

OBPS workshop discusses rollout of online building permission system

Kohima, Aug 08: A two-day joint session on the Nagaland Online Building Permission System (OBPS) concluded at Hotel de Oriental Grand, Kohima, on Thursday. The programme was organised by the Directorate of Municipal Affairs in collaboration with the Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), and the National Informatics Centre

(NIC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. According to DIPR, director of Municipal Affairs Temjenrenla Kechu delivered the welcome address and outlined the implementation of the OBPS in Nagaland. Associate Planner, TCPO, Sudeep Roy, presented the OBPS framework, while State Informatics Officer, NIC Nagaland, I. Lanusungkum Aier, gave an overview of the system.

Technical sessions focused on the Model/State Building Bye-Laws (BBL) and implementation of OBPS across states. Officials from the Directorate of Municipal Affairs, Urban Development Department, NIC and TCPO deliberated on synchronising the Draft National Building Bye-Laws, 2026 with the proposed e-Development Control Regulations (e-DCR) for Nagaland. Participants were taken



through the OBPS workflow, including user interface, pro-

cess flow, authorisation, digital certificate integration and on-line signing procedures. Officials from various departments discussed service integration and requirements for issuing online building permits. The sessions also covered building plan approval drawing standards, layer conventions, standardised colour coding, occupancy classifications and digital drawing formats. On the second day, participants

attended live demonstrations and hands-on sessions on CAD layer conventions, feature classification and practical application of OBPS requirements under the guidance of experts from NIC Meghalaya and TCPO. Department website launched: Advisor for Urban Development and Municipal Affairs, Zhaleo Rio, IAS (Retd.), launched the official website of the Municipal

Affairs Department and inaugurated the programme. The department stated that the website would enhance transparency, improve access to information and strengthen coordination between the department, urban local bodies (ULBs) and the public. It will provide information on the state's 39 ULBs, their structure, activities, contact details, rules, regulations and advisories.

Over 5,200 kg garbage cleared



Itanagar, Aug 08: In a major environmental initiative, over 5,200 kilograms of garbage was removed from the Yagamso River during a large-scale clean-up drive organized in Itanagar. The campaign, led by local authorities and supported by community volunteers, environmental groups, and student organizations, aimed to restore the river's ecological health and raise awareness about responsible waste management. The clean-up drive witnessed enthusiastic participation from hundreds of volunteers who worked tirelessly to collect plastic waste, discarded household items, and other pollutants that had accumulated along the riverbanks. Officials noted that the effort was part of a broader strategy to combat pollution and revive water bodies across the capital region. Speaking at the event, organizers emphasized that the Yagamso River is not only a vital water source but also a cultural and environmental asset for the people of Itanagar. "This initiative is about reclaiming our river and ensuring it remains clean for future generations. The removal of over 5,200 kg of waste is a testament to what collective action can achieve," said a senior official. The campaign also highlighted the importance of community-led conservation, with schools, NGOs, and youth groups joining hands to spread awareness about reducing single-use plastics and adopting sustainable practices.

Arunachal Dy Speaker urges students to call off stir over poor condition of key highway

Itanagar, Aug 08: Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Deputy Speaker Kardo Nygyor on Friday appealed to student organisations to call off their proposed agitation over the poor condition of a strategic highway connecting the central and northern districts of the state, saying the process to upgrade the road is underway. Addressing reporters here, Nygyor said the state and central governments had initiated administrative steps to improve the road. On August 4, the Jigo Yego Students' Union and the Basar Area Students' Union, under a Joint Action Committee, issued a 15-day ultimatum to the state government to restore and repair the highway. The organisations also urged the government to co-



ordinate with the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corpora-

tion Ltd (NHIDCL) and the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), warning of democratic agitation if no action was taken. Nygyor, who represents Likabali assembly constituency, said administrative procedures to upgrade the road are progressing following high-level interventions at both the state and central levels. Frequent landslides during the recent monsoon months have repeatedly blocked key stretches, severely disrupting the movement of civilians, military convoys, and essential services. Due to the dilapidated condition of the road, commuters and transport operators from Leparada, Upper Subansiri, West Siang, Shi-Yomi, and parts of Siang districts are currently forced to take a lengthy detour via the Pasighat-Pangin-Aalo route.

Green Peren store inaugurated

Dimapur, Aug 08: Deputy Commissioner, Peren, Hiazu Meru inaugurated the Green Peren store at Jalukie Town on August 6, 2026 under the banner "Our land nourishes us. Our hands grow it. Our pride shares it. And our future sustains it." According to DIPR report, speaking at the inaugural programme, Meru said it had been the long cherished dream of the District Planning & Development Board (DPDB), Peren to establish such a store, which the board had discussed and planned for two years. He noted that the initiative was a significant step towards benefiting farmers of the district. The DC observed that the Agriculture & Allied department, Rural Development and other departments had taken various initiatives to bring about such a mar-



ket, while stressing the need to upskill with available materials and resources. Meru encouraged Kingdom Steward for taking up the challenge of marketing the products and advised them to adopt a business based model despite the risks involved. He also urged youth engaged in the venture to dedicate themselves, master the skills and work with en-

thusiasm to ensure its success. Expressing happiness, Meru concluded that the initiative had finally become a reality. Community leaders and farmers present at the event expressed optimism that the store would serve as a platform for economic empowerment, while also reinforcing the district's commitment to sustainable agriculture.

Hundreds rally in Itanagar, demand scrapping job ratio

Itanagar, Aug 08: Hundreds of supporters of the All Future Task Force (AFTF) gathered in Itanagar for a "Mass Referendum Rally", demanding the immediate scrapping of the controversial 80:20 job ratio policy in Arunachal Pradesh. The rally, marked by placards, slogans, and speeches, drew participants from diverse backgrounds, including students, youth leaders, and civil society members, who voiced strong opposition to what they termed an unfair employment framework. Protesters argued that the 80:20 ratio, which reserves 80 percent of government jobs for local candidates and 20 percent for others, undermines meritocracy and restricts opportunities for deserving applicants. Rally organizers emphasized that the



policy has created widespread resentment among young aspirants, many of whom feel excluded from fair competition. "Employment should be based on merit, not arbitrary quotas. We demand a transparent system that gives equal opportunity to all," said an AFTF spokesperson. The demonstration, held peacefully under tight security arrangements, included symbolic activities such as sig-

nature campaigns and public pledges to continue the agitation until the government responds. Participants urged the state leadership to initiate consultations with stakeholders and reconsider the policy in light of growing discontent. Government officials acknowledged the rally but maintained that the job ratio was introduced to safeguard local interests while balancing broader employment needs.

Mineral development must uphold Article 371A: Chingang

Dimapur, Aug 08: Advisor for Geology & Mining and DUDA, W. Chingang Konyak, emphasised the significance of Article 371A, stating that mineral development in the state must be rooted in constitutional safeguards and carried out with confidence and participation of local communities. "Our objective must be responsible development-one that creates wealth without degrading the environment or undermining community rights," he asserted. He was speaking at the 46th State Geological Programming Board (SGPB) meeting of the Department of Geology & Mining (DGM) held at Hotel Saramati on Friday. Chingang said the Board should serve not merely as a review



forum but as a platform where science, policy and development aspirations converge. Highlighting Nagaland's rich deposits of coal, limestone, petroleum, natural gas

and other minerals, he stressed that the true value of these resources lies in how effectively they are utilised to improve people's lives. He asserted that mineral wealth must

contribute to employment generation, infrastructure development, industrial growth and economic self reliance, while ensuring sustainability. He underscored that natural resources are a shared inheritance and must be managed with scientific knowledge, environmental responsibility, transparency and respect for community rights. Calling for stronger collaboration, the advisor urged Geological Survey of India, technical institutions and DGM to avoid duplication and focus on priority areas with economic potential. He stressed that geological investigations should lead to tangible outcomes such as identified mineral blocks, investment opportunities, value addition and employment.

Rio unveils CM Yarn Bank for Nagaland's weavers

Dimapur, Aug 08: Nagaland chief minister Dr. Neiphiu Rio on Friday virtually launched the Chief Minister's Yarn Bank Scheme, describing it as a major initiative to strengthen Nagaland's handloom sector by ensuring affordable access to quality raw materials for weavers across the state. According to a DIPR report, the scheme was launched at the Chief Minister's Residential Complex, Kohima, on the occasion of the 12th National Handloom Day. Addressing the programme, Rio said the handloom sector symbolised the identity, culture and resilience of the Naga people, with every traditional textile reflecting the heritage of the state's tribes. He paid tribute to the state's weavers, especially women, for preserving Nagaland's



rich weaving tradition. Rio said limited access to quality natural yarn at affordable prices has long posed a major challenge, forcing weavers to travel long distances and bear high transportation costs. To address this, he said a Yarn Bank has been established at the District Industries Centre, State Industrial Park, Toluvi, Dimapur,

as a centralised facility to supply high-quality natural yarn across the state. Under the scheme, natural yarns such as cotton, eri silk, muga silk, bamboo fibre and other natural fibre blends will be available at mill-gate prices, with the state government providing a 15% subsidy to eligible weavers. Rio said the initiative is ex-

pected to benefit 5,000-10,000 weavers annually. Eligible beneficiaries holding Yarn Pass Books will be able to procure yarn through a transparent distribution system. Describing the Yarn Bank as more than a supply mechanism, Rio said it reflected the government's commitment to reducing production costs, improving productivity and

increasing household incomes while preserving Nagaland's textile heritage. He urged government departments, co-operative societies, self-help groups and community institutions to ensure the benefits reach deserving weavers in every district. Adviser for industries & commerce Hekani Jakhalu said the Yarn Bank addresses a key challenge faced by the handloom sector by making quality natural yarn affordable and accessible. She thanked the chief minister for sanctioning funds under the Chief Minister's Innovative Fund (2025-26) for establishing the facility. Jakhalu said the scheme is being implemented under the National Handloom Development Programme in line with the Ministry of Textiles' Raw Material Supply Scheme guidelines.

India maps 27 Arunachal sites, rebuffs China renaming

Itanagar, Aug 08: In a decisive move to assert sovereignty, the Government of India has officially placed 27 sites in Arunachal Pradesh on its national map, countering China's recent attempt to rename locations in the region. The announcement was made following deliberations in Parliament, where leaders emphasized that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of India and will remain so. The step comes in response to Beijing's unilateral renaming of several places in Arunachal, a practice India has consistently rejected as baseless. By formally mapping these sites, India has reinforced its territorial claims and sent a clear message that external attempts to alter nomenclature will not affect ground realities. A Parliamentary panel praised the move, noting that it strengthens India's position both domestically and internationally. "This is not just about names on a map. It is about protecting identity, her-



itage, and sovereignty," the panel stated. Officials added that the mapping exercise also highlights the cultural and historical significance of Arunachal's landscapes, many of which are sacred to local communities. Local leaders in Arunachal welcomed the announcement, stressing that it validates the sentiments of communities who have long resisted external claims. Civil society groups noted that the mapping exercise also aids in development planning, tourism promotion, and cultural

preservation. Strategic analysts observed that the move reflects India's broader policy of firm but measured responses to territorial provocations. By combining cartographic assertion with parliamentary backing, India has reinforced its stance without escalating tensions unnecessarily. The government reiterated that Arunachal Pradesh will continue to receive priority in infrastructure, education, and cultural initiatives, ensuring that the region remains fully integrated into India's growth story.

GHADC MDCs were on the verge of physical confrontation regarding the voting process limited to Scheduled Tribes

Shillong, Aug 08: Proceedings in the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council nearly turned into a fistfight on Friday when GNC MDC and former Deputy CEM Nikman Ch. Marak and TMC MDC Alphonsush R. Marak angrily confronted each other over a proposed amendment to restrict GHADC voting to Scheduled Tribe electors.

Video of the incident showed the two MDCs shouting, pointing at each other and walking aggressively towards one another before fellow members intervened and pulled them apart, preventing the confrontation from escalating further.

The dramatic scenes followed heated exchanges over a proposed amendment to Rule 128 of the Assam and Meghalaya Autonomous



Districts (Constitution of District Councils) Rules, which seeks to restrict voting in GHADC elections to Scheduled Tribe electors.

Opposition members pressed for the proposed amendment to be tabled for discussion, arguing that it did not incorporate the recommendations of the Select Committee. They also questioned why the extension granted until August 10, 2026, had not been notified until

the last moment.

BJP MDC Bernard N. Marak later alleged that the Williamnagar MDC spoke beyond the prescribed time while claiming credit for the proposed amendment. According to Bernard, Nikman objected, maintaining that the credit belonged to NGO leaders who had championed the demand and were later implicated and jailed. He further alleged that despite repeated demands from the Opposition, the ruling NPP and TMC MDCs refused to table the proposed amendment for discussion and claimed the matter was being handled discreetly.

The House also witnessed sharp exchanges over alleged irregularities involving the previous Executive Committee, including the former Chief Executive Member and

Deputy Chief Executive Member, adding to the tense atmosphere.

Following the confrontation, TMC MDC Alphonsush R. Marak said the issue should have been discussed peacefully. However, he alleged that the Opposition's objections were politically motivated and claimed that some members were opposing the proposal simply because it was being pursued by the present Executive Committee. Alphonsush said the issue had remained unresolved for nearly 74 years and urged all members, irrespective of political affiliation, to work together to resolve it. He added that the Chairman had announced that the proposed amendment would be taken up for discussion and consideration when the House reconvenes on Monday.

Four ULFA (I) cadres surrender



Itanagar, Aug 08: Four ULFA (Independent) cadres surrendered before the Assam Rifles in Arunachal Pradesh's Longding district near the India-Myanmar border on Friday, an official said.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, the paramilitary force launched an operation in the Chupkhaw Track area under Wakka circle in Longding district, according to an official report. During the operation, sustained persuasion by the security forces encouraged the insurgents to renounce violence and join the national mainstream, it said.

All four cadres voluntarily laid down their arms without any exchange of fire or casualties. Security forces recovered four pistols along with 17 rounds of live ammunition from the surrendered cadres.

Seeks CBI explanation over temple construction in CBI complex

Shillong, Aug 08: The Meghalaya government has sought an explanation from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) over the alleged construction of a temple within its office complex at Mawdangdiang in the New Shillong Township. The explanation was sought after the Khasi Students' Union (KSU) urged the state government to examine the 2018 lease agreement between the New Shillong Township Development Agency (NSTDA) and the CBI, and to demolish the alleged temple if it is found to violate the agreement. In a letter to Deputy Inspector General and Head of Branch, CBI, Anti-Corruption Branch, Shillong, NSTDA Member Secretary, P. K. Boro said that the agency received inputs from KSU Shillong Mihngi Circle and the Director of Land Records and Survey about the alleged construction. Boro said that the land was leased to the CBI in November 14, 2018 for an office-cum-residential complex. "As per Clause 10 of the lease agreement, the lessee shall not construct any structure, or alter any structure erected on the said land without prior permission of the Agency," the NSTDA Member Secretary informed the CBI official. Moreover, Boro

said the CBI must invariably comply with the terms of the lease agreement. On July 14, the KSU locked the under-construction temple at the CBI office in the Mawdangdiang, arguing that the land, designated as government revenue land, should not be repurposed for unauthorised religious structures. The KSU also gave a one-week ultimatum demanding the demolition of the temple built inside the government office. However, the Kutumba Surakshya Parishad (KSP), a prominent Assam-based Hindu organisation, has condemned KSU's demand to demolish the temple and urged Chief Minister Conrad Sangma to step in and ensure that people across the state are allowed equal freedom to practise religion without obstruction. "India is a secular country and every citizen has the basic right to worship as per his or her belief. We must not support activities that create social and communal tension," KSP president Satya Ranjan Borah had stated. Meanwhile, the KSU said it expects a fair and speedy inquiry into the construction of the temple inside the CBI complex, adding that if violations are found, the structure should be demolished as per law.

Church officials are calling for safeguards in the proposed changes to the FCRA

Shillong, Aug 08: Church leaders from Meghalaya and the North East have renewed their appeal to the Centre for meaningful consultations with all stakeholders before enacting the proposed Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, reiterating strong concerns over provisions that allow vesting of assets in the Designated Authority.

Speaking on the issue, Rev. Aminot T. Sohliya recalled that on July 5 a delegation of church leaders, led by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi and submitted a memorandum seeking key amendments. The Union Home Minister had assured the delegation that the Ministry of Home Affairs would consult all stakeholders.

Sohliya said it remains unclear whether the version of the Bill to be taken up will incorporate the



concerns raised by churches and the Meghalaya government. Principal objections relate to Section 16A(1), which provides for provisional vesting of foreign contributions and assets upon cancellation or cessation of an FCRA certificate. The churches have demanded that such vesting be subject to judicial oversight and legal safeguards. They have also sought protec-

tion for church and minority institutions under Section 16A(7), opposed retrospective application under Section 16B, and called for safeguards for properties in Sixth Schedule Areas under Section 16D. Meanwhile, Cabinet Minister Lakhmen Rymbui expressed concern that certain provisions in their present form could adversely affect organisations in Meghalaya and

must be modified. He objected to the sweeping powers proposed for the designated authority, including seizure of properties for lapses such as delayed renewal of licences, and to the expansion of personal liability beyond office-bearers.

Rymbui said organisations could face indefinite liability and that producing decades-old records retrospectively would be practically impossible.

He suggested amendments should apply only to future funding and that minor procedural lapses should attract monetary penalties rather than property seizure.

Stating that Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma has already met the Union Home Minister, Rymbui said his party supports strict action against misuse of foreign funds but will continue to seek suitable modifications to protect genuine institutions and the unity of Meghalaya.

Assam government will carry out a door-to-door evaluation of the damage caused by floods

Jorhat, Aug 08: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said his government will conduct a door-to-door assessment of flood damage in the four worst-hit districts from August 9 to 30.

He asserted that no affected household will be left out and the government will provide maximum relief permissible as per norms.

"Concluded an extensive training meeting with officials from the 4 districts affected by #AssamFloods.

From 9 to 30 August, our teams will undertake a door-to-door assessment of damage," Sarma said in a social media post after chairing a meeting with the officials of Jorhat, Sivasagar, Charaideo and Golaghat districts.

He said the district commissioners, co-district commissioners and circle officers must adopt a compassionate approach and ensure no affected household is left out.

"Officers concerned will upload images of the damage on a dedicated app. Thereafter, an assessment will be made by August 30, followed by re-verification with affected families," Sarma said.



The chief minister maintained that the "guiding principle is clear: assess every genuine loss and provide the maximum relief permissible under existing norms".

At least 97 people have been killed and over 1.68 lakh people remained affected in the deluge, with four eastern Assam districts bearing the worst impact.

Sikkim SIR: 37,724 names out of draft roll

Gangtok, Aug 08: Names of 37,724 people have been left out of the draft electoral roll in Sikkim as they have not submitted their enumeration forms during Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of rolls, an official said on Friday.

Sikkim had 4,71,018 electors before the SIR of electoral rolls, of whom 4,33,294 Enumeration Forms were received and digitised, the official said.

CEO Raj Kumar Yadav said around 77 per cent of electors had been successfully mapped with the 2002 electoral roll during the door-to-door exercise. Around 1,25,822 notices were generated and 1,05,821 have been served, while 75,243 hearings have been conducted to verify the eligibility and documents of electors whose records require further scrutiny, officials said. The notices were primarily served to electors whose names could not be linked or mapped with the 2002 electoral roll, or whose details submitted in the



enumeration forms required further verification.

Electors whose records were successfully mapped generally did not have to submit additional documents. The last date for filing claims and objections was August 4.

Gangtok recorded the highest number of notices, with 35,107 generated and 29,781 served, followed by Namchi with 27,092 notices and Pakyong with 21,487. Political parties have appointed 1,135 Booth Level Agents (BLAs) for the exercise, including 583 by SKM, 216 by BJP, 204 by Citizen Action Party-Sikkim and 132 by SDF. The final electoral roll is scheduled to be published on September 6.

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According to DIPR report, speaking at the inaugural programme, Meru said it had been the long cherished dream of the District Planning & Development Board (DPDB), Peren to establish such a store, which the board had discussed and planned for two years. He noted that the initiative was a significant step towards benefiting farmers of the district.

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Agriculture & Allied department, Rural Development and other departments had taken various initiatives to bring about such a market, while stressing the need to upskill with available materials and resources.

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MZP plans to stage a picket outside the MPSC office to advocate for reforms

Aizawl, Aug 08: Influential student organisation the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) on Friday announced that it will picket outside the Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC) office on August 10 to intensify its demand for structural reforms of the commission.

The MZP has been demanding that the MPSC should be strengthened through structural reforms and additional manpower to improve its efficiency and credibility, the organisation's general secretary Lalhminganga Chhangte said. The announcement came days after MZP functionaries held a demonstration outside the MPSC office in Aizawl on Thursday.

The protest, which was temporarily called off at around 2 pm, was part of an ongoing campaign to press for reforms aimed at restoring public confidence in the commission, Chhangte said. Earlier, the organisation held a meeting

with students on August 4 to review complaints from job aspirants regarding the MPSC recruitment process, he said. The meeting observed that repeated administrative shortcomings had seriously undermined the confidence of job seekers, he said.

The MZP alleged that several candidates were affected by problems arising from the One Time Registration (OTR) system.

It also expressed concern over applicants whose candidature was rejected because of incomplete document uploads, including some who had already qualified in written examinations but were later disqualified on OTR-related grounds.

Among key demands, the organisation urged the government to undertake comprehensive reforms of the MPSC and constitute a government-appointed reform committee or commission to overhaul



its functioning, according to Chhangte.

It demanded that the existing OTR system should be abolished and replaced with need-based, post-specific application forms.

The MZP also demanded that candidates rejected due to incomplete

online OTR document uploads be allowed to submit the required documents offline, providing a one-time offline document submission opportunity for candidates who cleared written examinations but were subsequently rejected because of OTR-related deficiencies.

Maharashtra Prohibits Books That Promote Violent Extremism in Terror Outfits

New Delhi, Aug 08: The Maharashtra government, led by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, has outlawed 114 books and magazines that “glorify violent extremism and jihad and promote radicalization” and are published by terrorist groups like Al Qaeda (AQIS), Islamic State, Islamic State in Khorasan Province, and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen Pir Panjal Regiment. The state government of Maharashtra stated in a gazette notification published on Thursday that intelligence inputs, cyber surveillance reports, and investigations carried out by the state Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) indicate that “radical and extremist literature, publications, and propaganda material” connected to organizations involved in or supporting terrorist and illegal activities are still being circulated, possessed, and transmitted. “Such material is found to have a content which glorifies violent extremism and jihad, promotes radicalisation, provides ideological indoctrination, facilitates recruitment, and incites or encourages acts prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India, thereby posing a serious threat to public order, communal harmony and internal security,” it said. The Islamic State/Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL),



Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Daish/Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP), Islamic State Wilayat Khorasan/Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham-Khorasan (ISIS-K), and all its manifestations are mentioned in 44 issues of “Voice of Khurasan” magazine, “Are you still sitting,” “Why Should You Join the Islamic State? Additionally prohibited are issues of “The Revolutionary Resurgence” associated with the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen/ Hizb-ul-Mujahideen Pir Panjal Regiment, “Nawai Gazawa e Hind,” “School of Yusuf,” and “Modern Warfare” associated with “Al Quida/Al Quida in Indian Sub-Continent (AQIS).” Devendra Fadnavis on Friday said the banned material contained content promoting radicalisation, including information on making bombs and carrying out lone-wolf attacks. “Earlier, there was no specific law in the state to ban such a material. Under the new Maharashtra Public Security Act, such

content can now be banned and action can be taken against those circulating it,” he told reporters. The gazette notification said that in March last year, top police and ATS officials had informed the government that certain newspapers, books, documents and other materials, including paintings, drawings and photographs, needed to be forfeited as they were associated with activities prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India. “The state government is satisfied that the said material is associated with terrorist organizations, including but not limited to Islamic State (IS/ISIS), Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen Pir Panjal Regiment, Al Qaeda (AQIS), and other organizations listed in the First Schedule to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, including associated websites, social media platforms, encrypted channels and digital networks propagating such content,” it stated.

Meeting PM Modi, Raghav Chadha expresses gratitude for his advice and observations

New Delhi, Aug 08: Raghav Chadha, a BJP Rajya Sabha MP, visited Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday. He called the encounter a “detailed and enriching interaction” and said he would treasure the morning. Chadha expressed his gratitude for the Prime Minister’s time and the chance to gain from his “insights and guidance” in a post on X following the meeting. “I shall treasure this morning. I had the honor of meeting

Shri Narendra Modi Ji, the Honorable Prime Minister. A thorough and enriching exchange. Extremely appreciative of his kind time and the chance to gain from his wisdom and advice,” Chadha added. Chadha, who recently switched from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to the Bharatiya Janata Party in April, has taken on a new role in the Rajya Sabha. He was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Petitions following its re-



constitution, which came into effect on May 20. Chadha led the exit of seven Rajya Sabha MPs, including Ashok Mittal and Sandeep Pathak, from the AAP to the BJP in April this year.

37 out of 57 Tamil Nadu MPs choose not to attend CM Vijay’s all-party meeting on delimitation, which is a major setback

New Delhi, Aug 08: The majority of Tamil Nadu MPs chose not to attend the all-party MPs’ meeting that Chief Minister C Vijay Joseph called on Saturday to discuss the delimitation issue, which could be interpreted as a symbolic setback for him. Vijay reportedly summoned the meeting to decide on a coordinated state reaction to the proposed delimitation exercise, which had sparked worries over the possible loss of parliamentary seats for southern states. Only 20 of Tamil Nadu’s 57 MPs were anticipated to attend the meeting, while 37 opted not go, indicating a lack of agreement on the chief minister’s proposal. According to the attendance details, the 20 MPs attending the meeting are largely from the Congress and its smaller allies. The Congress has 12 MPs present,

while the VCK, CPI and CPI(M) have two each, and the MDMK and IUML have one each. All 30 of the ruling DMK’s MPs are not present at the meeting, which they have boycotted. The four MPs from the main opposition AIADMK did not attend the function either. With one MP apiece, the PMK, MNM, and DMDK have also joined the boycott. The TVK-led administration is allegedly trying to deflect attention from the Cauvery water sharing issue, according to the MPs who are not attending the meeting. The discussion takes place in the midst of speculations that the administration is making a fresh attempt to pass the measure, with rumors that it would reintroduce it during the next monsoon session gaining traction. Following Independence Day, the government has stated

that it is prepared to present the delimitation measure during a special three-day session. The Draft Delimitation Bill 2026 and its possible effects on Tamil Nadu will be discussed at Vijay’s consultative meeting with state Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs. The boycott is primarily led by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). All 30 MPs from the DMK will allegedly be absent from the meeting. Speaking on the party boycotting the meet, DMK MP Kanimozhi said that the all-party MPs meeting convened by CM Vijay is unnecessary, alleging that it had been called to divert attention from the Cauvery issue. The Cauvery dispute is a decades-old disagreement over the sharing of river water between

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It is currently in focus over Karnataka’s proposed Mekedatu balancing reservoir project, which Tamil Nadu has opposed. Vijay has proposed dialogue between the two states to resolve the issue. Kanimozhi went on to say that there has been no formal declaration from the Union government regarding the delimitation bill’s tabling during the current Parliamentary session and that there is nothing new to debate because the updated draft is not even accessible. Along with the PMK, MNM, and DMDK, each of which has one MP, AIADMK will also abstain from the meeting with its four MPs. Two MPs from the Congress, two from the VCK, CPI, and CPI(M), and one from each of the MDMK and IUML are anticipated to participate.

A 17-year-old girl dies on the way to the hospital after her car becomes trapped in mud for hours

New Delhi, Aug 08: The district administration in Jammu and Kashmir’s Rajouri district suspended a government official and ordered an investigation after a 17-year-old girl died after the car transporting her to a hospital became bogged in mud on a road for several hours. The recent severe rains in the area caused a mudslide that damaged the road. Authorities were apparently notified that the route was open by the authority in charge of it. The girl from the isolated Methyani hamlet reportedly became very sick on Friday and was being transported to Government Medical College (GMC), Rajouri, when a mudslide at Chak Methyani left the

automobile transporting her trapped for about three hours. After hectic efforts, volunteers managed to pull the vehicle out, but the girl’s condition deteriorated, and she died while being taken to the hospital, the officials said. The Chak Methyani-Panglar-Kotecharwal road, the only road link connecting several remote villages in the area, was washed away near Methyani during last year’s monsoon and was subsequently restored temporarily. About two weeks ago, a mudslide struck the same area, making the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) road impassable. Locals accused the PMGSY authorities of egregious incompetence

for neglecting to restore the crucial road despite repeated pleas, sparking considerable public outrage. After a video of the incident went viral on social media, the issue received more attention. The Rajouri district administration moved quickly to issue an order claiming that the PMGSY Division Rajouri Executive Engineer had notified the administration via an official WhatsApp group that the road had been repaired and was now usable. However, a different picture emerged from a later verification carried out by Kotranka, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC). The deceased girl had been ailing for almost a month and had previ-

ously been admitted to Government Medical College Hospital in Jammu, according to the ADC’s report. Her condition worsened again when she was released from the hospital about two weeks ago, so her family decided to transfer her to GMC Rajouri. However, the report stated that there was a delay of around two to three hours due to the blocked route. According to the ADC’s assessment, the road was still in very bad shape because of large ditches and landslides, making it unsafe for cars to travel on. It also made clear how difficult it is still for the people of Narla Bamble, Kotecharwal, and Panglar to transfer patients, food grains, and fertilizers.

In the Chamba District of Himachal, a private bus overturned, killing eight people and injuring ten more

New Delhi, Aug 08: In the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh, a private bus overturned and plunged onto a lower road on Saturday morning, killing at least eight persons, including the driver and conductor, and injuring ten more. The bus, run by Sharma Bus Service, was traveling from Bairagarh to Chamba when the accident occurred close to Chalunj Mor in the Devikothi area on the Bairagarh-Tissa road. According to officials, the car departed Bairagarh at around 6:30 in the morning and was involved in the collision after traveling around three kilometers. When the bus crashed, eighteen individuals were on board. Several passengers were trapped in the wreckage as

the car toppled and fell onto a road below, according to officials. Hearing cries for help, local residents rushed to the spot and alerted the police. Rescue teams comprising personnel from the NDRF, Police, Home Guards, Fire Services and the Revenue Department launched an operation to pull passengers out of the damaged bus and shift the injured to hospitals. Of the 10 injured, six sustained serious injuries and were referred to Pt Jawaharlal Nehru Government Medical College and Hospital in Chamba for treatment.

The Chamba District Disaster Management Authority confirmed that eight people lost their lives in the accident, while ten others were injured. The iden-

ties of the victims have not yet been officially released. Authorities have launched an investigation to ascertain the cause of the accident. The collision happened on the 27-kilometer mountain section of the Bairagarh-Tissa route in the isolated Churah Valley, which is renowned for its steep slopes and small lanes. For travelers aiming for the high-altitude Sach Pass, the path is a crucial link. Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, the chief minister of Himachal Pradesh, sent his sympathies to the victims’ families after the disaster and gave the district administration instructions to prepare for the injured people’s good care. In the meantime, 185 roads in Himachal Pradesh have been closed



due to heavy rainfall, and the Shimla Met Office on Saturday issued a “orange alert” for heavy to very heavy rains in certain areas of the state on Monday and Tuesday. As of Saturday morning, 104 transformers and 77 water supply systems were also affected, according to the State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC). According to officials, 92 roads were blocked

in Mandi, 48 in Kullu, 14 in Chamba and Shimla, 9 in Sirmaur, 5 in Kangra, and 3 in Una district. 65 individuals have died in rain-related accidents since the start of the monsoon on June 30, including 14 from landslides and 1 from flash floods. According to them, the state has lost Rs 834 crore. The state is expected to have rain till August 14, according to the weather service.

It may be illegal for kids under 13 to create accounts on social media and gaming sites

New Delhi, Aug 08: A proposed private member’s bill would forbid platforms from tracking, profiling, or targeting kids with personalized advertising, and it would prohibit children under 13 from creating accounts on social media and online gaming platforms without verified parental agreement.

The Safeguarding Healthy Internet Environments for Little Digital-Natives (SHIELD) Bill, 2025 also calls for parental-control dashboards that would enable parents to monitor activity, control privacy settings, and limit screen time, as well as mandatory age-verification systems for platforms that are accessible to minors. The bill, proposed by BJP MP Baijayant Panda, was among two private members’ bills that were scheduled to be introduced in the parliament on Friday but could not be taken up because of adjournments of the House. The second bill



is a proposed law seeking to regulate the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) to create realistic imitations of people.

However, private members’ bills rarely make it into law, with only about a dozen having cleared parliament since Independence.

The SHIELD Bill aims to impose a certain set of

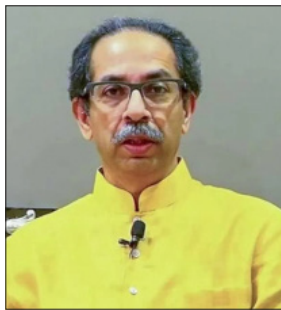
safety requirements on social media sites, online gaming platforms, and other digital intermediaries. It defines a child as anyone under the age of eighteen.

It suggests outlawing the tracking, profiling, and use of targeted advertising for minors by platforms. Additionally, platforms would need to take action to keep kids away from violent or

extremist content, drug-related content, gambling and simulated betting, and pornography. Platforms that violate the proposed law may be subject to fines up to ₹10 crore.

According to Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, services may be temporarily suspended or blocked for repeated or deliberate violations.

Thackeray queries PM Modi’s meeting with former Uddhav Sena MPs



New Delhi, Aug 08: Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s meeting with the MPs who defected from Shiv Sena UBT on Friday was criticized by Shiv Sena UBT president Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday. He questioned whether this was a sign to the Supreme Court, which is considering the party’s charges regarding its emblem and defection. He questioned whether the purpose of the Friday gathering between MPs and Prime Minister Narendra Modi was to exert pressure on the Supreme Court, which is currently considering the Shiv Sena matter. Additionally, he instructed MP Anil Desai to provide the Supreme Court with clippings of documents pertaining to the PM-MPs meeting. “The PM has time for Instagramming and I was criticised for doing Facebook Live during the Covid pandemic. Congress never received so many abuses in 65 years, but the Bharatiya Janata Party has received many abuses now. The PM does not have time for youth, but he has time for gaddar MPs,” he said.

Thackeray said that he has firm faith in the constitution and the judiciary. He uttered those words. “I assume these MPs went to Modi for protection, much as people bow down to saint Swami Samarth for their well-being. Modi is telling the MPs that he supports them; is he a new Swami? The six MPs who left Sena UBT to join Sena, a member of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), were also criticized by him. Thackeray questioned whether the PM’s support for the MPs is being conveyed to the court in a non-threatening manner.” Shinde used to meet Amit Shah when he traveled to Delhi, and now he is meeting the PM when Shah is in Delhi,” he stated. Navnath Ban, a spokesman for the BJP, stated, “Uddhav Thackeray does not meet anyone in the party.” Because Modi met the MPs, Sanjay Raut is furious. Modi meets with all MPs and opponents on a regular basis. MPs and the PM had a conversation. The Thackeray mansion, Matoshree, is closed to all visitors, including MPs and employees. Additionally, Sanjay Raut needs to demonstrate how he has used his money. “The courts will make the necessary decisions. However, it is obvious who is in charge of the actual Sena. PM Modi is not going to put pressure on the courts, Ban stated.

The government requests that Meta update its algorithms

New Delhi, Aug 08: According to official sources, Meta has been requested by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to update its algorithms and offer a compliance plan in order to stop the propagation of propaganda, deepfakes, and other unlawful or manipulated information on its platforms. According to the sources, the government has requested these particular modifications to Meta’s algorithms in an effort to improve the identification and elimination of damaging and manipulated content. Additionally, MeitY officials have requested that the corporation improve its content moderation systems, respond more quickly to takedown requests from authorized government organizations, and adhere to data localization regulations. According to the sources, the government has also pursued closer cooperation with Meta in order to expedite the identification and elimination of deepfakes, altered photos, and deceptive posts. The directives came after a Friday meeting between MeitY representatives and Meta’s technical team, when the business described how its current systems detect and manage hazardous content on the internet. However, government representatives advocated for particular algorithmic modifications meant to limit the dissemination of what they called deepfakes, misinformation, and manipulated media across Meta’s platforms. The most recent talks come after a number of meetings between Meta and the government over the management of harmful and unlawful content on its platforms. According to the sources, Meta identified weaknesses in its current systems and described technical steps it could take to combat deepfakes and other types of artificial content during the talks.

The parties have decided to carry on with the talks, and another meeting is scheduled for next week. Concerns about deepfakes, Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), and other dangerous information on Meta’s platforms have prompted the government to scrutinize the company more closely in recent days. Following the Indian government’s concerns, Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Meta, had already issued an apology for mistakes pertaining to CSAM and deepfake content on the company’s platforms.

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Ending the stray-cattle menace on our roads

The sight of cattle roaming freely on national highways, urban thoroughfares, and rural lanes has long transitioned from a quirky cultural anomaly to a grim, multi-faceted national crisis. Often described euphemistically as a traffic nuisance, the stray-cattle menace is, in reality, a lethal hazard that claims hundreds of lives and causes widespread economic disruption annually. Recent judicial interventions, including strict observations from the Supreme Court calling stray animals on highways “an invitation to death,” underscore the urgency of addressing a problem that has festered due to administrative apathy, socio-economic shifts, and regulatory failure.

At its core, the crisis is an intricate byproduct of shifting agrarian dynamics and economic pragmatism. With the rapid mechanization of agriculture, the utility of draft animals has plummeted. Furthermore, stringent anti-slaughter regulations and the fear of unlawful vigilantism have severely disrupted the traditional cattle economy. When dairy animals stop yielding milk or male calves become financially unviable to feed, a vast majority of owners choose expediency over responsibility, abandoning their livestock on the streets under the cover of night. This abandonment shifts private economic burdens onto the public square, turning municipal roads into hazardous obstacle courses. The consequences are devastating. In urban and semi-urban centers, unattended bovines obstruct traffic flow, graze dangerously on municipal garbage dumps—ingesting harmful plastics that prove fatal—and trigger horrific vehicular collisions. High-speed expressways and national highways, unlit and poorly monitored, frequently transform into slaughter zones when motorists fail to spot seated or wandering cattle in low visibility. In rural belts, the crisis inflicts severe trauma on the farming community. Desperate cultivators are forced to spend sleepless nights guarding their standing crops from stray herds, facing catastrophic agricultural losses that have, in extreme cases, driven vulnerable farmers

to despair and suicide.

First and foremost, ownership accountability must be legally enforced. The implementation of mandatory radio-frequency identification (RFID) tagging and comprehensive digital databases for all livestock is non-negotiable. If a tagged animal is found wandering on public roads, the registered owner must face strict penal action, including heavy fines and legal prosecution for abandonment. Accountability must trace back to the source, removing any incentive for owners to treat public spaces as open-air dairies or dumping grounds for unproductive cattle. Second, urban local bodies and state administrations must heavily invest in robust infrastructure. While numerous states collect specialized cesses ostensibly for cow welfare, the utilization of these funds remains opaque and inadequate. Transparent allocation is vital to build, expand, and professionally manage modern shelters (gaushalas) equipped with adequate fodder, water, and veterinary care. Public-private partnerships, engaging NGOs and community-led trusts, can inject much-needed efficiency and compassion into the management of these facilities. Third, technological intervention must be leveraged. Municipal corporations should deploy AI-enabled cameras and mobile helplines to track stray animal movement hotspots in real-time, ensuring rapid-response rescue teams can clear roads before tragedies occur. On the scientific front, large-scale adoption of sex-sorted semen technologies must be promoted to drastically curb the birth of male calves, which form the bulk of abandoned street cattle.

Ultimately, ending the stray-cattle hazard demands a synthesis of political will, administrative rigor, and societal cooperation. Public safety cannot remain hostage to administrative neglect or policy paralysis. Clearing our roads of this grave hazard is essential not only to preserve human life and restore traffic discipline, but also to ensure that animal welfare is managed with genuine dignity, system-wide accountability, and structural permanence.

The cost of ignoring small complaints

A dripping tap, a broken street-light, a damaged footpath or a blocked drain may appear too minor to demand immediate attention. Yet when small civic complaints remain unresolved, they gradually become larger and more expensive problems.

Citizens often stop reporting issues when they see little response, creating

a cycle of neglect and frustration. Authorities, meanwhile, may find it harder to identify problems before they become emergencies. A responsive civic system should treat small complaints as early warnings rather than minor inconveniences. Good governance is often visible in the speed with which an ordinary problem gets an ordinary solution.

Seven years on: the real transformation of Jammu & Kashmir

Few decisions in Independent India have reshaped the destiny of an entire region as profoundly as August 5, 2019. With the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A, and the reorganisation of Jammu & Kashmir, a new political and administrative chapter began for the region. Seven years later, opinions about that decision remain sharply divided. That is natural. Decisions of such historic significance are rarely judged by constitutional arguments alone; they are ultimately judged by what they change in the lives of ordinary people.

Today, those changes are no longer matters of speculation. They can be seen in railway tracks reaching the Kashmir Valley for the first time, highways cutting travel time almost in half, villages receiving drinking water through household taps, hydropower projects reshaping the region's energy future, industries investing at an unprecedented scale and a start-up ecosystem beginning to emerge where uncertainty once discouraged enterprise. Seven years is long enough to move beyond predictions. It is time to assess what has actually changed on the ground. For decades, Jammu & Kashmir's greatest obstacle was not merely conflict or policy paralysis. It was geography itself. Mountains, snowbound passes and fragile road links turned routine journeys into day-long expeditions. Distance dictated opportunity—and, for decades, limited it. It determined where businesses invested, how farmers reached markets, whether patients could access specialised healthcare in time and how easily students could pursue higher education.

The geography has not changed. The infrastructure built across it has. The completion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link has connected the Kashmir Valley to the national railway network for the first time in history. One of independent India's most ambitious engineering projects, the electrified corridor represents far more than another transport link. It marks the end of Kashmir's historic rail isolation. Air connectivity is expanding as Jammu and Srinagar airports undergo major upgrades to accommodate rising passenger traffic. National highways, expressways, bypasses and semi-ring roads are simultaneously reshaping regional mobility, while rural road connectivity has reached areas that remained isolated for decades. The impact is perhaps best measured in time rather than kilometres. The Jammu-Srinagar journey, which once routinely consumed seven to twelve hours depending on road conditions, can now be completed in around four-and-a-half hours. Travel time to Doda has reduced substan-

tially, while Kishtwar is now more than two hours closer to Jammu than it once was.

These are not merely transportation statistics. Every hour saved means farmers can deliver produce before it perishes, patients can access specialised healthcare faster, students can travel more easily and businesses can operate with significantly lower logistics costs. Connectivity is rarely dramatic, but it is often the single biggest catalyst for economic transformation. Building The Foundations Of Everyday Life Some of the most consequential changes of the past seven years are also the least glamorous. They do not dominate



headlines, yet they fundamentally improve everyday life. Jammu & Kashmir has long possessed enormous hydropower potential without fully harnessing it. That is finally beginning to change. Four major hydropower projects—Pakal Dul, Ratle, Kiru and Kwar—are under simultaneous construction with investments exceeding Rs 22,000 crore. Once completed, they are expected to nearly double the Union Territory's electricity generation capacity by 2028.

Equally important has been the strengthening of transmission networks, improvements in power distribution and significant gains in billing efficiency. These reforms rarely attract attention, but they translate into more reliable electricity and a stronger foundation for industrial growth. The transformation in drinking water access has been equally significant. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, more than 15 lakh rural households now have functional tap water connections, covering nearly four-fifths of the target population. For thousands of families particularly women who traditionally bore the burden of fetching water over long distances this represents a profound improvement in quality of

life. These developments transcend ideology. They represent the essence of good governance: delivering reliable infrastructure, essential public services and basic amenities that improve the daily lives of citizens. Governments can build roads, bridges and industrial estates. They cannot compel private investors to commit their capital. Investment follows confidence, and confidence cannot be legislated. It has to be earned.

According to the Industries and Commerce Department, realised investments have increased steadily from approximately Rs 2,153 crore in 2022-23 to nearly Rs 5,824



crore in 2025-26 almost 13 times the annual average recorded before 2021. Perhaps even more telling than the quantum of investment is its quality. Large manufacturing projects worth over Rs 500 crore each are now being established by companies such as Chiripal Polyfilms, Kandhari Beverages and Aegios. Historically, investments of this scale were almost unheard of in Jammu & Kashmir. Their arrival reflects growing confidence in security, connectivity and administrative predictability. Entrepreneurship is also gathering momentum. The number of recognised startups has expanded from just 69 in 2020 to well over 1,300 today, with several Valley-based startups securing external equity funding for the first time.

Meanwhile, Udyam registrations have surged from around 24,000 in 2021 to more than six lakh. This is more than a statistical increase. It signifies the formalisation of thousands of small enterprises that can now access institutional credit, government incentives and the protections of the formal economy. Seven years is enough to assess the direction of change, but not enough to conclude the journey. The physical transforma-

tion of Jammu & Kashmir is well underway. The next phase must focus on converting this infrastructure into sustained economic opportunity. Roads, railways and power projects create the conditions for growth; lasting prosperity will depend on how effectively they generate investment, entrepreneurship and quality employment for the region's young population. Manufacturing must broaden across sectors and integrate more deeply with national and global supply chains. Tourism, while witnessing renewed momentum, should evolve into a year-round, resilient industry supported by better infrastructure, diversified experiences and higher-value services.

Equally important is strengthening institutions that foster public confidence and long-term stability. Economic development and good governance are complementary, not competing, objectives. Together, they will determine whether the transformation witnessed over the past seven years becomes enduring and inclusive. The foundations are in place. The challenge now is to convert infrastructure into opportunity, investment into employment and growth into lasting prosperity. The Ground Has Begun To Tell Its Story. The constitutional debate surrounding August 5, 2019 will continue, as it should in any vibrant democracy. But alongside that debate stands another measure of history one rooted not in ideology, but in outcomes. Those outcomes are visible across Jammu & Kashmir today. They are reflected in railway tracks that now connect the Kashmir Valley with the rest of the country, highways that have dramatically reduced travel time, villages receiving clean drinking water, expanding power infrastructure, growing industrial investment and a new generation of entrepreneurs choosing to build their future at home. The people of Jammu & Kashmir are already beginning to reap the benefits of these changes. Better connectivity has brought markets closer, improved access to healthcare and education, lowered logistics costs for businesses and opened new opportunities for investment and employment. Infrastructure that once existed only on paper is steadily becoming part of everyday life. Seven years after August 5, 2019, the transformation of Jammu & Kashmir can no longer be measured solely through political narratives or constitutional discourse. It can also be measured through the everyday experiences of its people. The strongest testimony to change is not found in speeches or statistics alone—it is found in the lives that have become more connected, more accessible and more hopeful than they were seven years ago.

Combating India's rising diabetes burden through GLP-1 receptor agonists

India is facing a rare convergence of public health need, scientific progress and economic opportunity. More than 100 million adults live with diabetes and another 136 million with pre-diabetes. At the same time, GLP-1 therapies, initially developed to control blood sugar, have demonstrated reductions in cardiovascular events, kidney disease and mortality in clinical trials. For appropriately selected patients, they represent an advance in preventing the complications that make diabetes so costly for families and the health system. The WHO's decision in 2025 to include GLP-1 therapies in its Essential Medicines List for high-risk people with type 2 diabetes reinforces the clinical case.

International obesity thresholds can miss many Indians who develop diabetes and cardiovascular disease at much lower levels of body weight. Eligibility, therefore, must reflect South Asian physiology and India's distinctive disease burden. Competition has reduced prices and could push them down further. But even a monthly cost of ₹1,300 or ₹1,500 is beyond the reach of most Indian households when treatment continues for years. Diabetes-related complications impose enormous treatment costs, reduce household income, push family members into caregiving and land vulnerable families in debt. The real comparison, thus, is between timely treatment and the larger future costs of preventable complications. A carefully targeted programme could offer reasonable value for public spending. Avail-



able estimates remain provisional, requiring India to aggregate its own clinical and economic evidence before making a large national commitment. The country should begin with a controlled, phased access programme focused on people with type 2 diabetes who also have cardiovascular or kidney disease, and other high-risk groups. A four- or five-state pilot could test eligibility criteria, clinical protocols, procurement arrangements, adherence, safety, and cost-effectiveness under Indian conditions. Expansion should depend on demonstrated outcomes, not commercial pressure. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission can support longitudinal records -- prescriptions, dispens-

ing, laboratory results, side effects, and treatment discontinuation.

A carefully targeted programme could offer reasonable value for public spending. Available estimates remain provisional, requiring India to aggregate its own clinical and economic evidence before making a large national commitment. The country should begin with a controlled, phased access programme focused on people with type 2 diabetes who also have cardiovascular or kidney disease, and other high-risk groups. A four- or five-state pilot could test eligibility criteria, clinical protocols, procurement arrangements, adherence, safety, and cost-effectiveness under Indian conditions. Expansion

should depend on demonstrated outcomes, not commercial pressure. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission can support longitudinal records -- prescriptions, dispensing, laboratory results, side effects, and treatment discontinuation. There must also be firm safeguards against inappropriate prescribing and cosmetic use. Clear exclusion criteria, real-time pharmacovigilance and an independent safety board empowered to pause the programme should be built. India excels at manufacturing affordable versions of medicines discovered elsewhere; GLP-1 therapies offer an opportunity to go further from manufacturer to innovator and generator of globally relevant ev-

idence.

Government need not carry the entire early risk. Philanthropic and catalytic capital can finance India-specific trials, protocol development, affordability pilots, adherence systems and independent evaluation. Domestic manufacturers can contribute through competitive procurement and outcome-linked arrangements. Government must, however, retain stewardship over clinical standards, patient safety and data governance. Lifestyle changes, while important, alone can't address India's diabetes epidemic. The need is to expand access to GLP-1 therapies gradually and scale only when results justify it.

Pidilite Retains 20-24% Margin Guidance as Demand Remains Firm

Bengaluru: Adhesives and construction chemicals maker Pidilite Industries Ltd expects to maintain its operating margin in the 20 per cent to 24 per cent range for financial year 2027, supported by steady volume growth, manageable raw material costs and disciplined pricing.

Managing Director Sudhanshu Vats said the company's Consumer and Bazaar segment continued to record healthy volume growth during the April-June quarter, with demand holding up across both urban and rural markets.

Pidilite's key brands, including Fevicol and Dr. Fixit, continued to see strong demand across construction, home improvement and industrial applications, supporting the company's overall volume performance.

The company said input costs remained manageable despite fluctuations in global supply chains. Prices of key raw materials, including Vinyl Acetate Monomer, remained within a range that allowed the company to protect mar-



gins. Selective price increases, combined with operational efficiency measures, have also helped Pidilite offset cost pressures without significantly affecting consumer demand. The company expects these measures to support profitability through the remainder of the financial year.

Pidilite remains positive about domestic demand prospects, with continued real estate activity, government infrastructure expenditure and an expanding distribution network in semi-urban and rural markets expected to support growth.

The company expects these factors, along with stable input costs and sustained volume momentum, to help it remain within its 20-24 per cent operating margin guidance for FY27.

Aditya Birla Fashion's Q1 Loss Widens to Rs 249 Crore as Expenses Rise

Mumbai: Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd reported a consolidated net loss of ₹248.73 crore for the first quarter of financial year 2027, as a sharp rise in expenses outweighed growth in revenue during the April-June quarter.

The company's consolidated revenue from operations increased 10.6 per cent year-on-year to ₹2,025.56 crore from ₹1,831.46 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year. Including other income of ₹56.02 crore, total income stood at ₹2,081.58 crore, compared with ₹1,895 crore a year earlier.

Despite the increase in revenue, total expenses rose at a faster pace to ₹2,395.45 crore from ₹2,148.75 crore. The higher cost base put pressure on operating margins and contributed to the deterioration in the company's overall profitability.

Performance across the company's business segments remained uneven during the quarter. The Pantaloons retail format re-culped a segment profit of ₹3.48 crore, indicating limited profitability, while the Ethnic and Others segment reported an operational loss



of ₹188.54 crore.

The contrasting segment performance highlights continued pressure across parts of the company's brand portfolio, with losses in the Ethnic and Others business weighing on the overall operating performance.

On a standalone basis, Aditya Birla Fashion reported a net loss of ₹106.35 crore for the quarter, compared with a loss of ₹76.51 crore in the same period last year. Standalone revenue from operations increased to ₹1,558.07 crore during the quarter.

The company also announced a series of corporate restructuring measures alongside its financial results. Its board approved the amalgamation of two wholly owned subsidiaries with the parent company following sanction by the National

Company Law Tribunal.

As part of its efforts to consolidate its brand portfolio, the company increased its equity stake in Indivinity Clothing Retail Private Limited to 89.29 per cent.

The quarterly performance comes as Aditya Birla Fashion continues to reorganise its business portfolio while seeking to improve the profitability of its various retail and brand operations. The rise in revenue indicates continued business activity, but elevated costs remain a key challenge for earnings.

The company's ability to control expenses and improve performance across weaker segments will remain important for restoring profitability as it progresses with its broader portfolio consolidation and restructuring initiatives.

LIC Considers Dedicated Fintech Division, Strategic Stakes to Drive Digital Transformation

Mumbai: Life Insurance Corporation of India is evaluating plans to establish a dedicated fintech division and make strategic equity investments in specialised financial technology and insurtech companies as it seeks to accelerate digital transformation and improve operational efficiency.

LIC Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director R. Doraiswamy said the insurer was considering two parallel approaches to strengthen its technology capabilities. The first involves developing critical technology and applications internally, while the second would involve partnerships with external fintech platforms and potentially taking equity stakes in selected companies.

The proposed fintech expansion is aimed at improving LIC's customer-facing digital services, simplifying policy-related processes and strengthening the speed and efficiency of its operations. The insurer is also looking to use technology more extensively in areas such as underwriting and customer service.

LIC currently operates through a combination of



in-house software development capabilities and external technology service providers. The proposed strategy would allow the insurer to expand its internal technology base while using partnerships and investments to gain access to specialised digital capabilities.

Strategic investments in fintech and insurtech companies could also provide LIC with exposure to emerging technologies and business models within the financial services sector. The approach forms part of the corporation's broader technology roadmap as competition in insurance becomes increasingly digital.

Beyond technology, LIC continues to assess opportunities for strategic expansion across related financial services. The corporation

is evaluating potential investments in areas such as health insurance as it looks to strengthen its presence across the wider insurance and financial services ecosystem.

At the same time, LIC is maintaining operational preparedness for potential future government equity offerings. The insurer's proposed digital and investment initiatives are therefore being considered alongside its broader strategic and capital-market priorities.

The planned expansion into fintech and technology partnerships reflects LIC's effort to modernise its large-scale operations while improving service delivery for policyholders and responding to changing customer expectations in India's increasingly digital financial sector.

SEBI Backs Closing Auction Session to Strengthen End-of-Day Price Discovery

Mumbai: The Securities and Exchange Board of India has defended the introduction of a Closing Auction Session in the equity market, saying the new mechanism will strengthen price discovery, improve market resilience and bring India's trading practices closer to global standards.

The 20-minute closing auction for the equity cash segment came into effect on August 3, 2026. SEBI said the framework is aligned with practices followed by major global exchanges, including the New York Stock Exchange, London Stock Exchange and Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing.

The regulator said the new system replaces the earlier Volume Weighted Average Price-based approach for stocks with derivative contracts. Under the closing auction mechanism, buy and sell orders are accumulated during a designated window and matched to determine a single equilibrium closing

price based on the maximum volume of orders that can be executed.

The change is aimed at addressing sharp price movements near market close, particularly during periods of institutional index rebalancing. Under the earlier 30-minute VWAP mechanism, concentrated trading activity could contribute to increased volatility towards the end of the session.

SEBI said the reform has become increasingly important with the rapid expansion of passive investment products in India. Index funds and exchange-traded funds now account for about 30 per cent of Foreign Portfolio Investor equity assets under management and around 28 per cent of domestic mutual fund equity assets.

By concentrating end-of-day orders within a defined auction window, the new mechanism is intended to improve liquidity and provide a more transparent basis for determining closing prices. It

could also help passive funds reduce tracking errors by enabling them to execute transactions closer to a common market-clearing price.

The regulator said the auction-based system is also expected to reduce opportunities for price manipulation around the market close and provide greater certainty to investors and other market participants.

SEBI's defence of the reform comes amid concerns among traders over sharp movements in benchmark indices near the end of trading sessions. The regulator maintained that the structured auction process would provide a more robust and consistent mechanism for determining closing prices as market participation and passive investment continue to grow.

The move marks a significant change in India's end-of-day equity trading framework and is intended to bring greater consistency to closing-price discovery while improving the efficiency of the country's capital markets.

Greenpanel Industries Swings to Profit as Q1 EBITDA More Than Doubles

Mumbai: Wood panel manufacturer Greenpanel Industries Ltd returned to profitability in the first quarter of financial year 2027, supported by higher revenue, stronger capacity utilisation and a significant expansion in operating margins across its medium-density fibreboard and plywood businesses.

The company reported consolidated net profit of ₹11.2 crore for the April-June quarter, compared with a net loss of ₹18.4 crore in the corresponding period of the previous financial year. Revenue from operations increased 8.2 per cent year-on-year to ₹435.5 crore from ₹402.4 crore.

Operating performance improved considerably during the quarter, with earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization rising 126 per cent to ₹52.4 crore from



₹23.2 crore a year earlier.

The sharp increase in EBITDA lifted the company's operating margin to 12 per cent from 5.8 per cent in the year-ago quarter. Improved capacity utilisation, more efficient raw material sourcing and tighter control over operating expenses contributed to the margin expansion.

The stronger operat-

ing performance enabled Greenpanel to move back into the black despite revenue growth remaining in the single digits. The improvement also reflected better absorption of fixed costs as manufacturing capacity was utilised more efficiently.

The medium-density fibreboard business continued to account for the bulk

of the company's revenue. The segment generated ₹375 crore during the quarter, while the plywood division contributed ₹60.5 crore to overall revenue.

The company's performance in the MDF business remains closely linked to demand from the housing, construction and interior segments. Greenpanel expects domestic consump-

tion of wood panels to remain supported by real estate completions and continued renovation and home improvement activity in urban markets.

The recovery in profitability comes as manufacturers across the wood-panel industry benefit from sustained demand for construction and interior products. Improved sourcing and operating efficiencies have also helped Greenpanel strengthen its cost structure during the quarter.

With revenue growth accompanied by a substantial improvement in EBITDA and margin, the company has entered FY27 on a stronger operating footing. Continued demand from real estate and renovation markets is expected to remain important for sustaining the recovery through the rest of the financial year.

Cult Rejects Signature Forgery Allegations as IPO Preparations Continue

Mumbai: Fitness and wellness brand Cult, operated by Curefit Healthcare Private Limited, has rejected allegations of signature forgery involving founder Rishabh Telang, describing the claims as baseless and factually incorrect.

The dispute has emerged as the company prepares for its proposed initial public offering and relates to allegations that the signature of a former co-founder was used without authorisation on corporate documents associated with the company's early restructuring and equity allocation processes.

Cult has categorically denied the allegations and maintained that its corporate filings, share allotments and legal agreements were completed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements and established corporate governance procedures.

The company said its corporate actions were undertaken through formal pro-



cesses and that the relevant documentation complied with legal and regulatory standards. The management rejected any suggestion that corporate records had been improperly created or executed.

The controversy comes at

a significant stage for Cult as the fitness and wellness business works towards its proposed capital-market debut. The company said the allegations could cause unnecessary reputational damage and potentially disrupt preparations for the

planned public offering.

Cult has also indicated that it is assessing appropriate legal remedies in response to the allegations. The company said any action would be aimed at protecting the interests of its shareholders, business op-

erations and organisational reputation.

The dispute centres on events dating back to the company's earlier stages, when restructuring and equity allocation decisions were being undertaken. The allegations have raised questions around the documentation of those corporate processes, which the company has sought to address through its denial.

The management has maintained that the company's regulatory and governance procedures were followed while carrying out the relevant corporate actions. It has also reiterated its focus on continuing preparations for the proposed listing despite the dispute.

The matter adds a legal and governance dimension to Cult's preparations for entering the public markets, with the company now evaluating its response while seeking to protect its business and stakeholder interests.

Dhoot Transmission Raises Rs 918 Crore from Anchor Investors Ahead of IPO

Mumbai: Automotive components manufacturer Dhoot Transmission Ltd has raised ₹918.27 crore from 72 anchor investors ahead of its ₹3,067-crore initial public offering, allotting 1.05 crore equity shares at the upper price band of ₹871 per share.

Domestic mutual funds accounted for the largest share of the anchor placement, receiving 64.60 lakh shares, or 61.27 per cent of the total allocation, across 46 schemes managed by eight fund houses. Life insurance companies and pension funds were allotted another 9.22 lakh shares, representing 8.74 per cent of the anchor book.

Major investors participating in the anchor placement included BlackRock, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, SBI Mutual Fund, ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund, HDFC Mutual Fund, WhiteOak, Government Pension Fund, Allianz Global Investors and SBI Life Insurance.

The public issue will

open for subscription on August 10 and close on August 12. The company has fixed a price band of ₹829 to ₹871 per share.

The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth up to ₹1,400 crore and an offer for sale of up to 1.91 crore shares by existing shareholders, including promoter entities BC Asia Investments XV Limited, an affiliate of Bain Capital, and Mangalam Capital Private Limited.

At the upper end of the price band, Dhoot Transmission is expected to have a post-issue market capitalisation of around ₹17,816 crore.

The company plans to use proceeds from the fresh issue primarily to strengthen its balance sheet and finance expansion.

About ₹464.80 crore has been earmarked for debt repayment, while ₹301.77 crore will be provided to subsidiaries to help clear their outstanding borrowings.

Another ₹150 crore will

be invested in new wiring harness manufacturing facilities at Hhajjar in Haryana and Shoolagiri in Hosur, Tamil Nadu, as the company seeks to expand its production capacity.

Backed by Bain Capital, Dhoot Transmission holds an estimated 41 per cent share of India's two-wheeler and three-wheeler wiring harness market. Its presence is stronger in the electric vehicle segment, where it commands nearly 70 per cent of the domestic two-wheeler and three-wheeler market.

The company reported total income of ₹4,563.70 crore in financial year 2026, marking a 31 per cent year-on-year increase. Net profit rose 12 per cent to ₹396.84 crore during the same period.

The strong anchor participation comes ahead of the public issue and reflects significant institutional interest in the automotive components maker as it seeks to raise capital for debt reduction and capacity expansion.

US to Partially Resume Activities in Mexico’s Avocado Hub

Newyork: U.S. government will partially resume activities in Mexico’s top avocado-producing state of Michoacan, the U.S. Embassy said on Friday, easing a suspension that had disrupted export inspections following security concerns in the violence-affected region. According to the embassy, official U.S. activities will restart in some towns across Michoacan’s major “avocado belt” from Saturday, following commitments made by the Mexican government, the implementation of additional security measures in the state and continued coordination between the two countries over conditions on the ground. The embassy said it would continue monitoring the security situation and evaluate conditions before deciding whether further activities could be restored, adding that operations would be adjusted as necessary. However, it did not provide a specific timeline for the complete resumption of U.S. activities across the region. Decision follows the U.S. government’s suspension of activities in Michoacan on Wednesday after officials cited a threat to U.S. interests, temporarily disrupting the inspections required for avocados to receive clearance for export to the United States. Michoacan is Mexico’s leading avocado-producing region and plays a major role in supplying the U.S. market, making the suspension a significant concern for growers, exporters and businesses dependent on cross-border trade. The partial restart is therefore expected to provide some relief to the avocado industry, although uncertainty remains over when inspection operations will return fully to normal. Authorities on both sides are expected to continue coordinating closely on security arrangements and monitoring conditions in the region, where organised crime and violence have repeatedly affected agricultural communities and commercial activity. The U.S. decision also highlights the importance of security concerns surrounding agricultural exports and the broader economic relationship between Mexico and the United States. The Mexican Hass Avocado Association said on Thursday that it did not expect the temporary suspension of U.S. inspection activities to have a



significant impact on cross-border avocado sales in the near term, pointing to existing inventories and shipments already moving through the supply chain that should continue to meet demand in the United States. The association’s assessment offered some reassurance to growers, exporters and other businesses that depend heavily on uninterrupted access to the U.S. market, although concerns remained over how a prolonged disruption could affect future shipments. Meanwhile, a Michoacan government official told Reuters that authorities believed the U.S. security alert may have been linked to violence that erupted following the arrest of alleged cartel leader Alfonso Fernandez Magallon. The official said the security situation in parts of the state had deteriorated amid the unrest, prompting heightened concerns among U.S. officials operating in the region. Authorities had also received unconfirmed reports that a U.S. Department of Agriculture inspector may have been threatened. The reports have added to concerns over the safety of U.S. personnel involved in inspecting agricultural products before they are cleared for export. Michoacan remains a crucial centre of Mexico’s avocado industry, with a large share of its production destined for the U.S. market, making the security situation particularly important for farmers, exporters and international buyers. While existing stocks and shipments may help limit the immediate impact of the inspection pause, industry representatives and authorities are closely monitoring developments to determine whether continued security concerns could lead to further disruptions in the supply chain.

Typhoon Dolphin Sweeps Okinawa as China Closes Ports Ahead of Expected Landfall

Tokyo: Typhoon Dolphin lashed Japan’s southern Okinawa prefecture on Saturday, leaving at least six people injured and disrupting daily life across the region as powerful winds and severe weather conditions swept through the area. More than 50,000 buildings were reportedly left without electricity, raising concerns about further disruptions to essential services as the storm continued to move through the region. Authorities said five elderly people in Okinawa suffered non-life-threatening injuries, with three of them reportedly falling due to the force of the strong winds. Another person was injured in neighbouring Kagoshima prefecture, according to officials. Emergency authorities and local agencies remained on alert as strong winds and hazardous conditions continued to pose risks to residents, particularly elderly people and those living in vulnerable areas. Meanwhile, China began taking precautionary measures ahead of the typhoon’s expected arrival along its eastern coast, with authorities shutting ports and suspending ferry services in anticipation of worsening weather conditions. The measures were aimed at protecting residents, maritime workers and travellers from the potentially dangerous conditions associated with the approaching storm. Authorities in affected areas have urged people to remain cautious, avoid unnecessary travel and follow



official safety instructions as the typhoon progresses. With the storm continuing to affect parts of Japan and moving towards the Chinese coast, officials are closely monitoring its trajectory and preparing for possible further disruptions, including strong winds, heavy rainfall and transport interruptions. Nearly 39,000 buildings in Kagoshima were reportedly left without electricity, while just over 12,000 buildings in Okinawa were also affected by power outages as Typhoon Dolphin continued to batter southern Japan. The severe weather conditions also caused major disruptions to air travel, with domestic carriers ANA and Japan Airlines cancelling flights to and from Okinawa amid concerns over strong winds and unsafe flying conditions. The typhoon was reported to have maximum sustained winds of around 162 kph (89.5 mph), while powerful gusts reached up to

216 kph, creating hazardous conditions across affected areas. Okinawa and Amami Island in Kagoshima prefecture were identified as the main areas expected to experience the impact of the storm in Japan, with authorities closely monitoring the situation and warning residents to remain alert. Meanwhile, China was preparing for the typhoon’s expected landfall between late Sunday and early Monday, with authorities taking precautionary measures to minimise the potential impact of the approaching storm. Chinese authorities classified Dolphin as an orange-category typhoon, which represents the second-highest level in the country’s typhoon warning system, reflecting concerns over the storm’s strength and possible effects. Authorities also raised the emergency response level for Typhoon Dolphin by one notch to Level III, the second-lowest

level, as officials assessed the risks posed by heavy rainfall, flooding and landslides. Emergency teams and local authorities were placed on heightened alert, while residents in vulnerable coastal and low-lying areas were urged to closely monitor official warnings and take necessary precautions as the typhoon approached the Chinese coastline. The typhoon is most likely to make landfall between Zhoushan city in Zhejiang province and Fuding city in Fujian province and is expected to have winds of 38-45 metres per second (85-101 mph) near its centre, according to China’s National Meteorological Center. Rain and strong winds are expected to affect eastern China through August 12, including parts of Shanghai and neighbouring provinces. Some areas of eastern Zhejiang could receive more than 600 mm (23.6 inches)

of rain, according to forecasters. Zhejiang raised its coastal typhoon alert to its highest level and halted port operations. Authorities in eastern and southern China also suspended ferries, halted some construction work and ordered fishing boats back to port. Ningbo Lishe International Airport in Zhejiang said it will suspend all flights on Sunday. Shanghai’s Yangshan port had been cleared of vessels by late Friday, while some rail services in the Yangtze River Delta will be suspended. Beijing authorities have said they are closely monitoring the typhoon’s path and are preparing flood-control and evacuation plans for the capital. In Taiwan, 78 flights, mostly international, were cancelled because of the typhoon, the government said. Heavy rain was expected in northern parts of the island over the weekend, though authorities had not ordered evacuations as of Saturday. China has ordered that, due to the typhoon, ships passing through the Taiwan Strait must heed its traffic control instructions measures that Taipei denounced as “ridiculous”, saying that Beijing has no right to restrict access to international waters. China views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory and claims the strategic strait. Both Taipei and Washington reject that claim.

Taiwan President Oversees Major Coastal Strike Drill Amid Growing China Tensions

Taiwan: Taiwan President Lai Ching-te oversaw coastal strike drills on Saturday as part of the island’s annual Han Kuang war games, highlighting Taiwan’s efforts to strengthen its military preparedness against a potential Chinese attack. During the exercises, Lai boarded a fast-attack missile boat and observed the deployment of low-flying attack drones, which were used to simulate defensive operations aimed at repelling a possible Chinese assault from the sea. The drills are part of Taiwan’s broader annual military exercise designed to test the armed forces’ ability to respond rapidly and coordinate operations across different domains during a potential conflict. Taiwan began the 10-day Han Kuang exercises on Wednesday, with this year’s drills focusing heavily on combat readiness, coastal defence, rapid mobilisation and the ability to withstand and respond to a possible invasion. The exercises come amid longstanding tensions between Taiwan and China, with Beijing continuing to regard the democratically governed island as part of its territory and repeatedly stating that it could use force if necessary to bring Taiwan under its control. Taiwan’s government strongly rejects Beijing’s sovereignty claims and maintains that the island’s future should be determined by its people.



The military drills therefore carry significant strategic importance, serving both as a test of Taiwan’s defence capabilities and as a demonstration of its determination to maintain readiness amid persistent regional security concerns. Taiwan President Lai Ching-te boarded a fast-attack missile boat at a naval base in the southern city of Kaohsiung, where he delivered a message to sailors participating in the Han Kuang military exercises and emphasised the importance of maintaining strong defence preparedness. Lai said the purpose of the annual exercise was to use real troops, actual terrain and operational military equipment to test the armed forces’ command coordination, combat responsiveness and overall ability to defend Taiwan’s territory. Without directly mentioning China, he said the government would continue working to strengthen the is-

land’s defence capabilities in the face of “external threats and challenges” and pledged to provide the military and Coast Guard with the strongest possible support. Lai also urged personnel taking part in the drills to actively engage in the exercises, improve coordination and deepen mutual understanding among different units so that they would be better prepared to respond effectively to a wide range of potential situations. He stressed that maintaining solid combat capabilities was essential to protecting Taiwan’s national sovereignty and ensuring the safety of its people. His remarks came as Taiwan conducts the 10-day Han Kuang exercises, which are designed to test the military’s ability to respond to a potential invasion or other security threats and improve cooperation between various branches of the armed forces and the Coast Guard. The ex-

ercises also provide an opportunity for Taiwan to assess its operational readiness, identify weaknesses in its defence arrangements and strengthen its ability to respond quickly under challenging circumstances. Lai Ching-te then watched as small, low-flying attack drones swarmed across the beach and surrounding waters as part of the coastal defence drills, demonstrating Taiwan’s growing use of unmanned systems in potential combat scenarios. One of the Coast Guard’s newly introduced Anping-class catamarans also took part in the exercise, reflecting the important role the Coast Guard is expected to play alongside the navy in the event of a conflict. The Anping-class vessels are based on Taiwan’s highly manoeuvrable Tuo Chiang-class fast attack warships, which have been described by Taiwan’s military as “aircraft carrier kill-

ers” because of their ability to carry advanced anti-ship missiles and operate rapidly in coastal waters. The participation of the Coast Guard in the Han Kuang exercises highlights the island’s efforts to strengthen coordination between military and civilian maritime forces and ensure that its coastal defence capabilities can be rapidly integrated during a crisis. On Thursday, Lai had also observed the installation of missile launchers on an Anping-class Coast Guard vessel, underscoring the government’s focus on improving the fleet’s ability to contribute to national defence operations. The exercises are taking place amid heightened tensions across the Taiwan Strait, with China continuing to regard Taiwan as part of its territory and strongly opposing Lai’s administration. Beijing has repeatedly described Lai as a “separatist” and has rejected his repeated offers to engage in talks, while Taiwan maintains that its government has the right to protect the island’s democratic system and national security. Against this backdrop, the ongoing military exercises are aimed at strengthening Taiwan’s readiness and demonstrating its ability to respond to potential threats across its coastline and surrounding waters.

Census Offers Congolese Long-Awaited Recognition

Colombia: For Heritier Ramazani, being counted in the national census represents far more than simply becoming part of a population statistic. For the 28-year-old resident of Bunia, the capital of Ituri province in the northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the census could mark the first time that the Congolese state officially records and recognises his existence. Ramazani has never previously been included in a national census and does not possess an official document confirming his Congolese citizenship, leaving him without formal recognition in state records. His experience reflects the broader significance of the census for people who have spent years living without official documentation or a clear administrative identity. Being formally counted could provide a sense of recognition and belonging while also helping establish an official connection between citizens and the state. For many people in communities affected by years of instability and limited access to government services, inclusion in the census is seen as an important step towards obtaining legal identity and improving access to public services. The process could also help authorities develop a clearer understanding of the country’s population and ensure that citizens who have historically remained outside official records are recognised in future planning and governance. “I’ve never been registered in a census since I was born,” Ramazani told Al Jazeera, highlighting the long-standing problem faced by many people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo who have never been formally recorded by the state. For him, obtaining official recognition through the census and eventually receiving an identity card would be deeply meaningful. “Being registered and having my identity card will make me very happy,” he said. His experience reflects a much wider challenge



across the DRC, where millions of people have grown up without official documents confirming their identity or citizenship, often limiting their ability to access essential services and fully participate in civic life. Now, 42 years after the country’s last national census, authorities are preparing to undertake another nationwide population count in an effort to establish more accurate demographic records. The previous census was conducted in 1984, when the country was still known as Zaire, and the population and circumstances of the country have changed dramatically since then. Over the intervening decades, the DRC has experienced prolonged political instability, armed conflicts, displacement, economic challenges and rapid population growth, making the absence of updated census data an increasingly significant issue for national planning. The World Bank estimates that the country’s population has grown to around 112 million people, with an annual growth rate of approximately 3.2 percent. Government authorities say the new census will provide reliable and up-to-date information needed to plan public services, allocate resources and develop policies based on the country’s current demographic realities. For many ordinary residents, The significance of the census goes beyond statistics and government planning.

Sudan’s Prolonged War Threatens the Future of an Entire Generation, UN Warns Amid Growing Humanitarian Crisis

Newyork: More than 8 million school-age children in Sudan remain out of the classroom as the country’s devastating civil war continues to disrupt education and threaten the future of an entire generation, the United Nations has warned. The conflict, which erupted more than three years ago, has severely damaged the country’s education system, forcing schools to close, displacing families and leaving mil-

lions of children without regular access to learning. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed highlighted the worsening situation on Friday during an informal session of the UN Security Council focused on protecting education in Sudan, as the conflict entered its 1,210th day. She warned that the prolonged crisis is depriving children of more than just schooling, putting their long-term development, well-be-

ing and future opportunities at serious risk. Continued fighting, displacement, insecurity and the destruction of essential infrastructure have made it increasingly difficult for children to return to classrooms, while many families are struggling to meet basic needs amid the wider humanitarian crisis. The UN has repeatedly stressed the importance of keeping education services functioning even during conflict, arguing that

schools can provide children with a sense of stability, protection and hope in otherwise deeply uncertain circumstances. The scale of the disruption has raised concerns that a prolonged interruption to education could have lasting consequences for Sudan’s young population, potentially creating a generation facing reduced opportunities and deeper social and economic challenges. Teachers and students while ensuring

that humanitarian assistance can reach communities affected by the war. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed warned that one of the most serious consequences of Sudan’s ongoing war is the damage being done to the country’s future through the disruption of children’s education. Mohammed said, cautioning that the conflict is effectively depriving an “entire generation” of the opportunities needed

to build a better future. With schools no longer functioning safely in many communities, millions of children have been forced to remain out of classrooms, further widening the disruption to their education and development. Mohammed said that five out of every six children in Sudan are currently out of school, reflecting the enormous impact of the conflict on the country’s younger population.

How to Prepare Rose Petal Lip Balm at Home



Your lips may become chapped, flaky, and dry due to changing weather. Try this easy DIY rose petal lip balm prepared with natural materials instead of depending on store-bought lip balms that

are loaded with chemicals and artificial aromas. Why Rose Petals Are So Good for Your Lips: Antioxidants and moisturising substances included in fresh rose petals help maintain the suppleness and

softness of your lips. They may assist improve the natural glow of your lips while reducing dryness if you take regular care of them. What You'll Need: One cup of fresh rose petals (ideally Desi roses), two tablespoons of coconut or almond oil, one tablespoon of petroleum jelly or beeswax, half a teaspoon of honey and one vitamin E capsule are what you'll need. Make The Rose Oil Base: Wash and dry the rose petals thoroughly. Blend them into a smooth paste with a little coconut oil or raw milk. Heat the paste with coconut oil using a double boiler for 10-12 minutes on low heat, then

strain the mixture to extract the rose-infused oil. Turn It Into Lip Balm: Add beeswax to the infused oil and let it melt completely. Stir in honey and the oil from a Vitamin E capsule. Pour the mixture into a clean container and refrigerate for 20-30 minutes until it sets. Why You'll Love This DIY Lip Balm: You can adjust the ingredients in this DIY lip balm to suit your needs. It is a straightforward substitute for regular lip care since it is devoid of artificial colours and overpowering scents. Do a patch test before to regular use if you have sensitive skin or allergies, and stop if irritation happens.

These 6 sarees prove you don't need to spend big for a premium look

It is not always essential to have a four-figure budget to make a saree appear luxurious. In fact, some of the most convincing "premium-looking" sarees are characterized by their details: a sumptuous weave, a finish reminiscent of traditional textiles, a sophisticated print, or a clearly defined border. When searching for budget-friendly sarees, I prioritize the quality of the fabric, the color, and the overall design rather than just the price. Kanjivaram-inspired weaves, Chanderi-style prints, Banarasi textures, and silk finishes can elevate an outfit's sophistication instantly.

If you're looking for an affordable saree for a festive lunch, family gathering, puja or even a wedding guest look, these six options under ₹999 caught my eye. Premium sarees for women

1. SGF11 Women's Kanjivaram Soft Cotton Linen Silk Saree: Kanjivaram-inspired detailing immediately gives a saree a more traditional, occasion-ready feel. This SGF11 style combines the visual appeal of a silk saree with a softer cotton-linen-silk construction, making it an interesting option when you want something that looks festive without feeling overwhelmingly heavy. The overall aesthetic feels elegant rather than overly embellished, which also makes it easier to rewear for different occasions. Style tip: Add a contrasting blouse, jhumkas and a sleek bun for a classic festive look.

2. Yashika Women's Chanderi Floral Digital Print Saree: Chanderi-inspired sarees have a naturally refined appearance, and floral prints make them feel lighter and more contemporary. This Yashika saree is a good choice if elaborate embroidery isn't really your thing but you still want your outfit to have some visual interest.

The floral detailing makes it particularly easy to wear during daytime celebrations, festive lunches or family gatherings. Style tip: Pair it with a solid blouse, delicate earrings and neutral sandals to let the print do the work.



3. Yashika Women's Banarasi Kanjivaram Cotton Silk Saree: Banarasi and Kanjivaram-inspired elements together are almost guaranteed to give a saree a more luxurious visual appeal. This Yashika option combines that traditional aesthetic with cotton-silk construction, making it a versatile choice for anyone who likes classic Indian dressing.

The woven look gives the saree enough richness to work for festive occasions without requiring elaborate accessories. Style tip: Style it with gold-toned jewellery and a structured poti for an instantly festive finish.

4. Enthone Women's Pattu Art Silk Woven Saree: If your idea of a premium-looking saree involves a traditional silk-like finish, this Enthone Pattu-style saree is worth considering. The woven detailing gives it a more occasion-ready appearance, while the art-silk construction keeps the overall look accessible.

It's the kind of saree that can easily be dressed up with jewellery for a family function or festive celebration.

Style tip: Go for a statement blouse and traditional earrings rather than layering too many accessories.

5. C J Enterprise Women's Pure Kanjivaram Silk Saree: A Kanjivaram-inspired saree is one of those wardrobe staples that can instantly make an outfit

feel more formal. This C J Enterprise option leans into that traditional aesthetic, making it particularly suited to weddings, festive celebrations and other occasions where you want your saree to feel special. The classic silhouette also means you don't need to overthink the styling. Style tip: Pair it with temple jewellery, a traditional blouse and a gajra for a timeless wedding-ready look.

6. SGF11 Women's Kanjivaram Soft Lichi Silk Saree: Lichi silk-inspired textures have a subtle richness that can make even a relatively simple saree look elevated. This SGF11 option is another good pick if you gravitate towards traditional silhouettes but want something that doesn't require excessive embellishment.

I'd save this one for festive dinners, pujas or intimate celebrations where you want your saree to feel polished without looking overly dramatic.

Style tip: Add pearl or gold jewellery and a compact clutch for a sophisticated finish. How I make an affordable saree look more expensive

The secret is rarely the price tag. Styling makes a huge difference.

I would keep the blouse relatively structured, avoid mixing too many competing prints and invest more thought into jewellery and hair. A neat bun, statement earrings, a well-fitted blouse and elegant footwear can make even a simple saree look considerably more polished. Another trick is to choose one hero element. If the saree has a rich-looking weave, keep the jewellery restrained. If it's heavily printed, opt for a solid blouse. And if the saree itself is understated, that's when you can bring in statement earrings or a more dramatic blouse. Among these six, the Yashika Banarasi Kanjivaram Cotton Silk Saree would be my pick when I want the most traditional, dressed-up look, while the Yashika Chanderi Floral Saree feels easier for daytime occasions.

Changed from using lipstick to lip tints, and there is no turning back

If you have yet to experience lip tints, you are overlooking one of the essential makeup items. Serving as both a lipstick and a blush, lip tints are a versatile and portable makeup solution. Since I began using lip tints, I have not returned to my conventional lip colors. The advantage of lip tints lies in their formulation, which includes skin-hydrating and nourishing ingredients that maintain the moisture of your lips while providing a hint of color.

Many of these lip tints are subtle enough for everyday wear, making them suitable for the office, brunch with friends, or even evening outings. I highly recommend these six lip tints for every girl's makeup collection.

6 lip tints for you

1. Maybelline New York Superstay Teddy Tint, Lip and Cheek Color, Heart Locket: The Maybelline New York Superstay Teddy Tint delivers a soft matte tint that feels lightweight and comfortable for everyday wear. It is made with silicone-based emollients, film-forming polymers, lightweight pigments, and moisturising ingredients such as glycerin, helping the colour stay put while preventing dryness.

Amazon shoppers appreciate its long-lasting formula, velvety texture, and comfortable finish. Many reviewers mention that it leaves a natural blurred effect on the lips and works well for daily wear without feeling sticky.

2. e.l.f. Sheer For It Blush Tint, Multi-Use, Long-Lasting Lip & Cheek Make-up, Creates a Natural Flush Finish, Vegan & Cruelty-Free, Cherry Cola: The e.l.f. Sheer For It Blush Tint is a lightweight liquid tint that gives cheeks a fresh, healthy flush with a sheer finish. It is made with glycerin, water-based hydrators, skin-conditioning emollients, and mineral pigments that blend effortlessly into the skin. Amazon users love its easy-to-build colour, natural appearance, and lightweight feel. Many reviewers say it blends smoothly with fingers or a sponge, making



it suitable for beginners and everyday makeup routines.

3. Just Herbs Ayurvedic, Natural Lip & Cheek Tint, Blush For Women- SLS, Chemical & Paraben Free - 06 Pink Forever: The Just Herbs Ayurvedic Natural Lip & Cheek Tint offers nourishing colour for both lips and cheeks with a creamy texture. It is made with beetroot extract, kokum butter, shea butter, jojoba oil, almond oil, and Ayurvedic herbal extracts that help moisturise and soften the skin. Amazon reviewers appreciate its natural finish, smooth application, and skin-friendly ingredients. Many customers enjoy its subtle colour payoff and moisturising feel, especially for daily use.

4. DAUGHTER EARTH Vegan Lip and Cheek Tint | Matte Natural Blush for Women | Lip Tint with Vitamin E | Nourishing Cheek Tint, 4.5g - Original Pink: The DAUGHTER EARTH Vegan Lip and Cheek Tint provides buildable colour while caring for the skin with nourishing plant-based ingredients. It is made with castor oil, jojoba oil, shea butter, vitamin E, candelilla wax, and natural mineral pigments. Amazon customers praise its creamy texture, blendability, and comfortable wear. Several reviewers mention that it creates a fresh, dewy finish and suits those looking for a

clean beauty product made with vegan ingredients.

5. LANEIGE JuicePop Box Lip Tint #3 Lo-Fi Mauve: The LANEIGE JuicePop Box Lip Tint combines vibrant colour with lasting hydration for soft, glossy-looking lips. It is made with fruit extracts, glycerin, squalane, nourishing oils, vitamin E, and moisturising humectants that help keep lips smooth throughout the day. Amazon reviewers love its juicy finish, lightweight texture, and comfortable wear. Many users mention that the tint leaves behind a flattering stain even after the glossy layer gradually fades.

6. Sammmm LOVE Moisturizing Lip Tint Oil(10g) | pH Reactive Lip Oils with Natural, Glossy Pink Finish | Long-Lasting And Non-Sticky Liptint: The Sammmm LOVE Moisturising Lip Tint gives lips a natural pop of colour while helping them stay soft and hydrated. It is made with glycerin, vitamin E, plant-based oils, shea butter, and moisturising waxes, offering comfortable wear without excessive dryness. Amazon shoppers appreciate its lightweight feel, smooth texture, and everyday shades. Many reviewers say the tint provides decent colour payoff with a comfortable finish, making it suitable for regular use.

Home-based treatments for whitening teeth: Realize a more dazzling smile

Several safe home remedies can brighten your smile by removing surface stains, such as gently brushing with a baking soda and water paste, swishing coconut oil for 15 minutes, or rinsing with a greatly diluted hydrogen peroxide solution. Effective Natural Remedies: Baking Soda Paste: Mix 1 teaspoon baking soda with 2 teaspoons water. Brush your teeth gently with it once or twice a week to



eliminate surface stains. Coconut Oil Pulling: Swish one spoonful of coconut oil in your mouth for 15 to 20 minutes before spitting it out. This minimizes plaque and bacteria while

protecting your enamel. Diluted Hydrogen Peroxide: Combine 3% hydrogen peroxide with water to make a 1.5% solution. Swish it briefly as a mouthwash before brushing to destroy bacteria and remove light stains. Safety and habits: Protect Your Enamel: Avoid using powerful DIY acids like lemon juice or abrasive charcoal, since they can permanently damage and wear away your tooth enamel. To prevent new stains, rinse your mouth or use a straw after consuming dark drinks such as tea or coffee, and brush and floss regularly.

Learn how to create a wardrobe that is suitable for the rainy season if you want to wear comfortably

The monsoon season is known for its unpredictability. One moment, you may be relishing the soothing winds and light rain; the next, you could find yourself in the midst of an unexpected downpour. Even during dry spells, when you successfully avoid getting wet, the humidity can be quite bothersome, causing your clothes to stick to your body. This highlights the importance of functionality in monsoon fashion. However, how can one achieve both comfort and style?

We asked an expert for practical guidance on building a monsoon-friendly wardrobe. Ravi Gupta, creative designer and director of Gargee Designer's, shared how to stay stylish and comfortable this rainy season, covering everything from breathable,

quick-drying fabrics and comfortable silhouettes to rain-friendly colours.

Ravi explained the concept of a capsule wardrobe: "We've all experienced the challenge of having a wardrobe full of clothes but still feeling like there's nothing suitable to wear. During the monsoon season, it is even more difficult due to the high humidity, sudden rainfall, and wet conditions. And to dress comfortably and stylishly during the monsoon season, we need a versatile capsule wardrobe that provides comfort and practicality."

When you curate a set of versatile, monsoon-friendly pieces, you create a monsoon capsule wardrobe. This leaves you less confused at the last minute about which clothes can withstand humidity and sudden showers. A capsule wardrobe is essentially a carefully assembled collection

of a few essential clothing items that can be mixed and matched in different ways. What is a monsoon capsule wardrobe?

So, how many pieces should a practical monsoon capsule wardrobe? Ravi recommended keeping the collection compact and versatile. He said, "How many should you add to this capsule? Ravi added, "While planning your capsule wardrobe for the monsoon, try to restrict your wardrobe to 10-12 items that will emphasize comfort, convenience, and easy dressing."

Tips for selecting monsoon-friendly clothes

There is a certain technique to choosing monsoon-friendly outfits, and it includes more than just going for lightweight clothes. From fabrics that dry quickly and silhouettes that do not drag through



puddles to colours that conceal mud splashes, it is important to choose the right styles. Storage is also essential, as the moisture in soaked clothes can leave them smelling musty.

Ravi recommended the following tips for curating and maintaining a practical rainy-season wardrobe:

1. Select quick-drying and breathable clothes

Avoid heavy denim and

thick cotton as they tend to absorb moisture and take a long time to dry, making them unsuitable for rainy weather. Choose nylon-polyester blends, as they are naturally water-re-

sistant and quick-drying. Rayon and Modal will work wonders during humid weather as they give you lightweight and breathable garments without making you feel sticky against the skin. Light crepe and synthetic moisture-wicking fabrics will be comfortable as well during the rainy season.

2. Choose comfortable silhouettes

Dresses and skirts with mid-length will prevent soaked hemlines while walking through puddles. Wide-leg pants and palazzo pants also make great choices due to increased air circulation and no sticking to the legs.

Light and water-resistant cover-ups and open shrugs will be perfect as they provide a protective layer without overheating.

3. Be strategic with colours and prints

Although neutral ba-

sics should be a part of every capsule wardrobe, monsoon fashion requires choosing dark and vibrant colours wisely.

Dark colored bottom pieces in navy blue, olive, charcoal, or black will help you hide mud spots and splashes.

Wear light colored or floral top pieces, as well as vibrant colors such as yellow, pink, coral, or red to brighten rainy days.

4. Store and maintain clothes properly

Monsoon humidity can soon result in a smell of mildew or ruin your clothing items in a very short time if they are not kept properly.

Put some silica gel or activated charcoal in your closet to absorb any extra humidity.

Above all, do not fold or keep damp clothes in your wardrobe, as they are not dry yet.

ENTERTAINMENT

Tom Holland and Zendaya marry secretly

Agency : Tom Holland and Zendaya have reportedly celebrated their marriage with a lavish three-day wedding in the English countryside. The Spider-Man co-stars are said to have hosted around 250 guests at a luxury estate in Surrey earlier this week, with Robert Downey Jr, Timothée Chalamet and Kylie Jenner reportedly among those in attendance.

According to reports by Deuxmoi and The Sun, the celebrations were held at the Beaverbrook estate in Surrey Hills and cost approximately £500,000, or around Rs 6.4 crore. The venue is also located close to Kingston upon Thames, where Tom grew up. Neither Tom nor Zendaya has publicly confirmed details of the reported celebrations.

The couple reportedly went to considerable lengths to prevent photographs and videos from making their way online. Guests as well as employees working at the venue were allegedly not allowed to carry their phones during the festivities. A source told The Sun, “Tom and Zendaya went to great lengths to stop any information or pictures getting out, so neither guests nor staff were allowed their mobiles.” The celebrations reportedly began with a rehearsal dinner on Monday, followed by the main ceremony the next evening. Tom and Zendaya are said to have exchanged vows in a woodland setting at sunset. Tom’s younger brother, Sam Holland, reportedly served as his best man. The three-day gathering also included activities such as croquet and a pool party. Guests were reportedly treated to Japanese cuisine at Beaverbrook, which currently operates as a five-star hotel and country estate.

Ranbir-Yash's 'Ramayana' delays India release to November 8

Mumbai : Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi and Yash’s Ramayana is one of the most awaited films of the year. While it was recently announced that the Nitesh Tiwari’s directorial will hit theatres worldwide on November 6, producer Namit Malhotra has now clarified that India release date is different.

Malhotra was speaking on the sidelines of the inaugu-

ration of his Prime Focus Studio – Phase 1 at Dadasaheb Phalke Chitranganari in Mumbai, when he clarified that while the worldwide release date of Ramayana is November 6, in India, the film will hit theatres two days later, i.e. on November 8. “It (Ramayana) will release in India on Diwali,” he told NDTV and then added, “We are releasing internationally (on November 6) be-

cause the international distribution works from a Friday standpoint, which is the 6th of November. But (in) India, currently, we are targeting the Diwali release.”

This means that in India, Ramayana will release in India on the occasion of Diwali. Released in July 2026, the trailer opens with Yash’s Ravana proclaiming himself the ruler of all three worlds. As he unleashes chaos and

destruction, Lord Vishnu takes the avatar of Ram to restore balance and protect the earth. The trailer then introduces Ranbir Kapoor’s Ram, who battles demons and safeguards his people before growing up and marrying Sita.

However, Ram and Sita’s life takes a dramatic turn when he is sentenced to 14 years of vanvaas. Sita, played by Sai Pallavi, and

Lakshman, portrayed by Ravie Dubey, choose to accompany him into exile. What follows is the abduction of Sita by Ravana and the epic battle that ensues, setting the stage for one of the greatest confrontations between good and evil. It should also be noted that Ramayana is a two-part film. While the first part is releasing this Diwali, the second part will hit theatres on Diwali 2027.



Shreya Kalra’s total 'Lock Upp 2' earnings revealed



Mumbai : After six weeks of continuous drama, non-stop fights, and intense tasks, Lock Upp Season 2 ended on Wednesday night with a grand finale. For

those catching up on the news, Shreya Kalra emerged as the winner of Lock Upp Season 2. Shivangi Joshi ended up as the runner-up of the season. The show was

hosted by Riteish Deshmukh and Farah Khan.

Do you know how much Shreya charged per week to stay in the house? According to reports, Shreya Kalra charged between Rs 2 lakh and Rs 4 lakh per week to participate in Lock Upp 2. Since Shreya was in the house from the beginning of the show until the finale, she earned approximately Rs 12 lakh to Rs 24 lakh across the six weeks. Apart from her weekly fee, Shreya also won a cash prize of Rs 1.12 crore, bringing her total earnings from the show to around Rs 1.24 crore. Shreya’s fans were thrilled after her victory, and many viewers took to social media to congratulate her.

Iconic comedy turns 18: director celebrates the magic of Singh is Kinng



Mumbai : As “Singh Is Kinng” turned 18 on Saturday, filmmaker Anees Bazmee celebrated the moment and said the film will always be incredibly special to him for the memories it gave him.

Anees took to Instagram, where he shared a video from the making of the action comedy film, which also stars Akshay Kumar, Katrina Kaif, Om Puri, Ranvir Shorey, Neha Dhupia, Javed Jaffrey, Sonu Sood, Kirron Kher, and Sudhanshu Pandey. He wrote in the caption: “Celebrating 18 years of Singh is Kinng. Some films become memories, and some become a part of your life. Singh is Kinng will always be incredibly special to me for the memories it gave me and, most im-

portantly, for the love you all continue to shower on it even after 18 years.”

“From an incredible cast and crew to every single person who believed in this madness, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Forever grateful for the journey, the laughter, the memories, and all the love.” The film follows Happy Singh, who is

sent to Australia to reunite Lakhanpal Singh, a crime boss, with his ill father but finds himself facing love and trouble instead. The film also featured a song and a music video with American rapper Snoop Dogg.

Talking about Bazmee, he made his directorial debut with Hulchul in 1995. His commercial success came

in 1998 with the film Pyaar To Hona Hi Tha, one of the highest-grossing Bollywood films of the year. He achieved further success as well as recognition by directing the top-grossing comedies including No Entry, Welcome, Singh Is Kinng, Ready, Welcome Back, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 and Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3, while also receiving praise for directing the moderately successful romantic thriller Deewangee.

His film Naam – The Missing Identity is an action thriller film, which stars Ajay Devgn, Sameera Reddy, Bhumika Chawla, Rahul Dev, Shriya Sharma, Yashpal Sharma, Vijay Raaz, Rajpal Yadav, Mukesh Tiwari and Sharat Saxena.

Christopher Nolan’s the odyssey joins the billion-dollar box office club



Los Angeles : Filmmaker Christopher Nolan’s “The Odyssey” has earned over USD 1 billion at the global box office. Featuring Matt Damon as Odysseus, Tom Holland as Telemachus, Zendaya as Athena, Robert Pattinson as Antinous, Lupita Nyong’o as Helen of Troy and Clytemnestra, Anne Hathaway as Penelope and Charlize Theron as Calypso, among others, the film released globally on July 17.

The film has earned USD

429.7 million at the domestic box office and USD 570.3 million overseas at the box office, according to the entertainment news outlet Deadline. “The Odyssey” revolves around the Greek King Odysseus (essayed by Damon) on a perilous 10-year journey home after the Trojan War. Beset by vengeful gods, sea monsters, and enchantresses, he fights to reunite with his wife, Penelope (Hathaway), and son, Telemachus (Holland).

It is produced under Synccopy Inc and distributed by Universal Pictures. Actors Jon Bernthal, John Leguizamo and Travis Scott, among others, round off the cast of the film. They feature as Menelaus, the King of Sparta, Eumaeus and bard, respectively. The film is based on Homer’s ancient Greek poem, which has been previously adapted several times. In 1954, “Ulysses”, an Italian-American co-production, featured actor Kirk

Douglas as the Greek hero. “O Brother, Where Art Thou?”, released in 2000, and was a loose, satirical adaptation directed by the Coen Brothers.

“The Odyssey” in 1997 was directed by Andrei Konchalovsky and was broadcast as a two-part miniseries. It starred Armand Assante as the Greek king and Greta Scacchi as Penelope, and followed Odysseus’s perilous ten-year journey home after the Trojan War.

Security Constable Dies of Heart Attack Outside Salman Khan’s Home

Mumbai : A police constable who was deployed outside Salman Khan’s Galaxy Apartment in Bandra reportedly collapsed on Friday evening. According to the IANS reports, the deceased security guard, identified as 41-year-old Ganesh Raite, belonged to the LA-4 unit of the Mumbai Police.



on patrol. Raite’s colleagues and fellow officers arranged the transport and rushed him to the nearby Bhabha Hospital. Despite the swift response, doctors declared him ‘brought dead.’ According to the reports, police suspect that Raite might have suffered a cardiac arrest. His body has been sent for a post-mortem to authenticate

the exact cause of death. Raite’s sudden demise has left his colleagues and family in distraught. Raite earlier served in the Indian Army, guarding the country’s borders. After completing his Army service, he joined Mumbai police and started serving as a constable.

Raite’s death comes amid heightened security around Salman Khan, who has been under a Y-plus security blanket cover following frequent threats linked to jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and his associates. As part of Y-plus security category, Salman he is accompanied

by armed police personnel and personal security, including frequent patrolling outside the building. Last year, Salman Khan admitted that moving out being surrounded by security personnel on some days is challenging for him. While sharing with the press that he is not afraid of the threats, the superstar said, “Bhagwan, Allah sab unpar hai. Jitni umar likhi hai, utni likhi hai. Bas yahi hai (It’s all up to God, Allah. What is written is written. That’s all). Sometimes, having to move around with so many people becomes a problem”.

Suriya’s Vishwanath and sons trailer out now

Mumbai : The trailer of Suriya-starrer ‘Vishwanath and Sons’ is finally out, giving audiences a glimpse of the upcoming family drama directed by Venky Atluri. The film follows the journey of a man in his 40s who refuses to give up on his dreams and continues to chase them despite the challenges in his way. The trailer introduces Suriya as Sanjay Vishwanath, an international pistol shooter who is still working towards his career goals even in his 40s. Along with his sporting journey, the film also focuses on family relationships, personal growth and an age-gap romance. Mamitha Baiju plays the female lead, while Radhika Sarathkumar and Raveena Tandon are seen in important roles.

The trailer comes just days after Suriya received a grand welcome from fans at the audio launch of Vishwanath and Sons in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Thousands of fans gathered at the ven-



ue, cheering for the actor as excitement around the film continued to grow ahead of its release. Director Venky Atluri, music composer GV Prakash Kumar and the rest of the cast were also present at the event, where the film’s music was unveiled. The strong response from fans also follows the success of Suriya’s recent film Karuppu, adding to the excitement for Vish-

wanath and Sons. Directed by Venky Atluri, Vishwanath and Sons is scheduled to release in theatres worldwide on August 14. After Vishwanath and Sons, Suriya is expected to star in director Jithu Madhavan’s next film, tentatively titled S47. He also has another project with director TJ Gnanavel, backed by Hombale Films, along with several other films currently in development.

Sangeetha files withdrawal plea, bringing end to divorce case involving actor Vijay

Chengalpattu : Earlier this Friday, the divorce proceedings involving actor-turned-politician and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Joseph Vijay and his wife Sangeetha reportedly came to an unexpected halt after she withdrew the petition she had filed before the Chengalpattu District Court. With the withdrawal now accepted, the court has officially closed the case.

The development comes roughly six months after Sangeetha approached the court seeking dissolution of her marriage. According to the court’s order, the withdrawal has been accepted without preventing her from pursuing legal action again if circumstances change. An excerpt from the order reads, "The petitioner is permitted to withdraw this case with a liberty to file fresh petition in the future, if required." The latest order effectively ends the current proceedings and also dismisses months of speculation surrounding the future of the high-profile

case.

When the petition was originally filed, Sangeetha had alleged that she experienced mental, physical and emotional neglect during the course of the marriage. The filing also claimed that she was subjected to verbal humiliation and that her financial independence had been curtailed while they were together. As the proceedings continued, she later sought interim residential relief from the court. In that application, she requested permission to continue residing at the family’s Neelankarai residence until the divorce case reached its conclusion, or alternatively, for suitable accommodation to be provided during the legal process.

The petition quickly attracted widespread attention, prompting reports that the couple were exploring an out-of-court settlement through private discussions. Several unverified reports even suggested that both sides were negotiating terms for a mutually agreed separation, including possible financial arrangements.

However, with the petition now withdrawn instead of progressing towards a decree, those reports appear to have been unfounded. The court’s decision indicates that no divorce has been granted, and the matter now stands closed unless fresh proceedings are initiated in the future. Neither Vijay nor Sangeetha has issued a public statement following the court’s order. Despite Vijay’s decades-long career as one of Tamil cinema’s biggest stars before entering politics, the couple have largely kept their personal lives away from the public eye throughout their marriage.

For now, the legal chapter between Vijay and Sangeetha has come to a close. Whether the withdrawal signals a reconciliation or simply leaves the door open for future legal action remains unclear, especially since neither party has commented on the court’s latest order.

Amaal Mallik opens up on Arijit Singh’s step back from Bollywood music

Mumbai : In January this year, Arijit Singh announced that he was stepping away from playback singing. While his decision came as a shock to many of his fans, music composer Amaal Mallik has shared that he believes Arijit’s decision was not sudden or forced. In an interview with Pinkvilla, Amaal said those who worked closely with Arijit had noticed his growing disinterest in film music nearly one to two years before he made the announcement.

Speaking about Arijit’s retirement from playback singing, Amaal said, “I don’t think anyone forced him in any way. He made this decision himself. In fact, when he announced it publicly, all of us who had worked with him had already



realised one or two years earlier that he had lost interest in this kind of film music.” Amaal also said that the industry often relies on Arijit’s popularity to boost a song’s chances of becoming a hit, but believes the quality of the music ultimately matters too. “Even in film music, once you become a big artist, you have the freedom to choose your projects. The industry is so

driven by money that people often think, ‘Just pay whatever it takes, make the song, and get Arijit to sing it.’ That’s because having Arijit Singh on a song increases the chances of it becoming a hit, or at least getting noticed. But even Arijit later realised that what truly matters is how good the song itself is,” he said.

He further said that while Arijit’s name once helped make

songs popular, a famous singer alone cannot always guarantee a hit. He added that a song’s success depends on its overall quality and the combined work of the singer, composer and lyricist. Amaal recently collaborated with Arijit for the song ‘Yeh Awarapan’ from Emraan Hashmi’s upcoming film ‘Awarapan 2’. Speaking about the same, Amaal said, “When Arijit heard this song, it wasn’t because of any old promise or previous agreement. People often assume that an old recorded song was suddenly released, but that’s not true. For almost a year, the song existed only in my voice. Arijit and I regularly share music with each other. I send him five or six songs, and if he likes one, we work on it.

Kiren Rijiju’s “Change of Heart” Reaction to Rahul Gandhi’s Women Power Film

New Delhi, Aug 08: On Saturday, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju made fun of Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi’s video statement about women’s power.Rahul Gandhi stated that it’s critical to “bring women back into the conversation and allow them to do what they want to do” in a Friday video.In response to Gandhi’s video, Rijiju described it as a “positive message” and questioned whether a “change of heart” had occurred.The Congress Party appears to be sending a favorable message with this. “Shri Rahul Gandhi Ji has clearly changed his mind about women,” Rijiju wrote on X.In his article, he then included a question on women’s reservations for the Leader of the Opposition. ”Now, I hope Congress Party will support the Women’s Reservation Bill unconditionally,” Rijiju added. Congress and the Centre have been at loggerheads over the government’s push for Delimitation Bill and clubbing of the Women’s Reservation with it. Congress and other opposition parties have been opposing the Delimitation Bill and want women’s quota to be implemented in the current strength of Parliament. The government has been trying to push the bill to increase the number of seats in Parliament and state Assemblies to implement the 33% women quota which was earlier passed by Parliament unanimously.Rahul Gandhi’s re-



marks in an Instagram post on Friday came as an addition to his reply made during his Thursday’s “Ask Me Anything” session.Gandhi on Friday said: “I was thinking to myself that the energy of India’s women is trapped, is not allowed to express itself, is not allowed to imagine.“To me, no country can be successful if the women in that country are not expressing themselves. I think a lot of my politics and a lot of what politics should be in this country is in making people understand that our country is stunted, incomplete, without the expression of our women,” Gandhi said in his video on Instagram. The Congress leader asserted that it is not just about women doing well in business or in the political system, but about them

being able to express themselves in their homes and walk the streets comfortably. They are challenging their parents, husbands, siblings, sisters, and other family members by voicing a viewpoint that many others disagree with. Therefore, if India is to truly grow, a certain level of independence from this patriarchy and the strict supervision that Indian males impose on their women is necessary,” the Congress MP stated.When questioned on Thursday about his message to the young ladies battling for the right to an education, Gandhi said, “India’s women are our strength, our biggest asset.” The Congressman voiced his displeasure with the nation’s treatment of women in the business and educational systems.

Pushkar Singh Dhami, the chief minister of Uttarakhand, answers Rishabh Pant’s request for a “gift”



New Delhi: Rishabh Pant, an Indian wicketkeeper-batter, made a late-night appeal to Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on social media. Everyone was shocked when Pant came to X (previously Twitter) at 12:46 AM on Saturday to ask Dhami for help in purchasing property in Uttarakhand since he wanted to move his base from Delhi. The timing of the message and its grammatical mistakes caused more controversy than the request itself, with some followers even raising concerns for Pant’s wellbeing. ”pushkardhami hello sir how’s you??? It’s a long time for me especially being local from Uttarakhand .

I have been trying to buy land to shift my base from Delhi to Uttarakhand and I couldn’t find anything facilitating and big to live here I love my Uttarakhand. My humble request to us is please help me in land acquisition cause nowadays it had become nitemare with clarity and even other land is dew which was I supposedly get when I was promoting the state before keeping everything in side I wanna move back to my native place to help and built around Uttarakhand and I want to shif back to my Pahadi people please look into this matter it’s been 3 years didn’t get any land awaiting your

answer pushkardhami sir,” wrote Pant.As the post went viral, Dhami praised Pant for his immense contribution to cricket and for making Uttarakhand proud. He also stated that the concerned officials would get in touch with the cricketer to address his queries.“Dear Rishabh, you are the pride of Uttarakhand. With your splendid performance and achievements, you have illuminated the name of Devbhoomi in the country and the world. Your love for your motherland and your sentiment of returning here to contribute are highly commendable. Regarding the matter you have raised, instructions are being issued to the concerned officials. They will soon contact you and ensure all possible cooperation in accordance with the rules,” wrote Dhami on X. Prior to IPL 2027, Pant was moved from the Lucknow Super Giants to his old team, the Delhi Capitals, in a pre-auction transaction earlier in June. The Lucknow Super Giants paid Rs 13.5 crore for spinner Kuldeep Yadav, while the Delhi Capitals paid Rs 15 crore for Pant.

“Happy To Face Murder Trial”: Shakib Al Hasan Is Prepared To Go Back To Bangladesh With One Requirement

New Delhi: Great Bangladeshi cricket player Shakib Al Hasan, a supporter of deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, stated that if the government ensures his safety, he is prepared to return from a two-year exile, stand trial on allegations including murder, and participate in a farewell series. After Hasina’s administration was overthrown in a fatal student-led rebellion in August 2024, Shakib, a former member of the Awami League, moved to the United States.

The 39-year-old cricketer has stated that he still intends to play a last series at home and represent his nation in the 2027 ODI World Cup. He has not yet announced his retirement from international cricket. The case of the former cap-

tain of Bangladesh serves as a stark reminder of the broader consequences of Hasina’s removal, which have left many of her supporters facing criminal prosecution and unable to return to Bangladesh. His homecoming will put to the test if Prime Minister Tarique Rahman’s administration will let members of the old ruling party. This is an open topic because Hasina herself has stated that she intends to return in December even tho she was handed a death sentence there. ”

If I get the clearance from the government that my security will be ensured, I am happy to go back, face the court trial and everything that’s needed to be done,” Shakib told Reuters by phone from Sri Lan-

Amarinder Singh says he is ‘committed to BJP’

New Delhi, Aug 08: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi picked Capt Amarinder Singh as his favorite BJP politician, with the former Punjab chief minister stating that, while his personal and familial relationships with Rahul and his mother Sonia Gandhi would always exist, he is politically devoted to the BJP.Rahul Gandhi made a statement in an Instagram video.I get along with him; he’s cool. He is a specialist in military history. “Hello, Uncle Amarinder,” Gandhi said. In a fresh outreach to Gen Z, Rahul Gandhi on Thursday launched an “Ask Me Anything” session on Instagram, answering several questions.Posting a link to his Instagram initiative on X, Gandhi said, “Students, Gen-Z -- I’m here to listen. Ask me anything on Instagram, and I’ll answer as many questions as I can.” Reacting to Gandhi’s remark, Capt Amarinder Singh on Friday said it was nice of Rahul Gandhi to speak well of him.

St. Louis Rapid and Blitz is won by R Praggnanandhaa

St. Louis: With one round remaining, Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa decisively won his first Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz Championship. The 20-year-old easily outperformed Uzbekistan’s Javokhir Sindarov, who is vying for this year’s global championship, with 23.5 points. Praggnanandhaa advanced to second place in the Grand Chess Tour (GCT) on the penultimate day of the quick and blitz competition without losing any games, almost securing his seat in the grand finals that is set for later this year. The Indian will just have to keep up his form in the last tournament of the season, the Sinquefeld Cup, which will be played under the Classical format from August 10 to 19.After winning the rapid section with a marginal one-point lead against Sindarov, Praggnanandhaa lost only one game in the blitz and scored the requisite victories to end up with



11.5 points out of a possible 18.Sindarov, who was trailing Praggnanandhaa by a full point after the rapid section, had to be content with the second spot on 22 points whereas Wesley So of the United States came third, scoring 20 points overall.Praggnanandhaa jumped to second spot in the overall GCT rankings following his triumph and much would depend on how he performs in the Sinquefeld Cup starting on the weekend. The with-

drawal of Alireza Firouzja of France from the GCT has impacted positively on the lone Indian on the tour. Firouzja cited scheduling issues ahead of the last two events and his entire points earned thus far were removed as per the pre-agreement.Praggnanandhaa will have to watch out in the Classical event that starts on Sunday and if he ends up in top three, it will be another great result for the Indian who won the Norway Chess title ahead

of Magnus Carlsen earlier this year.“I am super happy with the result (winning the St Louis Rapid & Blitz) and overall about the game quality. This is the first major rapid and blitz victory, so I’m really happy about it,” said Praggnanandhaa on ‘X’ after the triumph in the elite 10-man field. ”I want to express my gratitude to my family and entire team for their incredible support. I will then participate in the Sinquefeld Cup, which begins in three days. Because it’s the event before to the GCT final, there isn’t much time to relax. The young Grandmaster said, “It’s going to be really exciting.”1. R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 23.5); 2. Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 22); 3. Wesley So (USA, 20.5); 4. Levon Aronian (USA, 19) 5-7. Fabiano Caruana (USA); Lenier Dominguez Perez (USA), Jorden Van Foreest (Ned) 17 each; 8. Anish Giri (Ned, 15.5); 9. Vincent Keymer (USA, 14.5); 10. Awonder Leong (USA, 14).

The US Senate Approves China and India Face a 100% Tariff Threat Due to Russia’s Sanctions Bill



New Delhi, Aug 08: A bill that would enable President Donald Trump to slap 100% tariffs on the top five buyers of Russian natural gas and oil worldwide, including China and India, has been adopted by the US Senate.

The Senate voted 86–11 to adopt the bill, which bears the name of Republican senator Lindsey Graham, a fervent friend of Ukraine who passed away on July 11. Graham has been a fervent supporter of further sanctions against Russia for starting the fifth-year conflict in Ukraine.The bill, according to his sister and Senate successor Darline Graham, “hits (Russian President Vladimir) Putin where it hurts.” Democrat Richard Blumenthal, who pressed for the bill’s passage along with Graham for over a year, said the people of Ukraine “are not alone”. ”Today, President (Volodymyr) Zelensky is watching from Ukraine - and Putin is watching from Moscow,” he said. ”I would like to think Lindsey Graham is watching, too,” he said.We tell the Ukrainian people today that they are not alone. He said, “And today we tell Vladimir Putin: You will not conquer Ukraine.”

The president may apply taxes on the top five buyers of Russian natural gas and oil worldwide, including China and India, according to the bipartisan deal.Azerbaijan, Hungary, and Slovakia are presently among the top five importers of Russian gas and oil, along with China and India. The bill also provides exceptions for countries that import less than 15% of their natural gas from Russia and are taking steps to reduce those imports.The legislation also includes sanctions on Putin, senior Russian political and military leaders, Russian financial institutions and Russian energy projects. The measure would broaden the scope of US penalties to include older, reflagged oil vessels that Moscow employs to get around current US restrictions on Russian energy and oil earnings.Additionally, if the president certifies to Congress that it is in the best interests of the country, the White House may remove limits or sanctions.The measure would prolong the Iran penalties Act of 1996, which penalizes businesses who engage in Iran’s energy sector, until 2031 in addition to the penalties against Russia.

In the Chamba District of Himachal, a private bus overturned, killing eight people and injuring ten more



Himachal Pradesh, Aug 08: In the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh, a private bus flipped and plunged into a lower road on Saturday morning, killing at least eight persons, including the driver and conductor, and in-

juring ten more.The bus, run by Sharma Bus Service, was traveling from Bairagarh to Chamba when the accident occurred close to Chalunj Mor in the Devikothi region on the Bairagarh-Tissa route. According to officials, the

car departed Bairagarh at approximately 6:30 in the morning and was involved in the collision after traveling around three kilometers.When the bus crashed, eighteen individuals were on board. Several passengers were trapped in the debris as the car toppled and fell onto a road below, according to officials. Hearing cries for help, local residents rushed to the spot and alerted the police. Rescue teams comprising personnel from the NDRF, Police, Home Guards, Fire Services and the Revenue Department launched an operation to pull passengers out of the damaged bus and shift the injured to hospitals. Six of

the ten injured were sent to Pt Jawaharlal Nehru Government Medical College and Hospital in Chamba for treatment after suffering severe injuries.Eight fatalities and ten injuries were recorded by the Chamba District Disaster Management Authority. The victims’ names have not yet been made public.An inquiry has been started by the authorities to determine what caused the accident.The collision happened on the 27-kilometer mountain section of the Bairagarh-Tissa route in the isolated Churah Valley, which is renowned for its steep slopes and small lanes. For travelers aiming for the high-altitude Sach Pass, the path is a crucial link.

Punjabi and Haryana farmers are greatly relieved by the rains, which also improve crop prospects

Punjab, Aug 08: Farmers in Punjab and Haryana have received much-needed respite from the recent monsoon rains, which have greatly improved agricultural conditions and decreased reliance on irrigation. According to farmers, the opportune showers are anticipated to boost harvests, reduce power use, and aid in replenishing the area’s rapidly diminishing groundwater.Farmers claim that the sporadic rainfall has guarantyd sufficient moisture

for crops, minimizing the need to run tube wells, as paddy stands in fields throughout both states. This will relieve pressure on groundwater supplies in addition to reducing power prices. Additionally, a lot of farmers think that the rains would help prevent crop illnesses and pest infestations, resulting in healthier plants and higher-quality products. Agriculture experts have described the rainfall as highly beneficial for the farming sec-

tor. They say rainwater strengthens crop roots, improves soil fertility, and naturally enriches the soil with nitrogen, promoting better plant growth. The moisture retained in the fields also supports seed germination and benefits crops beyond paddy. Rainfall washes dust and impurities off plants, further improving crop health and productivity. Timely rains are also expected to increase farm incomes by boosting agricultural output.Director of

weather department Surinder Paul said the rainfall has had a very positive impact on both Punjab and Haryana, benefiting agriculture, tourism, and the energy sector.

He said the showers have reduced irrigation requirements, helped recharge groundwater, and improved water storage across the region. According to Paul, the rainfall has been beneficial for everyone, especially farmers.

An Odisha woman dies after receiving the “wrong” injection

Odisha, Aug 08: At a pharmacy in the Rayagada district of Odisha, a lady died after allegedly receiving the incorrect injection, according to authorities on Friday.The event happened on Thursday at JK Pur. Baidehi Kumar, 55, of Getipada village in the Rayagada district’s Chandili police limits, was identified as the victim.In this regard, the accused has been held by the police. Family relatives claim that Baidehi had a fever and cold for the previous few days. She went to a JK Pur pharmacy on Thursday since her health was not getting better despite taking medication, and a staff member named A K Bhadra reportedly gave her an injection.Baidehi allegedly experienced serious adverse effects shortly after receiving the injection, and her health quickly worsened. She passed away while being transported by family members to the hospital at the Rayagada district headquarters, according to the police. The victim’s family later lodged a complaint at Chandili police station, alleging that the death was caused by the injection administered by the accused.Following the complaint, Chandili police detained Bhadra for questioning and launched an investigation.“We have received a written complaint from the victim woman’s family. The woman had received the injection at a medicine store. The man who administered the injection has been detained for questioning,” Uttam Sahu, inspector-in-charge (IIC) of Chandili police station, said. According to the IIC, the police are looking into the circumstances surrounding the death and will take further action based on the results of the inquiry and the post-mortem report.According to police, the precise cause of death will only be determined following the forensic evidence and post-mortem examination.



Hardik Pandya to CSK or KKR? Ashwin reveals latest IPL 2027 trade update

New Delhi: Speculation surrounding Hardik Pandya's future has dominated the IPL off-season, with reports linking the Mumbai Indians captain to Chennai Super Kings and Kolkata Knight Riders ahead of the IPL 2027 mini auction. While social media has been awash with theories and fans have dissected everything from Hardik's Instagram posts to potential trade packages, former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin believes the blockbuster move is nowhere close to being completed. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Ashwin dismissed suggestions that a deal was imminent and explained why Mumbai Indians would think twice before allowing one of their biggest stars to join a direct title rival. "Nothing has moved. Nobody has confirmed the trade," he said. "Let's understand one thing: everybody wants a player like Hardik Pandya. He is a three-dimensional player. Whether somebody wants him as a captain is the next phase." Ashwin said the sheer



value Hardik brings as an all-rounder makes any potential trade significantly more complicated than many believe. Drawing from his own experience at Punjab Kings, the former spinner recalled how a seemingly certain deal for Shikhar Dhawan collapsed at the last minute, revealing that the former opener went on to play for Delhi Capitals. Ashwin said that anecdote underlined why it would be premature to assume Hardik's departure from Mumbai In-

dians was a foregone conclusion. "The reason I'm saying this is because, when you're talking about giving away a player like Hardik Pandya, you're talking about Mumbai Indians, five-time champions. Then the other parties reportedly involved are five-time champions Chennai Super Kings and three-time champions Kolkata Knight Riders. If I'm Mumbai Indians, why would I want to part with Hardik so that these teams become even stronger?" If my team is

getting strengthened further, or at least I'm getting an equal trade, then I'll give away my player. Secondly, why would I strengthen another team?" Trade speculation has gathered pace in recent days, with reports suggesting both CSK and KKR are exploring the possibility of signing Hardik. Ashwin, however, pointed out that even if the player wished to leave, he could not dictate his destination. "And if you're all saying Hardik has told them, 'I will only play for

this particular franchise', that doesn't suffice. A player can only say, 'I don't want to play here.' He can't say, 'I want to go to this particular team,' beyond a certain point." Ashwin insisted the discussions, if any, were still at a very early stage. "This deal will not be closed this early. Don't count on Hardik going elsewhere." The former India off-spinner also weighed in on the player exchanges being speculated in the media. Reports have linked Chennai Super Kings with a package involving Shivam Dube and an Indian fast bowler, while Kolkata Knight Riders have also been mentioned as potential suitors. Ashwin questioned whether the proposed packages would genuinely improve Mumbai Indians. "Because what can CSK offer? A fast bowler and Shivam Dube, according to speculation. What can KKR offer? Cameron Green? What if Green goes to play the Ashes and misses the IPL next year?" He suggested there was only one scenario in which a KKR deal would make sense for Mumbai.

Asian Youth silver medals fuel lifter Titli's dreams

Chennai: Titli Maji was still a toddler when her father, who used to work as a goldsmith in New Delhi, died by suicide. It was learnt that he ended his life due to financial constraints. Mother Alpana was unemployed at the time and soon the family had a new member in the form of a second daughter, who was named Trisha. Initially, the neighbours supported the family as they used to take care of their meals. As Titli turned three, Alpana got a cook's job in a local school. But the meagre income she earns by cooking mid-day meals for school students was never enough to sustain the family comprising two daughters. With time, Titli got interested in sports and started pursuing gymnastics. A couple of years later, she developed interest in weightlifting and approached Srikanta Modi, who runs a gym near her house in Deulpur, Howrah (West Bengal). The mother, however, was against her daughter pursuing weightlifting. The difficulties she



faced at the time might have made her averse to the daughter's decision. Whatever doubts she may have had vanished when Titli was selected for the national camp six months ago and on Friday, Alpana would have been a proud mother as her daughter has won a silver medal each in the snatch, clean and jerk, and total of the 45kg weight category at the Asian Youth and Junior Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. It was Titli's first international meet but she shone brightly on the platform lifting 65kg in snatch, 80kg in clean and jerk taking her total to 145kg. All that

would not have been possible without help and generosity of the local coaches including Srikanta and Pralay Bagh. "I saw people doing weightlifting and developed a fondness for the sport. I went to Srikanta sir but initially he told me that his gym is full. He said he will speak to some other coaches but eventually relented on my insistence. He along with Pralay sir not only helped me train but also took care of my dietary requirements. They used to feed me chicken and other essential food items, which my family could not afford," Titli told this daily from Tashkent.

Diego Forlan named Uruguay coach after disastrous FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign



Montevideo: Former striker Diego Forlan has been appointed head coach of the Uruguay national team following their disastrous World Cup campaign, the country's football association (AUF) announced Thursday. Forlan will take

over, reportedly on an interim basis, from Marcelo Bielsa who stepped down following Uruguay's group-stage exit from the World Cup. "Diego Forlan is coming home (to take charge of) the Under-20 national team and the senior nation-

al team," the AUF said in a short statement. The agreement with Forlan, who won the Golden Ball award for player of the tournament at the 2010 World Cup, was finalised after weeks of negotiations. The 47-year-old will take over as interim coach but his contract keeps the door open for an extension, AUF sources recently told AFP. He will be in charge of the team for friendlies in September, October and March. Two-time world champion Uruguay is reeling after failing to get out of its group for a second successive World Cup. Back-to-back draws with Saudi Arabia and Cape Verde put it in unexpected danger of crashing out, before its elimination was confirmed by a loss to eventual cham-

pion Spain. The 71-year-old Bielsa was widely criticised for his tactics and for the decision to coax Fernando Muslera out of international retirement, with the veteran goalkeeper then making a string of errors. Forlan has little coaching experience despite enjoying a stellar playing career. He made his coaching debut during the 2020 season with former club Penarol but left the post after just 11 matches due to poor results. Forlan's only other managerial stint came in 2021, when he spent 12 games in charge of Atenas in the Uruguayan second division. He is highly regarded, though, in Uruguay after scoring 36 international goals, including five during its run to the 2010 World Cup semifinals.

TNPL 2026: Tushar shines against Chepauk as Tiruppur seal convincing victory

Agency : For years, fans believed Squid Game was all set to get a Hollywood makeover with David Fincher at the helm. But fresh reports suggest the streaming giant has now changed its game plan. Needless to say, the Korean drama Squid Game is easily one of the most popular franchises on Netflix. There were also talks about a Hollywood remake of the survival show in English since years. In the latest news, the American spin-off by David Finche has reportedly been scrapped by Netflix. According to The Playlist, Netflix is no longer moving ahead with David Fincher's rumoured Squid Game series. Internally referred to as Heckler, the project had Utopia creator Dennis Kelly attached as its writer. Kelly had previously teamed up with Fincher on another HBO venture as well, but that project also never made it to production. The report further claimed that the project slowly lost steam over time. A combination of leadership changes within Netflix, Fincher's busy slate of high-profile projects, and the streamer's evolving



vision for expanding the Squid Game universe reportedly contributed to the decision to shelve the series. Moving forward, Netflix will now probably be making its own versions of Squid Game for other nations including France and Norway, among others. Notably, these are just in talking stages as of now and there is no confirmation regarding this. Meanwhile, David is busy currently with a string of projects in the pipeline. He

recently finished the shooting of The Adventures of Cliff Booth, which is the sequel to Once Upon a Time in Hollywood, penned by Quentin Tarantino and starring Brad Pitt.Created, written and directed by Hwang Dong-hyuk, Squid Game is a South Korean dystopian survival thriller that became a global phenomenon after its Netflix debut. The story follows 456 cash-strapped contestants who agree to take part in a mysterious competition.

Australia players to miss IPL 2027? McDonald provides major update

Sydney: Australia head coach Andrew McDonald has said the IPL can "fit" into his team's hectic international schedule, but the demands on his Test stars mean they will have to "balance it out" with workload management, particularly for the fast bowlers. Beginning with a two-Test home series against Bangladesh on Thursday, Australia are set to play 20 Tests and 14 white-ball matches across next 12 months, with the 2027 IPL window expected to fall between a five-Test tour of India and the World Test Championship final, before the Ashes in England. IndiaNews Portal "I know people will start talking about the IPL and filling that time and what does that look like," McDonald told Cricinfo. I've said this before, the IPL is part of our management plan for a lot of our players, and to expose our best players in what I believe is the best competition in terms of T20 cricket has its performance benefits as well. You've just got to balance that out." Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood, Cameron Green and Travis Head are currently on IPL lists, while Josh Inglis is also part of the Lucknow Super Giants.



Australia's experience in 2023, when Cummins, Starc and Head skipped the IPL before playing key roles in the WTC final and Ashes, could influence decisions this time around. McDonald stressed that managing Australia's fast bowlers will be a priority, with the team aiming to preserve their fitness through a gruelling run of Test cricket. "I know that people say, country versus franchise and all that, but the important part of this period is that we're allowing our fast bowlers to reset their body, get everything in order to give themselves the best opportunity across the 20 or 21 games that everyone talks about," McDonald said. "What I will say about our players is they make good decisions across the journey, and that's underpinned by discussions with the medical team and coaches. They want to play for Australia. There's

an Ashes on the back of that. "Hopefully, a World Test Championship final and into a World Cup. There's a lot of important priority cricket for Australia in that period. So we're going to have to make some decisions." For McDonald, the IPL remains an option rather than a commitment, with Australia prepared to assess each player's workload and form before deciding. "The starting point is that you can do it all, and I think if you start from that point, then you can make decisions according to that," McDonald said. "Whereas if you're just defeatist and say, 'well, that doesn't fit', how do we know where Pat Cummins is going to be come the fourth Test against New Zealand? How do we know where Mitchell Starc is going to be at the end of South Africa? We don't know. So you gather all that information as you go across it.

MLB brings MLBx to India, featuring cricket superstar Suryakumar Yadav

Mumbai: Major League Baseball (MLB), announced that it will host MLBx, its innovative, fast paced 3-on-3 baseball competition in Mumbai, India for the first time on October 24, at Mumbai Football Arena, Andheri Sports Complex. The event in Mumbai will feature India's T20 World Cup-winning captain and MLB Ambassador Suryakumar Yadav, alongside former MLB All-Stars Nick Swisher and Adrian Gonzalez. Additional participants will be announced in the coming weeks, according to a press release on Thursday. The event will bring together baseball competition, interactive fan experiences and entertainment, offering Indian audiences a new way to experience the world's most historic sporting league. Created by Major League Baseball, MLBx is a dynamic, mixed 3-on-3 baseball competition that combines power hitting, athletic defensive plays and fast-paced gameplay. Following its appearance during MLB All-Star Week in Philadelphia, the competition now makes



its debut in Mumbai. The event has previously taken place at 15 US venues over the past three years, as well as internationally in London, Seoul and Mexico City. The announcement builds on MLB's continued investment in India, including its partnership with MLB Ambassador Suryakumar Yadav and strategic collaborations with RISE Worldwide (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited) and JioStar. "India represents one of the world's most exciting loca-

tions for large-scale events and a massive growth opportunity for baseball, which is why we're thrilled to bring MLBx to Mumbai for the first time," said Jeremiah Yolkut, Major League Baseball, Senior Vice President of Global Operations and Events. "Building on the incredible response to our recent partnerships in India, we're looking forward to giving fans the opportunity to experience the energy of baseball firsthand through MLBx," he said. Former MLB All-Star Nick Swisher played

12 Major League seasons, winning the 2009 World Series with the New York Yankees and earning an All-Star selection in 2010. Adrian Gonzalez enjoyed a 15-year Major League career, earning five MLB All-Star selections, four Silver Slugger Awards and four Gold Glove Awards while playing for the Texas Rangers, San Diego Padres, Boston Red Sox and Los Angeles Dodgers. MLBx: Mumbai represents another milestone in Major League Baseball's continued efforts to grow the game globally and introduce new audiences to baseball. By showcasing the excitement and culture of the sport through live music, interactive fan experiences and classic ballpark food with a local twist, the event celebrates the connection between baseball and India's vibrant sporting culture. Additional programming and event details will be announced in the coming weeks. Tickets for MLBx: Mumbai are on sale exclusively on BookMyShow, India's leading entertainment destination. MLB also announced a renewal

with JioStar, India's leading media and entertainment company, continuing the league's commitment to bringing live MLB games and content to fans across the country through one of the world's largest media platforms. World News Section Together, the partnerships strengthen MLB's presence in India by combining broad media distribution with the reach and influence of one of the country's leading athletes. Whether it's a packed cricket stadium or a baseball ballpark, the most memorable moments are the ones that bring people together. Suryakumar Yadav, who is exclusively managed by RISE Worldwide, has built his career creating those moments through a fearless, expressive style of play that resonates with fans across generations. "India is home to one of the most vibrant sports cultures in the world, and these partnerships allow us to connect with fans in a meaningful way," said Jeremiah Yolkut, Major League Baseball, Senior Vice President of Global Operations and Events.