured during the protest and assured them of all assistance.The police arrested four suspects in connection with the gan-grape and murder. Sources said three of them, Pravash Mondal, Ananda Sardar and Dibakar Sardar had con-fessed to their crime. Mondal was killed in encounter last night while trying to flee af-ter snatching a policeman’s revolver, they added.The

fourth suspect, Kabir Mollah, was picked up yesterday.The girl’s autopsy report has con-firmed sexual assault. It also revealed a severe head inj-ury, injuries to private parts, and bite and scratch marks across the body. Following the discovery of her body on Sunday, a wave of violent protests swept the southern suburbs, with hundreds of irate residents damaging rail-way tracks and police cars. At least 20 persons have been apprehended in van-dalism incidents. The police said they were also involved in the lynching of Indrajit Mondal.Adhikari directed Director General of Police Sidd Nath Gupta to provide a report within 72 hours after the girl’s family expressed satisfaction with the investi-gation’s progress.

All of them will be arrested. “No one will be spared,” he declared. Without mention-ing the opposition, he ac-cused rival parties of inciting violence and promised that the government will teach them a lesson.

Those who provoke peo-ple on social media will not be spared, the chief minister said.When asked about fi-nancial support for the affect-ed families, he stated that he will return to Baruipur before making an announcement.

The Supreme Court has questioned the Centre regarding the blanket ban on pregnant IPS officers during probation training

New Delhi, July 08: The Supreme Court questioned the Centre on Wednes-day about a 1993 government policy that prohibits pregnant Indian Police Service (IPS) probationers from receiving training, stating that a beneficiary provision intended for women cannot be used to deny them chances if they are medically healthy.Hearing a petition filed by IPS officer Urvashi Sengar, the court directed the Centre to respond by Thursday and clarify whether she could participate in the Phase-II training course, which began in June of this year.”This is a beneficiary provision under law for women’s protection, not to take away their right to undergo training if they are fit for it,” the bench observed while scrutinizing the Ministry of Home Affairs’ 1993 Office Mem-orandum (OM). The court further asked the Centre, “When the purpose of this OM is to enable training of a fit woman, then why are you stopping her if she is fit?”The bench also observed that a blanket rule may not be appro-priate, noting that while some women may be fit to resume training within nine months of childbirth, others may require much longer. It indicated that such cases should be assessed individually rather than through a rigid policy.

The Centre opposed any modification of the policy, claiming that giving relief in one case could pave the way for similar claims.However, counsel for Sengar told the court that exceptions had previously been granted in two such circumstances, allowing female officers to continue or resume training notwithstanding the 1993 policy.The appeal questions the constitutionality of the Ministry of Home Affairs’ 1993 Office Memorandum, which directs female IPS probationers not to conceive during their training period. It states that if an officer becomes pregnant, her training must be halted immediately. According to the protocol, the officer must take a year leave from training following childbirth before returning to duty. The term is considered unusu-

al leave and has no bearing on seniority.The Supreme Court is considering whether such a blanket restriction may still be enforced in light of devel-opments in medical technology and constitutional principles of equality, or whether choices should be based on individual medical assessment and suitability. Urvashi Sengar, a 2023-batch direct recruit IPS officer allotted the Madhya Pradesh cadre, joined the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy for Phase-I training in November 2023.While undergoing Phase-II training in April 2025, which primarily comprises classroom ses-sions, academic modules and institutional attachments, she became pregnant and informed the authorities.She delivered her child on September 20, 2025. With the next Phase-II training scheduled to begin on June 20, 2026 - around nine months after childbirth - she sought permission to join, stating that she was medically fit. The academy, however, denied her plea, citing the 1993 Office Memorandum, and informed her that she could only join the next batch.Sengar subsequently approached the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), which issued an interim ruling on May 27 allowing her to participate in the program, subject to medical fitness and other requirements.Although the police academy issued a letter allowing her to participate on June 16, it revoked the message within two days. The Centre then challenged the CAT’s ruling in the Delhi High Court, which delayed the tribunal’s order on June 22, citing that the policy was intended to protect the welfare of both the IPS probationer and the newborn. Sengar has argued before the Supreme Court that the 1993 policy makes no distinction between physically rigorous and academic phases of training and fails to take into account modern training methodologies, reasonable accommodations, and constitutional principles of substantive gender equality.

3 Arrested For Attacking Thane Hospital Staff, Cop Says Sena Leader Will Be Next

New Delhi, July 08: A Shiv Sena corporator led an assault on doctors at a Kalyan Dombivli hospi-tal, and three persons have been arrested by Maharash-tra police. The footage of the assault went viral and sparked outrage. Shiv Sena Corporator Ramesh Mhatre was caught on film abusing a female doctor and oth-er workers.Police believe a Shiv Sena corporator would be arrested soon. Assistant Commissioner of Police Suhas Hemade has stated that police will take action against the corpora-tor, and he will be detained. The incident occurred on July 6, and three days lat-er, authorities apprehended three individuals. Although a FIR was filed against the corporator, he has yet to

be detained. Responding to the growing outrage, the state government has also promised a probe and action the corporator. “As-saulting doctors is wrong. We will investigate the matter and take action. If someone has any issue, they must report to the au-thorities instead of taking the law into their hands,” Maharashtra Minister of State for Home Yogesh Kadam said on Wednes-day. A disagreement about the lack of neonatal in-tensive care unit (NICU) beds sparked the assault by Mhatre and his follow-ers, according to a hospital official. physicians notified the family of a pregnant woman in the hospital that the newborn may require a NICU facility, but because

all such beds in their hos-pital were already full, the physicians advised them to consider moving her to an-other hospital.

CCTV footage captured the corporator and a gang of guys hitting and slapping hospital employees inside a room. The frenzied scene went on for more than three minutes. Suddenly, a corporator attacked a wom-an doctor from behind, causing her phone to fall. Despite video evidence, Mhatre claimed he merely “slapped her phone” to get her attention and showed no regret for his actions. The hospital is currently closed as doctors and staff are on strike, demanding security and accountability from the Shiv Sena corpo-rator.

A woman gives birth to four babies in her car; all four die. Family Blames Lack of Ambulance

Bhopal, July 08: In a state where emergency medical assistance is meant to be just a phone call away, a mother in Madhya Pradesh’s Mandla city gave birth to four preterm kids inside an au-to-rickshaw while being driven to the hospital. The four newborns died. The mother survived.On Tuesday, Rajni Sin-dram, a 28-year-old native of Naiganwa village, experienced terrible labor pains. Her family claims they immediately phoned 108 ambulance service.

However, they claim that help did not arrive on time. As Rajni’s condition worsened, the family was forced to put her in an auto-rickshaw and rush her to the Ghutas Primary Health Centre with the assistance of an ASHA worker. Doc-tors treated her initially in Ghutas before referring her to the Bichhiya Community Health Centre for more advanced care. However, the referral arrived too late for the unborn infants. Rajni gave birth to four infants inside the auto-rickshaw on the route to Bichhiya, before the vehicle could arrive at the hospital. The ASHA volunteer who accompanied the family helped manage the crisis and ensured Ra-jni was transferred to the Bichhiya Com-munity Health Centre.

Doctors examined the neonates and



pronounced all four dead.Bichhiya BMO Dr Anoop Kumar Bharatiya stated that the delivery had already occurred when the woman arrived at the hospital. He stated Rajni was 30 weeks pregnant, or around seven months, and the babies were preterm and underdeveloped. The mother underwent emergency treat-ment and is now stable.Rajni’s husband, Dhanesh Sindram, said that the delay in the 108 ambulance service compelled them to transport her to the hospital in an auto-rickshaw. Manto Singram, an ASHA worker, stated that the labor pains began abruptly, and that the family notified her

that Rajni was being transported to the hospital by auto-rickshaw. “She went into labor unexpectedly and gave birth while riding in an auto-rickshaw. I got a call saying they were taking her to the hospital by car. I told them to bring her and that I’d meet them on the way,” she explained.According to hospital officials, Rajni’s condition has returned to normal, and her therapy is ongoing. However, the deaths of four newborns before they received competent medical attention raises the agonizing issue of whether this tragedy could have been prevented if the ambulance had come on time.

Navy Deputy Chief Describes New Role for Hindustan Shipyard Limited

New Delhi, July 08: The Indi-an Navy is looking to restructure its partnership with Hindustan Shipyard Limited, taking the Defence Ministry PSU based in Visakhapatnam beyond its traditional role in vessel construc-tion and delivery.That was the mes-sage delivered by Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, during a visit to HSL on Monday, where he was briefed by Chairman and Managing Director Rear Admiral Chandrasekharan Raghuram (retd) on the shipyard’s recent projects and expanded infrastructure. Speaking to shipyard personnel, Vice Admiral Sobti was direct about what the Navy now expects. “We would like to part-ner with HSL as a strategic partner and not just a construction yard,” he said, adding that the arrangement should cover a vessel’s entire service life rather than end at delivery, encompassing “full life cycle support, upgrades, and mid-life upgrades.” For a shipyard to take on such a broad, long-term man-date, corporate autonomy is as import-ant as technical capability. HSL’s Mini Ratna Category-I status, the higher of the two Mini Ratna tiers awarded to

consistently profitable central public sector enterprises, already allows its board to approve capital expenditure, joint ventures, and technology part-nerships without going through the government. That autonomy could be important as HSL becomes more involved in the type of continuous, decades-long maintenance contracts outlined by the Navy commander. The comments come against the backdrop of what the Vice Admiral called HSL’s own transformation. He credited the yard’s leadership and workforce for the progress made so far, calling HSL “a trusted partner of the Indian Navy for a very long time” and predicting it would become “a very, very important part” of India’s growing maritime sec-tor.Still, he tempered the praise with a caution on fundamentals. “Quality and timely delivery are very, very import-ant,” he told the gathering, a signal that any expansion in HSL’s mandate will be judged against its ability to meet basic delivery benchmarks.On capa-bility building, Vice Admiral Sobti pointed to people rather than machin-ery as the deciding factor. “The most critical aspect is the experience of the

people,” he said, acknowledging that HSL has already built meaningful ex-perience while expressing confidence in further growth. The HSL’s current footprint provides some indication of what a more comprehensive strategic relationship could look like. Estab-lished in 1941 and India’s second-larg-est shipyard after Cochin Shipyard, it already performs lengthy medium re-fits on Kilo-class submarines such as INS Sindhukirti, INS Vela, and INS Vagli, and has previously adapted INS Sindhuvir before its sale to Myan-mar. It is presently collaborating with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited to extend from refits to submarine con-struction, as well as a February 2026 Memorandum of Understanding with Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engi-neers to launch a significant national shipbuilding strategy.The Navy’s push to strengthen ties with domestic yards for sustainment work, not just new construction, is part of a larger effort to reduce reliance on original equip-ment manufacturers for through-life maintenance, a goal that successive naval leaders have identified as critical to self-reliance in shipbuilding.

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Politics, Promises and Poverty: What Clacton's Future Depends On

Nigel Farage's decision to step down as the MP for Clacton and seek a fresh mandate has created another political drama around a figure who has built his career on challenging the establishment. However, critics argue that the move has little to do with improving the lives of the people who elected him and much more to do with protecting his own political position. For residents of communities such as Jaywick, one of England's most deprived areas, the latest election battle risks becoming another moment when their struggles are used as a backdrop for a national political performance.

Jaywick has long represented the failures of Britain's economic and social policies. The coastal community, made up partly of former holiday homes converted into permanent residences, has repeatedly appeared among the poorest areas in England. Many residents have faced decades of neglect, limited opportunities, poor infrastructure, and a sense that politicians remember them only during election campaigns. When Farage won the Clacton seat, some voters hoped that his national profile would finally bring attention and investment to their area.

Instead, opponents argue that Farage's focus has remained largely on his own political battles, media appearances, and outside interests. His decision to trigger a new election has been described by critics as a personal strategy designed to strengthen his position at a time when his party faces uncomfortable questions and investigations.

Farage has presented the upcoming contest as a fight between ordinary people and what he calls an unfair political establishment. He argues that investigations into his finances, political activities, and relationships with wealthy supporters are attempts to undermine him because opponents cannot defeat him through traditional politics. His supporters see him as a politician willing to challenge powerful institutions, while critics believe he is using public anger to avoid scrutiny.

Several controversies have increased pressure on Farage and Reform UK. Questions have been raised over financial support he received, relationships with wealthy figures, and whether some of his political activities could create conflicts of interest. Farage has rejected accusations of wrongdoing and portrayed the attention as politically motivated.

The broader argument surrounding Farage is not only about individual controversies but about the type of politics he represents. Critics claim that his message often focuses on personal battles and cultural conflicts while offering fewer solutions

for communities facing long-term economic decline. They argue that voters in struggling areas need practical policies on jobs, housing, public services, and investment rather than repeated political confrontations.

Supporters, however, argue that Farage's appeal comes precisely from his willingness to challenge established institutions. Many voters who feel ignored by mainstream parties see him as someone prepared to raise issues that others avoid. His ability to connect with frustration and dissatisfaction has helped him build a strong political following.

The question facing Clacton voters is whether this election should be viewed as a referendum on Farage himself or on the future of their constituency. Communities such as Jaywick have serious challenges that require long-term attention, including poverty reduction, improved infrastructure, and economic regeneration. A political contest centred mainly on national arguments and personal controversies may do little to address those needs.

The situation also highlights a wider issue in modern politics: the relationship between political leaders and the communities they represent. High-profile politicians can bring attention to neglected areas, but there is also a risk that local concerns become secondary to national ambitions. For voters, the challenge is deciding whether a politician's public profile translates into meaningful change on the ground.

Farage has always been a figure who divides opinion. To supporters, he is a determined outsider fighting against a political system that has failed many ordinary people.

To critics, he represents a style of politics where personal influence and media attention can overshadow the everyday concerns of those who elected him.

Whatever the outcome of the Clacton contest, the deeper question will remain: will political attention finally lead to real improvement for communities that have been left behind, or will they once again become the setting for a larger political battle driven by personalities rather than practical solutions? For residents hoping for change, the answer matters far more than the spectacle of another election campaign.

Ultimately, the future of Clacton will depend on whether political promises translate into visible improvements in people's daily lives.

Voters facing economic hardship are not simply looking for national arguments or political symbolism; they want better opportunities, stronger public services, and leaders who remain connected to their communities beyond election day.

Billions for Carbon Capture: The Risky Path Between Fossil Fuels and a Green Future

As governments around the world search for ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining energy security, one technology has repeatedly been presented as a bridge between the fossil fuel era and a cleaner future: carbon capture and storage, commonly known as CCS. Supporters describe it as an essential tool that can remove carbon dioxide from industrial processes and power generation, allowing societies to continue using some fossil fuels while limiting their climate impact. Critics, however, argue that CCS has become a costly distraction that delays the transition to genuinely clean energy systems.

The debate over CCS is particularly intense in the United Kingdom, where successive governments have committed billions of pounds to developing carbon capture projects. Officials argue that these investments are necessary to achieve climate targets, protect industrial jobs, and maintain a reliable electricity system. Yet environmental campaigners, researchers, and some energy experts question whether the technology can deliver the promised benefits at a reasonable cost. They warn that large-scale investment in CCS could lock the country into continued dependence on fossil fuels while diverting resources away from renewable energy, efficiency measures, and energy storage.

At the heart of the controversy is the enormous financial commitment involved. Public announcements have often highlighted initial funding packages, presenting CCS as a relatively limited investment compared with

the economic damage that climate change could cause. However, critics argue that the eventual cost of building, operating, and maintaining a national CCS network could be far higher than early estimates suggest. Large infrastructure projects frequently experience delays, technical difficulties, and cost overruns, raising concerns that taxpayers and energy consumers may ultimately carry much of the financial burden.

The question is not simply whether CCS is expensive, but whether it represents the most effective use of limited climate funding. Governments face difficult choices about where to invest resources. Money directed toward carbon capture infrastructure is money that cannot simultaneously be spent on expanding renewable electricity, improving public transport, insulating buildings, modernising electricity grids, or developing new storage technologies. Critics argue that these alternatives can often deliver emissions reductions more quickly and at lower cost.

Supporters of CCS respond that some sectors of the economy cannot easily eliminate emissions through renewable energy alone. Industries such as cement, steel, and chemicals produce emissions through chemical processes that cannot always be removed simply by switching energy sources. For these sectors, carbon capture may provide one of the few available methods of reducing pollution while maintaining production. Many climate researchers acknowledge that some form of carbon removal or carbon management may

be necessary in reaching global climate goals, particularly for difficult-to-decarbonise industries.

However, opponents argue that the problem is not the existence of CCS technology itself, but the way governments are planning to use it. They claim that instead of focusing mainly on unavoidable industrial emissions, many CCS proposals are designed around continued fossil fuel consumption. This includes capturing emissions from gas-fired power stations or producing hydrogen from natural gas with carbon capture attached. According to critics, this approach risks extending the life of fossil fuel industries rather than helping society move beyond them.

One major concern involves the effectiveness of capturing carbon from fossil fuel operations. A CCS facility does not eliminate all emissions associated with fossil fuels. Extraction, transportation, processing, and leaks throughout the supply chain can still contribute significant amounts of greenhouse gases. Natural gas, often promoted as a cleaner alternative to coal, can have a substantial climate impact if methane escapes during production and transport. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas, and even small leakage rates can undermine the climate benefits of replacing other fuels with gas.

There are also questions about whether carbon capture systems can operate reliably at the scale required. Capturing carbon dioxide requires significant amounts of energy, a process sometimes described as an "energy penalty." Power plants equipped

with CCS generally need to burn more fuel to produce the same amount of usable electricity because some of the energy generated must be used to capture, compress, and transport carbon dioxide. Critics argue that this reduces efficiency and increases operating costs.

The history of CCS projects has added to scepticism. Around the world, many proposed projects have been delayed, cancelled, or failed to achieve their original targets. Some facilities have demonstrated that carbon capture can work in specific circumstances, but critics point out that decades of investment have not produced widespread commercial deployment. They argue that repeated promises of future success have not always matched practical results.

The technology has also attracted controversy because of the role played by fossil fuel companies in promoting it. Energy companies have invested heavily in CCS research and development, arguing that it offers a pathway to reduce emissions while continuing to provide energy. Critics believe that these companies have a strong economic incentive to support solutions that allow continued use of oil and gas infrastructure. They argue that CCS has sometimes been used as a way to present fossil fuels as compatible with climate goals rather than as a temporary technology for unavoidable emissions.

The relationship between industry influence and climate policy has become a broader issue in environmental debates. Governments must balance input from businesses, scientists, communities, and environ-

mental organisations when designing energy strategies. While industry expertise can be valuable, critics argue that policymakers must carefully examine whether proposed solutions primarily serve the public interest or protect existing business models.

Another argument against large-scale CCS investment is the rapid progress of alternative technologies. Renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power have become increasingly affordable, while battery storage and grid management systems continue to improve. Supporters of renewable-based systems argue that a cleaner electricity network can be achieved without maintaining large fossil fuel facilities equipped with expensive carbon capture equipment.

The transition away from fossil fuels also involves broader questions about energy demand and efficiency. Reducing unnecessary energy consumption, improving building insulation, increasing public transport options, and designing more efficient industrial processes can lower emissions while reducing pressure on energy systems.

Critics of CCS argue that climate policy should focus first on preventing emissions rather than creating expensive systems to manage pollution after fossil fuels have already been burned.

Despite these criticisms, many climate experts do not dismiss CCS completely. The technology may have an important role in specific situations, particularly industries where alternatives remain limited. The challenge is determining

where CCS provides genuine climate benefits and where it simply allows continued fossil fuel dependence. A balanced climate strategy may require careful use of carbon capture alongside rapid expansion of renewable energy and other solutions.

The central debate is therefore not whether carbon capture should exist, but whether it should become a major foundation of climate policy. Governments must decide whether billions of pounds should be committed to large infrastructure projects whose long-term performance remains uncertain, or whether those funds should accelerate technologies that are already delivering measurable emissions reductions.

Climate change requires urgent action, and the decisions made today will influence energy systems for decades. Investments must be judged not only by political promises but by evidence, costs, environmental impact, and long-term effectiveness. If carbon capture can deliver genuine reductions in areas where no alternatives exist, it may have a limited but valuable role. But if it becomes a justification for continued fossil fuel expansion, critics warn that it could slow the very transition it claims to support.

The future of climate policy depends on choosing solutions that reduce emissions quickly, protect communities, and provide lasting benefits. Whether CCS becomes part of that solution or remains a costly experiment will depend on how governments define its purpose and how carefully they evaluate its real-world results.

The Housing Giants Under Pressure: A Lawsuit That Could Change Britain's Property Market Forever

For decades, every new government in Britain has arrived promising to solve one of the country's most persistent problems: the shortage of affordable and suitable homes. Politicians regularly visit new housing developments, stand beside newly built houses, and speak about opportunity, security, and the dream of home ownership. Yet behind these carefully staged announcements lies a reality that has frustrated governments of all political colours: ministers may set targets, introduce policies, and announce funding, but they do not directly control how many homes are actually built.

A large part of that power rests with a small group of major housebuilders whose decisions shape the supply of new housing across the country. These companies control huge areas of developable land, possess the financial resources needed for large projects, and dominate the private housing market. The result is a system in which national housing ambitions often depend on the willingness of a handful of powerful developers to increase construction.

This concentration of power has become one of the central criticisms of the UK housing model. Critics argue that Britain's reliance on large speculative developers has created a system that prioritises profitability and shareholder returns over the urgent need for more homes. The result, they claim, is a market where housing supply remains limited, prices remain high, and ordinary buyers struggle to find affordable options.

The decline of smaller builders has played an important role in this transformation. Over recent decades, many independent construction firms have disappeared due to financial pressures, rising land costs, regulatory challenges, and difficulties accessing development opportunities. At the same time, public sector housebuilding declined significantly, leaving private developers as the main source of new housing.

This combination created a sit-

uation where large developers became increasingly influential. When governments want to increase housing supply, they often have limited options beyond negotiating with the same companies that already dominate the market. Critics argue that this gives major builders significant bargaining power over policymakers.

One of the biggest criticisms of the current system is the speculative development model. Unlike a manufacturing company that produces goods based on demand forecasts, housebuilders often control the pace at which completed homes are released onto the market. Developers argue that this approach helps them manage financial risks and respond to changing economic conditions.

However, critics claim that the system can encourage companies to build more slowly than the country needs. Releasing homes gradually can help maintain prices and protect profit margins, even when demand for housing is strong. This has led to accusations that the interests of shareholders may sometimes conflict with the national need for more affordable homes.

The legal challenge against major housebuilders has added a new dimension to these concerns. Thousands of homeowners may potentially receive compensation if claims that competition rules were broken are proven. The allegations focus on whether commercially sensitive information was shared between companies in ways that could have influenced pricing decisions.

The issue is not simply about whether companies communicated with each other. In competitive markets, information exchange can affect behaviour, and competition laws exist to prevent practices that

may disadvantage consumers. If developers shared information about prices, incentives, sales performance, or buyer behaviour in a way that reduced competition, affected customers could potentially have grounds for compensation.

The investigation into these issues has been complex. Authorities previously examined concerns surrounding the industry and raised questions about information-sharing practices. However, the matter ended without a final legal conclusion against the companies involved. Instead, developers agreed to certain commitments, including improving internal practices and contributing funds towards housing initiatives.

For critics, this outcome did not fully resolve concerns. They argue that broader problems remain within the housing market, including poor construction quality, difficulties faced by leaseholders, estate management charges, and the continuing shortage of new homes.

The possible financial impact of the legal case comes at a challenging time for the construction industry. Building costs have risen significantly due to inflation, supply chain pressures, and higher energy prices. Increased borrowing costs have also affected both developers and buyers, making new homes less affordable for many households.

The industry has also faced major financial responsibilities linked to building safety. Following the discovery of serious fire safety problems in some buildings, particularly those involving unsafe cladding, developers have faced substantial costs associated with repairs and remediation. These additional pressures have affected company finances at a time when housing demand has weakened.

Supporters of large developers

argue that they remain essential to solving Britain's housing shortage. They point out that building homes requires significant investment, planning expertise, and the ability to manage complex projects. Large companies can deliver thousands of homes quickly and have the financial strength to undertake major developments.

However, opponents argue that the answer is not to rely even more heavily on these companies but to create a more balanced housing system. They believe Britain needs more support for smaller builders, community-led developments, housing cooperatives, and public housing programmes.

A more diverse housing sector could reduce dependence on a small number of powerful firms and create greater competition. It could also encourage different types of housing, including smaller homes, affordable developments, and projects designed around local community needs.

The broader lesson from the controversy is that Britain's housing crisis cannot be solved simply by announcing ambitious construction targets. The structure of the industry itself must be examined. If the same limited group of companies controls much of the supply, governments may continue to struggle to achieve their housing goals.

The potential £4.5 billion legal claim represents more than a dispute over compensation. It reflects growing public frustration with a housing system that many believe has failed to deliver enough homes at reasonable prices. Whether or not the case succeeds, it has already intensified debate about how Britain builds, who controls development, and whose interests the system serves.

India, Japan sign 1st defence co-development agreement

New Delhi: India and Japan have signed their first bilateral agreement for the joint development of defence equipment, marking a significant step forward in their growing strategic and security partnership.

According to Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the inaugural project under the agreement will focus on the development and licensed production of the UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna) shipborne communications mast, an advanced integrated mast system developed by Japan’s NEC Corporation.

Under the arrangement, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) will manufacture the system in India in collaboration with Japanese partners. Japan will provide the design and core technologies, while India will undertake system integration, localisation and production in line with the government’s “Make in India” initiative.

Although the UNICORN system was originally developed by NEC, India plans to integrate its own sensors and antennas into the mast for deployment on Indian Navy warships. The integrated mast is expected to gradually replace existing communication and sensor mast systems across the Navy’s fleet.

India has shown interest in acquiring the technology for several years.



In November 2024, the two countries concluded an agreement for the export of UNICORN multifunctional masts to India under their broader strategic partnership, paving the way for the latest co-development initiative.

UNICORN, also known as NORA-50, was jointly developed by NEC Corporation, Sampa Kogyo K.K. and The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd. for Japan’s Mogami-class frigates.

Designed as an integrated mast, the system consolidates multiple communication, surveillance and electronic warfare antennas into a single structure, reducing the number of exter-

nally mounted antennas on a ship’s superstructure.

The mast incorporates an omnidirectional surveillance radar antenna, electronic support measures (ESM) antennas, Wi-Fi and Link 16 antennas, UHF transmit and receive antennas, identification friend-or-foe (IFF) systems, VHF/UHF communication antennas, a tactical navigation system and a lightning conductor.

Apart from improving space utilisation and reducing maintenance complexity, the integrated design lowers a vessel’s radar cross-section, enhancing stealth characteristics and making naval platforms more difficult to detect.

Knack Packaging shares list at 10% premium book profit

Mumbai: Knack Packaging Share Price: Shares of packaging solutions provider Knack Packaging made a positive debut on Dalal Street on Wednesday, July 8, 2026, after the company raised ₹380 crore through its initial public offering (IPO).The stock listed at ₹188 apiece on the NSE, a premium of ₹18, or 10.59 per cent, over the IPO issue price of ₹170 per share.On the BSE, the shares opened at ₹186, up ₹16, or 9.41 per cent, from the issue price.

The listing outperformed grey market expectations. Ahead of the debut, Knack Packaging’s unlisted shares were trading at around ₹179 apiece, indicating a grey market premium (GMP) of ₹9, or 5.29 per cent, over the issue price of ₹170, according to sources tracking unofficial market activity. Should you book profit?Shivani Nyati, head of wealth at Swastika Investment, advised investors who have received allotment to continue holding the stock

for further upside while maintaining a stop-loss at ₹175 to manage downside risk. Fresh investors, Nyati said, should consider entering on dips after monitoring the company’s upcoming quarterly performance. “The company is backed by strong fundamentals, including healthy revenue growth, improving profitability, high ROE and ROCE, and robust operating margins. Its reasonable valuation and fully integrated manufacturing capabilities provide a competitive advantage. However, investors should keep an eye on customer concentration risk and the successful execution of its new manufacturing facility, which will be crucial for future growth,” said Nyati. Knack Packaging IPO comprised a fresh issue of 22.4 million equity shares aggregating to ₹380 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 3.5 million equity shares worth ₹59.50 crore by existing promoters. The issue was priced in the

band of ₹161-170 per share, with a minimum application lot of 88 shares. It was open for subscription from July 1 to July 3, 2026.

According to data from the National Stock Exchange (NSE), the IPO received a strong response from investors, with the issue subscribed 83.33 times overall. Investors bid for 1,58,02,78,040 equity shares against the 1,89,64,018 shares on offer. According to the red herring prospectus (RHP), the company will not receive any proceeds from the offer for sale, as those will accrue to the selling shareholders. The proceeds from the fresh issue will be used to partially finance the establishment of a new manufacturing facility at Borisana, Kadi, Mehsana, Gujarat, and for general corporate purposes.

Founded in Gujarat in 2013, Knack Packaging is an integrated, export-focused manufacturer of

printed and laminated woven polypropylene bags, including pinch-bottom bags, catering to the food, agriculture, pet feed, fertiliser, and industrial sectors. The company operates four manufacturing plants in the Kadi-Mehsana belt with a production capacity of 43,300 MTPA, serves more than 1,950 customers across 71 countries, and derived about 56.3 per cent of its FY26 revenue from exports.

The Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) portion was subscribed 154.34 times, while the Non-Institutional Investors (NII) segment was subscribed 139.81 times. The retail investors’ quota was subscribed 20.07 times.

MUFG Intime India (formerly Link Intime India) was the registrar to the issue. Systematix Corporate Services, IDBI Capital Markets & Securities, and Pantomath Capital Advisors acted as the book-running lead managers.

Gold steady, silver slips as Fed rate hike expectations ease

New Delhi: Gold traded flat while silver slipped in early trade on Monday as softer crude oil prices reduced expectations of further interest rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve.On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (August 5) opened at Rs 1,47,135 per 10 grams, down Rs 243 or 0.16 per cent from the previous close of Rs 1,47,378.At around 11 am, the yellow metal was trading at Rs 1,47,177 per 10 grams, down Rs 200 or 0.14 per cent. It touched an intraday low of Rs 1,47,032, down Rs 346 or 0.23 per cent and a high of Rs 1,47,509, up Rs 131 or 0.08 per cent so far.Meanwhile, silver futures (September 4) opened at Rs 2,36,393 per kg, down Rs 1,017 or 0.42 per cent from the previous close of Rs 2,37,410.At the last count, the white metal was trading at Rs 2,36,198 per kg, down Rs 1,212 or 0.51 per cent. It touched an intraday low of Rs 2,36,001, down Rs 1,409 or 0.59 per cent, and a high of Rs 2,37,676, up Rs 266 or 0.11 per cent.However, in the international market, both precious metals traded higher. COMEX gold was up 1 per cent at \$4,173.24 per ounce, while COMEX silver gained 2 per cent to \$62.29 per ounce.According to commodity market experts, gold remained steady near a two-week high and continued to trade above its key short-term moving averages, indicating underlying strength.They said immediate resistance is seen at Rs 1,48,750 per 10 grams, with a breakout above this level likely to accelerate the upward momentum.Silver, despite opening lower, also continued to trade above its short-term moving average and could move towards the next resistance level of Rs 2,45,184 per kg, the experts said.Meanwhile, international benchmark Brent crude slipped 0.76 per cent, or 55 cents, to \$71.55 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude declined nearly 1 per cent, or 68 cents, to trade below \$69 per barrel.

Kusumgar IPO opens on July 8 GMP up 40%your money

Mumbai: Kusumgar IPO: The initial public offering (IPO) of Kusumgar is set to open for public subscription on Wednesday, July 8, 2026. Through its maiden share sale, the company seeks to raise ₹650 crore from the markets, comprising entirely an offer for sale (OFS).

As investors await the opening of the subscription window, here are the key details of the Kusumgar IPO:Kusumgar IPO detailsKusumgar IPO comprises an entirely offer for sale (OFS), with promoters divesting up to 15.5 million equity shares worth ₹650 crore. The public issue does not have any fresh issue of equity shares.

The issue is being offered at a price band of ₹398-419 per share, with a lot size of 35 shares. Investors can bid for a minimum of 35 shares and in multiples thereof A retail investor would require ₹14,665 to bid for one lot, or 35 shares. To bid for the maximum of 13 lots, or 455 shares, an investment of ₹1,90,645 is required.

Bigshare Services is acting as the registrar to the issue, while Axis Capital, IIFL Capital Services, and Motilal Oswal Investment Advisors are the book-running lead managers. The unlisted shares of Kusumgar were commanding a premium in the grey market

ahead of the opening of the public issue. Sources tracking unofficial market activity revealed that the company’s unlisted shares were changing hands at ₹590, reflecting a grey market premium (GMP) of ₹171 per share, or 40.81 per cent over the upper end of the issue price. The three-day subscription window for the Kusumgar IPO will close on Friday, July 10, 2026. Following the closure of the subscription window, the basis of allotment is likely to be finalised on Monday, July 13, 2026.

Successful investors can expect the company’s shares to be credited to their demat accounts by Tuesday, July 14, 2026.

Shares of Kusumgar are tentatively scheduled to make their Dalal Street debut on Wednesday, July 15, 2026. “Our Company will not receive any proceeds from the Offer (the ‘Offer Proceeds’) and all the Offer Proceeds will be received by the Promoter Selling Shareholders after deduction of their respective portion of the Offer-related expenses and relevant taxes thereon, to be borne by the Promoter Selling Shareholders,” the company said in its red herring prospectus (RHP).

BPCL, HPCL, IOCL slip up to 4%; ONGC gains 2% as crude oil prices rise

Mumbai: Shares of state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) were under pressure falling up to 4 per cent in Wednesday’s trade on higher crude oil prices.

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) and Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL) were down 3 per cent to 4 per cent. Meanwhile, state-owned upstream companies Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India were up 2 per cent each. In comparison, the BSE Sensex was down 0.45 per cent at 77,829 at 09:19 AM.

Thus far in the calendar year 2026, the stock price of HPCL (down 22 per cent), BPCL (down 21 per cent) and IOC (down 17 per cent) plunged over 15 per cent each, as against a 8.9 per cent decline in the benchmark index. ONGC and Oil India outperformed the market gaining up to 4 per cent during the same period. Oil prices climbed nearly 2 per cent on Wednesday after the US military launched airstrikes against Iran and reimposed crude sales sanctions, raising fears their fragile truce was unravelling and West Asia supplies could be disrupted again, the Reuters reported.

The US airstrikes were in response to Iranian attacks on three commercial vessels that were transiting the Strait of Hormuz, US Central Command said on Tuesday. The strait is a key waterway for the transport of West Asian oil shipments to wider markets. Brent crude futures gained \$1.38, or 1.9 per cent, to \$75.54 a barrel (bbl), and the US



West Texas Intermediate crude climbed to \$71.81/bbl, up \$1.37, or 1.9 per cent at 0128 GMT. Both benchmarks rose about 3 per cent on Tuesday after the US revoked the general licence authorising the sale of Iranian crude following the Iranian attacks, the news agency reported. Analysts at JM Financial Institutional Equities maintain ‘REDUCE’ rating on all OMCs as valuations are in-line with historical average. The brokerage firm expects GoI to hike excise duty, delaying recovery of OMCs’ Q1FY27 under recoveries. Analysts expect crude price to remain elevated ~\$75-80/bbl in the near to medium term due to huge restocking demand; and structural concerns around their aggressive capex plans in the refining and petchem business.

Motilal Oswal Financial Services upgrades ONGC to ‘BUY’ “While a peace memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been reached in West Asia, according to forecasts by the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) and our view, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

commercial inventories of crude oil and liquid products are unlikely to normalize for CY26 and H1CY27. This is likely to keep crude prices elevated, and we raise our Brent price assumptions to \$84.2/\$75 per bbl for FY27/FY28 from \$75/\$65 per bbl earlier,” the brokerage firm said in the company update. Analysts at Motilal Oswal Financial Services upgraded ONGC to BUY with a target price of ₹288 per share. The upgrade is premised upon a combination of inexpensive valuations, decent volume growth pick-up, and ONGC being a beneficiary of a multi-year government focus to turn around the sector.

According to rating agency ICRA, in a sustained high crude oil price scenario, there could be a material increase in the gross under-recoveries (GURs), as has been the case in the past, and this could consequently raise the working capital requirements and the short-term debt levels of OMCs, thereby negatively impacting their profitability.

Additionally, there have been instances in the past when in an elevated crude

oil price environment, the Government of India (GoI) intervened in the pricing of motor spirit (MS) and high speed diesel (HSD) that negatively impacted the marketing profitability of the OMCs, sadi the agency. Amid the Middle East (ME) conflicts, the international petroleum product prices increased significantly, resulting in IOCL’s marketing segment incurring losses on sale of gasoline and diesel, according to India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra).

Ind-Ra estimates OMCs to have incurred significant losses on sales of petrol and diesel during March-April 2026. Ind-Ra expects the marketing margins to improve during FY27, with a moderation in international product prices following the resolution of the ME conflicts. Furthermore, the margins are supported by an increase in retail prices of petrol and diesel and GoI lowering the special additional excise duty on them.JM Financial view on OMCs

Pre-Iran crisis, OMCs used to earn normalised margin on auto fuel of ₹12.4/ltr at landed Brent of \$70/bbl; currently, they earn normalised margin at landed Brent of \$95/bbl aided by ₹10/ltr excise cut and ₹7.5/ltr fuel price hike. However, assuming GoI reverses ₹10/ltr excise cut and ₹7.5/ltr fuel price hike, they will earn normalised margin only if landed Brent falls to \$65/bbl (versus \$70/bbl pre-Iran crisis) due to depreciation in INR/USD exchange rate (to ₹95 from ₹90-91 pre-Iran crisis) and higher transportation cost.

Nomura retains ‘buy’ on Uno Minda amid expansion plans, sees 33% upside

Mumbai: Nomura has retained a ‘buy’ rating on leading automotive component manufacturer UNO Minda while keeping the target price at ₹1,494, implying a 33 per cent upside from its current market price. On Wednesday, the stock was trading nearly 2 per cent higher at Rs 1150 levels in intraday deals on the BSE. Uno Minda announced on Tuesday, that it is expanding into the 4-wheeler passenger vehicle seating systems segment through its joint venture with Tachi-S Seating Private Limited.The company had been manufacturing seat recliners since 2022, but is now expanding to

manufacture complete seating systems. Passenger 4-wheeler vehicle seating systems are one of the highest-value products in the automotive supply chain, Nomura said. The joint venture already has an order secured from a leading OEM, which reduces initial risk associated with the expansion. Globally, the seating market is dominated by companies like Lear and Faurecia while in India, the market is controlled by suppliers with OEM partnerships such as Krishna Maruti, Bharat Seats, Magna, and Lear, the Nomura report said. The company’s

board has already approved a green-field manufacturing facility in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Maharashtra with a proposed capex of ₹3.2 billion to scale up production. The plant is expected to start production in the last quarter of FY 2028 and will have an annual capacity of around 240,000 units per year. Nomura expects Uno Minda’s move to increase content per vehicle significantly (around 20,000 to 70,000 per vehicle). The part maker currently earns around 7 per cent of its revenue from seating, primarily from two wheelers and commercial vehicles.

Cat-III AIFs post industry-beating

Mumbai: Category III (Cat-III) alternative investment funds (AIFs) have outpaced other segments of the AIF industry for the third year in a row. Cat-III AIFs are a key investment avenue for wealthy investors, which allow the use of complex strategies to generate market-beating returns.

Cat-III AIFs recorded a 36.9 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) increase in commitments to touch ₹3.1 trillion as of financial year 2025-26 (FY26), compared to a 25.6 per cent growth recorded by AIFs overall (₹16.9 trillion), according to recently released regulatory data. Cat-III “funds raised”, which reflect the commitments that have come into the scheme, rose 35.5 per cent Y-o-Y to nearly ₹2 trillion in FY26, while investments made from these funds grew 30.8 per cent to ₹2.1 trillion in the same period. Funds raised and investments made for the AIF industry

overall grew at 25-26 per cent in FY26. Both funds raised and investments made by Cat-III AIFs have also beaten overall AIF industry growth for the third year in a row.

This gains significance in light of the loss of traction for a key Cat-III strategy that allows investors to potentially make money whether markets rise or fall, popularly called long-short funds. Long-short funds lost traction following the introduction of specialised investment funds (SIFs) in September 2025. SIFs offer the same strategies in a more tax-advantaged manner, and typically at a lower ticket size of ₹10 lakh, with exceptions only allowed for accredited investors. All AIFs also similarly allow exceptions for accredited investors but require a minimum investment of ₹1 crore. Cat-I AIFs invest in startups, infrastructure, and other segments, while Cat-II AIFs include segments like private equity.

Sebi notifies changes to regulations, mandates

Mumbai: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has notified changes to the Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI) Regulations, shifting to a rupee-denominated payment structure instead of the current US dollar-denominated fee for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) and foreign venture capital investors (FVCIs).

The changes will come into effect after six months, giving the foreign entities time to make the shift.

In regulation 43B(2), the words and symbols ‘US \$1000’ shall be substituted with the words and symbols ‘₹90,000 in eligible foreign exchange equivalent’,” states the notification dated 3 July.

Additionally, in a move to simplify compliance and operations, the common application form for FPI registration will also include the date of birth or incorporation. This is to facilitate PAN application following the new notification by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) in March.The market regulator collected a total of \$12.98 million in the financial year 2025-26 from the fees paid by FPIs and

FVCIs for registration, continuation, and other charges. This amount includes GST. The changes follow issues such as manual accounting and invoicing for fees received in US dollars, which take a significant amount of time and lack real-time accounting visibility, leading to delays in financial reporting.Further, the fee paid by custodians has also been revised from annual to monthly payments—from ₹10 lakh annually to ₹85,000 per month.Sebi has also notified changes to the Mutual Fund Regulations on intraday borrowing.Mutual funds will be able to avail of intraday borrowing to bridge differences arising out of pay-in and pay-out settlement timings within asset classes, forex settlements, and other transactions.The regulator has also revised the registration charges for Category-I FPIs and FVCIs from \$2,500 to ₹2.3 lakh. Similarly, the late fee and continuance fee have also been revised. Designated depository participants—those who handle FPI trades in India—will have to remit the fees to Sebi within five working days of the grant of registration.

Hamas Dissolves Gaza Administrative Committee



Gaza City: Palestinian Islamist group Hamas has announced the dissolution of its administrative committee, which had overseen governance in the Gaza Strip for nearly two decades. The move clears the way for the transfer of administrative responsibilities to a newly established technocratic body, the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG).

Hamas took control of Gaza in 2007 after defeating its rival faction Fatah, following its victory in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections. Since then, the group has been responsible for governing the enclave.

Following the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas that came into effect in October 2025, Hamas had repeatedly indicated its willingness to step back from day-to-day civilian administration. However, the issue of disarmament has continued to remain the principal obstacle in broader political negotiations.

Ismail Al-Thawabta, head of

Hamas’ Government Media Office, confirmed that Mohammad Al-Farra, chairman of the emergency governmental committee, had formally resigned and that the committee had been dissolved to facilitate the transfer of administrative authority to the NCAG.

The NCAG was established following the October 2025 ceasefire agreement and is currently operating from Cairo, Egypt. The committee has stated that it is prepared to assume responsibility for governing Gaza once the necessary logistical arrangements and resources are in place.

NCAG Chairman Ali Shaath said the committee stands ready to fulfil its national responsibilities as soon as the required facilities become available. He stressed that Gaza should be governed under “one administration, one law, and one armed force.”

The International Board of Peace, established to oversee the ceasefire process, welcomed Hamas’ decision. The board said all weapons in Gaza should come under the authority of the NCAG, describing the move as consistent with the broader peace framework and the objectives outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2802.

US and Iran trade strikes after tankers hit in Strait of Hormuz



Iran: The US has launched “powerful” strikes on Iran in response to attacks on three oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz.

US Central Command (Centcom) said on Tuesday it had hit over 80 targets, including more than 60 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) small boats in the strait. Iranian state media said strikes hit Qeshm island, Bandar Abbas and Sirik, where people have been injured by shrapnel. Iran has not directly claimed responsibility for the attacks on the three tankers that led to the US launching strikes.

The IRGC said it had responded with retaliatory attacks on US military sites in Bahrain and Kuwait in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

Missiles and drones were launched at “85 key US military facilities” in the two countries, including a US Navy headquarters and an air base in Kuwait, the IRGC said.

Earlier on Tuesday, Iran’s deputy foreign minister described the US attacks as a violation of the US-Iran memorandum signed last month, and warned Tehran would “take decisive measures”.

The US had said there would be consequences to what it has called the “wholly unacceptable” attacks

on the three tankers.

Centcom said in addition to the 60 small boats, it had struck Iranian missile launch sites and command centres. It did not give locations of its targets. It said the strikes were “to impose heavy costs for targeting and attacking commercial shipping crewed by innocent individuals in an international waterway”.

Before the strikes, the US Treasury revoked a waiver that had temporarily lifted oil sanctions on Iran, and was part of the memorandum of understanding signed by Washington and Tehran last month.

Iran’s foreign ministry called the move a breach of the memorandum and said it proved the “bad faith,

inconsistency, and unreliability” of the US government.

It added that Tehran “will take whatever measures it considers necessary to safeguard its national interests and national security”. Qatar and Saudi Arabia also denounced the attacks, each saying a tanker from its country had been hit while transiting in or near the strait, and blaming Iran.

Qatar’s foreign ministry spokesperson Majed Al Ansari said it held Iran “fully responsible” for an apparent targeted attack on a vessel called Al-Rekayyat as it transited near the strait. In a separate social media post, Saudi Arabia’s foreign ministry said Iran had targeted the

Saudi tanker Wadyan as it crossed the strait.

Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei described Qatar’s accusations as “contrary to the principle of good neighbourliness”.

He added that commercial vessels using routes not co-ordinated with Iran or tampering with the ship’s tracking face a risk of collision and disrupt Iran’s efforts to “facilitate safe transit” in the strait.

The UKMTO said a tanker travelling through the strait had reported a fire after an unknown projectile hit an engine room on Monday.

In two separate incidents on Tuesday, a tanker reported being hit as it exited the strait but was

able to proceed to its next port of call, while another tanker reported sustaining minor structural damage after being struck, the organisation said.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity before Centcom’s announcement of fresh strikes, the US official insisted that US negotiators would continue to work in “good faith” towards a final deal with Iran.

Progress towards that came last month when the US and Iran agreed a 14-point memorandum of understanding, which was aimed at extending a ceasefire and ending conflict “on all fronts”.

As part of the agreement Iran and Oman, which both border Hormuz, must hold talks “to define the future administration and maritime services” in the waterway with other Gulf states. During the conflict Iran sought to assert its sovereignty over the strait, including by establishing the “Persian Gulf Strait Authority” which it said would manage “safe passage permits”.

Iran’s Fars news agency has reported that under the new deal with the US the strait would ultimately be managed by Iran in co-ordination with Oman, including possible “service fees” for ships to transit the waterway.

Asylum seeker in UK as part of ‘one in, one out’ scheme says it is unfair on those deported

UK: An asylum seeker brought to the UK by the Home Office has said it feels unjust that he was allowed into the country only because someone else was deported.

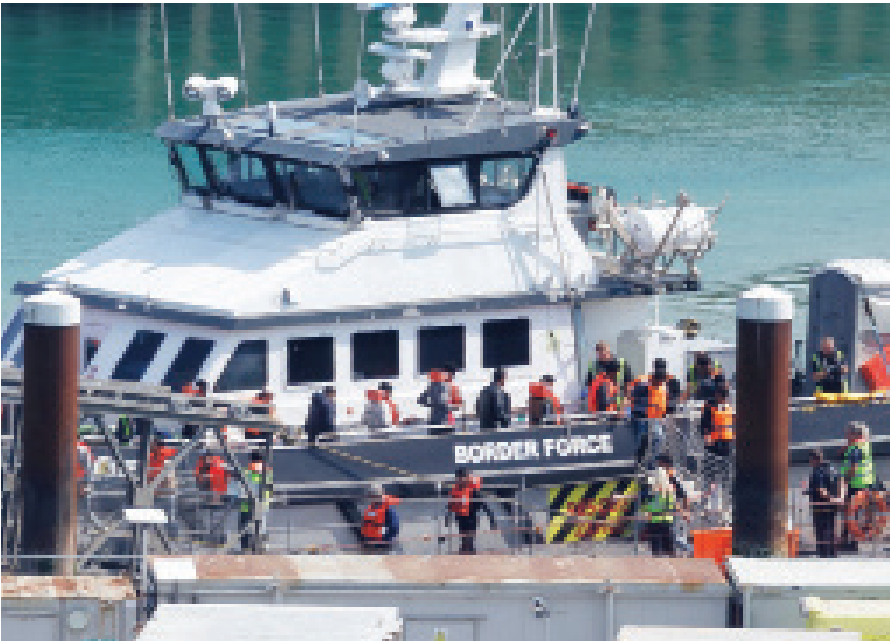
The individual benefited from the “one in” part of the controversial “one in, one out” scheme, where one asylum seeker who reached the UK on a small boat is forcibly returned to France in exchange for another being brought legally to Britain.

In the first interview with an asylum seeker brought to the UK legally, the man said: “I am very happy to be here, but it’s not fair that another asylum seeker who may have a very similar case to mine but arrived in a small boat has been sent back to France so I can come here legally,” the asylum seeker, who the Guardian is not naming to protect his anonymity.

“I don’t support sending some people back to France so that others like me can come to the UK.”

More than 900 people have been allowed into the UK to apply for asylum under the scheme since it was announced last July, with a similar number who arrived here irregularly moved out.

The charity Safe Passage, which supports asylum seeker families in France trying to come to the UK legally,



condemned the policy as “not a genuine route to protection”.

The asylum seeker acknowledged that his legal journey to the UK – by plane from Paris – was much safer and speedier than the crossings made by people risking their lives in small boats, but said he is in limbo here while he waits for his asylum claim to be determined. “We are waiting for our main asylum interview and have nothing to do while we wait,” he said.

“I applied for a university scholarship, but was told I am not eligible because I am an asylum seeker. I am doing some volunteering, but by

not allowing us to work or study and just waiting, the Home Office is teaching us to be lazy.”

He added: “I am in a hotel with others brought to the UK legally, and I have only seen other single men like me.”

The asylum seeker said that he applied for the “in” scheme online.

“They took our biometrics and passports in Paris and then we were taken to a hotel and told to wait until 5pm to find out if temporary visas had been approved for us to travel to UK by plane,” he said. “Those who were approved were taken to the airport in Paris and flown to

the UK.”

He said that on arrival in Britain, he and the rest of the “in” group were taken to a Home Office building. “They took us from a parking basement into an elevator for the Home Office interview so I don’t know exactly where it was.”

He said Home Office staff dealt with the process in a diplomatic way and were “so nice and friendly”. Gunes Kalkan, head of campaigns at Safe Passage, said that while the charity welcomed the provision of a safe route from France to the UK, challenges with the scheme – such as the length of time it takes to process

applications on arrival – were “preventing it from being a genuine route to protection in the UK”.

Earlier this year, the French national assembly’s commission of inquiry into arrangements between the UK and France to manage migration at the Anglo-French border heard that, as of February 2026, 89% of people brought to the UK under “one in, one out” were single men aged between 20 and 39.

The inquiry also heard that, while small boat crossings are down, the scheme had not yet acted as a deterrent.

More recent figures show that Channel crossings in the first five months of this year are down by more than a third on the same period last year. More than 2,000 people crossed last month, compared with 3,665 people in June 2025.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “Multiple families have made a successful application under the UK-France agreement, and applications continue to be processed with thorough consideration.

“All individuals transferred to the UK under the agreement are subject to robust security and identity checks before travel. Those who do not pass these checks will not be trans-

Manhattan building sparks evacuations



New York: A high-rise building in Manhattan was deemed unstable on Tuesday after authorities determined that support columns buckled, spurring evacuation of nearby buildings, according to officials and reports.

Officials said they also found “structural issues” on the 21st floor of the former Pfizer pharmaceutical building, which is being converted into residential apartments. “Two structural columns buckled, and there were multiple cracks and sagging floors,” the fire department said on X.

Workers were expected to begin stabilizing the building on Tuesday evening. According to New York mayor Zohran Mamdani’s office, a team went through each floor and did not detect any additional movement of the support columns, allowing the on-site contractors to begin the emergency repair work.

The temporary measures are meant to stabilize the building and are expected to stretch into the coming days, impacting a busy corridor of midtown near

the famed Grand Central Terminal, which is a hub for metro area commuters and residents as well as tourists. Officials said they received reports of a “structural issue at an active construction site” on East 42nd Street, between Second and Third avenues, before 8am. The fire department also posted a photo of a dramatically bent beam on its X account.

“It’s a very serious situation because the box beams – the steel beams – have started to bend and deflect from the weight,” John Esposito, the fire department chief, said. “We evacuated the building and started evacuations of surrounding buildings.”

Fire department drones have been deployed to provide “technical information and visuals” while officials continue assessing the building.

Authorities said efforts to stabilize the site will extend “into the night”, ABC 7 reported. “The building remains unstable,” Mamdani, said on Tuesday afternoon, per ABC 7. “This is an extremely serious situation.”

Esposito, the fire chief, said at a press conference that if the building fell, such a collapse would “not be a total collapse, it would be more of a localized collapse”, per ABC 7. He said it was because this building was made of steel, NBC News said.

People who work nearby are unsure when they will be able to return to their offices, with estimates ranging from several days to two weeks, CNN said.

MetroLoft, which is one of the two companies helming the construction, thanked city officials for their “quick response”.

“The safety of everyone at and surrounding the building is our number one priority,” MetroLoft said in a statement, according to Pix 11.

“We’re thankful there were no injuries, and as the DOB clarified, no debris fell from the building. We want to confirm that the affected area is a small section of one of the two buildings on this site. As the FDNY spokesperson noted, the entire building itself is not at risk of collapse.”

Gold rings around 2,000 years old found during dig at Thailand

Bangkok: Two gold rings aged around 2,000 years old were discovered during an excavation at a new archaeological site in western Thailand, officials said.

The rings were found with human bones during an ongoing dig at the Don Yai Thong archaeological site in Phetchaburi province last week, the Thai government’s Fine Arts Department said in a statement.

One ring found Thursday was engraved with characters believed to be Bhrami script, an ancient Indian



writing system. An initial assessment by experts identified the script reading as “pusarakhitas,” meaning “the one protected by

Pushya,” said to be one of the most auspicious zodiac signs in Indian astronomy, the department said.

The other ring found with

the same skeletal remains is a plain gold ring without any pattern. Experts believe the rings’ owner may have been a merchant of the Indian ancient caste system Vaishyas, the department said.

The Don Yai Thong archaeological site, about 130 kilometers (80 miles) southwest of the capital Bangkok, was discovered early this year after residents found pieces of ancient bronze drums in a rice field, leading to further excavation.

The site was dated to a late prehistoric era in Thailand, a

period of human settlement also known as the Iron Age, established to be around 1,500 to 2,500 years ago.

Since February, archaeologists have discovered eight human skeletons, bronze and gold jewelry, pottery and other artifacts indicating a ceremonial burial of wealthy people or members of the society’s upper classes.

The excavation is expected to be complete in another month, with plans to showcase the archaeological finds to the public, the Fine Arts Department said.

Essential items for men and women to prepare for this year’s unexpected monsoon showers

The monsoon possesses a certain enchantment, until you find yourself unexpectedly drenched in a downpour while wearing white sneakers, holding a laptop, and frantically seeking refuge beneath a tree that is clearly inadequate. One moment you are relishing the scent of petrichor, and the next you are squeezing water from your sleeves, questioning your decision to rely solely on an umbrella.

This year, skip the soggy socks, drenched jeans and ruined commutes by investing in rain-ready essentials that actually make the season easier. From waterproof raincoats and breathable rain pants to anti-skid clogs that don't mind puddles, these practical picks will keep you dry, comfortable and prepared, whether you're commuting

to work, riding your bike or heading out on a weekend adventure.

Monsoon essentials for men and women

1. Full Length Waterproof Raincoat for Men & Women: This transparent full-length raincoat offers maximum coverage without feeling bulky. Designed with full sleeves and an adjustable hood, it protects your clothes from unexpected showers while still allowing your outfit to remain visible underneath. The lightweight waterproof material makes it suitable for daily commuting, bike rides, travelling and outdoor errands. Since it's reusable, it's also a smarter long-term investment than disposable rain ponchos.

Style tip: Wear it over office wear or ethnic outfits without hiding your look.

2. lowercase Waterproof Cap: Rain doesn't always fall straight down, which

is exactly why a waterproof cap deserves a spot in your monsoon wardrobe. It helps shield your face from drizzle, keeps your hair from getting soaked and works particularly well when paired with hooded raincoats. Lightweight and comfortable, it's useful for walking, travelling and quick outdoor errands.

Style tip: Pair with sporty rainwear and waterproof sneakers for a practical monsoon look.

3. Boldfit Waterproof Rain Pants: Wet trousers can ruin even the shortest commute. These waterproof rain pants are designed to slip easily over your regular clothing, creating an extra layer of protection against heavy rain and muddy roads. Despite offering full coverage, they're lightweight enough to fold into a backpack when the skies clear. Ideal for bike riders, cyclists and

daily commuters.

Style tip: Pair with ankle-length waterproof footwear for complete low-body protection.

4. HighLands Waterproof Hooded Raincoat: If you enjoy trekking, travelling or spending time outdoors regardless of the weather, this breathable raincoat is worth considering. Unlike heavier rain jackets, it remains lightweight while still providing reliable waterproof protection. The adjustable hood and packable design make it easy to carry in your backpack throughout the rainy season.

Style tip: Layer over activewear or hiking clothes for outdoor adventures.

5. Robustt EVA Reusable Transparent Raincoat: Simple, practical and surprisingly durable, this reusable EVA raincoat is perfect for everyday monsoon use. The transparent material



makes it suitable for office commuters who don't want to hide their outfits, while the elasticated sleeves help

prevent rainwater from entering through the cuffs. The button closure allows quick wear even during

sudden showers.

Style tip: Keep one folded inside your office bag or car throughout the season.

6. Krystle Women's Waterproof Raincoat With Skirt Set: Designed specifically for women, this rain suit offers full-body protection through a matching raincoat and skirt combination. The transparent visor attached to the hood helps improve visibility while protecting your face from heavy rainfall. Whether you're travelling on a scooter or walking through crowded streets, this coordinated set keeps you dry without restricting movement.

Style tip: Pair with waterproof sandals or clogs to complete the look.

7. SVAAR Lightweight Classic Clogs: Monsoon footwear should dry quickly, offer good grip and remain comfortable even after hours of walking. These

lightweight clogs tick all three boxes. The adjustable back strap provides extra stability, while the EVA construction makes them easy to clean after muddy walks. Ideal for everyday errands, vacations and rainy commutes.

Style tip: Wear with shorts, joggers or rain pants for maximum practicality.

8. KazarMax Lightweight Memory Foam Clogs: Comfort becomes even more important when roads turn slippery.

These KazarMax clogs feature an anti-skid EVA outsole combined with memory foam cushioning for all-day comfort. The adjustable back strap ensures a secure fit while walking on wet surfaces, making them suitable for daily use throughout the rainy season.

Style tip: Pair with casual athleisure outfits or travel clothing for fuss-free comfort.

Could popular hair growth hacks potentially worsen hair loss



Hair loss is a prevalent issue in contemporary society. Whether it involves discovering additional strands on your pillow or observing a receding hairline, such occurrences can lead to feelings of anxiety. Consequently, in pursuit of immediate solutions, many individuals resort to social media, where numerous influencers and content creators guarantee thicker, healthier hair through straightforward home remedies. From onion juice and rosemary oil to garlic masks, DIY derma rolling, rice water rinses, and homemade hair packs, these viral 'hair growth hacks' have become extremely popular. While some of these remedies may sound natural and harmless, experts warn that blindly following internet trends may do more harm than good.

Hair Transplant Surgeon, Dr Pradeep Sethi, Co-founder, Eugenix Hair Sciences tells HT Shop Now, "Some popular hair growth hacks are low risk but unproven, while others can irritate the scalp, worsen hair shedding, or delay treatment of an underlying condition".

Here are a few pieces of advice by Dr Sethi to keep in mind before trying these viral hacks:

Microneedling helps but does not address DHT

Dr Sethi says that microneedling can help, but not in the way most people expect. "Microneedling involves creating tiny, controlled punctures on the scalp using fine needles that trigger a healing response. This results in releasing the growth factors, thereby also increasing the blood flow", he states. This, in turn, improves the follicles. However, he asserts that microneedling cannot replace core treatments. "It does not address DHT, so it alone cannot stop the underlying miniaturisation process. Microneedling can support growth; it doesn't stop the loss", he mentions.

Onion Juice might cause scalp irritation

The second very popular viral hack we all see to combat hair fall is applying onion juice. It is often promoted as a miracle solution because it contains sulphur, which may support hair health. However, according to Dr Sethi, "Onion juice can also cause scalp irritation, redness, itching, and an unpleasant odour". He further emphasises that there is no strong evidence that it reverses common pattern hair loss. Dr Sethi says, "After applying onion juice, if there is no proper head wash, it may

few months, many people notice reduced shedding and a sense that hair loss is stabilising. However, any visible improvement tends to be gradual and varies from person to person, especially depending on how early the treatment is started.

"This helps support the growth phase of the hair cycle, which can translate into thicker and more noticeable strands over time", he mentions. He also warns against some early shedding in the first few weeks as the hair cycle resets, followed by gradual changes over the next several months.

Garlic masks also come with risks

Garlic masks and other homemade mixtures also come with risks. Ingredients that are safe to eat are not always safe for direct application on the skin. Some people may experience burns, severe irritation, or allergic reactions after trying these remedies.

Hair growth depends on overall health

Healthy hair growth depends on overall health. A balanced diet rich in protein, iron, zinc, and essential vitamins, good sleep, stress management, and proper scalp care all play an important role. If hair fall continues for several weeks, becomes excessive, or is accompanied by bald patches or itching, it is best to consult a dermatologist instead of relying on viral hacks.

At the end, Dr Sethi recommends starting any procedure only after consulting a dermatologist. He says, "Both medications can be started after proper consultation with a doctor who can guide you on the correct dosage.

It is important to consult a doctor on time rather than getting involved in home remedies and oils for a prolonged period". He also says that delaying proper treatment may allow the baldness to progress further, leading to increased hair loss and a larger area of scalp to cover. Early intervention generally provides a better opportunity to preserve existing hair and achieve more favourable outcomes.

How to pick the ideal haircut for your hair type and face shape

A hairstyle serves as the cornerstone of a thorough transformation, representing the ideal glow-up. The appropriate haircut can alter your appearance, accentuate your most attractive facial features, and enhance your confidence. However, it is crucial to customize that haircut rather than simply adhering to the latest trends. Instead of mimicking celebrity hairstyles without consideration, opt for a cut that suits your face shape, hair texture, and lifestyle. Choosing the right hairstyle involves certain technicalities, and it is not just about going for whatever catches your eye on your Pinterest feed.

Hear it from an expert on which face type suits which kind of haircut. Samantha Kochharr, managing director of Blossom Kochharr Group of Companies and Chief Hairdressing Expert for Hairdressing World Skills- BKCCAD, how choosing the right hairstyle begins with understanding your face shape, hair texture and lifestyle.

How to figure out your face shape?

The first step to understanding which hairstyle is suitable for you is knowing your face type. There are a few simple ways to inspect your face shape. "Before you dive into a new style, take a minute to find your face shape. Most people fit into one of five: oval, round, square, heart, or diamond. Pull your hair back and check out the width of your forehead, cheekbones, and jawline, plus the length of your face," she explained how you can map your face shape.

The beauty expert revealed the six face shapes based on variations in jawline and cheekbone structure:

Oval: Balanced features, with the cheekbones just a bit wider and a gently rounded jaw.Round: Width and length are about the same, with soft curves instead of angles.Square: A strong jaw, a wide forehead, and clear, angular features.Heart: Wider at the forehead, with a narrow, often pointy chin.Diamond: Narrow at the forehead and chin, with wide, standout cheekbones.What are the hairstyle ideas for each face shape?

Samantha outlined the recommended hairstyles for each face shape based



on the most prominent facial features:

1. Oval face: Versatile face shape, goes well with every style.Can try long layers, bouncy waves, a sleek bob, even a short pixie.Don't go overboard with volume on top, since that can make your face look longer.Soft bangs or curtain fringes work to frame the features. 2. Round face: Add some length and slim things down a little. Long layers, cuts with some texture, and a bit of height at the crown do the trick. Side-swept bangs and asymmetrical bobs add definition.Best to avoid blunt, chin-length cuts or thick straight bangs; they can make your face look even rounder. 3. Square face: Go for styles that soften those bold angles.Can try layered cuts, loose curls, or waves for movement.Side parts and wispy bangs can also soften a strong jawline and give your look a softer edge.Try to avoid straight, blunt cuts since they'll just highlight the angles. 4. Heart face: This face shape looks great with styles that balance the jawline. Chin-length bobs, layered lob, and gentle curls work well.Side-swept bangs or fringes help narrow your forehead a bit. Skip styles that pile on volume at the crown, though. 5. Diamond face: With a diamond face, the idea is to soften those cheekbones and add width at the top and the chin.Shoulder-length cuts, soft layers, and gentle waves are perfect.Curtain

bangs or a side part help balance things out.Try to avoid cuts that are super short; they'll only draw more attention to your cheekbones. Does hair texture matter?

Hair texture also has an important role in choosing the correct hairstyle. Picking the relevant style helps a lot. Samantha described, "Hair texture changes everything, too. If your hair is fine, layers add much-needed volume. If it is thick, shaping or thinning can lighten it up. For curls, layers help define each curl without making your hair feel heavy or bushy." Why is it important to match hairstyle to lifestyle?

The expert also insisted on factoring in the lifestyle when choosing a hairstyle, as it can affect how long the look stays manageable. For something that can be easily maintained, pick a low-maintenance style. While structured cuts and bold bangs can jazz up the look and dial up the mood, they can also be high maintenance.

Why do you need to talk to a stylist?

Anything you read online does act as a helpful starting point, but the beauty expert asserted that in-person advice from a stylist or someone relevant is important to understand which hairstyle truly suits your face shape, hair texture, lifestyle and personal preference.

A PM regimen that will give you skin that is plump and fresh when you wake up

An effective nighttime skincare routine does not need to be complex. Although social media frequently highlights intricate routines featuring numerous serums, masks, and treatments, achieving healthy skin can be accomplished with just a few thoughtfully selected essentials. The crucial factor is consistency rather than the quantity of products utilized. By concentrating on the fundamentals, you can rejuvenate your skin overnight without investing excessive time or money. During the

night, your skin naturally enters repair mode. As you sleep, it works to regenerate cells, restore moisture, and recover from daily exposure to pollution, UV rays, and environmental stressors. A simple nighttime routine supports this natural process by removing impurities and providing the hydration and nutrients your skin needs. Unlike daytime skincare, which focuses on protection, your nighttime routine is all about repair and renewal. That's why choosing the right essentials can make a

noticeable difference over time.Start with a Gentle Cleanser

The foundation of every nighttime skincare routine is cleansing. Throughout the day, your skin collects dirt, excess oil, makeup, sunscreen, and environmental pollutants. Sleeping with these impurities can clog pores and contribute to breakouts or dullness. Choose a gentle cleanser that effectively removes buildup without stripping your skin's natural oils. Cream cleansers work well for dry or sensi-

tive skin, while gel-based cleansers are ideal for oily and combination skin. If you wear heavy makeup or waterproof sunscreen, consider double cleansing by using an oil-based cleanser followed by a gentle face wash. After cleansing, your skin needs hydration. A lightweight moisturiser helps lock in moisture and supports your skin barrier while you sleep. Even oily skin benefits from moisturising, as skipping this step can lead to dehydration and increased oil production.

ENTERTAINMENT

Johnny Galecki returns to the stage



Mumbai : or years, millions of fans watched Leonard Hofstadter stumble through science, friendships and love in The Big Bang Theory. Even after the sitcom ended, many hoped to see Johnny Galecki back on screen one day. That wait is finally coming to an end but with a twist.

After staying away from acting for seven years, Johnny Galecki is all set to make his comeback with Kowalski, a new stage production in Chicago. Instead of returning to television, the actor is stepping onto the theatre stage, taking on the role of legendary playwright Tennessee Williams. Best remembered for playing Leonard Hofstadter in The Big Bang Theory, Galecki will star in Kowalski, written by Gregg Ostrin and directed by Colin Hanlon for Lookingglass Theatre Company.

According to Variety, the play will run from September 19 to October 25.Set in Provincetown in 1947, Kowalski imagines the first meeting between playwright Tennessee Williams and Hollywood icon Marlon Brando. The production explores how that encounter eventually influenced Williams’ iconic play A Streetcar Named Desire, which premiered in 1951. After years away from the spotlight, Galecki said this project felt too special to pass up. He shared, “The planets aligned. Gregg’s writing, Colin’s vision, and the feeling that after seven years of quietly observing life, I finally had something new to bring back to the work. Add to that the privilege of portraying one of my artistic heroes, and it became impossible to say no.”

Playwright Gregg Ostrin also spoke about the heart of the production. “At its heart, ‘Kowalski’ is about the collision of extraordinary talents and the lasting impact those encounters can have on art and culture."Long before he became the lovable physicist Leonard, Galecki had already built an impressive acting career. He appeared in the hit sitcom Roseanne and starred in films including National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation, Prancer, Suicide Kings, I Know What You Did Last Summer, Vanilla Sky, Hancock, In Time and Rings. But it was The Big Bang Theory that turned him into a global television star. His portrayal of Leonard Hofstadter earned him an Emmy nomination and made him one of the most recognisable sitcom actors of his generation.

Amitabh Bachchan’s midnight call for ₹15 crore Ayodhya land deal revealed

Mumbai : Amitabh Bachchan has been expanding his real estate portfolio in Ayodhya since purchasing a plot in The Sarayu project ahead of the Ram Mandir inauguration in January 2024. Recently, Abhinandan Lodha, founder and CMD of The House of Abhinandan Lodha, opened up about his conversation with the veteran actor and revealed how Bachchan personally contacted him to buy land in the temple town.

Speaking at the Hindustan Times India Next Real Estate Summit 2026, Lodha shared details of his conversation with Big B. He revealed that he was in Australia in 2023 when he received multiple missed calls around 3 am there. A message that followed read, “This is Amitabh Bachchan, please call back when convenient.” The developer said he immediately returned the call after seeing the message. Recalling their conversation, Lodha said Amitabh Bachchan introduced himself and expressed his desire to own property in Ayodhya. “There were a couple of missed calls, followed by a message that read, ‘This is Amitabh Bachchan, please call back when convenient.’ I literally stood up and called him back,” he said.



“He told me, ‘Abhinandan ji, main UP se hoon aur mujhe Ayodhya mein land leni hai’ (I am a native of Uttar Pradesh and I want to buy land in the holy town of Ayodhya). I told him, ‘We will do it for you,’” recalled Abhinandan Lodha. Amitabh Bachchan first asked about the pricing before deciding to proceed with the purchase. When the developer mentioned that a 15,000 sq ft plot

could cost around ₹15 crore, the actor completed the payment the very next day.

“Bachchan first asked him about the price. I replied, ‘How can I talk pricing with you?’ He said he wanted to buy 15,000 sq ft, and I told him it may be around ₹15 crore. The very next day he sent me ₹15 crore,” he recalled. On the professional front, Amitabh Bachchan will next be seen in the sequel to Kalki 2898 AD. Directed by Nag Ashwin, the film also stars Prabhas and Kamal Haasan. The first instalment, released in 2024, turned out to be a blockbuster, earning over Rs 1,000 crore worldwide. Big B’s performance as Ashwatthama received widespread praise, and he will reprise the role in the sequel. The makers are yet to announce the film’s release date.

Zareen Khan slams Kushal Tandon's 'chauvinism', praises Dolly Javed

Mumbai : Actress Zareen Khan has called out Kushal Tandon for targeting Dolly Javed on Alliance. She took to social media to praise Dolly for putting up a fierce fight against Kushal and calling out his behaviour on the show. Besides Zareen, many fans of the show have also taken to social media to criticise Kushal Tandon.

Zareen Khan took to her Instagram Stories and wrote, “Kudos to Dolly Javed for not tolerating the bad attitude and chauvinistic behaviour of a fellow male contestant. Wonder why and how the others are quietly taking it all. More power to you, girl. Main toh fan ho gayi tumhari.” Just a few days ago, Dolly’s older sister and television personality Uorfi posted a video on her Instagram story, slamming Kushal and accusing him of acting entitled on the reality show. Uorfi sarcastically said



that if he considers Dolly a child, then the ‘building ke bachche’ are equally uninterested in talking to ‘uncles.’

She went on to add that Dolly should start addressing him as “Kushal uncle,” or perhaps even “Dadaji” (grandfather), saying that maybe then he would feel he was being shown the respect he expected. She further accused Kushal of behaving as though he is ruling the show. She said, “Kushal thinks he is ruling the show... ‘Isko nikaalunga, usko nikaalun-

ga’. Arrey? Tumhare cha-cha ka show hai kya? Tum kaise nikaal sakte ho, tum kaise logon ko dhamki de sakte ho? Uorfi also alleged that Kushal tries to intimidate contestants he considers weaker, while behaving differently around seniors like Sohail Khan and Ravi Kishan. She claimed he changes his attitude depending on who he is interacting with and called him “entitled”. Many on social media have also made similar comments about Kushal.

Jay-Z announces London date for 'jay-z 30' anniversary concert series

Washington : Singer and music composer Jay-Z has expanded his "Jay-Z 30" concert series with the addition of a London show, marking his only performance in the UK this year as he celebrates three decades of his music career, according to Variety. The newly announced concert will take place at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium on September 4. The London performance joins previously announced shows in Paris

on September 10 and Los Angeles on October 23.

The announcement comes as Jay-Z prepares for two special back-to-back performances at Yankee Stadium on July 10 and July 11. The concerts will commemorate the 30th anniversary of his debut album Reasonable Doubt and the 25th anniversary of The Blueprint, respectively,, according to Variety. Earlier this year, the rapper also headlined Roots Picnic in Philadel-

phia on May 30, where he performed with hip-hop band The Roots. During the show, Jay-Z acknowledged the effort behind the performance, telling the audience, "We worked really hard to put this together." Tickets for the London concert will be available through a pre-sale beginning on July 9 at 10 a.m. local time, while general ticket sales will open on July 10 at 10 a.m. local time,, according to Variety. Jay-Z is set to sit

down with Rick Rubin for the eight-part documentary series "Jay-Z in 8," debuting on HBO this fall. Rubin is directing the series and will interview the rapper about his music, lyrics, life experiences and creative process.

The two have a long history, as Rubin produced Jay-Z’s "99 Problems" for "The Black Album" in 2003, reported Variety. Jay-Z in 8, a Tetragrammaton production, will be executive

produced by Shawn Carter, Daniel Kaluuya and Rubin. Producers include Leila Mattimore and David Rohde. The series announcement comes on the back of a notable year for Jay-Z. He's been plotting celebrations in honor of the 30th and 25th anniversaries of two of his most revered albums, 'Reasonable Doubt' and 'The Blueprint,' respectively, with a series of shows and activations across the globe.



Gaurav Khanna's Ex Akanksha Chamola shares heartbreaking stance on marriage



Mumbai : TV actor Gaurav Khanna’s wife Akanksha Chamola has made up her mind. The actress, who confirmed her divorce from Gaurav on Lock Upp Season 2, says she has no intention of ever getting married again. For the first time in her adult life, she says, she will be living entirely on her own terms. “I don’t want to get married again. I think I am done. But first time in my life, main akeli rehne wali hoon. Like, not under my parents’ roof or not under my husband’s roof. I am going to have my own house. I am going to ride solo for life now," she said inside the Lock Upp

house.

The divorce, Akanksha revealed, came down to one fundamental difference — their views on having children. She told fellow contestants Shreya Kalra and Sufi Motiwala that she never felt a maternal instinct, even during their marriage. “Jab hum shaadi mein the, mera maternal instinct kabhi nahi tha. But I was open to discovering it and it was never shut down. But gradually I realised that I am not meant for it and he was okay with it. But I guess, in time, that shifted,” she said. Akanksha and Gaurav married in November 2016 after the two met at an audi-

tion. She was 24 at the time. They were considered one of television’s popular couples for nearly a decade before the separation. “I got married so young, I was married when I was 24," she said, reflecting on how much her life is about to change.

In the same episode, Akanksha also spoke openly about being bisexual. She said women have always been her safe space. “Mujhe ladkiya pasand hain. Main admire karti hoon, main attract hoti hoon unke taraf. I think mera woh safe space hain. Growing up, mujhe lagta hain ki its a very male dominated world toh humesha aap mummy, beheno ke taraf jaate ho... kahi na kahi jo comfort zone une milta hain. I love that feminine energy, I love that comfort and thrive in that. Aise society mein rehte hain jaha log bolte hain ki ladkiya dost nahi rah sakti jealousy hota hain ya competition hota hain. Mere mein woh sab nahi tha, mere live all females are beautiful. It’s a tag that society has given, for me it’s pure love," she said.

Abhishek Banerjee recalls fan reaction to his unforgettable Mirzapur Character

Mumbai : The Movie is one of the most anticipated films of the year. Following the successful three seasons of the franchise, when the makers announced a film based on the same universe with all the old characters, audiences couldn’t keep calm. As the excitement continues to grow, Abhishek Banerjee, who is known for playing the role of Compounder Subodh in the franchise, spoke about being loved for his character.

Recently, Abhishek Banerjee recalled being recognised by a fan as “Compounder Subodh,” calling it the kind of connection every actor dreams of building with the audience. Abhishek shared, “Yes, Jana and Hathoda Tyagi. I think I’m still known more by these characters than by my own name. And I’m genuinely happy about that. When your characters do well, people form that



kind of bond with them. Just now, as I was walking in, the security guard stopped me and said, ‘Arre, Mirzapur Compounder!’ That’s how he remembered me. That’s exactly the kind of connection I want to build with my audience.”

Speaking about his journey as an actor, Abhishek Banerjee added, “It’s a

long journey ahead; this is just the beginning. For me, it’s important that people know me for my work and my acting, not for who I am outside of it. And I’m really grateful for the kind of work that’s coming my way.” India’s biggest OTT franchise, Mirzapur, is all set to script history with Mirzapur: The Movie,

starring Pankaj Tripathi, Divyendu Sharma, and Ali Fazal, becoming the first Indian streaming franchise to make a grand leap to the big screen.

Further expanding the ensemble, the film features Abhishek Banerjee, Rasika Dugal, Mohit Malik, Sheeba Chadha, Rajesh Tailang, Pramod Pathak, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Harshita Shekhar Gaur, Shweta Tripathi, and Sonal S. Chauhan, coming together to bring to life an epic untold chapter from the world of Mirzapur. The Movie is presented by Amazon MGM Studios and Excel Entertainment. Directed by Gurmeet Singh, written by Puneet Krishna, and produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar under Excel Entertainment, and co-produced by Kassim Jagmagia and Vishal Ramchandani, the film is slated for a grand theatrical release on September 4, 2026.

IFFM nominations: Kantara, chapter 1, Aamir Khan, and Mammootty top the shortlist



Mumbai : Actress Gul Panag has come in support of Diljit Dosanjh’s Satluj after the film was taken down from Zee5 soon after its release. She said that she grew up in Punjab during the militancy years and witnessed many horrors as a child. This, she ar-

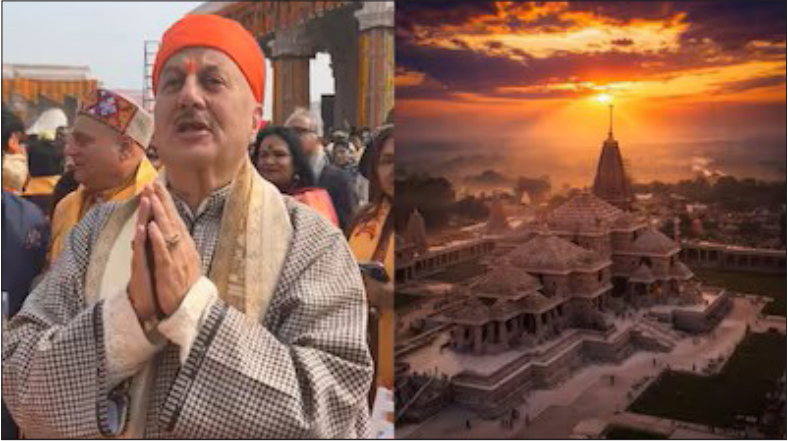
gued, is precisely why we must remember difficult chapters of our nation’s history. Gul Panag took to X and wrote, “I grew up in Punjab during the brutal years of militancy. I remember reading newspaper headlines about buses being

stopped and innocent passengers being pulled out and killed.” Have a look at her X post here. She added, “I also remember accounts of young men being picked up, detained and tortured, despite having nothing to do with the movement. Including from my village. Those memories are precisely why I don’t believe we should become so uncomfortable with difficult chapters of our history that we stop telling stories about them.

Satluj is based on the life of Jaswant Singh Khalsa, the human rights activist who investigated alleged extra-judicial killings and disappearances during Punjab’s militancy years. According to the events depicted in the film, Khalsa was abducted by police

officials, held captive, tortured and later killed. In real life, he was abducted outside his home in September 1995. He disappeared after the incident, and his body has never been recovered. The film was taken off ZEE5 India on July 5, just two days after its digital release. According to the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Satluj was released without completing the mandatory certification process. The Centre has also cited national security concerns. According to ETimes, officials reportedly believed the film’s content could have implications for public order and security, leading to its removal shortly after it became available for streaming.

Anupam Kher fumes over Ayodhya ram mandir theft, defends faith



Mumbai : Veteran Bollywood actor Anupam Kher sought divine blessings at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and spoke about the donation controversy, which he tagged as wrong and said “it shouldn’t have happened.” Speaking about his visit to the revered temple, Anupam revealed that he is shooting for a film “Shri Ram Bhoomi”. He said: “Our new film, Shri Ram Bhoomi, is about to start shooting in Ayodhya for the next

10-12 days. I have come here to seek the blessings of Lord Ram and Lord Hanuman. I have come here to pray for their health and peace.”

Talking about the ongoing controversy, Anupam shared: “If there is a theft in the house, they don’t put a chain around the house. What happened was wrong; it shouldn’t have happened. But Sanatan and Ramji are from the Dwapar Yuga, from the Yugo Yuga and...we should

take this as an incident. Those who have done this, they should definitely be caught. But there should be no blame on Sanatan or Ramji.” Earlier on July 7, police in Uttar Pradesh’s Ayodhya had moved the court seeking custody of three accused from whom substantial amounts of cash were recovered, as part of the ongoing investigation into the Ram Temple donation theft case.

According to the police, custody has been sought to obtain crucial information related to the bank accounts of the accused and to trace the financial trail linked to the recovered money. Officials said investigators suspect that a portion of the allegedly stolen funds may have been used to purchase various goods. They added that details regarding the alleged “proceeds of crime” can be established only after examining the bank records of the accused. Police said cash amounting to Rs 14,25,000 was recovered from accused Lavkush Mishra, while Rs 16,82,046 was seized from Anukalp Mishra. Another Rs 18,07,063 was recovered from Karunesh Pandey.

The missing blood-stained towel from the Kochi court resurfaces in the Fazal murder trial

New Delhi, July 08: A blood-stained towel, considered a significant piece of evidence in the murder of NDF activist Mohammed Fazal, has been discovered after going missing from the custody of the Ernakulam Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Court, according to prosecution sources on Tuesday.The absence of the evidence came to light after the Special CBI Court, where the trial began in May, requested the Material Objects acquired by the investigating agency.The Ernakulam Chief Judicial Magistrate Court notified the trial



court that the towel, which was stored in a sealed cover in its possession, had gone missing.According to accounts, the sealed cover contained an

inscription indicating that the towel had been damaged by rodents.Following this, the Special CBI Court requested a report from the CJM Court.

According to prosecution sources, the CJM Court has told the Special CBI Court that the lost evidence has been retrieved, albeit it is unclear how or where it was found. The towel is considered critical to the prosecution's case since it was reportedly set outside an RSS worker's home to falsely link him and others in the murder.The court has scheduled the case for August 4, according to reports.On October 22, 2006, a National Development Front (NDF) activist named Fazal (30) was hacked to death near a mosque in Thalassery.

PM Modi shares breathtaking aerial image of Prambanan Temple during his Indonesia tour

New Delhi, July 08: On Wednesday, while en route from Yogyakarta to the nearly 1,000-year-old Prambanan Temple complex, Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared a spectacular aerial view from his helicopter, describing the monument as majestic.Prime Minister Modi took to X to share a stunning aerial view from his helicopter, tweeting, "The majestic Prambanan Temple!" as they reached the historic site.The aerial flight comes ahead of the formal opening of an India-backed conservation and restoration program at the huge site, which represents a significant milestone in New Delhi's cultural diplomacy under the Act East strategy. The foundation for this heritage partnership was solidified on Tuesday, following extensive bilateral discussions between Prime Minister Modi and President Prabowo. The two leaders exchanged a Letter of Intent for the preservation project while reaffirming their commitment to deepening the India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to foster a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific. Situated on the island of Java, the Prambanan Temple Complex stands as the largest hindu temple site in Indonesia and the second largest across Southeast Asia, behind Cambodia's Angkor Wat. Spanning nearly 40 hectares, the ancient compound originally comprised around 240 temples, remaining today as one of Indonesia's most prominent cultural landmarks and a testament to deep-rooted subcontinental links. The



Hindu Mataram Kingdom oversaw the construction of the architectural masterpiece in the ninth century CE. According to historical records, king Rakai Pikatan initiated the monumental project, which was completed by his successor, Lokapala, to signal the empire's devotion to Shaivite Hinduism, as an architectural counterpoint to the Buddhist Borobudur Temple built nearby by the rival Sailendra dynasty.At the center of the compound are three towering temples dedicated to the Hindu Trimurti: Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu, and Lord Brahma. The central Shiva Temple, built of volcanic stone, dominates the terrain at a height of around 47 metres, displaying ancient Hindu architectural design with its soaring spires, symmetrical layouts, and beautiful gates. The external walls have extremely intricate reliefs depict-

ing scenes from the Ramayana and other great Hindu epics. These carvings depict the tremendous religious and cultural interchange that occurred centuries ago across Southeast Asia via marine trade channels, academic networks, and historic commercial routes. The court highlighted serious concerns regarding custodial violence, noting the absence of explanations for injuries sustained by the accused in the custody of the CBI. The judge condemned the use of physical coercion, asserting that the legitimacy of investigations lies in fairness, not fear. The court directed a medical examination for the accused and mandated an impartial inquiry to identify responsible officers, emphasizing that dismissing such allegations would undermine constitutional rights and the integrity of criminal justice.

After a guy allegations torture by the CBI, the court demands an inquiry

New Delhi, July 08: A Delhi court on Tuesday ordered a thorough investigation into allegations of custodial torture made by an undertrial while in CBI custody, stating that such allegations against officers of the country's foremost investigative agency cannot go unanswered. Special Judge Sushant Changotra of Rouse Avenue Courts issued the decision after Prabhat Kumar, who was arrested on June 16 by the federal agency for allegedly being a middleman in a ₹3-crore bribery case, claimed prison torture. CBI had last week arrested 2012-batch Haryana IPS officer and Bureau of Civil Aviation Security's (BCAS) regional director Deepak Gahlawat in the same case over allegations of receiving illegal gratification of Rs. 3 crores for exercising his personal influence over an unknown public servant in CBI, to secure favourable relief in a 5,000 crore counterfeit medicine racket case in Puducherry.Apart from Gehlawat and Kumar, CBI has arrested N. Raja, the alleged prime accused in the racket and a Delhi Police Inspector Pradeep Singh, in the case. Kumar filed an application last week, alleging that after being sent to CBI custody on June 17, he was severely abused, resulting in major injuries to his left ear and thigh. Kumar's lawyer contended that when

Kumar was in CBI custody from June 16 to June 22, his medical checkup was conducted on a regular basis, but the June 19 report revealed an injury to his left thigh. He noted that the accused had also complained of ear ache, which led to the discovery of blood clots in his ear, as well as complaints of a history of physical abuse by the Safdarjung hospital. The accused told the court that he could identify four CBI officials who had allegedly assaulted him. The assault on his ear, Kumar said, has significantly weakened his hearing capacity and sought action against the erring officers.Meanwhile, the prosecution said that Kumar had regular medical exams and that his charges were an afterthought.The court stated in its judgment that the claims were not vague or bald, but were "prima facie supported by contemporaneous medical records prepared by government doctors during the subsistence of police custody".The court stated that, notwithstanding the fact that the accused had these injuries while completely in CBI custody, the investigative agency provided no explanation for their cause. The court highlighted serious allegations of custodial violence against the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), emphasizing the lack of explanation regarding the accused's injuries, which were not

self-inflicted or accidental. The judge noted that these unexplained injuries, coupled with the accused's movement to another police station during custody and contemporaneous medical evidence, provide substantial prima facie support for claims of custodial abuse. The court condemned custodial violence as a significant affront to the rule of law, asserting that no investigative agency has the right to employ physical coercion or torture during interrogations. The legitimacy of criminal investigations must be grounded in fairness and legality, rather than fear or physical force. The court expressed concern that dismissing the CBI's alleged misconduct would reflect judicial indifference to constitutional rights and compromise the integrity of the criminal justice system. The allegations, which include the accused suffering permanent hearing loss, were described as "disturbing" and prompted the court to direct a medical examination for the accused at Safdarjung Hospital. Furthermore, a comprehensive investigation was ordered to identify responsible officers and assess their superiors' roles, with the stipulation that any criminal or departmental violations discovered should lead to appropriate action against the implicated officials.

Kejriwal's letter to Maruti, Toyota, and Hero, asking clarification on the E20 fuel policy

New Delhi, July 08: Arvind Kejriwal, National Convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), stepped up his resistance to the E20 (20 percent ethanol-blended) petrol mandate on Wednesday, revealing that he had written to 29 auto manufacturing businesses about worries about the use of E20 fuel in older vehicles.In a post on X (previously Twitter), the AAP leader indicated that he is drafting formal letters to Indian auto manufacturing businesses to clarify the impact of E20 fuel on automobiles made before 2023."Today, I am writing letters to all auto manufacturers in the country, requesting that they inform the public whether E20 can be used in products manufactured by them before 2023." If so, will the corporation reimburse for any losses incurred due to mileage issues or component damage?" he asked. across a followup post on X, Kejriwal

posted the letters and stated, "Today, I wrote letters to 29 automakers across the country. The initial letter was sent to three companies: Maruti Suzuki India,Toyota Kirloskar Motor; Hero MotoCorp. The second letter has been sent to the remaining 26 companies. During a news conference in Delhi, AAP leader Kejriwal announced that he has addressed letters to 29 auto manufacturing businesses.Today, I wrote to 29 auto manufacturers. I wrote separate letters to three businesses, Maruti, Toyota, and Hero, after they declared in a government news conference that E-20 fuel will not cause any problems in older automobiles. "I asked these three companies to include in their owner's manuals that older vehicles should not use fuel with an ethanol content greater than E-10," Kejriwal stated. He also stated that he had two questions for the firms.So I asked them two

questions: Will compensation be paid if the usage of E-20 results in a more than 5% loss in mileage or damage to any component? They should inform the public if E20 can be used in autos manufactured by them before 2023. If so, will the corporation reimburse for any losses incurred due to mileage difficulties or component damage?" Kejriwal inquired. Earlier on Monday, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri labeled reports of customer issues with E20 fuel as a "misrepresentation," asserting that both car manufacturers and consumers accept the ethanol-blended petrol. He indicated that the transition to a higher E25 blend would occur only after thorough testing and discussions with automakers. Emphasizing the successful use of E15 and E20, he stated that manufacturers are comfortable with E20 and consumers appreciate the product.

Shreyas Iyer Tears Team India Apart Following Humiliating Loss Against England

New Delhi: India skipper Shreyas Iyer said his team was "atrocious" after suffering their worst ever T20 defeat in terms of runs, a humbling thrashing by England at Trent Bridge on Tuesday. Fast bowlers blew away the T20 world champs India. Jofra Archer and Josh Tongue suffered a catastrophic 125-run loss. England produced 201-7, with Phil Salt scoring 70, while T20 world champions India only nearly surpassed the opener's tally before succumbing to 76 all out in 12 overs. Archer and Tongue were simply too much for India to handle, hitting speeds of more than 90 mph (145 kmh) as they ripped through the tourists' top-order with the new ball.Tongue finished with career-best statistics of 4-28 and Archer 3-29 as England took a 2-0 lead in the series with two games remaining after the first was washed out.Tuesday's outcome easily topped India's previous greatest run-loss in a T20, an 80-run defeat by New Zealand in Wellington in 2019. It also followed India's shocking 2-0 series defeat against Ireland in Belfast last month."It was atrocious," Iyer told Sky Sports. "I can't think of another

word." "Losing by such a large margin is unacceptable." "Hard lengths aided the bowlers on this wicket, although we didn't take many. Establishing patterns is crucial when chasing.We fell short; our execution was terrible," he said. By contrast, England skipper Harry Brook said: "Salty played a mega innings... To get to 200 on a tricky surface was a phenomenal effort."Brook, turning to England's efforts in the field, added: "We didn't need to talk much before the chase, the bowlers knew exactly what we needed to hit the top of the stumps with the occasional bouncer. As simple as it sounds, it worked beautifully tonight."Archer hurried teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi with a 90 mph bouncer and then smiled when the 15-year-old somehow struck the next ball for six over gully.Two of Tongue's first three balls also went the distance but from then on it was one-way traffic. Abhishek Sharma slashed to deep point, Sooryavanshi gloved behind as he attempted to attack Archer's following bouncer, and Ishan Kishan hit Jacob Bethell with a flat pull. When Archer dismissed Iyer and



Axar Patel, India was all but defeated at 52-5 after five deliveries. Will Jacks stumped Tilak Varma before Tongue removed Shivam Dube and dismissed Harshit Rana with a diving catch at backward point by Tom Banton. Leg-spinner Adil Rashid claimed two late wickets as India, who won the toss, only just surpassed their lowest T20 score of 74. Earlier, Jos Buttler started England off with 36 before being bowled by Prince Yadav's inswinging york-

er.Salt, after a slow start, smashed many boundaries in an expensive over from Varun Chakravarthy, including a long-hop for six before smashing three consecutive fours for a 36-ball fifty. Sam Curran's 41 not out increased the total.England can clinch the series with a victory in the fourth T20 at Bristol on Thursday, but Iyer said: "It's a great opportunity to come back strong, not to dwell on the past." We've played dreadful cricket, but there's still a lot to learn.

Rivaldo praises Lionel Messi's Argentina following their comeback win over Egypt

New Delhi: Rivaldo, a senior Brazilian football player, hailed Lionel Messi and Argentina's fighting spirit after the reigning champions defeated Egypt in the FIFA World Cup 2026 Round of 16. The 2002 World Cup winner took to Instagram following Argentina's thrilling 3-2 victory, praising Messi's leadership and the team's determination to overcome a two-goal deficit."What grit, what a will to win, what a fight, and what dedication from everyone! This is what fans expect to see on the pitch in a World Cup. Talking about @leomessi is stating the obvious. What a player! At 39 years old, playing in his sixth World Cup, he continues to show the same passion for the Argentina jersey: celebrating, fighting, crying and, once again, being decisive," Rivaldo wrote. The Brazilian great acknowledged the rivalry between Brazil and Argentina while praising the latter's performance in a thrilling match. Argentina initially trailed Egypt 2-0 but made a remarkable comeback to win 3-2, with Messi scoring one goal and assisting another. His equalizing goal marked his ninth consecutive World Cup match with a score, extending his all-time tally to 21 goals. Despite a missed penalty, making him the first player to miss two in one World Cup edition, Argentina's victory secured a quarter-final spot against Switzerland as they aim for a second consecutive title.

Gautam Gambhir Blamed for 'Harshit Rana' Batting Call in Record Loss to England

New Delhi: Former India wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik chastised the Gautam Gambhir-led team management for promoting bowler Harshit Rana above Shivam Dube during India's batting meltdown in the third T20I against England in Nottingham.

Following Axar Patel's dismissal on the last ball of the fifth over, India sent Harshit in ahead of Dube with the score at 52/5. Karthik, who was on commentary duty, was taken aback by the decision and questioned the management's confidence in Dube."Are you serious?" Is Harshit Rana ahead of Shivam Dube? "You can't be serious," Karthik said on air.Dube came out to bat a few overs later but failed to make an impression. Josh Tongue dismissed him for two off four balls. Karthik found it difficult to comprehend why Dube was held back.Do they (team man-

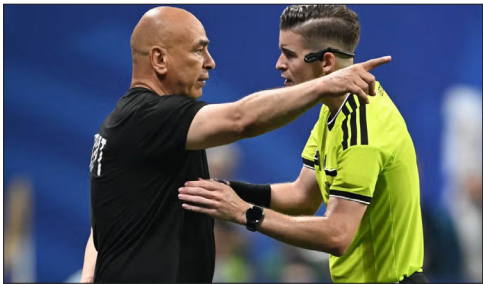


agement) not trust Dube enough to send him in at this point? Instead, they promoted Harshit Rana ahead of him. "I'm not sure that's the right way to approach it," he continued. Meanwhile, India suffered their heaviest-ever T20I defeat by runs, losing to England by 125 runs at Trent Bridge on Tuesday.Phil Salt overcame early nerves to hammer his way to a 44-ball-70 as England scored a challenging 201 for 7.The hosts grabbed a comfortable 2-0 lead in the five-

game series after the first game was rained out. In response, India's batting disintegrated under relentless pressure from England's pace attack. Chasing 202, the visitors were all out for 76 in 11.4 overs.England's bowlers hit frequently, giving India no opportunity to form partnerships as wickets dropped in groups throughout the innings.The emphatic victory gives England entire control of the series, while India must win the final two games to escape defeat.

Egypt files a complaint with FIFA following Argentina's loss, requesting that the referee be removed

New Delhi: The Egyptian Football Federation (EFF) has formally protested to FIFA against referee Francois Letexier following their 3-2 loss to Argentina in a recent match in Atlanta. After leading 2-0, Egypt faced a dramatic comeback by Argentina, with Lionel Messi's impact being critical in the final moments of the game. However, the EFF expressed outrage over several contentious officiating decisions that they claim adversely affected their team's performance. Notably, a VAR review led to the disallowance of an Egyptian goal, and a penalty appeal went unreviewed, coinciding with Argentina's match-winning goal.Hany Abo Rida, president of the Egypt Football Associa-



tion, lodged the complaint detailing a demand for an investigation into what they perceive as controversial officiating errors. The Egyptian federation is also requesting the removal of Letexier's officiating team from the rest of the

tournament, citing their decisions as crucially erroneous.Coach Hasan echoed this sentiment, implying that external factors influenced the match's outcome and suggesting a bias favoring Messi and Argentina's continuation in the tournament. He stated that Egypt performed better and that referee decisions were skewed, which included the disallowed goal and the unreviewed penalty appeal involving Alexis Mac Allister. In a press conference, he stressed, "We haven't seen respect or fair play.. We have been treated unfairly, and it has been an injustice." Hasan's comments highlight a belief that both internal and external influences weighed against his team during this pivotal match.

Afghanistan postpones domestic T20 league to mourn former pacer Shapoor Zadran's passing

New Delhi : The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) has postponed two days of fixtures in the ongoing 11th edition of the Shpageeza Cricket League to honour former fast bowler Shapoor Zadran, who passed away on Tuesday at the age of 38. The board announced that the scheduled matches on Wednesday, July 8, and Thursday, July 9, would not be played as a mark of respect for one of the pioneers of Afghanistan cricket. In an official statement, the ACB said the decision had been taken “as a mark of respect and in tribute to the late Shapoor Zadran.” A revised schedule for the remainder of the T20 tournament will be announced in due course. “As a mark of respect and in tribute to the late Shapoor Zadran, the scheduled matches for Wednesday, July 8, and Thursday, July



9, in the 11th edition of the Shpageeza Cricket League 2026, have been postponed,” the ACB wrote in a statement. The ACB also confirmed the arrangements for Zadran’s funeral. His mortal remains were scheduled to arrive at Kabul International Airport on Wednesday before being taken to his family residence in Sadr-e-Azam Township in the Bagrami district. The funeral prayers will be held at the historic Eidgah Mosque in Kabul on

Thursday morning, following which he will be laid to rest at Maranjan Hill. The board said its officials, along with members of the Afghanistan national team, would attend the funeral ceremony to pay their final respects to the former left-arm pacer. The postponement of the country’s premier domestic T20 competition underlines the immense respect Zadran commanded within Afghanistan’s cricketing fraternity. “The mortal remains of the

late Shapoor Zadran will arrive at Kabul International Airport today, Wednesday, at 4:00 PM and will then be taken to his family residence in Sadr-e-Azam Township in Bagrami District,” another ACB statement read. “The funeral prayer will be offered on Thursday at 10:00 AM at Eidgah Mosque, Kabul. Following the prayer, the late Shapoor Zadran will be laid to rest during a special burial ceremony at Maranjan Hill, Kabul.” Zadran was among the first generation of cricketers who helped establish Afghanistan on the international stage. He made his international debut in 2009 and went on to represent his country in 80 matches across formats, including 44 ODIs and 36 T20Is. The left-arm seamer claimed 43 ODI wickets and 37 T20I wickets before playing his final international in 2020.

2026 FIFA World Cup enters decisive phase with eight teams still standing



Spain: The World Cup is down to just eight teams, with a heavyweight line-up set to do battle in the quarter-finals from Thursday. AFP Sport looks at the match-ups, all of which are taking place in the United States. Imperious France have lived up to their billing as World Cup favourites, sweeping through the group stage and swatting aside Sweden before edging past Paraguay in the last 16. It is difficult to see any team keeping Didier Deschamps’ men quiet, given their embarrassment of riches in attack, including Kylian Mbappe, Ousmane Dembele, Bradley Barcola and the wonderfully creative Michael Olise. But unbeaten Morocco will not be fazed by facing the two-time world champions after seeing off the Netherlands on penalties and crushing co-hosts Canada 3-0 in the last 16. The North African team will have revenge on their minds in Boston after they lost to France in the semi-finals four years ago in Qatar. bThe Atlas Lions created history by becoming the first African team to progress to the last four in 2022 and will be keen to match that feat. In beating Portugal

1-0 on Monday, Spain became the first team in tournament history to record six consecutive World Cup clean sheets. Luis de la Fuente’s European champions do not always set pulses racing but they are strikingly efficient and comfortable on the ball. Barcelona star Lamine Yamal has netted just once in five games but Mikel Oyarzabal has scored four times, including twice in a 3-0 win against Austria in the last 32. Belgium go into the match in Los Angeles on the back of a 4-1 thumping of co-hosts the United States. That came after they rallied from two goals down in the last 32 to beat Senegal 3-2 in extra-time. The World Cup is likely the last hurrah for the remainder of the nation’s so-called Golden Generation, including Kevin De Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku, who will be desperate to leave the stage on a high. England’s defenders are used to facing Norway hot-shot Erling Haaland in the Premier League -- but whether they can handle him is another story. Thomas Tuchel’s men arrived in the United States among the favourites to win the tournament for just the second time in their history.

Ex-coach urges Samson recall after India's T20I collapse

New Delhi: Former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar has warned the team management not to fiddle with the team combination just to bring Sanju Samson back into the playing XI. Nayar stated that Samson should be recalled only if the team can fit him into the top three, warning that a middle-order return might not yield the desired results. Nayar’s comments came when a broadcaster asked if India should consider dropping Tilak Varma from the XI to accommodate Samson in a middle-order role after India slipped to their worst-ever defeat, losing to England by 125 runs in the third match of the ongoing five-game series. The Chennai Super Kings batter was dropped for the second T20I in Manchester to accommodate Vaibhav Sooryavanshi at the top of the order. Having managed only six runs across three T20Is—including two matches against Ireland which India lost—Samson was left out just months after winning the Player of the Tournament award at the T20 World Cup. “I really feel that if you have to get Sanju Samson back in, you want to position him in a place where he can succeed. Now, just because you want to bring him in, you’re going to bat him at No. 4, 5 or 6. It’s not something he’s done a lot. It’s not something he’s been successful at,” Nayar said. “He’s been best suited when he’s opened or batted in the top three. So if you aren’t giving him that position, then I feel it’s better that you don’t play Sanju Samson and instead stick with the kind of batting line-up India has.” Samson has predominantly operated in the top three in T20 cricket. His average in the top three stands above 30, but it drops to 22.63 at No. 4, where he has batted in 65 innings. At No. 5, a position he has occupied only 14 times, that average plummets to 15.33. Tilak, who was appointed vice-captain to newly anoint-



ed skipper Shreyas Iyer post the T20 World Cup, has struggled during the ongoing tour of the UK. Barring a well-paced 45-ball 56, the left-hander has failed to cross 20 in any of his other five knocks on tour. On Tuesday, Tilak was out for a sluggish 3 off 11 balls, stumped off the bowling of off-spinner Will Jacks. However, Tilak has also been playing out of position since midway through the T20 World Cup. Naturally a No. 3 batter, the Hyderabad star was pushed down the order to accommodate Ishan Kishan at the top. Nayar insisted it is crucial for the team management not to press the panic button, arguing that the primary issue has been a failure to properly assess conditions in Ireland and England, which have been in stark contrast to the pitches seen during the IPL earlier this year. They’ll have to reflect on it. Like Gautam Gambhir said, they’ve got 190 in two innings, but that is batting first. They struggled chasing because they haven’t assessed conditions enough. They haven’t found

the right tempo to score runs,” Nayar added. “You don’t want to press the panic button. You don’t want to make changes for the sake of it. If Sanju Samson has to come in, that’s all the management has to do: position him in a place where he can succeed.” Head coach Gautam Gambhir, speaking after India’s hammering in Nottingham, also conceded that the visitors have not been good enough at reading the pitches and conditions during their UK tour. “fWe haven’t adapted well. Whether it was in Ireland or here in England, that has been the reality. Had we adapted better and played better cricket, we wouldn’t have lost four matches in a row,” he said. Former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar urged the team management not to alter the lineup just to bring Sanju Samson back unless he can bat in the top three, where he has historically performed best. Samson’s middle-order recall may be ineffective given his poorer averages at lower positions.

Surekha's World Cup final medal upgraded to silver after official revision confirmed today Gold medallist Mariana Bernal fails doping test

Chennai: India’s ace women’s compound archer Jyothi Surekha Vennam’s bronze medal from the Archery World Cup finals in Nanjing last year has been upgraded to silver, after finals winner Mariana Bernal tested positive for an anabolic steroid according to International Testing Agency (ITA). Reportedly, the Mexican tested positive for nandrolone in an out-of-competition test in September last year, three weeks after winning women’s team compound gold in the 2025 World Archery Championships in Gwangju, South Korea. Nandrolone is prohibited under the World Anti Doping Agency’s (WADA) as Anabolic Androgenic Steroids. “The athlete did not challenge her Anti-Doping Rules Violation (ADRV) and agreed with the consequences for her ADRV under the WA anti-doping rules as proposed by the ITA,” the agency, in a statement released on July 2, said. Due to her early admission of the violation, her ban period is cut down to three years. However, she



will not take part in the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles This ruling will make Bernal’s compatriot and World No 1 Andrea Becerra the new finals gold medallist. While Surekha had captured her long-awaited individual medal in the World Cup finals by beating Ella Gibson for bronze, the upgrade to silver will be a delight for her. She confirmed this development to this daily from Madrid, the host city for the Archery World Cup

stage-4. “We have been told that it is updated in the ranking points,” she said. It remains to be seen whether World Archery, the global governing body for the sport, would hand her the silver medal.. After a forgettable show in previous stages of this year’s world cup, Indian compound archers will have to lift themselves in the fourth and final stage of the Archery World Cup ahead of the all-important Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

India batting crumbles as England secure dominant victory

Nottingham: Indian batters produced one of their worst performance in recent times, surrendering meekly to England’s tearaway quicks Jofra Archer and Josh Tongue’s hostile spells in a record 125-run loss in the third T20 International here. Archer (3/29 in 3 overs) and Tongue (4/28 in 4 overs) bowled with a lot of fire inside the Powerplay which led to India being shot out for 76 runs in 11.4 overs in pursuit of 202 on Tuesday. This was India’s worst T20I defeat in terms of margin of runs as only four batters managed double-digit scores here. The win gave England an unassailable 2-0 lead in the five-match series as the first match was abandoned due to rain.

Captain Shreyas Iyer’s winless streak has now extended to five games and this Indian team under Gautam Gambhir’s stewardship looks a disjointed unit. It wasn’t a pretty sight as birthday boy Mahendra Singh Dhoni watched his favourite team get dismantled one over at a time. England’s 201 for 7 was largely based on opener Phil Salt’s 70 and Sam Curran’s unbeaten 41 in a late assault. The match as a contest was over once India were reduced to 52 for 5 in five overs. The performance was marked by poor shot selection and an apparent lack of will to fight. Add to it the baffling tactical calls. A hit-and-



miss slogger like Harshit Rana was sent No. 7 inside the Powerplay ahead of Shivam Dube, something that is bound to raise eyebrows. The 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi once again hit a couple of sixes -- one each off Archer and Tongue -- but his 13-run knock ended in just five deliveries. A sharp bouncer directed on his right shoulder saw the teenager go for a hook but it ended in Jos Buttler’s gloves. Before Sooryavanshi’s dismissal, Abhishek Sharma was holed out at the deep extra cover, an area where he has been dismissed a few times. Ishan Kishan hooked one for a six but was out in no

time while Iyer tried to flick Archer and picked the only fielder behind square. Axar Patel expected a short ball and got a fuller length to edge one behind stumps. Earlier, Salt overcame initial jitters to smash his way to a 44-ball-70 as England posted a competitive 201 for 7 which proved to be enough in the end. The Indian pace unit put up a reasonably impressive show with the Delhi duo of Rana (2/40 in 4 overs) and Prince Yadav (2/30 in 4 overs) picking up wickets at crucial junctures but same couldn’t be said about veteran spinners Axar (1/49 in 4 overs) and Varun Chakravarthy (0/35 in 3 overs).

Joshna ready for record seventh Asian Games

New Delhi: Joshna Chinnappa is actually looking forward to hitting the 40s in a couple of months, around the time when one of Indian squash’s finest will become the first from her country to compete in a staggering seven Asian Games. Joshna has been on the road ever since she was nine years old and decades later she continues to push boundaries of longevity in elite sport. Remarkably, she feels fitter than ever, thanks to a combination of respecting her ageing body while training and playing roughly five professional events in a calendar year compared to the 10-12 till 2023. Her 11th PSA title in Japan last year gave her a reassurance that she can still compete with players half her age. Joshna is proudly part of the golden generation of Indian squash involving Saurav Ghosal and Dipika Pallikal, who don’t play on PSA tour anymore. In an interaction with PTI in the lead up to September-October Asian Games in Japan, Joshna said she has still got a little bit left in the tank that will push her to add to her five medals in the continental event.

She would like to last for the sport’s historic Olympic debut in 2028 but at this stage of her



career, she takes her life two weeks at a time. It would be awesome to play in the Olympics but it is still far away. I’ve had such a special career. I’ve had the opportunity to really play at some of the highest stages. And, of course, it’s great to play at the Olympics. And that’s obviously every athlete’s dream. “I’ll be 42 by then. And, of course, squash being so hard on the body, it just depends how my body is. Because, to me, health matters most right now where I’m at. And I do not compromise on that for a medal, for a little bit of glory. I take my career one month at a time, two weeks at a time,” said Joshna. At 73, the former top-10 player remains India’s second-highest ranked female after 20th-ranked Anahat Singh, who has taken over the leadership mantle from Joshna and Dipika. Joshna plays doubles from time to time but

predominantly remains a singles specialist. When it comes to training, she prefers more match play than coaching sessions. ”So in that sense, because there’s so much attention to detail for me to get on court, that I just have learned how to maximise getting the best out of my body without punishing it too much. I try and play every three, four weeks; there’s more gap between each tournament to really help me recover, rest, train properly and go a lot more prepared.” “I definitely choose my tournament schedule a lot better now. And even in terms of training, I do train like quite a bit during the week, but I make sure I get enough recovery time between sessions. And if my body is not recovered, I don’t go to train those days. Okay. So it’s really understanding when to push and when to back off,” said Joshna.