

Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav visits Good Samaritan Senior Citizen's Home, Meriema

Kohima, Aug 13: In a gesture emphasizing compassionate governance and social dignity for the elderly, Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav paid an official visit to the Good Samaritan Senior Citizen's Home in Meriema, located on the outskirts of Kohima.

During his visit, the Governor spent quality time interacting directly with the elderly residents, inquiring about their health, daily routines, and living conditions. Highlighting that senior citizens constitute a vital pillar of society whose wisdom and life experiences enrich the community, Governor Yadav stressed the collective duty of both government institutions and civil society organizations to ensure their dignity, emotional well-being, healthcare access, and peaceful retirement. As a practical gesture of support toward the home's daily operations, the Governor presented essential household provisions and food supplies to the management for the care of the residents. The formal program commenced with a welcome address delivered by Juliana, Executive Member of the Good Samaritan Women Society (GSWS). The opening



invocation prayer was offered by Kuolachalie Seyie, President of the Naga Club, seeking blessings for the residents, caregivers, and visiting dignitaries. A highlight of the occasion was a special musical performance presented by the elderly residents, who sang a traditional choral number to welcome the Governor.

Briefing the Governor on the history of the facility, Neithonuo Liegise, Chairperson of the Good Samaritan Women Society, shared that the institution was established on August 1, 2005, originally as the Kohima Old Age Home.

Founded under the aegis of the GSWS to assist destitute, sick, and vulnerable elderly individuals lacking family support networks, the facility was subsequently renamed the Good Samaritan Senior Citizen's Home in accordance with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Liegise also outlined the society's future expansion vision, including upgraded geriatric medical infrastructure, enhanced recreational spaces, and broader community outreach across district branches.

Acknowledging the ded-

icated service rendered by the Good Samaritan Women Society over the past two decades, Governor Yadav commended the management, staff, and caregivers for their selfless commitment. He took formal note of the development plans presented by the society and assured administrative consideration toward strengthening eldercare facilities, improving healthcare access, and fostering inclusive welfare initiatives across the state. Beyond immediate logistical assistance, the visit underscored broader state efforts to strengthen institution-

al support networks for senior citizens, particularly through the operationalization of the Elderline 14567 national helpline managed by the society in Nagaland. Emphasizing that community-led initiatives serve as the backbone of elder welfare in the region, the Governor urged youth groups and social organizations to maintain active intergenerational engagement with senior care homes, ensuring that vulnerable elderly citizens receive sustained emotional support, legal protection, and comprehensive healthcare throughout their golden years.

Arunachal Cabinet approves scrapping 80:20 reservation in state recruitment

Itanagar, Aug 13: The Arunachal Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, has formally approved the scrapping of the decades-old 80:20 reservation ratio in state government recruitment, replacing it with a revised framework that mandates indigenous eligibility criteria for public employment.

The landmark decision follows the formal acceptance of recommendations submitted by a High-Power Committee (HPC) headed by Industries, Skill Development, Labour, and Employment Minister Nyatou Dukam. Under the newly approved recruitment guidelines, candidates seeking government positions across state departments, the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC), and the Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) must hold both an Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe (APST) certificate and a valid Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC). Additionally, the Cabinet introduced a mandatory local dialect proficiency criterion, ensuring that future recruits possess foundational linguistic competency relevant to the



state's indigenous communities. First introduced in 1991, the legacy 80:20 recruitment model had earmarked 80 per cent of state government vacancies exclusively for indigenous APST applicants, while leaving the remaining 20 per cent as an open quota accessible to unreserved competition. Over recent years, indigenous youth, tribal bodies, and the apex student organization—the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU)—stepped up public demonstrations and referendum rallies, arguing that the open component compromised employment prospects for local educated youth in a state with limited private sector employment avenues. The protesting groups had issued an explicit

deadline of August 15 for the state government to dismantle the open quota and establish stronger indigenous job safeguards. Addressing the media after the Cabinet meeting, government officials highlighted that the High-Power Committee conducted extensive consultations with legal experts, constitutional scholars, and community stakeholders to ensure the revised recruitment policy withstands judicial scrutiny. By strengthening eligibility benchmarks through PRC, APST certification, and local dialect requirements, the state government aims to safeguard indigenous rights, streamline recruitment protocols, and fulfill long-standing administrative demands while maintaining constitutional viability.

Vehicle plunges into Lohit River in Arunachal, leaving one dead and six injured

Itanagar, Aug 13: One person was killed and six others were injured after a passenger vehicle lost control and plunged into the turbulent waters of the Lohit River in Arunachal Pradesh's remote Anjaw district on Thursday morning. According to Anjaw Deputy Commissioner Millo Kojin, the accident occurred around 9:30 AM near the Government Residential School at Sarti. Preliminary investigations indicate that the driver lost control of the vehicle along a narrow mountain stretch, causing it to veer off the road and roll into the fast-flowing river below. Immediately following the crash, the driver reportedly fled the scene, prompting law enforcement authorities to launch a manhunt to trace his whereabouts. Upon re-

ceiving news of the incident, local villagers, district police personnel, and administrative officials rushed to the riverbank to initiate immediate emergency response operations. To support the ongoing rescue efforts in the challenging terrain, the district administration urgently requisitioned specialized personnel from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) stationed at Tezu in neighbouring Lohit district. Joint rescue teams managed to pull seven occupants out of the river. Emergency responders confirmed one fatality on site, while six survivors were retrieved with varying degrees of injuries. Four of the survivors suffered severe injuries and were immediately rushed to the nearest medical facility for special-



ized emergency treatment. Active search operations remain underway along the riverbanks to verify whether

any other passengers were swept downstream by the river's strong currents. Expressing deep grief over the

tragic accident, Arunachal Pradesh Minister for Women and Child Development, Dasanglu Pul, offered her

condolences to the family of the deceased and wished the injured passengers a swift recovery. She stated that she

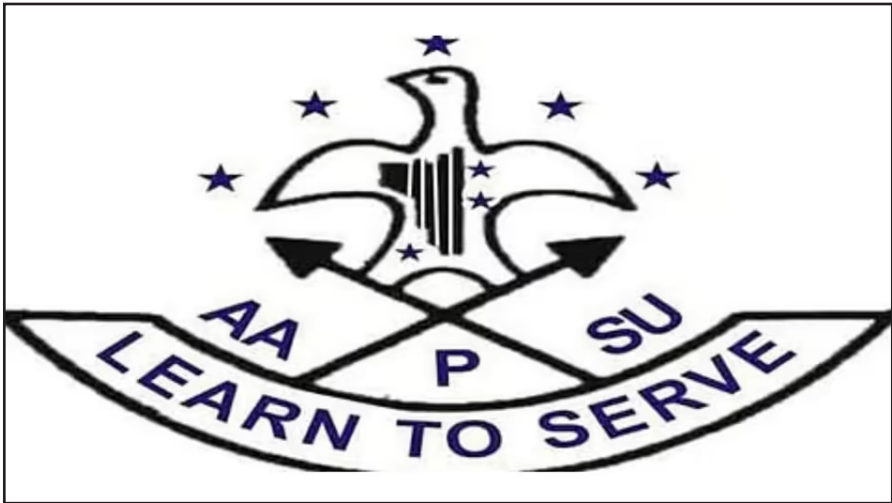
had issued strict directives to the local administration, district police, and the SDRF to mobilize all available resources and extend every possible support to the victims and their families. Meanwhile, local police have registered a case regarding the incident and initiated a formal investigation into the circumstances surrounding the crash. Security personnel continue to monitor the affected stretch of the Lohit River as search operations proceed. The treacherous arterial roads traversing Anjaw district—frequently subjected to monsoon-triggered landslides, eroded verges, and dense fog—have long posed significant safety hazards for commuters along high-altitude stretches overlooking the Lohit River. In

response to the latest mishap, district authorities issued a fresh advisory urging commercial drivers and travelers to exercise extreme caution, adhere strictly to speed limits, and avoid night driving or navigating hazardous mountain corridors during period of poor visibility. Expressing deep grief over the tragic accident, Arunachal Pradesh Minister for Women and Child Development, Dasanglu Pul, offered her condolences to the family of the deceased and wished the injured passengers a swift recovery. She stated that she had issued strict directives to the local administration, district police, and the SDRF to mobilize all available resources and extend every possible support to the victims and their families.

AAPSU begins Taksing march to highlight frontier security and infrastructure gaps

Itanagar, Aug 13: The All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU), the state's apex student body, launched a major march on Thursday toward the remote frontier village of Taksing in Upper Subansiri district to raise awareness about border security, telecommunications connectivity, and infrastructure deficits along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Organized under the slogan "Taksing Chalo, Bharat Bachao," the delegation was formally flagged off by AAPSU President Meje Taku from the union's headquarters at the NEFA Club building in Itanagar. The marching contingent, led by AAPSU General Secretary Mato Bui, will trek through difficult mountainous terrain to reach the border village, culminating on August 15 with a ceremonial hoisting of the National Flag at Taksing on Indepen-



dence Day.

Addressing members during the flag-off ceremony, Meje Taku emphasized that the youth and indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh will not tolerate any attempt to compromise India's territorial integrity. Reaffirming that Arunachal Pradesh remains an integral

and inalienable part of India, Taku urged both the Central and state governments to treat border infrastructure development and defense preparedness as top national priorities. He noted that residents in border villages serve as the country's primary guardians and require robust basic amenities, reliable road

networks, and mobile connectivity to prevent distress migration.

The rally assumes heightened significance following recent concerns voiced by local community organizations, including the Nah Welfare Society, regarding alleged movements by Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)

personnel near Yaja and Togo villages in the Taksing sector. While Chief Minister Pema Khandu assured that security agencies are actively monitoring the situation and verifying ground reports alongside the Indian Army, student leaders highlighted the necessity of an independent ground assessment. Throughout their journey to Upper Subansiri, the AAPSU delegation will interact with village chiefs, youth associations, and local residents across border hamlets to compile a comprehensive field report detailing infrastructure gaps, health facilities, and security challenges. The student body plans to submit this document to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Arunachal Pradesh government to press for accelerated developmental projects and enhanced surveillance measures along the international frontier.

IMCT reviews monsoon disaster situation in Nagaland

Dimapur, Aug 13: A six-member Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT), led by M. Ramachandrudu, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, completed a comprehensive review of the severe disaster situation caused by the ongoing monsoon across Nagaland. During a high-level briefing session held at Chümoukedima, Advisor to the Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority (NSDMA), Z. Nyusiethio Nyuthe, along with Joint CEO Dr. Johnny Ruangmei, presented a detailed damage assessment to the visiting delegation. State officials highlighted that Nagaland has been reeling under relentless spells of heavy downpours, flash floods, and landslides triggered by cloudbursts since July 19, with a second wave striking on August 3. The natural calamity resulted in an unprecedented tragedy in Mon district, where 11 lives were lost. The disaster heavily disrupted public infrastructure,



washing away key road arteries and isolating numerous remote hamlets across the state's rugged terrain. Severe blockades forced state authorities and emergency response agencies to carry out aerial drops of food grains and essential medical relief supplies to cut-off communities. Officials also pointed to unusual spatial variations in rainfall this season, which caused catastrophic inundation in certain agricultural belts while leaving neighboring areas dry, severely affecting standing paddy, horticulture crops, and local livelihoods.

District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs) from Mon, Mokochung, Longleng, Tuensang, and Peren presented detailed status reports on local damage, immediate relief efforts, and long-term rehabilitation requirements. The IMCT members, representing key Union Ministries including Finance, Agriculture, Rural Development, and Power, conducted field inspections across affected regions to evaluate damaged bridges, breached irrigation channels, destroyed homes, and disrupted power networks.

Assam Chief Secretary Calls for Stronger GTAC Operations to Expand Tea Trade and Global Reach

Guwahati, Aug 13: Assam Chief Secretary Ravi Kota chaired a meeting of the Governing Body of the GTAC to review its overall functioning and discuss measures to strengthen its role in supporting Assam's tea industry. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on improving the efficiency, transparency and competitiveness of the auction process, while also exploring ways to enhance GTAC's position as a key platform for Assam's tea trade. The meeting also focused extensively on strengthening the infrastructure and operational capabilities of the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre, while exploring measures to streamline auction-related processes and make the overall system more efficient, transparent and competitive. Discussions centred on improving market access for tea producers, traders and exporters, enabling them to reach a wider range of domestic and international buyers and secure better opportunities for Assam's tea. The participants also highlighted the need to mod-



ernise existing auction mechanisms, upgrade supporting infrastructure and adopt technology-driven solutions to improve efficiency and transparency across the tea trading process. Greater emphasis was placed on creating a business-friendly environment that can encourage increased participation in the auction platform, strengthen the value chain and support the long-term interests of tea growers and industry stakeholders. The discussions further underlined the importance of strengthening Assam's tea ecosystem to meet evolving global market requirements, improve the competitiveness of its

tea products and reinforce the state's position as one of India's leading tea-producing regions in the international tea market. The meeting focused on increasing the participation of tea producers, buyers and other stakeholders in the GTAC.

while encouraging more tea to be brought into the organised auction system to strengthen trading volumes and improve the overall efficiency of the platform. Discussions were also held on measures to increase GTAC sales and expand tea exports from Assam by improving market access, strengthening logistics and addressing operational challenges faced by

exporters. The use and functioning of the ICD at Aminagaon were reviewed, along with various issues related to tea exports, logistics and the availability of subsidies aimed at supporting the industry.

In addition to strengthening GTAC's commercial role, the meeting also discussed plans to develop the auction centre as a Tea Tourism Hub, with the aim of showcasing Assam's rich tea heritage and creating a more engaging experience for visitors. Progress on five proposed projects was reviewed, including plans for a dedicated tea museum, improved visitor facilities and other infrastructure aimed at enhancing the tourism potential of the centre. These initiatives are expected to combine Assam's tea industry, heritage and tourism opportunities while further strengthening GTAC's role as an important centre for tea trade and promotion. Preparations for the unveiling of a bust of Maniram Dewan, one of the prominent figures associated with Assam's tea history, were also dis-

cussed during the meeting, reflecting efforts to highlight the state's rich tea heritage alongside the development of the GTAC. Chief Secretary Ravi Kota stressed the need to strengthen tea-testing facilities and ensure that proper quality standards are consistently maintained for tea being sold through GTAC, with an emphasis on improving quality assessment and building greater confidence among buyers and consumers. The meeting also reviewed the implementation of new warehousing rules and examined plans to upgrade the auction hall, along with other essential facilities and infrastructure at the centre.

The proposed improvements are aimed at creating a more efficient, modern and well-equipped auction environment capable of meeting the evolving requirements of tea producers, buyers, traders and exporters. Kota directed all concerned officials and stakeholders to work in close coordination and ensure that the planned initiatives are completed within clearly defined timelines.

72 Specialists Join Arunachal Health Service, Boost Remote Care

Itanagar, Aug 13: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu said the induction of 72 specialist doctors through the Medical Specialist Recruitment Examination-2026 marks a significant step towards strengthening specialised healthcare services across the State and improving the availability of advanced medical treatment for people closer to their homes. Felicitating the successful candidates and handing over their appointment orders, Khandu congratulated the newly recruited specialists and expressed confidence that their presence would further enhance the capacity of government health institutions to provide quality and timely medical care. He noted that while a substantial number of specialist positions had now been filled, some vacancies still remained and would be filled shortly as part of the government's continued efforts to strengthen the healthcare workforce. CM particularly highlighted the importance of deploying specialist doctors in remote, rural and underserved parts of Arunachal Pradesh people of-



ten face challenges in accessing specialised medical services and may have to travel long distances for treatment. The induction of the new specialists is expected to improve access to specialised consultations, diagnosis and treatment within the State, while also reducing the need for patients to travel to other cities or states for advanced healthcare.

Khandu emphasised that strengthening human resources in the health sector remains a key priority for the government and that sustained efforts are being made to improve medical infrastructure, healthcare delivery and the availability of qualified professionals across Arunachal Pradesh. Khandu said 35

specialist posts at TRIHMS, 61 specialist posts in government hospitals and 79 General Duty Medical Officer posts remained vacant.

He said the State had six zonal hospitals, 17 district hospitals, 57 community health centres, 162 primary health centres and 647 sub-health centres. He stressed the need to ensure that people in remote areas received quality healthcare comparable to that available in urban centres. Highlighting developments in medical education, Khandu said TRIHMS, which started with 50 MBBS seats in 2017, now had an intake of 100 seats. He added that post-graduate MD and MS courses would be introduced shortly.

AITF Appeals for Calm



Itanagar, Aug 13: The Arunachal Indigenous Tribes Forum (AITF) on Wednesday urged people of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh to maintain restraint and communal harmony following recent firing along the inter-State border. The forum, an umbrella body of indigenous tribal organisations in Arunachal Pradesh, condemned the firing during a confrontation between Hime village in Lower Siang and Mingmang Basti in Assam's Dhemaji district on Monday, which reportedly injured at least 18 people.

The AITF said violence and retaliatory measures would not resolve the long-standing border dispute and urged people on both sides not to circulate unverified information or take the law into their own hands. It welcomed the contact between the Directors General of Police of the two States and the deployment of reinforcements to prevent further escalation. The forum also criticised the indefinite road and economic blockade against Arunachal Pradesh launched by the Takam Missing Porin Kebang (TMPK), describing it as "uncalled for".

It said the blockade would cause hardship to ordinary people, particularly those travelling for medical treatment and other essential work. The AITF appealed to both Assam and Arunachal Pradesh to take immediate steps to restore peace and maintain harmony in the border areas, urging all stakeholders to resolve the longstanding boundary dispute through dialogue, mutual understanding and peaceful negotiations.

The organisation stressed that continued tension and confrontation could adversely affect the lives, livelihoods and security of people living in the affected regions, while also damaging the close social, cultural and economic ties that have existed between communities of the two neighbouring states for generations.

Manipur CM Warns Legal Action Against Those Failing to Surrender Illegal Weapons CM Warns Over Illegal Arms

Imphal, Aug 13: Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Wednesday appealed to people possessing illegal weapons across both the hill and valley regions of the state to voluntarily surrender them within a period of 15 days, warning that those who fail to comply with the directive could face legal action under the provisions of the law. The Chief Minister urged individuals and groups in possession of unauthorised firearms, ammunition and other illegal weapons to come forward and cooperate with the government and security agencies in their efforts to improve the security situation and restore normalcy across Manipur. He emphasised that the voluntary surrender of illegal arms would help prevent their misuse and reduce the possibility of further incidents of violence, while also contributing to stronger law and order in sensitive areas. Singh appealed to residents to treat the 15-day period as an opportunity to cooperate with the authorities and support ongoing peace-building initiatives, stressing that public participation would be crucial to creating a safer and more stable environ-

ment. At the same time, he made it clear that those who continue to possess illegal weapons beyond the stipulated period could be dealt with according to the law, as the government seeks to strengthen security measures and ensure greater protection for people across both the hill and valley regions.

The Chief Minister urged individuals and groups holding unauthorised firearms and other illegal weapons to cooperate with the authorities and contribute to efforts aimed at restoring peace, stability and security in the state. He stressed the importance of removing illegal arms from circulation, particularly in areas that have witnessed prolonged tensions and violence, and called on residents to respond responsibly to the appeal.

The government's warning comes as part of efforts to strengthen law and order and prevent the misuse of illegal weapons, with authorities expected to take necessary action against those who continue to possess such arms beyond the stipulated deadline. Addressing a function organised for the display of recovered arms,



ammunition and explosives at the 1st Battalion Manipur Rifles Parade Ground in Imphal, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh urged individuals and groups still in possession of illegal weapons to come forward and surrender them through their respective Members of the Legislative Assembly or the District Superintendent of Police. The Chief Minister emphasised that the voluntary handover of unauthorised firearms, ammunition and explosives would play an important role in strengthening the government's ongoing efforts to restore normalcy, improve public safety and create a more secure environment across Manipur. The event,

which showcased a substantial collection of arms, ammunition and explosive materials recovered by the security forces and law enforcement agencies, highlighted the continuing efforts of the authorities to remove illegal weapons from circulation and prevent their potential misuse. The display also highlighted the seriousness of the prevailing security situation in Manipur and reflected the government's continued commitment to taking effective measures to reduce violence, strengthen law and order, and maintain peace and security across both the hill and valley regions of the state. Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh appealed to people

to extend their full cooperation to the administration, police and security agencies by voluntarily surrendering any illegal arms, ammunition or other unauthorised weapons through the designated channels. He stressed that public cooperation was essential for preventing the misuse of illegal weapons and creating a safer environment for communities across the state.

The Chief Minister further emphasised that the removal of illegal arms from circulation would help security agencies maintain better control over the situation, prevent potential incidents of violence and improve confidence among the people. He urged residents to work collectively with the authorities and support the government's peace-building efforts, noting that responsible participation from the public would contribute significantly to strengthening law enforcement, restoring normalcy and rebuilding trust among communities. Such cooperation, he said, would be an important step towards creating conditions conducive to lasting peace, stability and security in Manipur.

Lok Bhavan Opens to Public on August 15-16



Shillong, Aug 13: On August 15 and 16, 2026, Lok Bhavan in Shillong will open to the public to commemorate India's 80th Independence Day. Visitors can explore the venue from 1.30 pm to 8 pm on August 15 and 11 am to 8 pm on August 16, with free entry for all. The event will feature cultural performances from various regions, including Bhawai and Kalbelia dances from Rajasthan, as well as Dogri, Kashmiri, Gojri, and Pahari dances from Jammu and Kashmir, celebrating India's rich cultural diversity. During the two-day celebration, Karnataka will showcase Bharatanatyam, a classical dance form, alongside a cultural troupe from the Karnataka Sangha, Mandya. Additionally, performances highlighting the rich traditions of Meghalaya's Khasi, Jaintia, and Garo tribes will be featured, emphasizing the state's diverse cultural heritage. A military band

from the Assam Regimental Centre will also perform, enhancing the patriotic spirit of the event. The celebrations will further feature an exhibition showcasing agriculture, floriculture, horticulture and other sectors, displaying products, technologies and services, along with flowers, orchids and traditional artefacts. Food stalls offering local cuisine and other popular food items will also be available for visitors, with select items offered for sale. An exhibition of artefacts, manuscripts, handicrafts and other works of art will also form part of the celebrations.

In the evening, the Lok Bhavan premises will be illuminated in the colours of the Tricolour of the Indian National Flag, adding to the festive and patriotic atmosphere and symbolising the pride, unity and spirit of the nation on the occasion of Independence Day, a press release said.

Historic Dimasa Milestone

Dima Hasao Celebrates Historic Milestone as Dimasa Language Gains Official Recognition Alongside English for Administrative Use

Dima Hasao, Aug 13: A historic and proud moment for the people of Dima Hasao was marked with the celebration of 'Graodima Khe Maan Yaophane Mel-Mjang' at the Auditorium Hall in Haflong on Tuesday, commemorating the recognition of the Dimasa language for official use in Dima Hasao alongside English. The landmark development was widely regarded as an important step towards preserving the linguistic identity, cultural traditions and heritage of the Dimasa community, while providing greater recognition to the language in official and administrative affairs within the district. The recognition was formally notified by the Government of Assam

through the Home and Political Department, marking a significant milestone in the long-term efforts to promote and safeguard the Dimasa language, literature and cultural heritage.

The decision is expected to encourage greater use of Dimasa in official communication and strengthen efforts to document, develop and promote the language among present and future generations. The celebration brought together members of the community, cultural representatives and other stakeholders to acknowledge the significance of the development and its potential impact on the preservation of the region's unique linguistic and cultural identity. The



recognition was also seen as a reflection of the importance of protecting indigenous languages and ensuring that local communities have opportunities to preserve their traditional knowledge, literature and cultural expressions. For the people of Dima

Hasao, the official recognition represents not only an administrative achievement but also a significant step towards strengthening pride in the Dimasa language and ensuring that its rich cultural legacy continues to flourish in the years ahead. The

programme also honoured and felicitated individuals who had made significant contributions towards the recognition of the Dimasa language and worked tirelessly towards achieving the milestone.

Adding to the signifi-

cance of the occasion, the book 'Jengklhongmander: Yaowaisainthi Beleb Lairimin-3' was formally released during the programme, further highlighting the importance of literature and cultural expression in preserving and promoting the Dimasa language. The book release was seen as an important part of the celebration, reflecting the continued efforts of writers, scholars and cultural organisations to document and strengthen the linguistic and literary heritage of the Dimasa community.

The programme was attended by Chief Executive Member of the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council Debola Gorlosa, Haflong MLA Rupali Langthab, DLAC

chairman Mohet Hojai, president of Dimasa Lairimdi Mel and retired ACS Ramesh Thaoson, along with executive members, members of the autonomous council and other distinguished guests. Their presence underscored the wider significance of the occasion and the importance being attached to the recognition and promotion of the Dimasa language in the district. The gathering provided an opportunity for community representatives, public figures and cultural stakeholders to celebrate the milestone together and reaffirm their commitment to preserving the language, literature, traditions and cultural identity of the Dimasa people.

The Delhi Police’s use of facial recognition technology on NEET protesters at Jantar Mantar will be tested by the Supreme Court

New Delhi, Aug 13: On Thursday, the Supreme Court consented to investigate whether the Delhi Police’s use of biometric and facial recognition technology to keep an eye on demonstrators at Jantar Mantar has legal support and whether such widespread surveillance infringes upon fundamental rights to free speech, privacy, dignity, and peaceful assembly. In response to a public interest lawsuit filed by CPI(M) Rajya Sabha MP AA Rahim, a bench consisting of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana sent a notice to the Delhi Police commissioner and the Center regarding the alleged use of biometric identification tools, AI-powered surveillance systems, and facial recognition technology against protesters. Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, appearing for Rahim, told the bench that the petition specifically challenged the use of facial recognition technology by the Delhi Police against protesters and alleged that the data collected was being held by private companies. “This is very specific prayer concerning facial recognition being used by the Delhi Police against protesters, and the data is held with private companies,”

Guruswamy said. She said that both smart glasses and a facial recognition car were used in the surveillance, and that information was gathered without the subjects’ consent. One is a car, and the other maps your face. Thus, both a car and eyewear are utilized. Additionally, all of that data was obtained without authorization. The data is hosted by these private organizations. We will contend that it violates the DPDP Rules, the CrPC, and several other laws,” she stated. The judge then ordered that notice be given and that the plea be linked to other outstanding petitions pertaining to the “Sansad Chalo” protest on July 20. These petitions include claims of police abuses, such as the use of pellet guns and violence against both demonstrators and police officers. According to the petition, which was submitted by attorney Subhash Chandran KR, thousands of demonstrators, journalists, and regular people have been the targets of “continuous and pervasive biometric surveillance” since the sit-in at Jantar Mantar began on June 20. Rahim has requested a ruling declaring the indiscriminate use of biometric and face recognition technology against nonviolent demonstrators to be



unlawful. Additionally, he has asked for orders prohibiting the Delhi Police from using these technologies until a bill authorizing their use is passed by Parliament. Among other reliefs, the petition seeks disclosure of the surveillance technologies, databases, standard operating procedures and vendor agreements used during the Jantar Mantar protest; deletion of protesters’ biometric data from NAFIS, CCTNS and allied databases; and a mechanism enabling individuals to ascertain whether

their biometric information was collected and seek its deletion. In addition to prohibiting private vendors from utilizing the data to train, create, or enhance facial recognition or artificial intelligence systems, it has asked them to verify the permanent deletion of biometric data obtained during the demonstration. The plea claims that in addition to real-time facial recognition utilizing the “lkshana” surveillance vehicle and “AjnaLens” smart glasses, the surveillance was conducted using CCTV cameras,

drones, a Mobile Command and Control Vehicle, and handheld devices. Additionally, it claims that fingerprints were collected using the NCRB’s “Abhigyan” application and compared to the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS). The plea argues against the legality of biometric surveillance during lawful protests, claiming that neither Delhi Police orders nor the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 authorize such measures. It cites RTI responses indicating that no privacy impact assessment was conducted, and criticizes the use of an 80% similarity score for facial recognition matches without publicly validated thresholds.

The petitioner asserts that facial recognition technology is purportedly for tracing missing or deceased persons, not for policing peaceful demonstrations. Referencing the Supreme Court’s 2017 privacy judgment, the plea underscores that such surveillance lacks legality, legitimate aim, and proportionality, potentially infringing on free speech and assembly rights. It also raises alarm over the indefinite retention of biometric data without adequate protections or policies.

The Tata Chair’s departure puts the \$120 billion spending goal in jeopardy

New Delhi, Aug 13: The chairman of the largest conglomerate in India abruptly resigned, leaving a void while the expansive organization implements a massive reinvestment program over the next five years. Natarajan Chandrasekaran’s decision to resign in February puts Tata Sons Pvt.’s \$120 billion bet on future expansion in jeopardy and abruptly ends nearly ten years of leadership that led India’s push into cutting-edge technology like semiconductors and batteries. According to persons familiar with the situation who asked not to be named because the specifics aren’t public, some of the conglomerate’s ongoing and planned initiatives may slow down, be scaled back, or take longer to complete while it waits for new leadership. That’s especially true as Chandra’s exit leaves Noel Tata, the chairman of Tata Trusts, as kingmaker to manage the transition at the top of the group’s holding company. Noel has in recent months pushed back against the Chandra-led spending spree, favoring more measured capital spending with quicker payout horizons. The two men’s tension has now reached a breaking point and will affect the entire nation.

With brands including Jaguar Land Rover’s luxury vehicles, the Taj hotel chain, Air India, and Tetley, as well as a sizable software services division that is the biggest employer in the country’s private sector, Tata is in many respects a stand-in for the Indian economy.

SBI and Vijay Mallya in the Bombay High Court’s Asset Dispute Case

New Delhi, Aug 13: The commercial battle between the banks and fugitive tycoon Vijay Mallya must now cease, according to the Bombay High Court. Due to a Rs 9,000 crore debt default to the former Kingfisher Airlines (KFA) from many banks, Mallya is wanted in India. After fleeing to the UK in March 2016, Mallya was labeled a “fugitive economic offender” in 2019, which allowed police to legally seize his belongings. He contested a 2020 ruling by a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court that allowed the State Bank of India-led group of banks to use his assets that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had seized. A single-judge bench of Justice Milind Jadhav heard his petition this week and said if the parties involved “do not move” past this dispute, it will have a direct and negative impact on the country’s economy. The court also sought details from the ED regarding the current status of the investigation and the attached assets. The bench said the matter, which has been ongoing for nearly a decade, must now reach a logical conclusion. Mallya, 70, had argued that the order to hand over his assets to the banks was unjustified. The court noted that the solutions to commercial



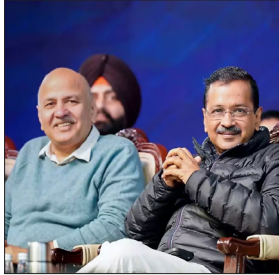
disputes often lie within the disputes themselves, and the parties should move towards practical resolutions rather than remaining locked in conflict. His two petitions appealing his classification as a “Fugitive Economic Offender” under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act (FEOA) and contesting a court decision formally proclaiming him a fugitive were considered in February by a bench made up of Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhara and Justice Gautam Ankhad. The court stated during the February 12 hearing that it would not consider his plea until he returned and submitted to its authority. If he wanted to seek relief, the court had ordered him to make it clear whether he planned to return. During the subsequent hearing on February 18, Mallya stated that he was unable to specify when he would return to India due to restrictions imposed

by English courts, which he claimed prevented him from leaving the country. Senior attorney Amit Desai, who was representing him, requested the court to consider the two petitions independently even if his client was unable to go to India in person.

He cited Supreme Court rulings to support his claim that constitutional courts have occasionally decided writ petitions even in the absence of petitioners. In January 2019, Vijay Mallya received a “fugitive economic offender” designation. Even before a trial is over, the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act permits courts to seize and dispose of the assets of anyone who flees India in order to avoid prosecution. As part of recovery attempts related to the bank loans, authorities seized assets valued at thousands of crores. India has been requesting that the UK extradite Mallya.

Manish Sisodia and Arvind Kejriwal ask the Delhi High Court to reject the CBI’s petition

New Delhi, Aug 13: Arvind Kejriwal, the former chief minister of Delhi, and Manish Sisodia, the former deputy chief minister, have petitioned the Delhi High Court to dismiss the Central Bureau of Investigation’s (CBI) appeal contesting the trial court’s decision to release them in the excise policy case. Kejriwal and Sisodia said that the agency filed the appeal with “unprecedented haste” and in a way that showed a lack of seriousness in their case, which was submitted on Wednesday, only days before the high court was set to hear CBI arguments on August 17. They argued that the appeal, which is over 500 pages long, was



filed within four hours of the trial court’s discharge judgment. According to the two leaders, the speed with which the CBI preferred the appeal “manifestly shows” that the agency could not have properly appreciated or considered the detailed findings and reasoning contained in the discharge judgment. “That the entire Revision Petition omits any specific findings

or paragraphs of the discharge order that, in the CBI’s opinion, demonstrate the perversity.” As a result, the current petition does not meet the requirements for filing a revision petition under Section 442 BNSS. The application said, “The current petition is nothing more than an appeal filed under the guise of the Revision Petition. It further argued that the CBI’s petition does not contain specific accusations against each accused, such as how the discharge order was issued without supporting documentation, what relevant evidence was purportedly overlooked in connection with a specific accused, or which particular finding or

paragraph in the judgment represents an arbitrary or perverse exercise of judicial discretion. Additionally, the CBI has not included any supporting documentation, materials, or proof with the current revision petition to demonstrate the irregularity in the discharge order. The petition may be rejected in its current form because it lacks the particular averments in the order of discharge and the material that is being relied upon. The CBI challenged the verdict before the HC after the trial judge dismissed Kejriwal, Sisodia, and 21 others on February 27, ruling that the CBI’s material did not even reveal a prima facie case.

Arunachal welcomes 72 specialists to improve healthcare in isolated regions

Itanagar, Aug 13: According to Pema Khandu, the chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh, the Medical Specialist Recruitment Examination-2026 helped boost the state’s specialized healthcare facilities by hiring 72 specialist physicians. Khandu congratulated the chosen applicants and gave them their appointment orders, stating that there were still open positions that will soon be filled. He claimed that by increasing access to specialized care within the State, the additional



specialists would especially help those living in isolated and underprivileged locations. According to

Khandu, there are still open positions for 35 specialists at the Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sci-

ences (TRIHMS), 61 specialists in government hospitals, and 79 general duty medical officers. Six zonal

hospitals, 17 district hospitals, 57 community health centers, 162 primary health centers, and 647 sub-health centers were all present in the state, according to him.

He emphasized the importance of providing remote residents with high-quality healthcare on par with that found in larger regions. Khandu highlighted advancements in medical education, pointing out that TRIHMS currently has 100 MBBS seats, up from 50 in 2017. Postgraduate MD and MS programs would soon be offered, he continued.

The FCRA Bill referral to JPC is welcomed by Meghalaya CM

Shillong, Aug 13: On August 12, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma praised the Center’s decision to refer the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), stating that the concerns expressed by religious institutions, churches, and other organizations need to be taken into consideration. According to Sangma, the National People’s Party (NPP) and his government were among the first to voice

concerns to the Center about the planned legislation. According to Sangma, “the NPP was actually the only party that took up the matter with Mr. Kiren Rijiju when the Bill was initially tabled.” He recalls meeting Rijiju with a team of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI), which included its president and secretary general, and then meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah with another delegation from Meghalaya. According to Sangma, the matter was thereafter

brought up with the Center by other chief ministers and political parties. However, he emphasized that the state’s close ties to a number of organizations that would be impacted by the planned reforms were the reason behind his participation rather than any political motivation. “We are very grateful to the government that it has now been forwarded to the JPC,” Sangma stated, expressing optimism that the parliamentary panel will look into the issues brought up by various orga-

nizations, churches, and other religious entities. The chief minister of Meghalaya stated that the government needs to find a balance between controlling foreign contributions and making sure that respectable institutions may carry on with their operations without needless hassles. “We will be able to find a way again to ensure that the balance of regulating foreign currency, at the same time not impacting the good work being done by a large number of institutes, must be maintained,” he

stated. According to Sangma, legislative oversight should be used to accomplish both goals—effective regulation of foreign contributions and ease of operation for organizations performing lawful social work. A move to refer the FCRA Amendment Bill to a 31-member JPC for in-depth review was adopted by the Lok Sabha on August 12. Before presenting its findings at the Winter Session, the panel is supposed to look into issues brought forward by different stakeholders.

According to NHA CEO Barnwal, Tripura will become a model state for digital health

Agartala, Aug 13: By October 31, Tripura’s healthcare delivery system will be entirely computerized. Health Secretary Kiran Gite made this announcement during a workshop on the Integrated Health Information Management System (IHMS). Dr. Sunil Kumar Barnwal, the Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Authority (NHA), stated that if Tripura is successful in implementing its extensive digital healthcare initiative, it could become a “model digital health state” in the nation. When Dr. Barnwal visited the recently opened Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Agartala Civil Hospital, he was pleased with the hospital’s digital healthcare infrastructure, paperless system, and usage of digital administration in the inpatient and outpatient departments. He also looked at the hospital’s “Computer on Wheels” facility, which allows medi-



cal staff to digitally capture and manage patient data right at the patient’s bedside. The digital, paperless system at Agartala Civil Hospital is very advanced, according to Dr. Barnwal, who stated he had previously seen similar systems in the UK. Dr. Barnwal claims that by linking every citizen with an Ayush-

man Bharat Health Account (ABHA) ID, every healthcare facility with a Health Facility Registry (HFR), every physician with a Healthcare Professionals Registry (HPR), and every health center with IHMS and other ABDM-enabled software, an integrated digital health ecosystem can be established.

Lok Bhavan in Shillong will open to the public on August 15–16 and feature a Pan-India Cultural Showcase

Shillong, Aug 13: On August 15 and 16, 2026, Lok Bhavan, Shillong, will open to the public on the special occasion of India’s 80th Independence Day. This will give locals and tourists a chance to observe and celebrate the spirit of Independence Day amid the rich cultural legacy and customs of Meghalaya and India. On August 15 and August 16, Lok Bhavan will be accessible to the public from 1.30 pm to 8 pm and 11 am to 8 pm, respective-

ly. Everyone will be able to enter Lok Bhavan for free. Visitors will have the chance to see a number of cultural performances throughout the course of these two days, showcasing India’s rich cultural diversity and the spirit of unity in diversity, performed by artists and cultural troupes from all parts of the nation. The cultural performance will showcase Rajasthan’s unique folk history thru the colorful Bhawai Dance and Kalbelia. Dogri dance from

the Jammu region, Kashmiri dance from the Kashmir region, and Pahari dance from the Jammu region’s border areas will all be performed from Jammu and Kashmir. Additionally, a composite cultural presentation in Hindi will showcase the region’s identity and cultural legacy. The audience will be treated to Bharatanatyam, a classical dance tradition from Karnataka that showcases the elegance and depth

of one of India’s most prestigious classical dance styles. A cultural group from the Kamataka Sangha, Mandya, will also be part of the Karnataka contingent. Representing the host State, cultural performances showcasing the rich traditions of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo tribes of Meghalaya will also be presented, providing visitors an opportunity to experience the diverse indigenous cultural heritage of the State.

A cultural group from the Kamataka Sangha, Mandya, will also be part of the Karnataka contingent. Representing the host State, cultural performances showcasing the rich traditions of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo tribes of Meghalaya will also be presented, providing visitors an opportunity to experience the diverse indigenous cultural heritage of the State.

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Healthy adults start with anaemia-free teens

The Government of India’s flagship “Anaemia Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan” recently added low birth weight babies, born under 2.5 kg, to the programme’s ambit for the first time. Nearly one in five babies born in India are born with low birth weight. This puts babies at high risk of developing anaemia within the first few months of life, which can affect a child’s cognitive development and performance at school. Beyond the immediate risks of infection and malnutrition in infancy, research increasingly links low birth weight to a higher lifetime risk of non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, chronic kidney disease and metabolic disorders. These conditions often surface only decades later but can severely impact the quality of life. Given the severe impact of anaemia, addressing the issue in these infants early is, therefore, an investment that pays off well into adulthood.

Iron deficiency and severe anaemia in women, before and during pregnancy, can restrict oxygen and nutrient delivery to the foetus. This frequently leads to preterm delivery or intrauterine growth restriction, resulting in a low birth-weight baby. The fact that one in every two pregnant women in India is anaemic means addressing this is an absolutely critical issue that impact future generations. Correcting anaemia before pregnancy ensures a healthy start for newborn. It is in this context that the release of the Anaemia Mukht Bharat (AMB) Abhiyaan operational guidelines, in June 2026, by Union health and family welfare minister J.P. Nadda, assumes particular significance. Given the urgent need to address anaemia before pregnancy, the new guidelines’ strengthened focus, among the many important advancements, on addressing anaemic in adolescents stands out as one of the most consequential.

Anaemia lies at the intersection of child health and maternal health, with adolescence serving as the critical bridge between them. With nearly six in ten adolescent girls and one in three adolescent boys affected by anaemia, the challenge extends across the adolescent population. The revised guidelines rightly recognise that anaemia during adolescence is not simply a concern for the present. It is a determinant of future maternal health, birth outcomes and the well-being of the next generation. Addressing it early creates benefits that extend across the life course and starting during adolescence is pivotal. As a paediatrician, I rarely encounter adolescent anaemia as a medical emergency. Rather, it looks like a slipping report card. A teenager who used to excel at sports, now sits out the games. Or a once eager learner often loses focus during classes. Fatigue is mistaken, time and again, for laziness or a difficult phase. Left unrecognised, these seemingly ordinary symptoms can affect learning, physical development, productivity and long-term health.

The revised guidelines respond to this reality by embedding adolescent anaemia within the broader framework of the National Health Mission. Rather than treating it as an isolated condition, they integrate prevention, screening, treatment and counselling into existing school health services, adolescent health programmes and community-based platforms. This life-course approach acknowledges that improving adolescent health requires sustained engagement, not one-time interventions. The programme itself reflects a welcome evolution. The 6x6x6 strategy now becomes 7x7x7, with the addition of a new beneficiary group, a new intervention, and an additional institutional mechanism. Equally significant is the expansion of the T3 approach of Test, Treat and Talk into a T4 approach that adds Track, placing sustained follow-up on par with counselling, diagnosis and treatment. The operational protocol laid out for adolescents is comprehensive and field-ready. Going forward, annual screening will take place through Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) Mobile Health Teams in schools and anganwadi centres, and opportunistic screening will be conducted by frontline health workers. A structured treatment pathway using the IFA Blue tablet has been advised as well as defined timelines for retesting. Most importantly, a clear referral pathway that ensures every adolescent completes their treatment successfully will also be implemented. The line-listing of anaemic adolescents, shared with ANMs and school teachers, will further strengthen the continuum of care. Another welcome addition is the introduction of “Eating Right” as a dedicated intervention.

Iron supplementation alone cannot solve anaemia if dietary habits remain unchanged. By combining treatment with sustained nutrition counselling and promoting iron-rich diets during adolescence, the guidelines acknowledge that lasting improvements require behaviour change alongside clinical care. In addition, the Abhiyaan’s emphasis on Jan Bhagidari, or community participation, will encourage active involvement of parents during parent-teacher meetings, the vigilance of school teachers, and the reinforcement of healthy nutrition practices at the community level. These are all important steps toward translating this clinical protocol into sustained, everyday practice. The Indian Academy of Paediatrics warmly welcomes these revised operational guidelines and reaffirms its commitment to supporting the government’s efforts to strengthen adolescent, maternal and child health. As part of this commitment, the Indian Academy of Paediatrics is working to strengthen awareness and preventive action on adolescent health through its network of paediatricians across the country. Through this, we hope to complement the government’s efforts by encouraging healthier practices at the community level.

India’s resilience amid global turmoil hinges on unfinished reform agenda

If someone had told me in December 2025, while I was contemplating the year-ahead outlook for the Indian economy for 2026, that two months into the year, a war in West Asia would send global crude oil prices rocketing past \$100/bbl, the Strait of Hormuz would be shut for at least six months and 54% of India’s gas imports would get stuck, I am sure I would have painted a rather gloomy picture. But here we are, oscillating between having a peace deal and a ceasefire violation, oil at \$70/bbl in one instance and \$100/bbl in another, and the Strait of Hormuz open & free and closed & chargeable. Despite such a backdrop, India’s growth in the April-June quarter is estimated to be at least 7% year-on-year.

After the war in West Asia broke out, it became apparent that India was more at risk of a “gas shock” than a “crude oil shock,” given access to alternate suppliers and strategic reserves for the latter. Accordingly, the Essential Commodities Act was invoked, industries were tiered depending on national importance, and rationing of gas supplies began. The outcome was predictable: a sharp, short-lived contraction in fertiliser production; production lines in ceramics and glass factories grinding to a halt; the hotel and restaurant industry facing intermittent shutdowns; petrochemical factories focusing on LPG throughput; and civil aviation and port cargo traffic taking a hit. While these disruptions were severe and extended beyond production lines to livelihoods, a return to normalcy began by mid-

April. At the time of writing this, high-frequency activity indicators were showing steady improvement, even with lingering uncertainty surrounding the truce and widening concerns around other maritime routes. Arguably, these developments guided the Reserve Bank of India to revise its gross domestic product (GDP) growth forecast up by 10 basis points (bps) to 6.7% y-o-y at the August Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting. With the current crude oil price lower than the assumption used in June, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation forecast was also revised down by 10 bps to 5%

shock and administered price increases are not a reflection of demand-push inflation. That said, the MPC statement underscored that it will maintain a close vigil and remain resolute in its commitment to align inflation with the target of 4% in the medium term, noting that “although generalised inflation pressures continue to remain modest so far, the risks of higher food, fuel and other input prices translating into a broad-based increase in inflation persist”.

So, with inflation rising to 5%, do we expect RBI to hike rates soon? Not necessarily. Even though the mandate for the MPC is to keep

ing the hiking cycle. As for stance, a “neutral” stance gives two-way optionality in terms of rate action, and unless RBI has reasonable clarity about the next move, it could retain a neutral stance. So, while August delivered a neutral pause, we expect it to persist through the remainder of 2026. It would be remiss to conclude a monetary policy discussion without referring to currency. Having addressed the capital account crunch concerns by announcing a slew of measures to attract foreign capital inflows, RBI and the ministry of finance did the heavy lifting alongside the June 2026 meeting. With more than \$50

deficit before these steps came into effect). This erases the tail risk for the currency, allaying fears of any outsized depreciation of the rupee vis-a-vis emerging market peers. So, to the extent fundamentals warrant, any rupee depreciation could be modest and gradual.

With resilient growth, contained demand-driven inflation, and an outlook for gradual currency depreciation, one would have expected Indian government bonds to get a place in the Bloomberg Aggregate Index, but the wait appears to have gotten longer than previously envisaged. Should operational difficulties get ironed out, leading to index inclusion, foreign portfolio investment in Indian government bonds could rise, offering additional support to the currency. The tensions in West Asia have exposed India’s energy import dependence yet again, and as the economy steers through this volatile geopolitical global environment, looking inward and beefing up energy security is fast becoming a policy priority. Ramping up strategic petroleum reserves, greater focus on renewable energy, dedicated resource allocation for oil and gas exploration and other such initiatives are some of the steps that the government has already announced to insulate India’s external account from energy price and availability gyrations in the future. The next phase of India’s economic journey will depend as much on the availability of short-term buffers to navigate crises as on using the lessons of this period to deepen reforms, strengthen energy security and attract global capital.



y-o-y. A sharper downward revision of the core CPI inflation forecast by 40 bps to 4.3% y-o-y was notable. It reinforces the view that current and imminent inflationary pressures are led by a supply-side

CPI inflation at 4% (+/- 2% band), the composition and the path matter. With core inflation closer to 4% and adjusted for precious metals, still below 4%, the MPC may opt to wait and watch before commencing

billions of flows on account of these measures already in (and more to follow), the balance of payments (BoP) situation appears on track to turn to a likely surplus of \$30 billion in FY27 (from an expected

Betting on old alliances: why Washington’s new regional pact echoes cold war failures

To most people, the prize that diplomat Hooker Doolittle was urging his masters to seize might have seemed a meagre one: “We typed not only our notes to them,” a colleague at the American consulate remembered of Karachi in August 1947, “but their reply to us as well on our typewriters because they didn’t have any.” For months, consul-general Doolittle—famous for having survived being bitten by a rabid dog when he was serving in Kolkata—had been urging an alliance with a new nation that had risen around him. The Muslims, so the consul-general wrote, were “retrograde, uninformed, [and] venal.” Yet, he argued, Pakistan was America’s best bet as the Cold War dawned: “Its strategic position and facilities make it the eastern bastion of the weak but immensely important belt of Islamic countries, as Turkey is the western anchor. We cannot afford to lose it.”

Last week, Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement, which many commentators have claimed will reorder Middle Eastern geopolitics. The text of the treaty has not been released, but informed accounts suggest it is underwhelming: there is no detailed commitment on how the three countries would respond to aggression, or even to maintain joint forces. The three countries obviously do not need a treaty to buy or sell defence technology. Islamabad signed a similar agreement with Saudi Arabia last year, and has maintained troops in the kingdom for decades. The Mecca agreement isn’t the beginning of a new order, but the latest iteration of plans brewed

by men like Doolittle in the dying months of the Raj, from imperial hubris and Cold War paranoia. Enmeshed in the war in Korea, and committed to the defence of Western Europe, American generals concluded they needed a Middle East Defence Organisation, or MEDO, to protect against a Soviet attack on oil the West depended on. The Middle East powers America sought to protect, though, did not want to work with it. Flailing, the United States turned to Pakistan but though it destroyed its relationship with India, it never got the troops it hoped for.

Little imagination is needed to see the striking similarities: an overstretched America seeking partners to share its imperial burden; an imaginary existential threat; a solution that has no bearing on the problem. Following the end of the Second World War, British India’s Foreign Secretary, Olaf Caroe, had assembled an informal group to discuss post-Independence defence. The group brought together some of the most fascinating characters of the late years of Raj: Francis Tuker, a friend of the diplomat KN Panikkar as well as of the artists Amrita Sher Gil and Jamini Roy, and chief of the Army’s Eastern Command; the spy Peter Fleming; and Walter Cawthorne, the Director of Military Intelligence. Tuker and Caroe threw out a series of bizarre proposals—among them a ring of British-controlled statelets running from Balochistan to Assam, from where an army “impartially controlled” by British officers could defend what had been the Raj’s borders. Claude Auchinleck,

the British Indian Army’s last commander-in-chief, dismissed Tuker as “a very strange man” after being briefed on his ideas. The British Army leadership, though, supported the idea that the two new nations would have one single army. This, Tuker claimed, would help India, since it would create “this vast cushion of Islam between herself and danger.” Among the ideas that never crossed the minds of the group, historian Raymond Callahan has observed, is “what was happening under their noses... [which was] Britain’s impending bankruptcy and its electorate’s weariness with empire.” The Raj had begun to implode—and a new imperial power had begun to embrace its role.

For many years, Caroe had warned of the “shadow from the north”: the Soviet Union, he claimed, was poised to drive south into Asia, seizing the oil fields of Persia on its path to the ocean. These ideas had enormous intellectual influence: American Cold War strategists, as well as Indians like Panikkar, built their worldview from Caroe’s words. The truth, though, was that a Soviet Union eviscerated by war had no grand imperial designs: even holding on to its new East European vassals was proving hard. The Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, allowed the communist insurgency in Greece to be crushed, withdrew his troops from Iran, and turned away from the Turkish straits. Vyacheslav Molotov, the Soviet commissioner for foreign affairs complained in 1946: “There is no corner of the world in which the USA cannot be seen. The US has air bases everywhere: in

Iceland, Greece, Italy, Turkey, China, Indonesia and other places and an even greater number of air and naval bases in the Pacific Ocean.” There would be no Soviet push to seize the oil fields of Persia: the USSR did not have the military power or the wealth.

Late in 1947, Feroz Khan Noon—later Prime Minister of Pakistan—laid out three principles he argued should guide American decision-making. First, the American belief that Pakistan would collapse was wrong. Second, Pakistan would never embrace communism. Third, Pakistan was “the Eastern bastion against communism as Turkey is the Western bastion. It is in the interest therefore of the US to give military and economic support to Pakistan as well as to Turkey.” This argument was persuasive to American diplomats in Karachi. To back Pakistan, Doolittle conceded, would incense the “tortuous Hindu who despises as he grovels before, or politely infuriates by obfuscation, the unclean European.” “So what?” From 1951 onwards, the United States began to revisit these arguments. American military commanders argued they needed Pakistani troops to secure the Middle East. Foreign Office bureaucrats in London found the idea worth exploring, but were uncertain about its viability. Allied planning showed Iran would be rapidly overwhelmed in the event of a war. That meant Pakistan would potentially end up confronting the USSR on its western border, and China, Afghanistan and India on the east. This was, clearly, uninviting. In any case, Pakistan was certain to ask

for a price, such as support on Kashmir, that London did not think it wise to pay. The Middle East, meanwhile, showed little interest in joining the Middle East Defence Organisation. Iraq did not wish to be seen as allying with America; Iran worried about provoking the USSR. Syria said it could join only after the Palestine problem was resolved. The King of Jordan feared public reaction. Egypt’s Gamal Abdul Nasser was blunt: “The Soviets are five thousand miles away,” he said. The British, on the other hand, occupied Egyptian land. “How can I go to my people,” Nasser asked, “and tell them I am disregarding a killer with a pistol 60 miles from me at the Suez Canal to worry about somebody who is holding a knife five thousand miles away?” As the MEDO plan disintegrated, Karachi invited the foreign ministers of 12 Islamic nations to consultations on the security of the Middle East. The invitees dropped out one by one. Islamic solidarity was a powerful slogan, a Foreign Office paper noted, but each leader had pressing problems at home.

London’s languid pace on MEDO began irking the United States by 1953. The State Department chose to push forward independently to secure the Pakistani troops it desperately needed. Knowing that military aid to Pakistan would anger India, America decided to craft a Turkey-Pakistan pact. This agreement was meant to allow America to claim that its military aid was purely for the defence of the Middle East. The fig leaf covered little. The first draft of the paper presented by the Foreign Office to the British cabinet on the trea-

ty read: “The United States Government evidently attach great importance to the closer association of Turkey and Pakistan, not merely as a camouflage for their offer of military aid to Pakistan, but for its own sake.” The words “a camouflage” were crossed out by hand, and replaced with “an occasion.”

The path to stability in the Middle East does not run through military alliances, any more than it did in 1951. Iran needs to be reintegrated into the regional and global order. The proxy wars that have torn apart Yemen and Lebanon have to be ended. The problem of Palestine needs to be resolved. These are political problems, not military threats. America’s ill-advised efforts helped no one—not Pakistan, not the Middle East, and not itself. The Turkey-Pakistan pact was replaced by the five-nation Baghdad Pact—later renamed the Central Treaty Organisation, or CENTO—in 1955. The members, though, never could agree on a joint military command structure, nor joint forces. A revolution in Iraq, Egypt’s war in Suez, civil war in Lebanon: CENTO was unable to deal with a single regional problem before the 1979 revolution in Iran delivered it the coup de grace. General Ayub Khan, Pakistan’s ruler, did not get the CENTO support he hoped for on Kashmir, either. Turkey flatly declined to side with Pakistan over India. And in 1971, CENTO did little to help Pakistan as it was cut apart by India. America did not get a single Pakistani soldier. The relationship between the United States and India would take decades more to recover.

Jio Financial Shares Rise as Global Partnerships Strengthen Expansion Plans

Mumbai: Jio Financial Services Ltd is stepping up its expansion across India's financial services market through strategic partnerships with major global institutions, combining its digital infrastructure and domestic distribution network with international financial expertise.

In its latest development, the company, promoted by Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani, entered into an agreement with Bank of America Corporation under which the US financial services group will acquire up to a 49.9% stake in Jio Credit Ltd, the company's non-banking financial subsidiary, for ₹18,268 crore, or about \$1.9

billion.

The proposed transaction will involve a preferential allotment of equity shares along with warrants that would allow Bank of America to raise its ownership to 49.9%. The deal values the two-year-old NBFC at around 2.5 times its net worth. Jio Credit had assets under management of ₹30,667 crore as of June 30, 2026.

Jio Credit will continue to operate under its existing management team following the transaction. The board will have equal representation from the two partners, providing both sides with an equal presence in the company's governance structure.



The Bank of America partnership adds to Jio Financial Services' growing portfolio of international collaborations across different financial businesses. In the mutual fund segment, the company has partnered with US-based asset manager BlackRock to develop joint operations covering asset management, wealth

advisory and brokerage services in India.

The company has also entered the insurance segment through a partnership with Germany-based Allianz Group. The collaboration covers domestic reinsurance, general insurance and life insurance businesses, further widening Jio Financial Services' presence

across the financial ecosystem.

The strategy enables Jio Financial Services to combine the technology and digital distribution capabilities of its own platform with the institutional expertise, capital and risk-management experience of established global financial companies.

Investors responded positively to the latest developments. Shares of Jio Financial Services gained 3.27% to close at ₹263.35 on the BSE on Thursday, reflecting market interest in the company's expanding network of international partnerships and its plans to build a broader presence across India's financial services industry.

Sensex Gains While Nifty Slips as Markets Recover from Early Losses



Mumbai: Indian equity markets ended a volatile trading session largely flat on Thursday, with late buying in fast-moving consumer goods, technology and real estate stocks helping offset weakness in banking, metal and pharmaceutical counters.

The benchmarks opened on a subdued note and came under pressure during the morning session, with the Nifty 50 falling to an intraday low of 24,311.40. Buying interest emerged later in the session, helping the indices recover from their lows. The

BSE Sensex gained 113.61 points, or 0.15%, to close at 78,079.96, while the Nifty 50 declined 40.10 points, or 0.16%, to end at 24,395.85.

Broader market indices outperformed the benchmarks, with both mid-cap and small-cap segments recording modest gains. Sectoral performance remained mixed, reflecting selective buying across defensive and consumer-facing stocks alongside continued selling in several heavyweight sectors.

The Nifty Metal index fell 1%, while the Private Bank

index declined 0.5%. In contrast, the Nifty Realty index advanced 1% and the Consumer Durables index gained 0.45%.

Among the leading Nifty gainers were Tata Consumer Products, Tata Motors PV, Hindustan Unilever, NTPC and Shriram Finance. Hindalco Industries, ICICI Bank, UltraTech Cement, Grasim Industries and Power Grid Corporation of India featured among the major laggards.

Market breadth remained positive, with more than 160 stocks touching fresh 52-week highs during the session. Solar Industries, Radioco Khaitan, Ajanta Pharma, Bosch, Aurobindo Pharma, Pidilite Industries and Zyda Lifesciences were among the companies reaching new one-year highs.

India Plans Five Homegrown Small Modular Reactors by 2033 Under Nuclear Expansion Drive

New Delhi: The Union government plans to operationalise at least five indigenous small modular reactors by 2033 as part of its Nuclear Energy Mission, supporting the broader objective of expanding India's nuclear power capacity to 100 gigawatts electrical by 2047.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for the Department of Atomic Energy Jitendra Singh outlined a two-pronged approach that combines conventional large-scale nuclear power projects with smaller modular reactor systems. The strategy includes deploying 700-megawatt electrical pressurised heavy water reactors at greenfield sites alongside modular reactors that can be installed at brownfield locations.

The smaller reactors are intended for multiple applications, including replacing retired fossil-fuel-based power plants, meeting the energy requirements of captive industrial

users and supplying electricity to areas without access to conventional grid infrastructure.

The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre is developing three key indigenous reactor designs under the programme. These include the 220-megawatt electrical Bharat Small Modular Reactor, known as BSMR-200, the 55-megawatt electrical SMR-55 and a high-temperature gas-cooled reactor capable of producing up to 5 thermal megawatts.

The high-temperature reactor is being designed with hydrogen production among its potential applications, adding an industrial and clean-energy component to India's expanding nuclear technology programme.

The government is also seeking greater participation from private companies in the nuclear sector. Under the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Act, 2025, private-sector entities will

be able to participate in nuclear manufacturing, supply-chain development and technological activities, while central authorities will continue to oversee regulation and safety.

Alongside reactor development, the Department of Atomic Energy is pursuing India's long-term multi-stage nuclear fuel programme. The strategy begins with the use of natural uranium in heavy water reactors before moving towards plutonium-fuelled fast breeder reactors developed by the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research.

The programme is ultimately aimed at enabling greater use of India's domestic thorium resources through uranium-233 fuel cycles. The KAMINI reactor at Kalpakkam is already being used to test uranium-233-based technology, forming part of the country's longer-term effort to develop a nuclear fuel cycle that can make greater use of its domestic thorium reserves.

Retail Inflation Edges Higher to 4.45% Amid Food Price Pressures

Mumbai: India's retail inflation increased to 4.45% in July, driven largely by higher prices of essential kitchen staples such as onions and ginger, according to government data. The Consumer Price Index-based inflation rate rose from 4.38% in June, remaining above the Reserve Bank of India's 4% medium-term target for the second consecutive month.

The July inflation reading was the highest recorded since the new CPI series, with 2024 as its base year, was introduced in January. Food inflation also accelerated during the month, rising to 5.52% from 5.32% in June, according to data released by the National Statistics Office.

Among individual food items, onion prices recorded a sharp increase in July. Inflation in onions climbed to 22.54%, compared with 4.73% in June. Ginger re-



corded an even steeper rise, with inflation surging to 83.62% during the month. Garlic prices also registered a significant increase, adding to the pressure on household food expenses.

However, price trends remained mixed across vegetables. Inflation in potatoes, ladyfinger, peas and tomatoes remained negative in July, indicating that prices of these items were lower than in the corresponding period a year earlier.

the near term and reach its peak during the third quarter of fiscal 2026-27. The expected increase was attributed mainly to food and fuel prices, after which inflation was projected to moderate.

The RBI has projected CPI inflation for fiscal 2026-27 at 5%, marginally lower than its earlier June estimate. The central bank has, however, highlighted continuing upside risks from geopolitical tensions and the El Niño weather pattern. Some improvement in weather-related conditions could become visible in the August inflation data.

Under the government's inflation-targeting framework, the RBI has been mandated to keep retail inflation at 4%, with an allowable tolerance band of two percentage points on either side. This places the formal inflation range between 2% and 6%.

The NSO data showed considerable variation in inflation across regions in July. While national retail inflation stood at a provisional 4.45%, rural inflation was higher at 4.84%, whereas urban inflation remained comparatively lower at 3.96%.

Among states, Telangana recorded the highest retail inflation in July at 6.32%, while Mizoram registered the lowest rate at 1.84%. The divergence reflected differences in food prices and other components of household consumption across regions.

The July figures are expected to remain important for monetary policy expectations as the RBI assesses whether the recent rise in consumer prices represents a temporary increase driven by food and fuel or develops into broader and more persistent inflationary pressure.

Navi Plans Rs 3,000 Crore IPO as Sachin Bansal's Fintech Firm Eyes \$2 Billion Valuation

Mumbai: Bengaluru-based digital financial services company Navi is preparing to raise up to ₹3,000 crore through an initial public offering, with the fintech firm targeting an enterprise valuation of as much as \$2 billion ahead of a potential stock market debut.

Founded in 2018 by Flipkart co-founder Sachin Bansal, Navi has appointed several leading investment banks to advise on the proposed public issue. JM Financial, Kotak Mahindra Capital, Goldman Sachs Group and JP Morgan are among the advisers working



on the planned offering.

The IPO is expected to primarily comprise a fresh issue of equity shares, allowing the company to raise new capital through the listing. Navi is expected to submit its initial draft offer documents to market regulators by December as it moves forward with prepa-

rations for the public issue.

The proposed listing represents Navi's second attempt to enter the public markets. The company had previously received approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India in September 2022 to launch a ₹3,350 crore IPO. However, the company subsequently deferred the offering as volatile market conditions and a correction in fintech valuations made the timing less favourable.

Since its earlier IPO filing, Navi has expanded its operations beyond its original digital consumer lending business. The company has

developed a broader financial services platform covering personal loans, real estate lending, health insurance, UPI-based payment services and mutual fund management through Navi Mutual Fund.

The expansion has allowed the company to diversify its revenue streams while building a wider digital financial ecosystem. Its lending operations remain a key part of the business, while its insurance, payments and investment offerings have broadened its customer proposition.

Navi has also held discussions for a potential pre-

IPO primary fundraising round involving technology-focused investment firm Prosus. Such a transaction could provide an additional valuation benchmark for the company before it approaches public markets.

The proposed ₹3,000 crore offering comes as Indian fintech companies continue to explore public-market opportunities amid growing investor interest in digital financial services. Navi's broader business portfolio and expansion since its previous IPO attempt are expected to form an important part of its positioning ahead of the proposed listing.

Tata Group's Listed Market Value Nearly Triples to Rs 23.35 Lakh Crore Under Chandrasekaran



Mumbai: The combined market capitalisation of listed Tata Group companies has nearly tripled since N Chandrasekaran became Tata Sons chairman, rising from ₹8.22 lakh crore in February 2017 to ₹23.35 lakh crore.

Retail business Trent Ltd emerged as the biggest performer during the period, delivering a 1,790% gain as its share price climbed from ₹166.47 to ₹2,982.10. A ₹1 lakh investment in the company at the beginning of the period would have grown to approximately ₹17.91 lakh.

Three other Tata Group companies recorded gains of more than 1,000%. Satellite communications company Nelco Ltd rose 1,115%, Tata Investment Corporation gained 1,050%, while Titan Company Ltd advanced 1,015%.

Titan was also among the group's largest contributors to overall value creation. Its market capitalisation increased by ₹4.10 lakh crore to ₹4.50 lakh crore during the period, reflecting the

strong performance of its jewellery and watches businesses.

Other consumer-oriented companies also recorded substantial gains. Tata Consumer Products rose 660%, while Indian Hotels Company Ltd, which operates the Taj hospitality business, gained 540%. Benares Hotels and Automotive Stampings and Assemblies advanced 790% and 640%, respectively.

Several other Tata Group companies delivered significant returns. Tata Teleservices gained 480%, Tata Elxsi rose 400%, Oriental Hotels and Tata Power each advanced 350%, and Tata Steel climbed 300%. Vol-tas increased 255%, Artson rose 250%, Automobile Corporation of Goa gained 170%, while Tata Communications advanced 130%.

Tata Consultancy Services, the group's largest technology company, recorded a comparatively lower percentage gain of 93.3%, but added ₹3.60 lakh crore to its market val-

ue because of its large starting base.

Not every group company recorded gains. Agrochemicals company Rallis India declined 13% over the same period, making it one of the notable laggards within the listed portfolio.

The expansion in the group's overall market value coincided with several major restructuring and portfolio initiatives under Chandrasekaran's leadership. These included the consolidation of the group's aviation businesses under Air India, the creation of Tata Consumer Products and efforts to streamline and rationalise holdings across industrial businesses.

The sharp increase in market value across several major group companies reflects the transformation of Tata Group's listed portfolio over the period, with retail, consumer, technology, hospitality and financial businesses emerging as important contributors to shareholder wealth creation.

Credent Connect N Care Launches Rs 93.90 Crore IPO to Fund Healthcare Expansion

Mumbai: Healthcare services and logistics company Credent Connect N Care Ltd opened its ₹93.90 crore initial public offering on Thursday, offering investors equity shares in the price band of ₹179 to ₹189 apiece.

The SME public issue comprises a fresh issue of 49.68 lakh equity shares and does not include an offer-for-sale component. The subscription window will remain open until August 17, with the company scheduled to list its shares on the NSE Emerge plat-

form on August 20.

Retail investors are required to apply for a minimum of two lots under the issue. Each lot consists of 600 shares, making the minimum application size 1,200 shares and requiring an investment of ₹2,26,800 at the upper end of the price band.

Ahead of the public issue, Credent Connect N Care raised ₹26.53 crore from anchor investors on Wednesday. The company allotted 14.04 lakh shares to institutional investors at ₹189 per share.

The anchor allocation included participation from Abakus Venture Opportunities Fund, Motilal Oswal Finvest, Hem Growth Opportunities Fund and 360 ONE LVF Treasury Solutions Fund.

The company plans to use the net proceeds from the IPO mainly to meet the working capital and capital expenditure requirements of its wholly owned subsidiary, Credent Healthcare Private Limited. A portion of the funds will also be directed towards repayment of debt and general corpo-



rate purposes.

Established in 2015, Credent Connect N Care operates a business-to-business, technology-enabled healthcare logistics and sample collection network. The

company provides services to more than 2,500 diagnostic laboratories, pharmaceutical companies and hospitals across 452 cities.

Its operations are supported by a field workforce of more than 6,500 professionals, giving the company an extensive presence across India's healthcare logistics and diagnostic services network.

Hem Securities is acting as the sole book-running lead manager for the IPO, while KFin Technologies has been appointed as the registrar to the issue.

Politicians among mourners at funeral service for Ann Widdecombe

UK: About 100 family, friends and colleagues of Ann Widdecombe have attended a funeral service for the former Conservative minister, who was killed in her home in Devon last month.

Politicians and broadcasters were among the mourners at Buckfast Abbey in Buckfastleigh, a Catholic abbey in Devon where Widdecombe regularly worshipped and which she described as her “safe haven”.

A 90-minute requiem mass – where prayers are offered for the soul of the dead – was held for the former MP and Reform UK spokesperson.

Before the service, police officers and sniffer dogs could be seen searching the grounds.

Widdecombe died on 8 July, aged 78, after she was hit over the head with a hammer 21 times at her home in Haytor. Joshua Kerry, 28, of Rotherham, South Yorkshire, was charged with her murder on 20 July.

It is understood that Reform leader, Nigel Farage, did not attend the funeral because he did not wish to be a distraction. He is expected to attend a public memorial planned for later this year. Those slated to attend included the shadow chancellor, Mel Stride, the former Conservative justice minister Crispin Blunt and the broadcaster Iain Dale.

The private mass featured a homily from the Rt Rev



David Charlesworth, the abbot of Buckfast. He said: “In the midst of the shock, clamour and sometimes unwarranted comment surrounding her death, our response is to pray for the repose of her soul, to give thanks for her fortitude, and offer Holy Mass in this abbey church, which Ann called her safe haven.”

An earlier statement from the abbey said: “Ann was a woman of profound faith, a faith which found expression in the public forum of politics. Ann was unafraid to express her unwavering convictions, formed through her Roman Catholic faith. She had a sharp intellect and was a dedicated public servant.” The order of service showed tributes would be paid by the Rev Roger Widdecombe, Widdecombe’s nephew, and Christian Sweeting, a close friend.

Donations made in her memory will be divided between the Leprosy Mission and Abound, supporting the projects of the Christian Endeavour Hostel in India.

Widdecombe was first elected as a Conservative MP for Maidstone in 1987 and became a prisons minister in the 1990s. She later became a member of the European parliament for the Brexit party. At the time of her death she was a spokesperson on immigration and justice for Reform UK. She had also appeared on Strictly Come Dancing and Celebrity Big Brother.

UK heatwaves may have cost economy £4.4bn in lost output so far this year

UK: Repeated debilitating heatwaves this summer are likely to have cost the UK economy more than £4bn in lost economic output by the end of July, new analysis shows.

Green thinktank Verdant had suggested June’s unseasonally hot weather had an economic cost of £2.36bn. Updating its assessment to include last month’s high temperatures, it finds a £4.4bn hit to output.

As temperatures soar once again this week, Verdant’s director, James Meadway, said: “The economic costs of climate change are already with us, and set to worsen in future years. Action by the government to protect workers and businesses from the severe effects of extreme heat is well overdue.”

Direct economic costs arise because workers across many industries become less productive in heatwaves, while infrastructure and equipment overheats and has to be shut down.

This week’s amber weather warning for extreme heat in England from the Met Office, comes after three previous heatwaves in the UK in May, June and July. The forecaster has said the UK is on course to record its hottest summer ever.

Verdant is calling for the government to implement a maximum working temperature; and be ready to step in



to compensate workers when they are forced to cut their hours because of extreme heat.

The report also points to the need for investment in urban redesign, to create more cooler green spaces in the UK’s towns and cities.

Verdant’s estimates exclude indirect losses such as the cost of fighting wildfires, and additional electricity consumption from running fans and air conditioning. The largest effect is likely to have been felt in London and the south-east, where temperatures have been highest, the thinktank argues.

If heatwaves continue to intensify at the same rate as in the last decade, it suggests the annual economic cost could rise to more than

£25bn by 2030.

Verdant relies on cross-European estimates by the insurer Allianz, that suggest for every degree above 30C that temperatures rise, workers’ output an hour declines by 3%.

The estimates correspond with work by the Grantham Research Institute at London School of Economics, which suggested a £1bn-plus loss of output during June’s heatwave alone, from workers cutting back their hours or being less productive than usual, because of high temperatures.

In a survey of 2,000 people, the institute’s researchers found that 3.6% of respondents did not work at all during the week of 22 June due to searing temperatures;

while 87% reported at least one health-related impact, from disrupted sleep to dizziness. Economists have increasingly warned about the mounting economic costs of extreme weather events – including the risks of higher inflation due to rising food prices, as production is hit by droughts, floods and wildfires.

Almost three-quarters of England has been declared officially in drought after the repeated heatwaves, which have also affected much of Europe this summer.

The London mayor, Sadiq Khan, recently pointed to the impact of this year’s extreme temperatures as evidence that Labour should take on net zero sceptics and stick to its climate targets.

“The climate emergency is here – and no one can say they didn’t see it coming,” he wrote.

Paul Nowak, general secretary of the TUC, said: “As climate change causes more heatwaves, workers are suffering – and productivity is taking a hit too. Many of us have experienced this directly as we’ve struggled to keep working through the heat.

“Unions are calling for rules that require employers to take action to reduce temperatures when they exceed 24C, and for work to stop when temperatures reach 30C, or 27C for strenuous jobs.”

Six Dead After Houthi Strikes Hit Cargo Vessel Near Yemen’s Bab al-Mandeb

Sanaa: At least six people were killed after a cargo vessel came under attack near Yemen’s Bab al-Mandeb Strait, according to Yemen’s internationally recognised government and local coastguard authorities.

The incident has heightened concerns over the safety of commercial shipping through the strategically important Red Sea corridor.

The vessel, identified as the Tihamah, was reportedly struck in an attack that sparked a fire on board and caused extensive damage.

Four crew members were killed, including three Pakistani nationals and one Indonesian national, according to Yemen’s transport ministry.

A second strike reportedly took place while rescue teams were attempting to evacuate the vessel. Two members of the forces involved in the rescue operation were killed in the follow-up attack, while about 10 people were injured during the incident.

Yemen’s coastguard blamed the Iran-backed Houthi movement for the

attack. The Houthis had not immediately issued an official statement confirming responsibility.

The incident occurred near the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, a vital maritime chokepoint connecting the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden. The waterway is an important international trade route linking the Indian Ocean with the Suez Canal.

Rising Threat to Commercial Shipping

The latest attack comes amid renewed tensions across the Red Sea region.

Houthi attacks on commercial vessels in recent years have prompted several major shipping companies to avoid the Red Sea and take longer routes around the southern tip of Africa.

The incident also comes against the backdrop of heightened regional tensions involving Iran, the United States and their respective allies. The Houthis have previously carried out attacks on commercial and military vessels in the region as part of their wider campaign.

Eextreme heat prompts Cobra emergency meeting

UK: The prime minister will chair a meeting of the Cobra emergency committee on Wednesday in response to extreme heat, which has caused wildfires and plunged many parts of Britain into drought.

Andy Burnham will meet with ministers, officials and agencies as high temperatures continue across the UK on Wednesday afternoon, with temperatures of 33C forecast, and up to 38C on Thursday.

It will be the second Cobra meeting this year on heatwaves, after one took place amid high temperatures in June. Ministers from Defra, the home office, the health department and officials from the Environment Agency will be present. A

Downing Street spokesperson said the government understood firefighters, farmers and NHS staff were all facing challenges connected to the weather. The Met Office has said the UK is on course for its hottest summer on record, as parts of the country face their fifth heatwave this summer. Rare amber “extreme heat” warnings have been issued by the forecaster for London and parts of the south-east, East Midlands, east of England, West Midlands and South Yorkshire from 9am to midnight on Thursday. The government urged the public to pay attention to UK health security agency heat alerts and advised people to drink plenty of fluids and check in on family, friends and neighbours who may be at high risk.

A No 10 statement said: “The prime minister will chair a meeting of COBR – the government emergency committee – this afternoon on the UK’s ongoing response to extreme heat, wildfires and drought. “We know how challenging this summer is proving, particularly for firefighters tackling wildfires, farmers working in drought conditions, and NHS staff in busy A+E units. “We will continue to take the action needed to keep communities safe, protect water supplies and safeguard the environment.”

The Met Office chief forecaster, Chris Bulmer, said: “While the peak heat will be

more short-lived than recent heatwaves, temperatures widely into the mid-30s Celsius on Thursday brings the potential for impacts for some, which is why a Met Office warning has been issued. “High pressure is now becoming dominant and temperatures will build day-by-day. Southerly and south-easterly winds will also tap into the hot conditions over Europe which helps develop this further notable heat in what has been a hot and dry summer so far for many in the south of the UK.”

On Tuesday, Steve Wright, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), warned the country faces a “national emergency” because of the wildfires.

The tragedy of a Moroccan footballer trying to reach Ceuta

Morocco: Football was the life Faten Ben Omar El Azizi had wanted. She had long played in Morocco’s regional league for Maghreb Atlético Tetuán, whose striking kit replicates the colours of the famous Spanish club Atlético Madrid.

And in the cruellest of ironies, on the day that she drowned last month, one of nearly 150 people who died in the illegal mass crossing into the Spanish exclave of Ceuta, her mother was told that her daughter had just been granted a visa to go to Spain.

El Azizi loved training, says her coach: Tuesdays on the pitch and Thursday at the beach, near the city of Tétouan in northern Morocco, where the 26-year-old lived with her mother and the rest of her family.

But making a living from

playing in a women’s football league in Morocco had proved impossible for El Azizi. She received only a small payment of about 260 dirham (£21) when her team won and nothing when it lost – not enough to support her mother, two siblings and other relatives. Her father died when she was 12.

Alongside her football, she had been working in Tétouan’s oldest cemetery, cleaning graves and selling mourners bunches of rayhan (basil), which is associated with blessings in Muslim funeral traditions.

“She dreamed of reaching Europe through football,” says her mother, Jamilla. Instead, El Azizi is now buried in the cemetery she once worked in after she drowned on 30 July while trying to swim from Morocco to Ceuta, the Spanish exclave near Tétouan.



She was among at least 141 people who died during last month’s extraordinary mass crossing to the Spanish territory in north Africa, according to the migrant rights group Caminando Fronteras. It is believed most of those who died –

drowning or crushed at the land border – were under the age of 35.

Their deaths have come less than a year after a wave of youth-led demonstrations swept across Morocco – the biggest since the 2011 Arab spring. The protesters

had criticised underfunding of healthcare and education amid spending on expensive stadiums as the country gears up to co-host the 2030 World Cup with Spain and Portugal.

For Morocco, the 2030 World Cup has become a

symbol of national ambition, although it has also sharpened the debate over public priorities. Nearly 40% of young people aged 15 to 24 were unemployed in Morocco last year, while for those who do find work, wages can be low – Morocco’s gross minimum wage in the non-agricultural private sector is about £250 a month.

Simo, 20, who recently returned to Morocco after the mass crossing into Ceuta last month, says: “Like Faten, many of my friends and myself cannot find work in our country. It’s difficult to build a future here.”

Jamilla says her daughter dreamed of training and developing as a player, but the family could not afford to help her.

On the morning of 30 July, Jamilla says she received a phone call from someone

who asked to speak to Faten. “No, I am her mother,” Jamilla replied. An official then told her that her daughter’s Spanish visa had been approved and that Faten should travel to the consulate in Tangier with her identity card to collect it. Jamilla says she had not known her daughter was applying for a visa or, given she had applied for one, why she spontaneously decided to try to reach European territory by crossing to Ceuta.

Her mother believes Faten had been applying for a visa informally and did not expect to get it approved. She does not know what type of visa it was or where her daughter intended to travel. In recent weeks, she says, her daughter had become unusually quiet, sad and distant. “She seemed switched off,” Jamilla says.

After Faten disappeared,

her family says they searched through the night. A young man eventually came to the house and asked whether she had been wearing a tracksuit. He said that she had struck her head during the crossing.

Jamilla says she could not bring herself to enter the room where the bodies of those who died were being kept. “I did not want that image engraved in my memory,” she says. Instead, her sister went in to identify the body.

For Jamilla, the heartache continues. After learning that Faten had made the crossing, she found out that her other two children had gone, too.

Her eldest son reached Ceuta and phoned her, but Jamilla is still awaiting news of her 14-year-old daughter, who is also believed to have reached Ceuta. “Now I am alone without my children,” she says.

Try These Floral, Peacock, and Jhula Mehendi Designs

Hariyali Teej is not truly complete without exquisite mehendi. As women adorn themselves in bright green attire, traditional mehendi patterns enhance the celebratory atmosphere. With a variety of Teej-themed designs available, ranging from intricate flowers to peacocks and classic swings, there is no shortage of options to select from.

Jhula-Themed Design: Swings or jhulas are closely associated with Teej celebrations. A mehendi design featuring a woman sitting on a swing, surrounded by flowers and leafy vines, can give the pattern a distinctly festive touch.

Floral Mehendi: If you prefer something simple, go for a floral design. Large flowers combined with

small leaves and delicate vines can create a traditional look without making the hands appear too crowded.

Peacock And Floral Combination: Combine two classic motifs by placing a peacock at the centre and surrounding it with flowers, leaves and paisley patterns. This works particularly well as a back-of-the-hand design.

Minimalist Floral Vines: For those who prefer subtle mehendi, delicate vines running across the fingers and back of the hand are a good option. Add tiny flowers and leaves for a simple Hariyali Teej-inspired look.

Traditional Paisley And Flowers: Paisley, or kairi, is another timeless mehendi motif. Pair several paisley shapes with flowers



and leafy patterns to create a traditional design that works for both the palm and back of the hand.

Full-Hand Teej Design: Want something more elaborate? Combine peacocks,

flowers, paisleys, leaves and a swing motif into one full-hand design. The mix of traditional elements can make the mehendi look festive and detailed without relying on a single pattern.

Caring for Your Hair Naturally: Shampoo You Can Make at Home



To produce a potent DIY herbal shampoo for hair development, boil 1 tablespoon each of reetha, shikakai, amla powder, and fenugreek seeds in 1.5 cups water for 20 minutes. Strain the liquid after it has cooled. This natural cleaner strengthens the roots,

decreases hair loss, and promotes growth.**Key Ingredients and Benefits:** Reetha (Soapnut): A natural, chemical-free cleanser that removes grime and oil. Shikakai: Shikakai cleanses softly while leaving natural scalp oils untouched. Amla (Indian Gooseber-

ry): Amla (Indian Gooseberry) contains high levels of Vitamin C, which helps to strengthen hair follicles. Fenugreek (Methi) or Flax Seeds: Produces a soothing mucilage gel that increases slide and wetness. Rosemary or Bhringraj: Increases blood flow to the scalp, waking up resting hair roots. Step-by-step stovetop recipe: Combine: 1 tablespoon reetha powder, 1 tablespoon shikakai powder, and 1 tablespoon whole flax or fenugreek seeds in a kettle with 1.5 cups water. Simmer: Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat and allow it to bubble for 20 minutes. Strain: The warm liquid thru a clean cloth or fine mesh strainer into a glass jar. Cool and store: Allow it to cool completely. Because it includes no artificial preservatives, it should be refrigerated and consumed within 7 to 10 days.

10 Slip-on shoes you will desire to wear daily: Comfortable, and budget-friendly selections

I have arrived at a stage where, if a pair of shoes demands excessive effort to wear, I am likely not interested in them.

With my busy schedule that includes work commitments, attending dance classes, fitting in walks, and being on my feet more than I would prefer, I have developed a keen preference for slip-on shoes. There is an undeniable pleasure in effortlessly stepping into your shoes and exiting the house without the hassle of dealing with laces. But convenience alone isn't enough. I've learnt that a good everyday slip-on needs three things: a comfortable fit, enough cushioning for long hours and a breathable upper. If it looks great but starts hurting after an hour, it isn't making it into my regular rotation.

I've been looking at these 10 options, and they cover everything from sporty walking shoes to casual sneakers that can work beyond the gym.

The kind I reach for when I know I'll be walking a lot

My biggest test for everyday shoes is pretty simple: would I happily wear them on a day when I know I'll be out for hours?

That's where cushioning becomes important. For commuting, errands, travel or days when I'm going from one place to another, I prefer something soft underfoot rather than a rigid sole.

1. **Boldfit Daywalk Max Soft Cushioned Slip-On:** This is the sort of shoe I'd pick when comfort takes priority. The slip-on construction makes it particularly convenient for everyday use, while the cushioned build is designed for walking and regular wear.

What I like about shoes in this cat-

egory is that you don't have to think too much about styling them. They're practical enough for errands but can easily work with joggers, jeans or casual trousers.

My tip: If you're buying slip-ons specifically for long walks, don't just check the cushioning, make sure the heel feels secure too.

When I want something sporty but don't want to look like I'm heading to the gym

Not every comfortable shoe needs to look intensely athletic or performance-driven with gym-ready aesthetics.

2. **ATHCO Drift Memory Foam Comfort Shoes:** This pair leans into the sporty side, with memory foam cushioning and a lightweight construction designed for activities including walking, training and jogging.

I'd wear these on days when I'm mixing errands with a workout because they don't feel like something that needs to stay inside a gym bag.

My tip: Sporty slip-ons work particularly well with straight-leg joggers, oversized T-shirts and lightweight jackets if you want that off-duty look.

For those days when I want one pair to do everything

I'm always suspicious of products that claim to be suitable for absolutely everything, but versatility is genuinely useful when it comes to everyday footwear.

3. **Boldfit Casual Walking Shoes:** Designed for walking and casual use, this pair focuses on soft cushioning and a lace-free construction. It's the kind of straightforward shoe that can work for everyday errands, casual outings and light activity.

For me, this is where slip-ons make the most sense: you don't need a separate pair for every small activity.

The breathable option I'd consider for summer

One thing I notice quickly with everyday shoes is how warm they get. A shoe can be perfectly comfortable at 9am and feel completely different by late afternoon.

4. **Neeman's Begin Walk 'Breeze' Slip Ons:** The breathable knit upper is what makes this one stand out. Along with a cushioned insole and supportive midsole, the construction is geared towards everyday comfort without feeling overly bulky.

I'd particularly consider this kind of knit slip-on for warmer weather or travel days when I'm likely to spend hours walking.

My tip: Knit uppers are great when breathability is your priority, but always check how well the shoe holds your heel before buying. When I want a more recognisable sporty silhouette

5. **Puma Men Scorch Mark Running Shoe:** If you prefer your everyday footwear to have a more performance-inspired look, this Puma option is worth considering. Its running-shoe styling makes it easy to pair with activewear, joggers and casual separates.

I'd reach for something like this on days when I'm moving between workouts and regular plans rather than changing shoes halfway through the day.

The uncomplicated everyday walking option

6. **Campus Men Oxyfit (N) Walking Shoes:** Walking shoes don't need to be complicated to be useful. This Campus pair is designed around ev-

These six watches match well with every ensemble

I must admit that I once viewed watches merely as a tool for telling time. However, my perspective has shifted, and I now consider them an integral part of my attire.

On certain days, when I don jeans and a simple t-shirt, it is the watch that completes the overall appearance. Conversely, on office days, a well-structured watch elevates the look of trousers and a shirt, lending a more refined air. Additionally, when wearing ethnic attire, I appreciate how the appropriate watch can introduce a modern element without overshadowing the jewellery.

The funny thing is that I don't think you need a different watch for every outfit. In fact, I've found myself reaching for a small rotation of styles again and again because they work with almost everything I already own.

My rule: if I can wear it with jeans and a kurta, it's a winner

The most useful watches in my wardrobe aren't necessarily the loudest ones. They're the ones that disappear into an outfit when I want them to and become a subtle styling detail when I don't. A clean analogue watch works beautifully with officewear, but it can also make a casual outfit feel more intentional. A minimal black strap works with monochrome looks, denim and even dresses. And when I'm wearing something more colourful, I usually prefer a watch that doesn't fight with the rest of the outfit.

I've also realised that the size of the dial matters more than I thought. Oversized watches can make a simple outfit feel more contemporary, while smaller, cleaner dials work particularly well when I'm already wearing statement jewellery.

The watch I reach for when I'm running late

You know those mornings when there is absolutely no time to think about accessories?

That's when a versatile everyday watch earns its place.

I tend to reach for something with a clean dial and uncomplicated detailing because it works with almost anything. Jeans, a shirt, a co-ord, a kurta—the watch doesn't need the outfit to be carefully planned.

And honestly, that's what makes a



great everyday watch. It should make getting dressed easier, not give you another decision to make. For office outfits, I like a little structure

When I'm wearing tailored trousers, a crisp shirt or a blazer, I usually prefer watches that have a slightly more polished finish.

There's something about a structured watch paired with tailoring that makes an outfit look more considered. You don't necessarily need chunky jewellery or a statement bag; sometimes a watch, small earrings and a good pair of shoes are enough. This is also where metallic finishes work particularly well for me. They add just enough shine without making the outfit feel overdressed. With Indianwear, I don't always want a traditional watch

This is probably one of my favourite ways to style a watch.

If I'm wearing a kurta set or saree with traditional jewellery, I don't necessarily want another overtly ethnic accessory competing for attention. A sleek contemporary watch can actually make the entire outfit feel fresher. Think silver-toned watch + cotton kurta + jhumkas, or a classic watch with a saree and minimal jewellery.

The contrast is what makes it interesting. And yes, watches can make ca-

sual outfits look expensive

This is my favourite little styling trick.

Take the most basic combination: straight-leg jeans, a fitted top and sneakers. Add sunglasses, a structured bag and a good-looking watch, and suddenly the outfit feels much more intentional.

The watch doesn't have to be expensive. What matters is the proportion, finish and how well it works with the rest of the outfit.

That's also why I prefer having a few versatile watches rather than collecting styles I'll only wear once in a while. These are the six I'd actually keep in my rotation

Rather than buying a watch simply because it's trending, I'd choose based on the outfits I actually wear. A versatile collection could include one classic analogue style, one everyday minimalist option, one slightly sportier design, and a couple of statement pieces for when you want the accessory to do more of the talking.

Here are the six watches I would select for such a wardrobe: To me, the ideal watch is not necessarily the one that attracts the most attention. Rather, it is the one I can wear almost instinctively, enhancing the overall appearance of the outfit.



rather than buying separate shoes for every type of low-impact activity.

The everyday comfort-first option

10. **Careforce Wander Walking Slip-On Shoes:** This final pair takes the same comfort-first approach, with a cushioned, lightweight and lace-free construction intended for everyday use.

It's the sort of shoe I'd consider for travel, shopping days or simply those occasions when I know I'll be walking much more than usual. My biggest tip before buying slip-on shoes

Don't make the mistake of assuming slip-on automatically means comfortable.

The fit still matters. Your heel shouldn't constantly lift out of

the shoe, your toes should have enough room to move, and the upper shouldn't press uncomfortably across the widest part of your foot. Cushioning is important, but so are stability and breathability.

I also think about where I'll actually wear the shoes. A soft knit slip-on can be brilliant for everyday walking, while a more structured athletic shoe may make more sense if I'm combining errands with a workout.

For me, that's the real appeal of slip-ons. They're not just about avoiding shoelaces. The good ones make everyday dressing, and getting out the door, a little easier.

And on a busy morning, I'll take that small win.

Sushant Singh Rajput's sister questions death findings, claims actor possessed crucial information

Mumbai : Over six years after Sushant Singh Rajput was found dead in his Mumbai apartment, his sister, Shweta Singh Kirti, has now reiterated that the Bollywood actor was murdered. In a recent interview, Shweta claimed how multiple psychic told her about ‘foul play’ in her brother’s death and added that there

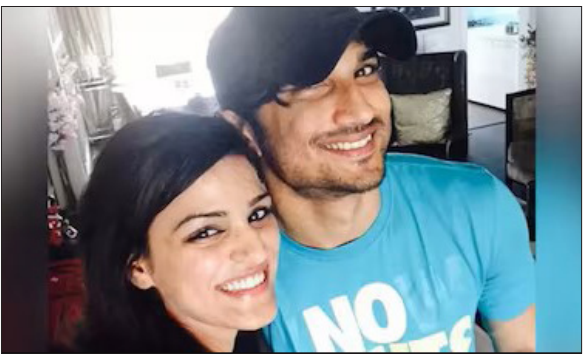
are several questions which still remain unanswered. “It’s been six years, we still do not know what really happened. What was the hurry for post mortem? He never used to lock his room. How was his room locked from inside? There are several answered questions,” Shweta told ‘Supertalks By Themovingship’. “Some-

thing was not right. Something was wrong,” she added. Shweta further claimed that Sushant was disturbed after Disha Salian’s death, who was Sushant’s manager and died after falling from the 14th floor of a residential building in Mumbai. “After Disha Salian’s death, he was very much disturbed. He kept saying that they will

not even spare him. I don’t know. Maybe he had some information he was about to come out with. Maybe something like that,” she stated. Asked if by ‘they’ Sushant meant Bollywood, Shweta said, “We do not know that”. Shweta further said that she does not need a closure from CBI now and rather

wants to focus on celebrating Sushant’s legacy. “We do not need a closure from CBI now, we know what had happened. Whatever they are doing, maybe cover-up, we know in our hearts what happened. There was some kind of cover-up. Now what do we do? After we know that there was some foul play. What do we do? Should

we keep this wound open or should we live Sushant?” she said.Sushant Singh Rajput was found dead in his Mumbai apartment on June 14, 2020. While some suspected it to be a case of death by suicide, others had alleged foul play. His sister, Shweta Singh Kirti, has been fighting for justice ever since.



BTS's V reveals struggle with hearing loss

Seoul : BTS star V revealed he has been dealing with hearing loss for two and a half years. He shared the personal news during a recent live broadcast with bandmate Jung Kook.

V explained that his hearing condition worsened while he was completing his mandatory military service. During that time, people around him urged him to focus on mental strength. He convinced himself that pushing through the pain was enough. However, the issue persisted and grew more severe over time. The singer shared that the difference between his ears is now significant. He estimated that while one ear hears at full capacity, the other only functions at around thirty percent. Bandmate Jung Kook urged him not to ignore the medical problem or rely solely on toughing it out.V reassured fans that he is currently managing the condition responsibly. He visits the hospital regularly and takes prescribed medication to treat his ears. He promised listeners that he is doing his absolute best to care for his health while continuing his music career.

Rishab Shetty, Dulquer Salmaan lead star-studded opening press conference at IFFM 2026



Mumbai : The 17th edition of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) got underway on August 13 with a star-studded opening press conference that brought together some of the biggest names from across Indian cinema. Actors Rishab Shetty, Dulquer Salmaan and Vijay Varma were among those in attendance, alongside Manushi Chhillar, singer Nikhita Gandhi and Dolly Singh.

The gathering also saw filmmakers Nikkhil Advani, Vikram Phadnis, R. Gowtham, Kaizad Gustad and RS Prasanna in attendance, along with the cast of Lala and Poppy. The event set the tone for a festival that continues to position Indian cinema as a diverse, multilingual and increasingly global cultural force. For Rishab Shetty, the festival offered an opportunity to represent Kannada cinema at an international platform. The actor-filmmaker, whose work has helped bring stories rooted in Karnataka’s folklore and traditions to audiences well beyond the region, spoke about the significance of seeing Kannada cinema receive recognition overseas.

“I feel proud to be here. They’ve invited me here to represent Kannada cinema, and I’m very proud of it. To see Kannada cinema get such recognition on an international stage is simply marvellous. To be with literally the entire Indian cinema representatives and so many people here from the Indian film industry. I wish all the best to all the filmmakers at the festival,” Rishab Shetty said in a press statement.His comments also reflected the larger spirit of IFFM, which has increasingly become a meeting point for talent from different Indian film industries. The festival’s 2026 programme brings together films and artistes from multiple languages and regions, underlining the breadth of contemporary Indian storytelling. Dulquer Salmaan, meanwhile, is attending the festival in Australia for the first time. The actor spoke about beginning his Australian visit with IFFM and about Lokah, the Malayalam superhero film that draws from

Kerala’s folklore and mythology.“It’s my first time here in Australia. I’m glad that the start is with Indian film festival of Melbourne. I’m happy to be here with my film Lokah, celebrating Kerala’s folklore mixed with a superhero story. I’m the glad has traveled so much, more than we could have ever imagined,” Dulquer Salmaan said in a press statement. With Rishab Shetty representing Kannada cinema and Dulquer bringing a Malayalam story shaped by Kerala’s cultural traditions, the opening also highlighted one of IFFM’s defining strengths: creating an international space where regional Indian stories can sit alongside mainstream Hindi cinema and find audiences beyond their original markets.As the festival gets underway, its opening gathering offered a glimpse of the conversations and celebrations to come, with Indian cinema’s diversity, new voices and expanding international footprint taking centre stage.

Kushal Tandon sets the record straight on relationship status with Shivangi Joshi

Mumbai : On Lock Up 2, Shreya Kalra claimed that Kushal Tandon had once messaged her on Instagram and flirted with her after they shot for a promotional video for Barsaatein – Mausam Pyaar Ka. She alleged that he was dating Shivangi Joshi at the time. Now, Kushal has hit back at Shreya’s claims, denying that he ever flirted with her or sent her any such messages. He said that Shreya was the one who first reached out to him on Instagram, and that he only responded to her in a professional manner. He further clarified that if Shreya believes she was the reason behind his breakup with Shivangi, that is completely untrue. He also challenged her to share the DMs publicly if she has proof of him flirting with her.



In a conversation with Zoom, Kushal said that when he was first informed about Shreya’s claims on Lock Up 2, he couldn’t initially recognize who she was. “I didn’t even know her (Shreya Kalra) full name. When I was told about her commenting about me in Lock Up, I first thought, ‘Who is she?’ ‘Then, I remembered her,” said Kushal.He then clarified that his breakup with Shivangi had nothing to do with Shreya. “Firstly, she said that my breakup with Shivangi happened because of her, which is not at all true,” said Kushal.

Kushal said he only met Shreya once during the shoot of the promo for his show Basaatein. “I met her for the first time during the shoot of Barsatein Mausam Pyaar Ka’s first promo shoot. There was a passing shot of her where she sees me and says, ‘Wow, what a guy!’ During the shoot, we talked to each other. At that time, I asked her, ‘Why is she doing this promo shoot?’ She told me, ‘I was told that you will be shooting a full-on promo with Kushal Tandon’. Eventually, it turned out to be a passing shot. But she couldn’t walk out now,” he recalled. He further said that his message to her was strictly professional. “I got a message from her on Instagram thanking me for being a ‘nice person’. I replied to her, ‘Dude, you can do much better. You can do very good. You should not have done this small role of passing by seeing the actor. ‘That’s it. I didn’t even have a single word with her apart from that. I never DMed her,” he said.He further said that he never DMs girls on Instagram because he has a huge ego. He further challenged Shreya to share the proof publicly if he ever flirted with her. “And if you have any DM showing that I was flirting with you, I request you to please put it out in public for the whole world to see,” he said.

Rajkummar Rao and Wamiqa Gabbi's Prahaar postponed to October 16

Mumbai : Following Srikanth and Maalik, Rajkummar Rao is set to take on another real-life character in Prahaar: The Untold Story Of Ujjwal Nikam. The courtroom drama revolves around the life and career of renowned public prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam, who rose to national prominence for handling several high-profile criminal cases. The film is expected to delve into Nikam’s role in the prosecution of 26/11 Mumbai terror attack convict Ajmal Kasab, while also shedding light on the intense pressure and challenges surrounding some of India’s most closely watched legal battles.Now, Rao’s upcoming film Prahaar has locked a new theatrical release date.



The film is now scheduled to hit cinemas on 16th October 2026. The makers announced the new date with the intriguing line, “When justice needed a voice, one man became its Prahaar...”, offering a

glimpse into the film’s central character and its serious subject. Rao will play Ujjwal Nikam, the renowned lawyer known for handling several high-profile criminal cases. The role marks an interesting addition to the actor’s film-

ography, with the story set against the backdrop of the legal system. Directed by Avinash Arun, Prahaar is produced by Dinesh Vijan under the banner of Maddock Films. The film features an ensemble cast that includes Wamiqa Gabbi, Jaideep Ahlawat, Sikander Kher and Tarun Sharma in key roles. Details about their respective characters are yet to be disclosed. With its courtroom and legal backdrop, Prahaar is expected to explore themes of justice, law and the people who fight for it. Further details about the storyline, trailer and supporting characters are likely to be revealed closer to its theatrical release.Prahaar will release in cinemas on 16th October 2026.

Critics hail Batwara 1947 as a moving drama led by Sunny Deol and Shabana Azmi

Mumbai : There is much anticipation surrounding Batwara 1947, which stars Sunny Deol, Preity Zinta, Shabana Azmi, Karan Deol and Ali Fazal, among others. The film is backed by Aamir Khan Productions, and has generated quite the buzz with its plot and casting. While the film will hit theatres on August 14, Ramesh Taurani has shared his early review after a special screening. Ramesh took to Instagram and wrote, “Batwara 1947 is a deeply sensitive, moving and truly humanity-glorifying film that deserves to be watched First Day, First Show. It is a powerful reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the importance of compassion, especially during the darkest chapters of our history.” Have a look at the post here. He added, “@iamsunnydeol delivers a terrific and deeply impactful performance. And what a joy it is to see @realpz doing what she does best on the big screen. @azmishabana18, @alifazal9 and @imkarandeol are all exceptional in their respective roles, bringing such depth, intensity and authenticity to the film. @abhimanyusingh.44 is terrific as the villain, creating a



character that is both compelling and deeply unsettling.” “Kudos to @rajkumarsantoshi.official for once again telling a story that strikes an emotional chord with audiences. His ability to bring humanity, emotion and heart to his films is truly special. Congratulations to @apamapurohit and @aamirkhanproductions for producing this incredible film. A beautifully made film with a powerful message — Batwara 1947 is a must-watch. #batwara1947 #aamirkhan,” the review

concluded.Ramesh Taurani’s review of Batwara 1947 has only increased the anticipation surrounding the film. Set against the backdrop of the 1947 Partition, this Rajkumar Santoshi directorial follows a family whose lives are irrevocably altered as violence, fear, and forced migration tear apart communities that once lived side by side. Yet, amid unimaginable loss and deepening divisions, the film celebrates the courage to choose kindness over hatred and hope over despair.

Actress Anupama Parameswaran addresses past toxic relationship in candid interview



Chennai : Actress Anupama Parameswaran has spoken about enduring a toxic relationship for two years. Appearing on I AM with Dhanya Varma, the multilingual actress, who shot to fame with Premam (Malayalam) in 2015, described the unpredictable and

extreme personality shifts she experienced in a past relationship, which she characterised as narcissistic abuse that lasted for about two years. She compared her former partner’s behaviour to the multiple-personality character from Anniyan, the Chiyaan Vikram-starrer of the same name. She said her partner would be extremely loving and romantic, like the character Remo, one day, making her feel incredibly lucky and as though the relationship was almost unreal and dream-like. The next day, however, he would completely flip into a different extreme mode. He would become cold, aggressive or hostile, to the point of emotional cruelty or indifference even in severe situations. Then he could switch again to apologising, begging, crying and love-bombing, restarting the cycle.Ever since she made a cryptic post on Instagram in July, there had been speculation about her breakup. “Oooops!!!!!! Sorry for the photo dump. Turns out, when you don’t have to wait for approvals, a song selection, or someone else’s caption... posting becomes a lot more fun,” the

Karthikeya 2 actress wrote. Anupama has now clarified that her social media post wasn’t an overnight impulse. It came after two years of emotional turmoil, during which she took time to step back, heal and rebuild before making the post. “There was a journey of a girl who identified something really big about herself and life, and who took her time to heal and voice something so important,” she stated. Another of Anupama’s recent posts read: “Sometimes, you have to let go of the dead ends to finally find your peace. And today, peace found me. From today, I choose my voice. I choose my life. No more permissions. No more fear.” The actress also discussed how many people can become trapped in narcissistic relationships without even realising what they are experiencing, a phenomenon often associated with trauma bonding. She recalled shivering after first watching a video by actress Madonna Sebastian about narcissistic abuse, which helped her recognise her own situation.

Publicity designers confirm AI integration in Prabhas starrer Fauzi poster art



Hyderabad : Recently, the makers of Prabhas-starrer Fauzi unveiled a poster announcing the film’s release date, December 3, 2026. Netizens were quick to speculate that the image was AI-generated. The film’s publicity designers, Anil and Bhanu, addressed the speculation surrounding Prabhas’ Fauzi first look in

an interview with Gulte.com. They confirmed that AI was used, but only in a limited capacity. According to them, AI was used to remove distracting elements from the frame. Some background figures were not needed for the poster, and the designers felt that these elements looked distracting, so

they were edited out using AI tools.However, they remained firm about one thing: the main image, especially Prabhas’ face, was not created using AI. They explained that AI cannot capture genuine emotion in an expression, so that part of the work remained entirely manual. The clarification comes at a time when many film posters

are facing scrutiny over the use of AI. Anil and Bhanu’s statement draws a clear line between AI-assisted cleanup and the core creative output. Meanwhile, the first look has been a rage. Released alongside the film’s theatrical release date announcement, the poster has generated extraordinary online engagement. In July, it became the most-shared first-look poster for an Indian film. According to the makers, the poster amassed more than 533,000 shares within its first 24 hours on Instagram. Meanwhile, at an event on Wednesday evening, producer Y Ravi Shankar stated that Prabhas is highly dedicated to the Fauzi sets. He is present every day from around 8 AM to 6:30 PM, staying close to the proceedings and carefully overseeing everything. Even on days when he isn’t shooting, he still comes to the sets and sits by the monitor.

Arrested Official Discloses Details About Jharkhand Jobs “Scam” Rs 70 Lakh, Fixed Interviews



Ranchi, Aug 13: An apprehended suspect has revealed the details of the purported recruitment scheme as the investigation into purported anomalies in the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) recruitment tests heats up. Students from Jharkhand have been demonstrating in Ranchi for weeks, calling for the last JPSC exam to be canceled due to alleged irregularities. At least 20 persons have been taken into custody thus far by the state Crime Investigation Department (CID), which is looking into the matter. Sources claim that Abhay Tiwari, the detained Marketing Manager of TDPL, the organization that administered the state examinations, exposed the whole scheme in front of the CID. Top officials, such as TDPL director Ramvir Singh, former chairman of the Jharkhand Public Service Commission L Khiangte, and Commission members Drs. Ajita Bhattacharya, Jamal Ahmed, and Anima Hasda, have been identified by Tiwari as being involved in the scheme to have their nominees hired. Tiwari informed the CID that agents and intermediaries were used to send applicants to the official network. He said that plans were formed to inflate candidates' final grades by "fixing" the interview board after an agent by the name of Aditya Pandey linked job seekers to TDPL director Ramvir Singh, who subsequently sent them to a Commission member. According to Tiwari, candidates were charged different amounts at different levels of the exam process. For "setting" up an interview with a "board of choice", agents and officials charged a

candidate up to Rs 15 lakh. By the time of selection, the cumulative amount charged from a candidate went up to Rs 60 to 70 lakh for the 12th and 13th JPSC exams, Tiwari has told the CID, as per sources. In his statement, Abhay Tiwari named at least three officials who allegedly got selected for jobs via this racket: Police Superintendent Robin Kumar, Deputy Superintendent of Police Shailesh Singh, and Deputy Jailer Rajesh Kumar Rajak. Tiwari told the CID that Lalu Yadav, a Koderma resident, worked as an agent for these three candidates. According to him, Lalu Yadav brought the candidates to him, and later the interview was "fixed" with Ajita Bhattacharya's board by TDPL's Ramvir Singh. Apart from TDPL and JPSC officials, Abhay Tiwari has also named Exam Controller Shweta Gupta and Patanjali Coaching operator Ravi Kumar, among others, as being part of the racket. His statement has laid bare the entire racket behind "settings" in JPSC recruitment exams. According to sources, Abhay Tiwari told the CID that candidates who paid a particular JPSC member were then sent for an interview to that member's board. He said arrangements were made to "decode" a candidate's code before the interview. According to him, the code was decoded a day before the interview through TDPL's Ramvir Singh, and on the day of the interview the candidate was sent to the board of the Chairman or Ajita Bhattacharya. As per Abhay Tiwari's statement, the network operated like this: Abhay informed the CID that the majority of applicants only

showed up for the interview after making financial arrangements and getting in touch with a member or powerful individual. Additionally, Abhay Tiwari informed the CID that DSP Manish Kumar's "setting" was carried out by an Ajita Bhattacharya acquaintance. In his statement, he said that Gautam Kumar's "setting" was carried out by Patanjali Coaching operator Ravi Kumar. Abhay Tiwari told the CID that interview money was delivered to the concerned persons through different people. According to him, payments for Ajita Bhattacharya were sent to her PA Brijram, a resident of Morhabadi. According to Tiwari, money was sent to Khiangte via a person named Dharmendra. Abhay also told the CID that for Jamal Ahmed, candidates were "fixed" through several agents in Hazaribagh. In his statement to the CID, Abhay Tiwari has also mentioned the Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) exam. He said candidates were provided by TDPL for this exam and the rate was fixed at Rs 10 lakh per candidate. Abhay said one candidate paid Rs 15 lakh to fix the interview board with then JPSC Chairman L. Khiangte. Abhay Tiwari told the CID that candidate Kajal Bharti paid Rs 10 lakh to secure an interview before Ajita Bhattacharya's board. The money was routed to her via PA Brijram. Abhay also said that Brijram was in contact with Ravi Kumar, operator of Patanjali Coaching. Abhay Tiwari's statement names several officers, JPSC members, agents, and candidates. The CID is now verifying these claims by investigating money transactions, bank records, call detail records, digital evidence, interview records, and other witnesses. Former JPSC Chairman L. Khiangte has already been arrested. After his arrest, three members of the Commission - Dr. Ajita Bhattacharya, Dr. Anima Hansda, and Dr. Jamal Ahmed - resigned from their posts. The CID has now summoned these three former members for questioning. The CID has already questioned Dr. Ajita Bhattacharya and Dr. Jamal Ahmed regarding alleged irregularities in JPSC exams, the Commission's functioning, and matters related to the former Chairman.

Shahnavaz Khan, a long jumper, aims to win an Asian Games medal

Japan: Young long jumper Shahnavaz Khan, who won a medal at the World Athletics U20 Championships, hopes to surpass his personal best by finishing on the podium in the next Asian Games in Japan. With an effort of 7.84 meters last week in Eugene, USA, the 18-year-old Shahnavaz became the first long jumper from India to earn a medal at the World Athletics U20 Championships. It was a long way from his earlier-year personal best of 8.30 meters. He claimed that his performance had been impacted by a cramp in his left calf muscles. "Normally, more the pressure, the better I do in a competition. But in Eugene, after the third jump, I started getting cramps. Then I couldn't do it. It was cramp on muscles. This is the first time happening. I don't understand anything," Shahnavaz told PTI in an interaction facilitated by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). "There was a little pain in the heel, so both the heel (pain) and cramp." He, however, said it's a minor issue and will be sorted soon. He said will be able to feature in the invitational Indian Athletics Final Series on September 10 in New Delhi, where most of the Japan Asian Games-bound athletes are expected to participate. "It is not a big issue. It will be all right," he said. On his target in the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games in September-October, Shahnavaz said, "My aim to better my PB of 8.30m and win a medal." Shahnavaz also said senior long jumper Murali



Sreeshankar helps him and rectifies his mistakes as they train at the same place. He hails from Madhaurpur village in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. His late father Naseemudin, who worked as a taxi driver, died of cancer in 2018 when he was 10 years old. But his uncle, who were national level athletes, stepped in to guide him. Shahnavaz is one of the most promising long jumpers in the country with Commonwealth Games silver medallist Sreeshankar showering high praise on the youngster. He is the current national U20 record holder (8.30m) and reigning Asian U20 champion. He is currently third in the Asian senior top list of the season with his 8.30m jump while finishing behind Sreeshan-

kar (8.38m) at the National Inter-State Championships in June. He won gold at the Asian U20 Championships in May with a jump of 7.84m. In the last four months, he has improved his personal best from 8.23m to 8.30m. At such a young age, his personal best (8.30m) is the all-time third among the Indians (seniors) behind Jeswin Aldrin (8.42m) and Sreeshankar (8.41m). He has also breached the 2026 Asian Games qualification mark set by the Athletics Federation of India. Basant Kumar Meghwal, the reigning Asian U20 champion, cleared a personal-best of 2.21m to earn silver in the men's high jump at the global U20 competition. He regrets not winning gold. I was convinced that if I could

jump 2.24 meters, I would win the gold medal. I did my best, but I couldn't accomplish it. My ankle strained as soon as the takeoff began," the 19-year-old claimed. All three medalists cleared 2.21m but failed three times to sail past 2.24m. The places were therefore determined by a countback depending on the number of tries to clear the preceding height. Algeria's Younes Ayachi won the gold medal after clearing 2.21m on his first try, while Basant and Otis Poole of Great Britain won silver and bronze, respectively. If I had passed 2.21m in the first try, both of us (Ayachi and Basant) would have won the gold medal," said Basant, who will compete in the National Open in October.

An earthquake of magnitude 5.5 occurs in Leh, Ladakh

Leh (Ladakh), Aug 13: According to a statement from the National Center for Seismology (NCS), an earthquake of magnitude 5.5 occurred early on Thursday morning in Leh, Ladakh.

At a shallow depth of ten kilometers, the earthquake happened at roughly six in the morning. There have been no initial reports of significant structural damage or fatalities. The NCS posted the following on X: "EQ of M: 5.5, On: 13/08/2026 06:05:15 IST, Lat: 36.881 N, Long: 74.402 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location:

Leh, Ladakh." Anywhere between the surface of the Earth and around 700 kilometers below it is susceptible to earthquakes. According to USGS data, the earthquake depth range of 0-700 km is separated into three zones for scientific purposes: shallow, moderate, and deep. In general, shallow earthquakes pose a greater risk than deep ones. This is due to the fact that seismic waves from shallow earthquakes have a shorter path to the surface, which causes increased ground shaking and perhaps more structural damage and fatalities.

“He Motivates Us” Lovlina Borgohain Shares Her Joy PM Narendra Modi during the meeting



New Delhi: Lovlina Borgohain, an Indian boxer who earned a silver medal at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, talked about how happy she was to see Prime Minister Narendra Modi and how she was praised for her stance on the Indian map in a Glasgow restaurant. She also conveyed her sorrow over the Assamese floods. While PM Modi was interacting with India's medal winners at his home, Borgohain met him. In an interview with ANI, Borgohain expressed her happiness at seeing PM Modi once more and praised his support and encouragement of athletes. It was her sixth encounter with him, she added, adding that, in contrast to previous generations, athletes nowadays are privileged to have such possibilities. "After the Commonwealth Games, I came back home and went to meet the flood victims here. At that time, an invitation for a meeting with PM sir also came, so I had to go

there quickly. And I felt very good meeting him, like every time. I met him for the sixth time. I also met him during the Olympics, every Commonwealth Games, Asian Games. I meet him every time. So it feels very good, the way he motivates us and supports us. Athletes of earlier times would never have thought they could meet the Prime Minister. But we are very lucky that we are able to meet him. After every competition, he talks to us so personally," she said. PM Modi also asked Borgohain about the incident at a Glasgow restaurant, where she had objected to a distorted Indian map after noticing it during her visit. Borgohain said PM Modi praised her for her stand, adding that his appreciation and recognition of her efforts to help flood victims made her feel proud and happy. "He also gave me a lot of praise on the India map issue at the Glasgow restaurant. I felt very good about that. He also said that I

came from there and came to meet the flood victims. And he said very good things about me, so I am feeling very happy because when the Prime Minister of the country says good things about you, it is a very different feeling. It feels very good," she said. Borgohain met Assam flood-affected victims in Golaghat on August 8 and expressed concern over the prevailing situation, describing the destruction as severe. Borgohain said she was deeply saddened by videos of the Assam floods while she was in Glasgow and tried to help in whatever way she could. She praised the support from the government and others but expressed concern over the devastation and urged that the crisis end soon so affected people could rebuild their lives. "While seeing films from Glasgow, I was experiencing severe emotional distress. Since it is difficult for anyone to see their own folks in this condition, we are unable to express how deeply we feel. After that, I tried everything I could. We also don't know when it will be resolved because this is such a significant issue. It seems like our CM sir is interested in it day and night since so many people are come to help. The fact that everyone has support is a positive thing, but it also means that they will have to start over when everything is over. Thus, I can only hope that this is resolved quickly so they may begin again," she remarked. Borgohain won her first CWG medal at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow, however she had to settle for silver in the women's 75kg boxing competition after losing to Emma-Sue Greentree of Australia in a tight final.

Was Jantar Mantar, Mute Jharkhand, Aided by the Instagram Algorithm Analysis of Data



New Delhi, Aug 13: The Jharkhand students' protest is having trouble gaining attention, while the Jantar Mantar demonstration swamped Instagram feeds with recordings. Why did the Ranchi demonstrations almost go unnoticed on Instagram? Is it anything else, or is it the algorithm? Is the Instagram algorithm successfully selecting which youth rebellion becomes a national event and which one fades away, or are we just observing attention shift? On his primetime program "India Matters" on Wednesday night, Shiv Aroor dissected this digital enigma. Examined "DataBeings" data to delve deeply into the digital footprint of the two student-led protests. A keyword search analysis showed that while there were over 5,000 posts on the Delhi protest, the Ranchi protest saw

just over a thousand. However, those 5,239 posts with the phrase "Delhi CJP Protest" made up only 0.001% of Instagram's 48,000,000 Indian users. Nevertheless, it seemed as though the Delhi protest took over Instagram throughout that protest week.

According to data, those 5,239 posts, which reached 1.8 crore people and had over 3,500 engagement per post, originated from just 3,100 distinct accounts. As a result, the demonstration in Delhi became viral on Instagram. Replacing just 'Delhi' with 'Ranchi' in the keyword search, the data shows there were 1,062 posts from 290 unique accounts with a total reach of just 6 lakh, compared to 1.8 crore for the Delhi protest. What made the Instagram algorithm decide that Jantar Mantar needed disproportionate

higher amplification compared to Ranchi's lathi charge? An analysis of views per reel on both protests also shows that Delhi was far ahead of Jharkhand. Delhi showed a slow and steady climb from the day of clashes on July 20 and peaked at 3 lakh views per reel on the day Dharmendra Pradhan resigned. The Jharkhand curve tells a different story. After peaking at 2.8 lakh views per reel at the beginning of the protest, it saw a dramatic collapse. By the time of the police clash in Ranchi on August 10, the protest had almost disappeared from the algorithm. One in three of the top 100 accounts' reels were posted on Jantar Mantar during its height. On the other hand, barely 3% of posts from the top 100 accounts were from Jharkhand during its height. In response to the analysis, BJP leader Amit Malviya questioned Meta's methodology. Is there a bias in the content that is muted and boosted? On Thursday, he posed the question in an X post. "Meta has a right to ask this inquiry. It is increasingly being accused of favoring some information over others and passing judgment on India's public conversation. The BJP leader wrote, "In the most recent instance, it is guilty of suppressing the Jharkhand student protest while boosting the political campaign in the name of students at Jantar Mantar."

A dispute about the venue's “Shuddhikaran” following Mallikarjun Kharge’s rally Uttarakhand

Dehradun, Aug 13: Following a rally by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on August 8, a political brawl broke out between the BJP and the Congress here on Wednesday over a "shuddhikaran" (purification) ritual staged at the Ramlila Ground in Haldwani. Ganesh Godiyal, the leader of the Uttarakhand Congress, claimed that the "Shri Ram Sena" group

performing at the event was connected to the BJP; the party strongly refuted this accusation. Godiyal accused the BJP of dividing society along caste lines and asserted that the ceremony was carried out because Kharge is a member of the Dalit community. The state Congress chairman said that the practice demonstrated the "fundamental difference in ideology between the Congress

and the BJP" and called it a crime against humanity. He also questioned the Nainital senior superintendent of police for not taking action against the right-wing group. However, the BJP denied any affiliation with the organization and charged that the Congress was defaming the saffron party in order to forward its own agenda. Khajjan Das, a Cabinet Minister and state spokesman for the BJP,

At badminton worlds, are monkeys whispering PV Sindhu Responds to the Viral Hype

New Delhi: After a 17-year hiatus, the World Badminton Championships are back in India. The main event will begin in New Delhi on August 17. The India Open badminton competition was conducted earlier this year in the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, where the event is taking place. Due to poor cleanliness, a monkey threat, and bird droppings interfering with play, the location received complaints from all around the world. This time, the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium has undergone a complete renovation thanks to the collaboration of the Sports Authority of India and the Badminton Association of India. In order to frighten away rhesus macaques, which are frequently spotted in central Delhi, including the vicinity of the stadium that will host the August 17-23 championships, the organizers have hired three



trained monkey whisperers who imitate langur cries. Heavy-duty polyethylene bird nets and non-toxic deterrent gels have also been installed. While the effort put in has been lauded, some sections of social media have made terse remarks about the World Championships organisers' focus on these remedial measures. Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu defended the organisers. The unique solution comes in the wake of the India Open in January, which was

briefly disrupted by monkeys in the spectator stands, with the images making international headlines. Rhesus macaques are believed to be wary of langurs, which are considerably larger in size, and the mimicry is being used as a deterrent. The use of actual langurs for such activities was banned in 2012. "100%. I genuinely don't understand the outrage. We all love Wimbledon, and they've had Rufus the hawk keeping pigeons away for years. Every major sporting event has its own local challenges. This is just one additional measure on top of the countless measures already being taken. Somehow that becomes the talking point," PV Sindhu wrote on X. "Can't wait for the world to experience Indian hospitality. I'm 100% sure we're going to deliver a world-class World Championships."

Two Champions League Titles, Two Super Cups: PSG Juggernaut Continues Dominating World Football

New Delhi: The PSG juggernaut continued in world football as the Luis Enrique side won back-to-back UEFA Super Cups, beating Aston Villa 2-1 on Wednesday. Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Desire Doue scored for the French side, who followed up their second straight Champions League triumph by retaining the UEFA Super Cup. PSG took the lead in the 20th minute through a stunning strike from Kvaratskhelia, but Aston Villa hit back just before half-time through Brian Madjo. Doue restored PSG's advantage in the 61st minute, racing onto a through ball from Ousmane

Dembele before curling his shot into the far corner. Villa thought they had avoided defeat when the offside flag went up, but a VAR check confirmed that Doue had stayed onside and awarded the goal. PSG, who beat Tottenham Hotspur on penalties in last year's Super Cup, held on to their lead despite Villa enjoying plenty of possession late in the game. The victory further underlined PSG's remarkable run under Luis Enrique. The French club have now won back-to-back Champions League titles and followed both victories with Super Cup triumphs. PSG have become only the



third team after AC Milan and Real Madrid to retain the UEFA Super Cup. Despite many of his players only recently returning from the World Cup, Enrique named a formidable starting XI, with nine play-

ers from the side that won the Champions League final featuring from the start. Kvaratskhelia opened the scoring after combining with Doue before dancing past Matty Cash inside the area and firing an unstop-

pable effort into the net. Villa had several chances to equalise before the break, with Madjo sending two headers wide and another effort hitting the outside of the post. The 17-year-old eventually found the net moments before half-time. John McGinn floated a ball towards the six-yard box and Madjo, under pressure from Willian Pacho, volleyed into the roof of the net. Madjo became the youngest-ever UEFA Super Cup scorer with his goal. Enrique introduced Ousmane Dembele at the start of the second half and the French forward soon played a decisive role.

Diamond Singh Begins Senior Football Journey With SC Delhi At Durand Cup

Ranchi: At 16, Thokchom Diamond Singh is only beginning to make his mark in senior football, but his journey to the Durand Cup has already been shaped by years of development across some of India's prominent youth football programmes. Ranchi had already seen enough. Rodriguinho, on his first start for SC Delhi, had put five past Defenders FC, and the Birsamunda Stadium had settled into that pleasant stupor grounds fall into once a scoreline stops being in doubt. Then, in the 85th minute, something smaller happened. A late change, a fresh pair of legs, a number few in the crowd would have recognised. Thokchom Diamond Singh picked up the ball on the left, dropped a shoulder past his marker,



and drove a shot low toward goal -- only for Defenders FC's keeper to fling himself across and turn it away, according to a press release. It lasted perhaps four seconds. It will not make any high-light reel next to the Brazilian's hat-trick and a half. But for a sixteen-year-old mid-

fielder three weeks into his first senior contract, it was the entire point: a boy who has spent twelve years being coached for exactly this moment, taking it. Diamond's route here reads like a map of Indian football's youth pipeline, drawn in a straight line. He began at four years

old at TYDA Football Academy in Bishnupur, Manipur -- the sort of modest but serious set-up that the state has built by the dozen, and which quietly stocks the country's underage squads. From there he moved through FC Imphal City Football Academy, an

AIFF-accredited set-up built specifically to develop youth talent across Manipur and the Northeast, then Sudeva Delhi's youth system, then the Bhaichung Bhutia Football Schools, each stop adding a layer of polish. The AIFF-FIFA Talent Academy came next, the closest thing Indian football has to a finishing school for its most promising teenagers, and it was there that a call-up to Bibiano Fernandes' India U-17 side arrived, followed by a place in the squad for the AFC U-17 Asian Cup. Diamond Singh said his football journey began at the age of four at TYDA Football Academy and progressed steadily through different youth levels before earning a place in SC Delhi's senior squad.

Sports Ministry suspends national table tennis federation over governance and code violations

New Delhi: The Sports Ministry has suspended the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) over what it described as "governance deficiencies and institutional failures". The ministry has also requested the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to constitute an ad hoc body to manage the sport's affairs in the country, in consultation with the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF). "The ministry is satisfied that TTFI has failed to adhere to the principles of good governance, transparency, accountability and democratic functioning expected of a recognised National Sports Federation, besides repeatedly disregarding



the directions and guidelines issued by this ministry from time to time. The continued governance deficiencies and institutional failures have adversely affected the effective administration of the federation and have the potential to prejudice the interests of athletes and the sport of table tennis in the country," an office order issued by Director

(Sports) Bangararaju VVKK T stated. "Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred under the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011, and other extant regulations, the ministry hereby suspends, with immediate effect, the recognition granted to the TTFI as the National Sports Federation for the sport of table tennis until further orders," the order added. Following the order, the federation will no longer be entitled to financial assistance or any other form of government patronage. However, the ministry has asked the IOA to constitute an ad hoc committee to oversee and run the sport in the interim.

Argentina World Cup Winner Rulli Completes Manchester City Move From Marseille

Manchester: Manchester City have signed Argentine goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli from French club Olympique de Marseille on a two-year contract, the Premier League side announced on Wednesday. The 34-year-old arrives as a replacement for James Trafford, who left City to join Leeds United. Rulli returns to Manchester City after spending the 2016-17 season at the club, although he did not make a senior appearance during his first stint. He joins as an experienced backup option, with Gianluigi Donnarumma continuing as City's first-choice goalkeeper. "This is an amazing



opportunity for me and one I had to grasp," Rulli said in a club statement, as per Reuters.

"When the chance to join Manchester City comes along, you have to take it.

Everyone knows what an impressive club this is." Rulli has earned eight caps for Argentina and was part of the squads that lifted the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and the 2024 Copa America. The goalkeeper has also enjoyed spells with several European clubs, including Real Sociedad, Montpellier, Villarreal and Ajax. During his time at Villarreal, he played a key role in the club's 2021 Europa League final triumph over Manchester United, saving a penalty in the shootout. The current La Liga champions have already put out their second offer for the Spanish FIFA

World Cup-winning star, while Man City are holding out for 80 million euros, as per Goal.com. Enzo had remarked on the player's contractual situation, and until the move is settled, Rodri will stay with City and stick with their schedule. Enzo is counting on the Man City star as long as he officially is with the club. Within the Barcelona camp, there have been extra moves made to bring the Spanish star to the team, and they want to bring him as quickly as possible so that he can adjust into Hansi Flick's system without delay, and Flick personally is reported to want him immediately.

Hockey World Cup: India's Schedule, Match Timings, Livestreaming and TV Details

New Delhi: The Indian men's and women's teams are all set to enter the hockey World Cup 2026, with the aim of ending a jinx that has lasted for more than 50 years. The Indian men's team, who won the World Cup in 1975, haven't played in the semi-finals ever since then. The women's side finished fourth in the inaugural edition of the Women's World Cup in 1974 and have since been going through a similar jinx. However, this time, both teams will be aiming to make a solid impression and aim for gold. The Indian men's team will be in Group D, where they will face arch-rivals Pakistan, Wales and England. The women's team are also in Pool D, where they will face South Africa, China and England. The Interna-

tional Hockey Federation (FIH) have made a big change to the current edition of the World Cup as the quarterfinals have been removed, and new phases being introduced. With this, the first two teams from each group will go into E and F, with the last two teams from each group going into G and H. In the second phase, each team will play three additional games against sides they did not encounter in the opening round. However, when two teams advancing from the same initial pool meet again in Phase 2, the outcome of their earlier encounter will be carried forward and count towards the next stage. This will then determine who will make it to the semi-finals and how the rest of the ranking matches will pan



out. With the stakes high, all eyes will be on the Indian teams to see if they can bring back gold. Goalkeepers: Mohith HS, Suraj Karera Defenders: Jarmanpreet Singh, Harmanpreet Singh (c), Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit, Yashdeep Siwach Midfielders: Rajinder Singh, Aditya Arjun Lalage, Har-

dik Singh, Manpreet Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Vivek Sagar Prasad Forwards: Dilpreet Singh, Shilanand Lakra, Sukhjeet Singh, Mandeep Singh, Abhishek Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam Defenders: Ishika Chaudhary, Shushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Lalthantluangi, Jyoti, Shilpi Dabas.

AIFF Awaits FIFA Approval as Brazil Friendly Clashes With ASEAN Cup Final Schedule

New Delhi: The All India Football Federation finds itself in a tricky situation over India's participation in the inaugural FIFA ASEAN Cup as it mulls sending an understrength team with the tournament final on October 3, clashing with a proposed high-profile friendly against Brazil in Kolkata on the same day. "We're awaiting a response from FIFA," an AIFF official told PTI on Wednesday. India have been drawn in Group A of Division 1, or the Premier Division, alongside Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The tournament is scheduled to be held in Indonesia from September 24 to October 3, with India's campaign comprising three group-stage matches followed by the final on October 3. The AIFF executive committee had decided at its August



6 meeting to participate in both the ASEAN Cup and the Brazil friendly, with separate squads planned for the two competitions, a move that was opposed by Indian icon Bhaichung Bhutia, who said India must field the best team at the FIFA ASEAN Cup. FIFA regulations do not allow a participating

country to field an Under-23 or second-string team in a FIFA-sanctioned competition. This means India cannot field a reserve side in the ASEAN Cup while the senior team plays Brazil in Kolkata. "The Executive Committee recognised the match against Brazil, to be played

during the FIFA International Match Window, as a unique opportunity to provide Indian players with invaluable exposure against one of the world's strongest footballing nations," the AIFF had said after its meeting earlier this month. The federation had also said it would formally notify FIFA of its plan to field separate squads for the two competitions. The AIFF is now waiting for FIFA's response on whether such an arrangement can be permitted. The federation is understood to be keen to retain the Brazil fixture while exploring other international friendlies to ensure the national team gets adequate match exposure. A pullout from the ASEAN Cup, if it arises could also invite regulatory action, including a financial penalty.