

Meghalaya CM Seeks Centre's Approval For Shillong Airport Expansion And Aviation Projects

Shillong, July 22: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Tuesday met Union Minister for Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammo-han Naidu and sought the Centre's support to expedite a series of aviation infrastructure projects aimed at strengthening air connectivity across the state. During the meeting, the Chief Minister informed the Union Minister that the State Government had completed its responsibilities for the proposed projects and requested the Ministry of Civil Aviation to grant the necessary approvals to enable their implementation.

The expansion of Shillong Airport at Umroi was Emphasized as the State's highest priority. The State Government said it has already transferred the required 22 acres of land to the Airports Authority of India (AAI), obtained environmental clearance, and that AAI has awarded the runway expansion work.

According to the State Government, the extended runway will enable larger



aircraft, including Airbus A320 aircraft, to operate from Shillong Airport, creating the possibility of direct flights to major cities and reducing dependence on the road journey from Guwahati. The Chief Minister requested the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to issue the execution-level approval required for the commencement of the awarded works. He also informed the Minister that

the State Government is bearing the cost of removing flight-path obstacles, including the relocation of Umden Mission Village at an estimated cost of around Rs 150 crore, and has reaffirmed this commitment before the High Court of Meghalaya.

For the Garo Hills region, the Chief Minister urged AAI to take over and operate Baljek Airport at Tura as a full-fledged AAI airport on an "as-is-where-is" ba-

sis. The State Government has offered to deposit the estimated project cost of Rs 63.67 crore upfront. The airport is proposed to be developed in phases, initially handling 19-seater aircraft before expanding to ATR-72 and Airbus A320 operations. The Chief Minister also sought approval for the project under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS-UDAN), with reimbursement of the deposited

amount after the project's sanction.

The Chief Minister further informed the Union Minister that two heliports at Shillong and Tura have already been sanctioned and are under construction. The State Government has identified nine additional sites across district headquarters and tourist destinations and requested approval for at least two more heliports under the RCS-UDAN scheme, along with feasibility studies for all identified locations.

In addition, the State Government sought approval for a water aerodrome at Umiam under the RCS-UDAN scheme following the successful seaplane demonstration at Umiam Lake in November 2024. It also requested the preparation of a detailed project report and proposed Umiam as one of the five water aerodromes to be developed by AAI. The proposed projects are aimed at improving regional air connectivity, expanding aviation infrastructure, and enhancing access to different parts of Meghalaya.

Mizoram CM pushes Mizo literature growth via translations, digital access

Aizawl, July 22: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma on Wednesday released a Festschrift titled Zawhzawzo Val, a commemorative volume containing scholarly writings on Prof. Laltluangliana Khiantge, along with two books associated with the noted scholar at a function held at the BSI Hall, Bible House, Aizawl. The two books released were Lalzika leh Vanthangi, an English translation of the Mizo drama authored by Prof. Laltluangliana Khiantge, and Teaching of Mizo Language in Secondary School, co-authored by Prof. Khiantge and Dr. Lalramliana. Mizoram University Vice Chancellor Prof. Dibakar Chandra Deka, who attended the event as the Guest of Honour, also released the Bengali translation of Pasaltha Khuangchera.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said Prof. Khiantge is widely respected among the Zo people for his contributions to literature and education. He said the scholar's achievements in academics and education had already established his legacy, while his literary works had fur-



ther enriched Mizo society. Lalduhoma recalled his discussions with Prof. Khiantge over the years, during which the author had expressed a desire to see more Mizo literary works translated into other languages. He said the release of the English translations of Pasaltha Khuangchera and Lalzika leh Vanthangi marked the fulfilment of one of those aspirations.

The Chief Minister emphasised the need to promote Mizo literature globally through translations into English, Hindi, Bengali and other major languages, and by making such works accessible online. He said

these efforts would help promote Mizoram and the Mizo people internationally while contributing to the preservation and development of the Mizo language. He also stressed the importance of increasing Mizo-language content on digital platforms. According to the Chief Minister, expanding online repositories of Mizo vocabulary with English and Hindi equivalents would support the development of Artificial Intelligence applications in the Mizo language and improve translation between Mizo and other languages. Prof. Khiantge has represented Mizoram.

MSCW promotes digital literacy among women via Yashoda AI programme



Imphal, July 22: The Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW), in collaboration with the National Commission for Women (NCW), on Wednesday organised a one-day awareness programme on "Yashoda AI" at the Jubilee Hall of D.M. College of Teacher Education, Imphal, to promote artificial intelligence (AI) literacy, digital awareness and cyber safety among women. The programme was attended by MSCW Chairperson Th. Tiningpham Monsang, MSCW Member Sk. Sophia,

Member Secretary of MSCW and Additional Director of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Smt. W. Phajatombi Devi, MCS, and Principal-in-Charge of D.M. College of Teacher Education Dr. Anita Kangabam.

Addressing the gathering, Th. Tiningpham Monsang said the Manipur State Commission for Women serves as a platform for women facing violence, discrimination and other forms of hardship. She said the Commission regularly conducts seminars

and awareness programmes across the State to educate women about their constitutional and legal rights.

She said Yashoda AI is a nationwide initiative launched by the National Commission for Women to promote AI literacy and digital awareness among women, adding that the programme was the first of its kind to be held in Manipur under NCW sponsorship. Monsang said the initiative aims to enhance women's understanding of AI, strengthen digital literacy, promote online safety and cyber security, encourage self-reliance through technology and develop leadership skills. While AI offers immense opportunities, she cautioned that it also poses risks such as cyber fraud and online scams, underscoring the need for digital awareness and vigilance. She added that experts, including banking professionals, briefed participants on common cyber frauds and preventive measures.

Fresh floods batter Arunachal as 1.49 lakh people remain impacted Assam flood toll increases to 11; train services hampered



Itanagar , July 22: Fresh floods caused by relentless monsoon rains have battered five districts of Arunachal Pradesh in the last 24 hours, while neighbouring Assam continues to grapple with rising rivers, disrupted train services, and worsening flood conditions, even as heavy rain wreaks havoc in several other parts of the country. According to the Arunachal Pradesh State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC), new flood and rain-related occurrences were recorded in Siang, Papum Pare, West Kameng, Kamle, and Lower Siang districts, impacting six administrative circles. Flash floods inundated Kallek

village in Siang district's Kebang circle. Heavy rainfall also caused damage in Baliyan and Tarasso villages in Papum Pare district, Lish village in West Kameng, Yada village in Kamle, and Jipu village in Lower Siang. The ongoing monsoon has so far affected nearly 1.49 lakh people across Arunachal Pradesh, with authorities continuing relief and rescue operations in the affected areas. In Assam, one more flood-related death was reported from Charaideo district, taking the state's rain-related death toll to 11. The Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said over 3.10 lakh people remained affected across

758 villages in Biswanath, Charaideo, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Jorhat, Kamrup, Karbi Anglong, Nagaon, Sivasagar and Tinsukia districts. Several major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, Dikhow, Desang and Dhansiri, continued to flow above the danger level. The Dikhow and Desang rivers crossed the "extreme flood level" at Sivasagar town and Nanglamoraghat respectively, while the Dhansiri River remained in a "severe flood situation" at Numaligarh in Golaghat district. The Brahmaputra at Neamatighat and the Buridihing at Khowang also remained in spate.

Floodwaters continued to disrupt rail connectivity in Upper Assam for the second consecutive day after tracks were submerged. The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) cancelled, diverted and short-terminated several trains while operating special services for stranded passengers. Relief and rescue operations are being carried out jointly by the Indian Army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Fire and Emergency Services, and district administrations. Meanwhile, in Nagaland, the death toll from flash floods and landslides in Mon district

rose to nine after five more bodies were recovered. Four people remain missing as search operations continue. Preliminary assessments indicate that 7,460 people have been affected, while 64 houses across 93 villages in 10 districts have suffered damage. Elsewhere, heavy rainfall continued to wreak havoc across northern India. In Jammu and Kashmir, overflowing rivers and streams inundated residential areas, swept away shops and vehicles, and forced large-scale rescue operations. More than 23 people have died in rain-related incidents in the Jammu region since Sunday, while seven others remain missing. In Himachal Pradesh, six houses were washed away in a cloudburst, though no casualties were reported.

The India Meteorological Department's red alert prompted authorities to close schools and colleges in Kangra, Mandi and Sirmour, while landslides blocked sections of National Highway-5 in Kinnaur. In Uttarakhand, authorities resumed the Char Dham Yatra after temporarily suspending it due to landslides and heavy rain. The Dehradun-Mussoorie road has also been reopened for light vehicles following restoration work.

Nagaland CM Holds Consultative Meeting With NPF leaders To Discuss State Issues

Kohima, July 22: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on Wednesday attended a consultative meeting of the Naga People's Front (NPF), which was attended by elected members and senior party functionaries. According to the Chief Minister, the meeting focused on deliberating on the current issues facing the state. The participants also discussed the party's organisational priorities, measures to strengthen coordination, and its future course of action.



larly in areas such as infrastructure development, youth employment, healthcare, and rural empowerment. He reiterated that the government's priority remains the welfare of citizens and the pursuit of long-term stability. NPF leaders welcomed the initiative and expressed their readiness to contribute meaningfully to the discussions. They raised concerns regarding agricultural sup-

port, road connectivity in remote districts, and the need for enhanced educational opportunities. The leaders also stressed the importance of safeguarding cultural identity while embracing modernization, noting that balanced development must respect the traditions and aspirations of the Naga people. The meeting further addressed issues of financial management, resource allocation, and the

strengthening of local governance institutions. Both sides agreed that transparency and accountability are essential in building public trust. The Chief Minister assured that the government would continue to engage with all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, to ensure participatory decision-making. In a joint statement, the Chief Minister and NPF leaders reaffirmed their

commitment to work together in addressing state challenges. They agreed to establish a follow-up mechanism to monitor progress on the issues discussed and to hold periodic consultations for sustained collaboration. The consultative meeting concluded with a shared vision of unity and progress. By fostering dialogue and cooperation, the government and NPF leaders aim to create a roadmap that strengthens Nagaland's socio-economic foundations while preserving its unique cultural heritage. Additionally, the Chief Minister announced that a series of district-level consultations will be organized in the coming months to ensure grassroots voices are heard. These sessions will focus on local priorities, enabling communities to directly contribute to the state's development agenda and reinforcing the government's commitment to participatory governance.

Tripura first to empanel private institutes under ST scholarship scheme

Agartala, July 22: Tripura has become the first state in the country to empanel private Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) institutes under the Scheduled Tribe (ST) Scholarship Scheme. This landmark decision reflects the government's commitment to expanding access to quality teacher education for students from tribal communities. The initiative aims to ensure that aspiring teachers from ST backgrounds can pursue professional courses in recognized private institutions without financial barriers. By extending scholarship coverage beyond government colleges, Tripura is opening new avenues for inclusive growth in the education sector. Officials noted that the empanelment process was carried out with strict quality checks to ensure that only credible institutions were brought under the scheme. Speaking at the announcement, the Education Minister high-



lighted that the move will directly benefit hundreds of tribal students each year. He emphasized that teacher education is a cornerstone for improving learning outcomes in schools, particularly in rural and tribal areas. With more trained teachers emerging from these institutes, the state expects to strengthen its education delivery system and reduce dropout rates. Representatives from private institutions welcomed the decision, stating that it will encourage them to invest further in in-

frastructure, faculty development, and student support services. The government also assured that monitoring mechanisms will be in place to maintain transparency and accountability in scholarship disbursement. This pioneering step positions Tripura as a model for other states seeking to integrate private institutions into scholarship frameworks. By prioritizing equity and opportunity, the state is reinforcing its vision of education as a driver of empowerment and social transformation.

Meghalaya High Court Rips Pollution Board Over Byrnihat Air Quality

Shillong, July 22: The Meghalaya High Court blasted the Meghalaya State Pollution Control Board for dragging its feet on Byrnihat pollution. Judges caught the agency failing to act on a March 2025 air quality report. Chief Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice Wanlura Diengdoh slammed the board during a July 7 hearing.

The MSPCB hired the CSIR-NEERI in 2024 to trace pollution sources in Byrnihat and the Export Promotion Industrial Park. That report arrived in March. It detailed how steel plants, smelters, and alloy facilities choke the town. Heavy traffic on the Guwahati-Shillong National Highway adds to the mess. Byrnihat holds the title of a non-attainment town for PM10 and ranked as the world's most polluted spot in late 2023 or early 2024.

Experts want industries to install



particulate control systems. They suggest building greenbelts and switching to renewable energy. The court also took a swipe at the Health Department. The judges noted that the Health Department's status report was "sketchy" and failed to cov-

er the core issues of the case.

The High Court dragged the MSPCB and the Central Pollution Control Board into the legal fight. MSPCB lawyers asked for more time to file an affidavit. The bench set the next hearing for July 23.

Meghalaya Election Officials Rule Out Extensions for Electoral Roll Revision

Shillong, July 22: Meghalaya election authorities have officially ruled out any extensions for the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. House-to-house verification must wrap up by July 29, and officials warned that anyone missing this window faces exclusion from the upcoming draft electoral roll. The state plans to publish the draft on August 5, followed by a claims and objections period running through September 4, with final publication slated for October 7.

As of July 21, the state has distributed 23,06,605

enumeration forms, hitting 98.17 per cent coverage of the 23,49,645 total electors. Authorities have already digitised 14,07,446 of those forms. West Jaintia Hills, South West Khasi Hills, and South West Garo Hills hit the 100 per cent distribution mark. West Khasi Hills leads in digitisation at 79.86 per cent.

Chief Electoral Officer BDR Tiwari urged citizens to cooperate, stating: "A-doko niam gita pu-onna man-gipa mande sakantikon BLO-rang baksa sakrim-china chinga mol-molaten-ga aro an-tangtangni bim-

ingrangko Draft Electoral Roll-rango segatna somoi gita an-tangtangni enumeration form-rangko on-china didiatenga." Voters should hand forms to Booth Level Officers or use the ECINET app or the official election portal.

The department identified 53,908 electors under Absentee, Shifted, Deceased, and Duplicate categories. This includes 5,795 absentee voters, 13,379 who have shifted, 32,382 deceased individuals, 2,029 duplicate entries, and 323 people who refused to accept forms. All these cases will be handled

according to the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, with verification and hearings provided where necessary.

Tiwari met with representatives from major parties including the NPP, UDP, Congress, BJP, VPP, and TMC to coordinate. Political parties have deployed 892 Booth Level Agents to assist in the process. Residents who previously submitted online do not need to provide physical copies, and those appearing on the 2005 electoral roll are exempt from providing fresh documentary proof.

Meghalaya BJP Silent on Youth Leader's Threat Against Protesters

Shillong, July 22: Meghalaya BJP leadership has refused to address controversial social media comments made by Mewakar Lyngdoh Pakma. Pakma, the president of the party's youth wing, publicly suggested that protesting students in New Delhi should be shot. Despite widespread outrage, party figures including M Kharkrang and MLA AL Hek have provided no explanation or disciplinary action against Pakma. When questioned, Hek deflected, claiming that the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is actively addressing student concerns. He avoided specific questions regarding Pakma's remarks but stated, "An-chingni chatro chatrirang, neng-nikanirangko chagrongna nangtokenga

aro uamangni neng-nikanirangko namataniara chingni daitoan ong-a." Hek also refused to confirm if Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan would face dismissal, stating only that the government will review the situation.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) has lashed out at the Delhi Police. Officers used tear gas and lathi charges to disperse peaceful students protesting recent exam paper leaks. The CBCI labeled these actions a direct violation of constitutional rights. They also confirmed their support for activist Sonam Wangchuk, who is currently demanding systemic reforms in the education sector.

ICFAI Tripura hosts conference on nuclear physics and nuclear power

Dimapur, July 22: The Department of Physics, Faculty of Science and Technology, The ICFAI University Tripura, is currently hosting the five-day National Conference on "Innovations in Nuclear Physics and its Application to Nuclear Power Generation (INP-NPG-2026)", from July 20 to 24, at the University campus in collaboration with the Indian Nuclear Society (INS).

The conference aims to provide a national platform for scientists, academicians, industry experts, research scholars, and students to exchange ideas and deliberate on the latest developments and emerging trends in the field of nuclear science and technology. The conference was inaugurated by distinguished guests including Dr. Subir Sen, Director (Technical), Tripura State Electricity Corporation Limited (TSECL); Prof. (Dr.) Biplab Halder, vice chancellor, The ICFAI University Tripura; Shri Kishor U. Agrawal, former

associate director, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL), Joint Secretary, Indian Nuclear Society, and Executive Director (Technical & Strategic), TENEX JSC; Dr. Debabrata Datta, former associate director (Safety), Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and executive committee member, Indian Nuclear Society; Prof. Gautam Gangopadhyay, professor, Department of Physics, University of Calcutta; along with other University dignitaries including Dr. A. Ranganath, Registrar; Priyanshu Rana Borthakur, Dean, faculty of Science and Technology; and Prasenjit Bal, principal, ICFAI Science School. The deliberations during the conference focus on several contemporary themes, including recent advances in nuclear physics, innovations in nuclear power generation, advanced reactor technologies, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), nuclear safety and security, radiation technologies, and



the growing applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in nuclear science and engineering. The event has witnessed participation from leading researchers, experts from premier research institutions, universities, nuclear industries, and policymakers from across the country. The five-day conference features keynote lectures by renowned experts, and the

top three Best Oral Presentation Awards will be presented to outstanding participants. The conference is being convened by Dr. Arunabha Saha, Convener, INP-NPG-2026 and assistant professor, Department of Physics, The ICFAI University Tripura. It is being coordinated by Dr. Camelia Das, Head, department of Physics, with Dr. Dipayan Chattopadhyay serving as the organizing secretary.

Mass Resignation Hits Congress in Nagaland

Kohima, July 22: Sixty-one Congress party members in Mokokchung district quit their posts and primary membership today. The group submitted their en masse resignation letter directly to the All India Congress Committee president. They are done. The exodus includes Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee officials, District Congress Committee leaders, Youth and Mahila wings, the Minority Department chairman, the Seva Dal chief organiser, advisors, and executive members. These workers cite autocratic functioning and constant mismanagement by the Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee leadership. He dissidents claim they stayed loyal even when the party neared extinction in 2015. They stated they can "no longer remain silent spectators to the destruction of the party organisation" in the state.

Mizoram Congress Holds Black Day Protest Against FCRA Amendment Bill

Aizawl, July 22: The Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee held a Black Day protest Tuesday outside Vanapa Hall in Aizawl. They gathered to block the BJP-led Central Government from passing the Foreign Contribution Regulation Amendment Bill of 2026. The protest turned into a formal rejection of the legislation. Party leaders passed six resolutions during the event. Senior Vice-President Lalnunmawia Chuauango warned that the Bill complicates certification processes and limits appeal rights for funding recipients. He stated, "The proposed legislation would make it more difficult for recipients of foreign contributions to obtain certification and seek an appeal if their applications were rejected."

AICC Mizoram in-charge Chella Kumar accused the Centre of targeting NGOs and minority communities. He claimed that schools, hospitals, and churches across Mizoram face existential threats if the law moves forward. Former ministers including



Zodintluanga Ralte, John Rotluangliana, and H. Rohluna joined other senior members to lead the opposition.

The Congress resolutions demand an immediate withdrawal of the Bill and an end to the harassment of Christians. They want the Mizoram Chief Minister to assemble church leaders and NGO representatives to lobby the Prime Minister. Furthermore, the party pushed for the state legislature to hold a special session to formalize its opposition. They also expect Mizoram's two Zoram People's Movement Members of Parliament to vote against the measure rather than abstaining.

Centre launches Rs 175-crore mission to make Meghalaya's Lakadong turmeric global brand

Shillong, July 22: DoNER Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia on Tuesday launched a Rs 175.45-crore mission to transform Meghalaya's GI-certified Lakadong turmeric into a globally competitive brand, with a target of doubling farmers' income and expanding cultivation over the next five years. The Meghalaya Lakadong Turmeric Integrated Development Mission aims to benefit more than 17,500 farmers across West and East Jaintia Hills by strengthening the entire value chain — from cultivation and certification to processing, branding, value addition and exports, officials said. Jointly funded by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), North Eastern Council (NEC), the Agriculture Ministry and the Meghalaya government, the mission was launched at Sanchar Bhavan in New Delhi in the presence of Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma and state Agriculture Minister Timothy D Shira. Describing the initiative as "Mission Golden Spice", Scindia said it reflected Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's vision of leveraging the Northeast's unique strengths for national and international markets. "Our northeastern states are no longer to periphery of the developmental paradigm but have now become the centre of India's development," he said. The minister said the mission seeks to strengthen the Lakadong turmeric value chain by expanding processing capacity, reducing distress sales and increasing value addition. It aims to double farmers' remuneration to Rs 80 per kg by 2030, he said.

The programme also envisages expanding the area under Lakadong turmeric cultivation from 2,500 hectares to 7,000 hectares and promoting exports to markets such as the US, the EU, Japan and the Gulf countries. Scindia said the initiative would also promote women-led development, noting that Lakadong turmeric had gained international recognition after being showcased by PM Modi at the G7 Summit. Sangma said the high curcumin content and premium quality of Lakadong turmeric stem from the unique soil and ecosystem of



the Jaintia Hills. "The unique soil and ecosystem in West Jaintia Hills and East Jaintia Hills ensure the high quality of Lakadong turmeric, making it the right product for this mission," he said. The CM said the programme would significantly improve the livelihoods of thousands of farmers and entrepreneurs, particularly women engaged in turmeric cultivation and processing. He said the state government

has created financial mechanisms to provide working capital to farmers, self-help groups and organisations without requiring conventional banking collateral.

Officials said the mission targets annual production of 49,400 metric tonnes of Lakadong turmeric by 2030, with women expected to account for 99 per cent of participation in processing and institutional activities.

Flash flood kills farmer

Kohima, July 22: A 38-year-old man drowned after a flash flood hit Ukha village in Mon district on Tuesday. Heavy rain triggered the surge around 12:30 p.m. Lhangti Kongko was working in his terraced paddy field with his family when the water struck. He could not escape the current. The floodwaters dragged him away despite frantic rescue attempts by his wife and others at the scene. Mopong Hongkong Students Union president Y. Lhamnyi said the disaster also wrecked a large stretch of agricultural land. The community scrambled to respond. Villagers from Ukha, the Ukha Village Guards, and volunteers from Yangching village in Longleng district launched a massive search operation. After three and a half hours,



rescuers pulled the body from the Phangsha River. Lhamnyi noted that the Village Guards and relatives entered the swollen river without safety gear to find him. "Despite desperate attempts by family members and others working nearby to rescue him, he could not be saved," Lhamnyi said. The Extra Assistant Commissioner of Mopong visited the site to inspect the wreckage. Farmers now face heavy losses from the ruined fields. Kongko leaves behind a wife and three young children. He was buried at Ukha village that same evening.

ICFAI Tripura is holding a conference dedicated to the topics of nuclear physics and nuclear power

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The deliberations during the conference focus on several contemporary themes, including recent advances in nuclear physics, innovations in nuclear power generation, advanced reactor technologies, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), nuclear safety and security, radiation technologies, and the growing applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML)

in nuclear science and engineering. The event has witnessed participation from leading researchers, experts from premier research institutions, universities, nuclear industries, and policymakers from across the country.

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After winning medals at the South Asian Championship, Meghalaya karate heroes are given a warm welcome

Shillong, July 22: On July 21, after returning from the 10th Cadet, Junior, U-21, and Senior South Asian Karate Championship 2026 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Meghalaya’s medal-winning karatekas Daniel Dabiangbha Warjri and Gideon Tympuin were welcomed at Umroi Airport. During the championship, which took place from July 15 to 19, Gideon won bronze in the Men’s U-21 Individual Kata event, while Daniel won gold in the Boys’ Junior Individual Kumite (-68 kg) category. Both competitors are now focused on earning medals at the 39th National Games, which Meghalaya will host the following year, as a result of their achievements.

The duo was felicitated by the All Meghalaya Karate-Do Association (AMKA), family members, friends and supporters at the airport. East Shillong MLA and Adviser to the Meghalaya Government M Ampareen Lyngdoh and former MDC Fantin Lakadong were present to congratulate the athletes. Meghalaya State Olympic Association Working President

John F Kharshiing also arrived on the same flight from Kolkata and joined in welcoming the medal winners. The latest achievement marks the third successive edition of the South Asian Karate Championship in which Meghalaya has secured a medal. Kynjailin Lyngdoh Mawnai won bronze in 2025, while Wandahunshisha Mawblei claimed gold in 2019.

AMKA General Secretary Ksan Kupar Warjri said the performances of Daniel and Gideon would inspire other karatekas from the state ahead of the National Games. He continued by saying that the South Asian Championship is still one of the hardest regional contests, with nations like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal routinely outperforming India. Both athletes’ strong accomplishments at national-level competitions earlier this year won them spots on the Indian squad. Daniel won silver in the Junior Individual Kumite (-68 kg) category in the 5th KIO Sub-Junior, Cadet and Junior National Karate Championship in Dehradun in June, while Gideon won gold for Meghalaya at the



5th KIO Senior and U-21 National Karate Championship in New Delhi in February and March. Daniel expressed his appreciation for the response they got and stated that it will inspire him to succeed even more. He pointed out that the competition at the South Asian Championship was more intense than at the national level and called for different strategies and more work. Before hoping for success at the World Championship, he stated that his next goal is to win gold at the National Games in Shillong. Gideon, who participated in the in-

dividual kata discipline, said it was a worthwhile experience to compete against elite karatekas from all around South Asia.

He stated that he wanted to keep representing India and bring more accolades to Meghalaya and the nation. The most recent medals bolster AMKA’s track record of winning medals abroad. Karatekas Banshanlang Kharumnuid, Damang Syngkon, and Linza Fenny Syiem, who all trained under the late Sensei Stephan Leong, had previously represented the association in the South Asian Games.

The Telangana government develops a plan to lessen El Niño’s effects

New Delhi, July 22: A political struggle has escalated between the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) and the ruling Congress over whether to operate the Kannepalli pump house of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme to lift Godavari waters for irrigation in the state’s parched northern districts, as Telangana is experiencing drought-like conditions due to a monsoon rainfall deficit linked to El Niño. Official statistics show that Telangana has a total monsoon rainfall deficit of between 31% and 35%, with 30 of its 33 districts reporting either insufficient or significantly insufficient rainfall between June 1 and July 20. Simultaneously, flood volumes of up to one lakh cuses into the Medigadda barrage through the Pranahita River have been caused by torrential rainfall in upstream Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. An irrigation department official said the water level at the Medigadda barrage reached around 96 metres by Monday, prompting authorities to lift all 85 gates to release the incoming floodwaters downstream. For the past few days, BRS leaders have stepped up attacks on the Congress government, demanding that it operate the Kannepalli pump house at the Medigadda barrage to lift Godavari water into the barrage and further upstream to the Annaram and Sundilla barrages for irrigation. During a PowerPoint presentation on the project on July 11, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said that



it was not advisable to operate the Kannepalli pump house given the National Dam Safety Authority’s (NDSA) directives. He claimed that the October 2023 floods caused significant damage to the Medigadda barrage and cautioned against storing water there as it could lead to a structural collapse. Speaking at a public gathering in Mancherial on Tuesday, BRS working president K T Rama Rao charged that Telangana farmers were experiencing drought-like conditions while the Congress government was purposefully ignoring the Kaleshwaram project and permitting Godavari waters to flow “wastefully” into neighboring Andhra Pradesh. “To protect agriculture, the government should immediately lift water through the Kannepalli pumps,” he insisted. According to the BRS, running the Kannepalli pump house did not require the Medigadda barrage. Water might be lifted whenever the river level at Kannepalli rose over 93 meters, according to KTR.

Rahul Gandhi’s Five Requests to the Center Following Dharna and Detention

New Delhi, July 22: Unprecedented drama, dharna, and detentions occurred on Tuesday as the opposition escalated its criticism of the government’s assault on student demonstrators. The Leader of the Opposition presented the Center with five demands at the end of the day, laying the groundwork for Wednesday’s ongoing political conflict in Parliament. In response to the NEET paper leak incident, Rahul Gandhi requested the resignations of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday, accusing the government of taking advantage of students. During a sit-in outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s home at Lok Kalyan Marg, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, and a number of Congress officials were arrested by Delhi Police and subsequently freed. Rahul

Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were detained during a protest, with Rahul taken to Chhatrasal Stadium and Priyanka to Mandir Marg police station.

Both were released later that evening. In a video statement, Rahul Gandhi articulated five demands to the government: the resignations of Home Minister Amit Shah and Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, action against police who assaulted students, an apology from the Prime Minister for recent actions, parliamentary discussion on the matter, and urgent education reforms. He raised concerns about the deteriorating state of the Indian education system, questioning issues like paper leaks and high education costs that financially burden families. Rahul expressed gratitude to supporters and emphasized the Opposition’s

demand for a parliamentary debate. The standoff illustrates the escalating tension between the government and the Opposition regarding exam paper leaks affecting numerous students. During the protest, Minister of State Jitendra Singh engaged with Rahul Gandhi but later criticized him for allegedly shifting his demands. Singh asserted that the government is willing to discuss issues related to NEET, framing Gandhi’s actions as contrary to democratic principles. In response, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan accused Gandhi and the Congress party of exploiting student concerns for political gain, contending that the opposition prioritized spectacle over constructive dialogue despite the government’s readiness to engage in comprehensive discussions on the issues raised.

A request against police action against CJP student protestors is denied an immediate hearing by the Supreme Court



New Delhi, July 22: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant advised the petitioner not to “waste” the court’s time by submitting videos and instead take appropriate legal action after the Supreme Court on Wednesday declined to start on its own initiative and urgently list a petition alleging police excesses during the July 20 crackdown on

student protesters in the nation’s capital. At the beginning of proceedings, the subject was brought up before a bench led by the Chief Justice of India. The Delhi Police’s actions against thousands of students who marched towards Parliament as part of the “Chalo Sansad” protest organized by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) and demanded the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged exam paper leaks and reforms in the National Testing Agency (NTA) were the subject of a lawsuit seeking suo motu proceedings, according to a lawyer. The CJI advised the attorney, “Don’t waste our time, and don’t waste your time.” In an effort to convince the court, the attorney said that the protests were focused on matters that affected millions of students, such as the way the NEET exam was administered and NTA reforms. Cutting him short, the bench, also comprising justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, responded, “Thank you very much.” When the lawyer referred to videos

purportedly showing police personnel assaulting unarmed protesters and offered to submit such videos, the CJI declined to entertain the submission. “We are not interested in videos; we don’t have time to watch,” observed the bench, refusing to grant an urgent listing. The Supreme Court’s refusal came a day after Delhi high court chief justice DK Upadhyaya similarly declined to urgently hear a plea concerning the police action. “Don’t drag the Court into this,” the chief justice had remarked while refusing urgent circulation of the matter. The event occurred against the backdrop of the CJP-organized “Chalo Sansad” march on July 20, which followed a hunger strike at Jantar Mantar that had lasted for more than three weeks. Thousands of protesters marched from Jantar Mantar towards Parliament on the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, calling for Pradhan’s resignation due to alleged exam paper leaks, accountability for student suicides connected to the problem, and exam system reforms.

Amid fierce protests, Vijay’s TVK demands that NEET be completely scrapped

New Delhi, July 22: Regarding the NEET paper leaks and student protests, Tamil Nadu’s ruling TVK has joined the opposing chorus. On Tuesday, Thalappay Vi-jay’s party raised the stakes by stating that they wanted the medical admission exam to be eliminated completely in addition to being against NEET anomalies. Additionally, it called for governments to have complete authority over issues pertaining to medical education. The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam declared its “uncompromising and firm stand” that the national entrance exam for medical candidates should be eliminated amid student demonstrations against NEET in Delhi. The TVK, without identifying the main opposition DMK, declared that it would never engage in the “fraudulent politics” of tricking voters by

promising to “scrap NEET ourselves.” The DMK had, in the run-up to the 2021 Assembly elections, promised to scrap NEET after coming to power. In a statement issued here, the TVK called for shifting education from the Concurrent List to the State List of the Constitution as part of the solution to the issue. “If there are any legal or procedural hurdles in doing so, a Special Concurrent List should be created as an interim measure until they are resolved to grant powers to state governments.” According to this, states would have complete control over education, including medical education. This is how we envision both a long-term and short-term answer. Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, our winning leader, has already emphasized this, the party stated. The party declared that anybody



who engage in the immoral politics of “putting their own label” on the efforts, ideas, and hardships of others have to cease attacking the TVK right away. Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin’s condemnation of the government’s treatment of rap artist “Therukural” Arivu, who has taken a firm stance against NEET, coincides with the TVK’s remark. Arivu briefly chanted anti-NEET chants outside the Tamil Nadu Secretariat on the Fort St George campus before being taken away by the police.

New Delhi, July 22: Once their four-year military service is over, former Agniveers who wish to enlist in India’s paramilitary forces would have half of the Constable and Rifleman positions reserved for them, along with a lighter physical test bar and no written exam to pass. In one of its most thorough public explanations of the Agnipath to Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) pipeline’s intended operation, the administration presented this information to Parliament on Tuesday. The information was provided in response to a query posed by BJP MP Janardan Singh Sigiwal, who wanted to know exactly what the government had done to ensure those troops leaving the Agnipath initiative had a second job. In a written response submitted to the Lok Sabha on July 21, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai outlined the response in three sections. As a matter of policy, Ex-Agniveers will now receive half



of all Constable (General Duty) and Rifleman positions in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), and Assam Rifles. Not as a preference, but as a firm reservation outlined in the hiring guidelines. The typical upper age restriction for these positions is raised by three years for each former Agniveer. The first group to withdraw from the Agnipath program—those who enrolled before any of this was finalized—also receive an additional five years. It’s

a one-time concession, and it makes sense. This group took a gamble on a plan without knowing how it would turn out. This is most likely the section that will receive the greatest attention. Candidates will not be required to take the written test or pass the Physical Standards Test (PST) and Physical Efficiency Test (PET), which are requirements for all CAPF candidates. The government is essentially declaring that four years of military service is sufficient evidence of discipline and fitness. In addition to all of this, the ministry claims to have established an Ex-Agniveer branch un-

der the Ministry of Home Affairs. Its responsibility is to monitor and arrange for the landing of these soldiers when their engagement period has ended. The Agnipath scheme, launched in 2022, lacks concrete outcomes as the initial group of Agniveers has yet to complete their service. Critics question the fate of the 75% of recruits not retained after four years, with the government citing pathways to other employment, particularly in CAPFs. Recently, the government provided further details, including age relaxations and testing exemptions for these positions. However, the real assessment will begin when the first Agniveers exit the program, as the capacity for CAPFs to absorb thousands annually remains untested. The government’s response indicates a willingness to adjust the policy without detailing any changes. Currently, a theoretical framework is in place, awaiting its first applicants.

A woman uses a cooker lid to strangle her husband

New Delhi, July 22: An official stated on Wednesday that a 30-year-old woman had been arrested for allegedly hitting her husband with a pressure cooker lid and strangling him to death after a domestic argument about her failure to bring her sarees. On Tuesday, accused Sunitadevi Hareram Singh, a native of Bihar’s Rohtas district, was taken into custody. According to the police, she first tried to deceive them by claiming the death was unintentional. On July 19, victim Hareram Kishunji Singh (35) was at his Badlapur East house when the pair got into a furious dispute because he had forgotten to bring sarees. She attacked him with a pressure cooker lid and strangled him out of rage, according to an official. Police first filed an accidental death report based on the wife’s story, but a government hospital’s medical assessment prompted a full-fledged investigation. According to the findings, the death was unnatural and resulted from forceful suffocation from strangling. Strong suspicions were established against the wife when questions were asked of the deceased’s relatives and the landlord, according to senior inspector Nitin Patil of the Badlapur East police station. Sunitadevi was placed under police detention until July 29 by a municipal court on Tuesday, he added.



Allahabad High Court: Nothing Can Disgrace Those Unfazed by Donation Theft at Ram Temple

New Delhi, July 22: Justice Atul Sreedharan of the Allahabad High Court has addressed the alleged misappropriation of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, noting that nothing can humiliate those who are unaffected by the event. Additionally, the judge recommended capital punishment for violations of the Prevention of Corruption Act. Justice Sreedharan said that the recent “theft” of donations at the Ram temple shows the “nadir of Indians’ integrity” while simultaneously criticizing the systemic corruption afflicting Indian institutions and making harsh observations about the Uttar Pradesh government’s recent bulldozer operations. He went on to say that the typical Indian has normalized corruption and no longer views it as evil unless it is discovered. He further remarked that even the fact that India ranks 91 among 182 countries in the Transparency International 2025 report “does not shame us”. Referring to the “donation-theft” row, Justice Sreedharan said, “The recent controversy relating to the theft of donations at the Ram temple is the proverbial last straw on the camel’s back. Nothing can shame people who remain unfazed by the theft at the Ram temple which epitomises the nadir of Indians’ integrity”. The court expressed worries about the extent to which corruption has been accepted in society and even recommended that the State revise the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 to include the death penalty for offenders. Justice Sreedharan’s 51-page judgment in a split ruling, which addressed the subject of “bulldozer justice” and the demolition of accused people’s homes under the pretense of municipal code infractions, had the harsh observations. Setting the scene for these demolitions, the judge stated that the “perceived blood lust” of a society nourished on a diet of “bulldozer justice” is primarily satisfied by demolishing a home right after an offense. Justice Sreedharan criticized the ongoing demolitions despite Supreme Court rulings, highlighting the complicity of authorities in allowing unauthorized structures through political and bureaucratic support. He pointed out that corrupt officials facilitate the rise of non-compliance homes by accepting bribes, leaving buyers to face legal repercussions years later. Sreedharan labeled the State as an accomplice for providing essential services to these illegal constructions, claiming this “collective absence of integrity” undermines all institutions.

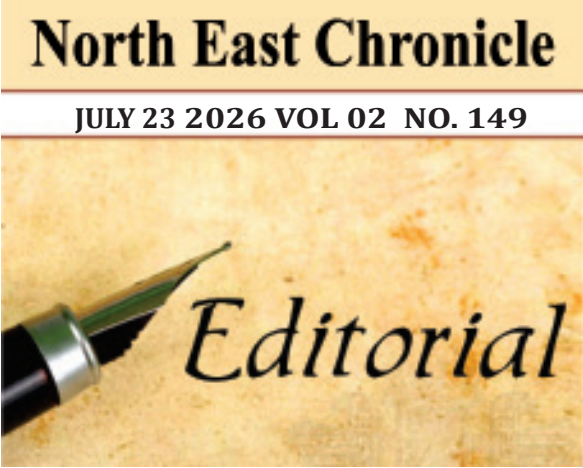
In the midst of CJP rallies in Delhi, twenty more CRPF companies hurried in from West Bengal



New Delhi, July 22: In response to the CJP protests and other political parties’ demonstrations, the Center has ordered the deployment of 20 more CRPF companies in Delhi to bolster security measures, authorities said on Wednesday. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) ordered the personnel, who are all members of the Central Reserve Police

Force (CRPF), to be immediately deployed in the nation’s capital on Tuesday night. As a result, the forces are being airlifted from West Bengal. According to official sources in the security establishment, 20 CRPF companies are being airlifted from Kolkata to be deployed in Delhi to bolster peace and order in light of the CJP protests, political party demonstrations, and the current Parliament session. They said that this urgent deployment was required due to several violent incidents during the most recent protests. They

said that these companies were sent to West Bengal to conduct assembly elections a few months ago and were instructed to remain there at the state government’s request. A CRPF company employs roughly 100 people. According to officials, the Center has given the Delhi Police about 30 companies of the CRPF and its specialized anti-riots unit Rapid Action Force (RAF) to strengthen security measures in light of the Cockroach Janta Party’s (CJP) protest and the Monsoon session of the Parliament that started on July 20.



Those Who Stayed, Those Who Left: Ukraine's Painful Divide

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has created destruction on a scale that is visible through damaged cities, displaced populations, and the ongoing suffering of civilians. However, beyond the physical devastation lies another, less visible wound: the emotional and psychological divide between those Ukrainians who remained in the country and those who were forced to leave. This separation has created complex feelings of anger, guilt, shame, and misunderstanding among people who are all experiencing the consequences of the same war but from very different realities. The conflict has not only divided families and communities geographically but has also created different experiences of survival that are increasingly difficult to reconcile.

For many Ukrainians who stayed behind, daily life has been shaped by air raid sirens, missile attacks, power shortages, uncertainty, and the constant fear of losing loved ones.

Their experience of war is immediate and physical. A strike on a city is not simply a headline or a social media update; it is the sound of explosions, the search for information about friends and relatives, and the anxiety of not knowing who has survived. The war begins each day with the possibility of danger. This reality can create a painful distance from those who left, even when both groups continue to care deeply about each other.

Those who moved abroad after the invasion, however, also carry their own forms of suffering. Refugees and displaced Ukrainians face loneliness, uncertainty, cultural adjustment, financial difficulties, and the emotional burden of rebuilding their lives in unfamiliar environments.

Many struggle with guilt over leaving behind relatives, friends, and communities. They experience the war through phone calls, news updates, and messages from home, often feeling powerless because they cannot directly protect the people they love. Their pain is less visible but remains deeply real.

The difficulty arises because these two experiences can sometimes appear impossible to compare. Those who stayed may feel that people who left cannot fully understand the dangers they endured. Seeing friends abroad continue with ordinary routines can create feelings of resentment or abandonment. A social media post expressing concern about a Ukrainian city under attack may feel different to someone who experienced that attack directly. For those still living under threat, the war is not an event they observe; it is the environment in which they exist.

At the same time, those who left may struggle with a different kind of emotional burden. They may feel guilty for being safe while others remain in danger. Many hesitate to speak about their own difficulties because they fear appearing insensitive compared with those experiencing the war directly. The safety they gained by leaving can become connected with feelings of shame rather than relief. They may question whether they have the right to express fear, sadness, or exhaustion when others are facing much greater physical risks.

The emotional distance between these groups can become especially painful because it exists among people who share the same nationality, history, and memories. War has created not only a geographical separation but also different psychological realities. Those inside Ukraine experience the war through immediate threats, while those abroad experience it through distance, uncertainty, and helpless observation. Neither perspective represents the entire truth of the conflict; both reflect different forms of suffering created by the same tragedy.

The challenge is recognizing that pain does not have only one form. Physical danger and emotional distress cannot be measured against each other like competing experiences. A person living under bombardment carries one kind of trauma, while a person separated from their home and loved ones carries another. Comparing these hardships risks creating further division among people who need solidarity most.

The war has also complicated relationships through feelings that many people find difficult to admit. Anger toward those who left, guilt among those who stayed, and frustration on both sides can create emotional barriers.

These feelings do not necessarily represent a lack of compassion; rather, they reflect the enormous psychological pressure created by prolonged conflict. When people experience trauma, they often struggle to understand experiences that differ from their own.

Healing these divisions will require empathy and an acceptance that Ukrainians have endured the war in different ways. Those who stayed and those who left should not be placed in competition over who suffered more. The survival choices people made were shaped by personal circumstances, family responsibilities, health conditions, and individual fears. Leaving was not always an act of escape, and staying was not always a choice made freely. Each person responded to an extraordinary situation in the only way they could.

Ukraine's Internal Challenges Amid the War: The Struggle for Military Effectiveness and Democratic Accountability

Ukraine's ongoing war with Russia has entered a complex phase in which the country faces challenges not only from an external aggressor but also from internal political and institutional tensions. While Ukrainian civilians continue to endure devastating missile strikes, infrastructure damage, and the human costs of prolonged conflict, disagreements within the country's leadership have raised important questions about military strategy, governance, and the future direction of the war effort. The recent controversy surrounding the dismissal of Mykhailo Fedorov, the popular defence minister, highlighted these tensions. The dispute reflected deeper disagreements between political leaders and military commanders over reform, recruitment, corruption, and the structure of wartime decision-making. Although President Volodymyr Zelenskyy later attempted to resolve the crisis by offering Fedorov a prominent role and promising changes within the military command, the episode revealed the difficult balance Ukraine must maintain between maintaining unity during war and preserving democratic accountability.

The disagreement between Fedorov and military commander Oleksandr Syrskyi represented a clash between two different approaches to managing Ukraine's war effort. Fedorov, a younger civilian leader associated with technological innovation and administrative reform, gained recognition for efforts to modernize aspects of Ukraine's defence system and improve transparency. His supporters credited him with introducing more flexible methods, reducing corruption, and encouraging innovative approaches to military organization. Syrskyi, by contrast, represents a more traditional military establishment shaped by Soviet-era structures and conventional command systems. The disagreement between them reportedly centred on issues such as recruitment reforms, training systems, military organization, and the relationship between civilian authorities and military leadership. At its core, the dispute reflected a broader question facing Ukraine: how should a country fighting a major conventional war adapt its institutions while preserving effective command and discipline?

The controversy became particularly sensitive because Ukraine's military performance has been closely watched both domestically and internationally. After facing significant difficulties during parts of the war, Ukraine has regained momentum through improved battlefield strategies, technological innovation, and successful strikes against Russian logistical and military infrastructure. Moscow's attempts to achieve decisive breakthroughs have repeatedly failed despite Russia's advantages in manpower and resources. Ukrainian forces have demonstrated their ability to conduct complex operations, including attacks on targets deep inside Russian territory, disrupting fuel supplies, military facilities, and critical infrastructure. These operations have not only affected Russia's military capabilities but have also challenged public confidence in Moscow's ability to sustain a prolonged conflict without significant costs.

However, Ukraine's achievements should not create a false sense of security. Former military chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi has warned against underestimating Russia's capacity to continue the war. Moscow retains significant advantages in population size, industrial capacity, military production, and financial resources. Russia's strategy appears focused on gradually exhausting Ukraine by imposing continuous military pressure while waiting for international support to weaken. The Kremlin has

repeatedly sought to exploit divisions within Western countries, hoping that political fatigue and economic concerns will reduce assistance to Kyiv. Therefore, Ukraine's ability to maintain unity, both internally and among its international partners, remains a crucial factor in determining the outcome of the conflict.

The human cost of the war continues to increase. Civilian casualties have risen as Russia has intensified attacks on Ukrainian cities far from the frontline. Missile and drone strikes against residential areas, energy infrastructure, and essential services have created enormous humanitarian challenges. Millions of Ukrainians have experienced displacement, loss of homes, disruption of livelihoods, and psychological trauma. Despite these hardships, Ukrainian society has demonstrated remarkable resilience. Citizens have continued to support the defence effort while demanding transparency and accountability from their leaders. This combination of national unity and democratic pressure represents one of Ukraine's greatest strengths.

The internal debate over military leadership also reflects broader concerns about governance during wartime. President Zelenskyy has enjoyed strong public support since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, largely because of his ability to communicate Ukraine's cause internationally and maintain national morale. However, wartime leadership inevitably creates tensions between the need for centralized decision-making and the democratic expectation of institutional checks and balances. Critics have raised concerns about excessive concentration of power within the presidency and the treatment of political rivals. Previous controversies, including disputes over anti-corruption institutions, demonstrated that Ukrainian citizens remain

attentive to questions of accountability even during national emergencies. The dismissal of senior officials during wartime is always politically sensitive. Ukraine's earlier decision to replace Valerii Zaluzhnyi as military chief in 2024 generated significant public debate because he was widely respected among soldiers and civilians. Similarly, the dispute involving Fedorov raised concerns about whether political disagreements could interfere with military effectiveness. However, Ukraine's democratic environment also allowed citizens to express criticism openly and influence government decisions. Public protests following earlier controversies demonstrated that wartime conditions have not eliminated democratic expectations. This distinction separates Ukraine from authoritarian systems where criticism of government decisions is often suppressed.

The international dimension of Ukraine's challenges is equally important. Continued Western support remains essential for Ukraine's military survival and economic stability. The United States has been the most significant provider of military assistance, while European countries have played an increasingly important role through financial aid, weapons supplies, and humanitarian support. Any uncertainty regarding long-term Western commitment creates strategic risks for Kyiv. Although recent diplomatic engagements have produced positive signals, including improved relations between Ukrainian and American leadership, uncertainty remains because international support can be influenced by domestic politics in partner countries. European governments also face difficult choices. While many European leaders remain committed to supporting Ukraine, concerns over economic pressures, energy costs, defence spending, and public opinion have

created challenges. Maintaining sanctions against Russia and expanding military assistance require sustained political commitment. Moscow continues to hope that divisions within Western alliances will weaken support for Ukraine over time. Therefore, Ukraine's internal stability is closely connected to its ability to maintain confidence among international partners. Allies require assurance that Ukraine's leadership remains united, effective, and committed to reforms. One of the most important aspects of the current crisis is that Ukraine's democratic system continues to function despite wartime conditions. Elections have been postponed because of the security situation, but public debate, criticism, and political competition have not disappeared entirely. The ability of Ukrainian citizens to question government decisions demonstrates that the country continues to defend not only its territorial sovereignty but also its democratic identity. This contrasts sharply with Russia's political system, where opposition voices have been restricted and criticism of government policy faces severe consequences. Ukraine's commitment to democratic accountability strengthens its moral argument in the international arena.

At the same time, democratic debate must be balanced with the realities of wartime governance. Excessive political conflict could weaken military effectiveness and create opportunities for adversaries to exploit divisions. Ukrainian leaders must therefore ensure that disagreements over policy and personnel decisions do not undermine national unity. Reform, transparency, and accountability are necessary, but they must be pursued in ways that strengthen rather than weaken the country's defence capabilities.

The controversy surrounding Fedorov and Syrskyi ultimately represents more

than a personal disagreement between officials. It reflects the broader challenges faced by a nation fighting for survival while attempting to preserve democratic principles. Ukraine must modernize its military institutions, address corruption, improve recruitment systems, and maintain effective leadership structures. At the same time, it must continue demonstrating to its citizens and international supporters that wartime necessity does not mean abandoning democratic values.

The road ahead remains difficult. Russia continues to possess significant resources and shows no indication of abandoning its objectives. Ukraine's military successes have demonstrated resilience, but the conflict remains a test of endurance. Maintaining Western support, strengthening domestic institutions, and preserving public trust will be essential for Ukraine's future. The internal debate over military leadership, while disruptive, also reveals a fundamental strength: Ukrainian society retains the ability to hold its leaders accountable even during the most challenging circumstances.

Ultimately, Ukraine's struggle is not only about defending territory but also about protecting the political values that define its future. A nation fighting against authoritarian aggression must demonstrate that its own institutions remain transparent, responsive, and accountable. The current crisis serves as both a warning and an opportunity. If Ukraine can transform internal disagreements into constructive reforms, strengthen civilian-military cooperation, and maintain democratic legitimacy, it will emerge stronger in its struggle against Russia. The ability to combine military resilience with democratic accountability may prove to be one of Ukraine's most powerful advantages in the long conflict ahead.

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The Challenge of Long-Term Reform in Modern British Politics

Andy Burnham's rise to the position of Prime Minister represents a significant moment in British politics, particularly because it comes at a time when democratic politics is increasingly shaped by immediate reactions, constant campaigning, and the pressure of short news cycles. In an era where political leaders are often judged within hours or days of announcing policies, Burnham appears determined to pursue a different approach: a long-term strategy focused on structural reforms rather than temporary political victories. His emphasis on planning, patience, and institutional change places him at odds with a political culture dominated by instant responses and continuous electoral competition. The challenge for Burnham will be convincing a public accustomed to rapid results that meaningful improvements in areas such as social care, public services, economic security, and regional inequality require time, consistency, and sustained commitment.

Burnham's journey to Downing Street was the result of a carefully developed political strategy rather than a sudden transformation of circumstances. Following Labour's disappointing performance in local and devolved elections, some of his supporters believed that the political environment was creating an opportunity for his return to national leadership. The plan involved several uncertain steps, including a parliamentary vacancy, a change in Labour leadership, and the ability to build sufficient momentum among party members and MPs. Such a strategy carried

significant risks, as any failure in one part of the process could have ended his ambitions. However, the success of the campaign demonstrated Burnham's political strengths, particularly his ability to connect with voters and build a personal reputation that extended beyond the Labour Party's institutional identity. A key factor behind Burnham's success was his strong personal appeal among voters. His victory in the Makerfield by-election created political momentum and reinforced the perception that his public image had become a powerful electoral asset. Unlike many politicians who depend heavily on party structures, Burnham's popularity has often been associated with his personal style, communication skills, and reputation as a politician who understands local concerns. The strength of the "Andy" identity became particularly important at a time when many voters had become disconnected from traditional party politics. His ability to create a direct relationship with the public helped him overcome challenges that might have weakened a less established political figure.

This contrasts sharply with the leadership style of his predecessor, Keir Starmer. Although Starmer secured a significant Labour victory in the 2024 general election, critics argued that his success was driven more by public dissatisfaction with Conservative governments than by strong enthusiasm for Labour's vision. Starmer was viewed as a disciplined administrator and effective strategist, but some within the party felt that he lacked the

political instinct and campaigning energy required to maintain public engagement after winning power. His approach focused heavily on governing from the centre and avoiding controversy, but this sometimes created the impression of a leader lacking a clear transformative agenda. The challenge for Burnham is therefore not simply to govern differently but to convince voters that politics can produce meaningful change. Burnham's greatest political advantage is his comfort with politics itself. Unlike leaders who view political discussion primarily as a means to an administrative end, Burnham has spent decades engaging with party debates, ideological disagreements, and public campaigns. This experience gives him familiarity with the internal dynamics of the Labour Party, where different factions often compete over policy direction and political identity. Managing these divisions will be crucial because Labour contains a broad range of views on taxation, public services, economic policy, immigration, and social reform. Burnham's understanding of party politics may allow him to build consensus more effectively than a leader who struggles with internal negotiation.

His communication style is another important part of his political appeal. The quality often described as "authenticity" in politics is not simply spontaneous honesty; it is usually the result of experience, preparation, and the ability to communicate complex ideas in a way that feels natural to voters. Burnham's political career has allowed him to develop this skill. He is able

to present himself as a politician who understands everyday concerns while also discussing broader questions about governance and social reform. This ability will be essential as he attempts to persuade the public to support policies whose benefits may take years to become fully visible. However, Burnham's political style differs significantly from that of populist figures who thrive on constant confrontation and immediate emotional reactions. Leaders such as Nigel Farage have built influence through a campaigning style centred on direct challenges to established institutions and the ability to dominate media attention. Populist movements often benefit from permanent political conflict because anger and dissatisfaction create energy and visibility. Governments, by contrast, must deal with complexity, compromise, and delayed outcomes. They must implement policies, manage institutions, and accept that improvements may not appear immediately. Burnham's challenge is to maintain public support in an environment where political opponents can exploit impatience and frustration. The current political environment makes long-term governance particularly difficult. Social media platforms and twenty-four-hour news cycles have transformed politics into a continuous debate where every decision is immediately judged. Governments are frequently compared not with realistic alternatives but with ideal expectations or nostalgic versions of the past. This creates a difficult situation for governing parties, because policy implementation

often requires time while public criticism can emerge instantly. A government repairing healthcare systems, reforming social care, improving infrastructure, or rebuilding economic capacity may need years to demonstrate results, while opponents can criticize perceived failures within days. Burnham appears to understand this challenge. His approach suggests that he wants to combine immediate actions with a broader long-term programme. He recognizes that governments must respond to urgent concerns, particularly the cost-of-living pressures affecting households, but also believes that temporary measures alone cannot address deeper structural problems. Providing short-term relief may help rebuild public confidence, but lasting improvements require investment, reform, and institutional change. His political task is therefore to convince citizens that immediate steps are part of a wider strategy rather than isolated announcements designed only for short-term popularity. The idea of a 10-year plan reflects this broader ambition. Many of Britain's major challenges cannot be solved within a single parliamentary term. Issues such as social care reform, regional inequality, housing shortages, economic productivity, climate adaptation, and pressure on public services require sustained policies that continue beyond electoral cycles. Yet long-term planning is difficult in a political system where governments are constantly preparing for the next election. Burnham must therefore create a political culture that values patience and consistency while still demonstrating progress along the way.

Ukraine's ongoing war with Russia has entered a complex phase in which the country faces challenges not only from an external aggressor but also from internal political and institutional tensions. While Ukrainian civilians continue to endure devastating missile strikes, infrastructure damage, and the human costs of prolonged conflict, disagreements within the country's leadership have raised important questions about military strategy, governance, and the future direction of the war effort. The recent controversy surrounding the dismissal of Mykhailo Fedorov, the popular defence minister, highlighted these tensions. The dispute reflected deeper disagreements between political leaders and military commanders over reform, recruitment, corruption, and the structure of wartime decision-making. Although President Volodymyr Zelenskyy later attempted to resolve the crisis by offering Fedorov a prominent role and promising changes within the military command, the episode revealed the difficult balance Ukraine must maintain between maintaining unity during war and preserving democratic accountability.

The disagreement between Fedorov and military commander Oleksandr Syrskyi represented a clash between two different approaches to managing Ukraine's war effort. Fedorov, a younger civilian leader associated with technological innovation and administrative reform, gained recognition for efforts to modernize aspects of Ukraine's defence system and improve transparency. His supporters credited him with introducing more flexible methods, reducing corruption, and encouraging innovative approaches to military organization. Syrskyi, by contrast, represents a more traditional military establishment shaped by Soviet-era structures and conventional command systems. The disagreement between them reportedly centred on issues such as recruitment reforms, training systems, military organization, and the relationship between civilian authorities and military leadership. At its core, the dispute reflected a broader question facing Ukraine: how should a country fighting a major conventional war adapt its institutions while preserving effective command and discipline?

Rupee settles at 96.25 against USD



New Delhi: Rupee pared initial losses and settled for the day higher by 11 paise at 96.25 against the US dollar on Tuesday, as traders assessed the strong inflows related to the Reserve Bank’s initiatives to support foreign exchange liquidity amid global market uncertainties.

Forex traders said India attracted USD 20.72 billion in forex inflows under the swap facility since June, providing significant structural support to the country’s balance of payments position.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 96.41 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 96.13 to 96.42 during the day. The domestic unit finally settled for the day at 96.25, higher by 11 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee fell 6 paise to 96.36 against the US dollar.

The Reserve Bank on Monday said its concessional swap facility, introduced to encourage foreign currency inflows, has attracted USD 20.72 billion till July 17. The swap facility has seen avid interest and attracted steady forex inflows since June 8, 2026.

A strong mobilisation was witnessed through Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) or FCNR (B) deposits.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength

against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.03 per cent at 100.91. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.25 per cent higher at USD 89.44 per barrel in futures trade.

The USD/INR pair continued to remain under pressure as the dollar index has touched 100.91 while oil prices were well bid at USD 89.44 per barrel, traders said, adding that the US-Iran conflict and the Houthi-Saudi blockade could again risk the Middle East oil supplies.

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said the rupee recovered on softening of the US dollar and easing US Treasury yields.

“However, weak domestic markets and surge in crude oil prices capped sharp gains. Dollar strengthened on escalating US-Iran conflict as the US struck Iran for the 10th consecutive day,” Choudhary said, adding, “USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 95.90 to Rs 96.50.”

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex declined 238.41 points to settle at 77,470.11, while the Nifty dipped 50.80 points to 24,187.70.

Foreign Institutional Investors turned net buyers, purchasing equities worth Rs 1,650.16 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Indian pharma debates impact of 3x rise

New Delhi: Will the talk of a tidal wave of tariff facing Indian pharma companies see policy reversals? Will there be pullbacks or compromises considered? Will a new deal emerge? Or will it all just fizzle out? These are some of the questions that precede any discussion on how life and business could change for Indian pharmaceuticals companies if the US were to stick to it’s latest stance to start imposing stiff tariffs on imported generic medicines two years from now. But then, two years is a long period in an era where things could change in a matter of days. Higher cost of operations is a major deterrent, Indian pharma companies see the likely implications in higher prices for the end consumer in the US since most companies may end up passing on the higher cost to the end consumer. Also, the evolving scenario could heighten the risk of smaller players finding it unviable and possibly exiting the market & potentially triggering drug shortages. At the moment, it is

a wait-and-watch stance that most are adopting and are unwilling to be named on where they stand in the ongoing debate. Speaking off-the-record, many are not sure if the plans to impose tariff on imported generic drugs will actually fructify since the government in the US would be more concerned about the net impact for the American consumer. Also, many a time, there has been a rollback on tariffs.

Nonetheless, at the moment, the focus within India is largely around the end outcome. What can be the possible implications of high tariffs on imported generic drugs into the US two years from now unless the Indian companies begin to make these in the US and sell it there. As things stand, the US government is to retain the Head of Advisory & Lifesciences at EY & KPMG. r To top it all, “ in the near term, Indian pharmaceutical companies remain deeply embedded in the US healthcare ecosystem.”

Google employees demand severance promise amid layoffs; 4,500 workers Pichai for voluntary

New Delhi: Tech layoffs have created much anxiety among workers amid ongoing AI-driven restructuring across the industry. As tension grows, over 4,500 Google employees have signed a petition addressed to CEO Sundar Pichai to introduce stronger protections for workers who may be affected by layoffs.

In the petition, Google employees demand better severance packages, voluntary exit packages, and more predictable exit processes before job cuts happen. The concern is said to be driven by Google’s increased spending and investment in AI, and ongoing job cuts across the teams. According to The Guardian



report, Members of the Alphabet Workers Union delivered the petition to Pichai and three senior executives, demanding guaranteed severance, voluntary

exit packages before layoffs, removal of performance quotas, and extended paid leave options for affected employees.

The petition was delivered to

Cyient DLM shares rally 18% post Q1 results; should you buy, sell or hold

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The petition was delivered to Pichai after nearly 100 employees gathered outside Google’s campus in support of the campaign. Protesters also wore black T-shirts and carried a banner featuring the names of petition signatories.

The union described the protest as the largest employee-led initiative on job security in Google’s



gle’s history. Parul Koul, the president of the Alphabet Workers Union, criticised Google’s way of handling job cuts, as per the report. According.

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Tata Power, Adani Green, Bernstein targets, what investors should chase NTPC, JSW Energy shares:

New Delhi: Foreign brokerage Bernstein in its fresh note suggested an ‘Outperform’ rating on Tata Power Company Ltd, JSW Energy Ltd and NTPC Ltd while recommending an ‘Underperform’ on Adani Green Energy, with its target prices suggesting 23-34 per cent upside for the first three and a 22 per cent potential downside for the Adani stock. Bernstein said the crowd is chasing Solar+BESS, a battery energy storage system, but it believes one should chase private thermal and pumped storage.

This, it said, is clearly visible in competitive intensity in bids, noting that pumped storage and thermal power tenders see 3-5 bidders, as against 20-plus companies bidding for Solar+BESS projects.

Thermal is limited by equipment and plant size, pumped storage by access to strategic sites, it said adding that there is no barrier to entry in the case Solar+BESS.

“A big issue with renewable tenders have been that while the tariff looks good, it is not converting to a firm off-take agreement. In this case if we compare the cost of different options to store power, and considering this tender does not have any solar attached to it, we see good chances of this contract converting to a firm PPA (some haircut DISCOMs might need),” Bernstein said. On top of it, Bernstein said, there



is a waiver on transmission charges on Pumped Storage Projects (PSP) projects for a period of 25 years from PPA date, in respect of projects for which the construction work is awarded on or before 30th June 2028.

“Latest SECI tender result had a condition for the plant to get commissioned in 3 years from PPA date, this also helped reduce competition further. As per our estimates, the bid could result in 20%+ equi”The government intent on PSP is very clear in their plan. In fact even China which makes 80-90 per cent of global batteries is tripling PSP capacity,” the foreign brokerage said. ity IRR for Tata Power,” Bernstein said.Bernstein said

JSW Energy is an early mover. Tata Power while lower in scale benefits from an existing reservoir at its sites, it said.

Bernstein has a target of Rs 430 on Tata Power, hinting at 34 per cent potential upside. Its target of JSW Energy at Rs 623 implies 23.4 per cent potential upside over Tuesday’s closing price.

NTPC with a prie target of Rs 450 offers 27.7 per cent downside. Adani Green, meanwhile, received a target of Rs 1,000, hinting at 22 per cent potential fall. “The government intent on PSP is very clear in their plan. In fact even China which makes 80-90 per cent of global batteries is tripling PSP capacity,” the foreign brokerage said.

IndiaMart’s share price targets: Reasons behind the 8% decline following Q1 results; should investors still consider it a Buy

New Delhi: IndiaMART InterMESH Ltd saw its shares falling 8 per cent in Wednesday’s trade after at least three brokerages cut their target prices on the stock, citing elevated customer churn in the June quarter, with no respite from declining paid subscriber numbers. Jefferies suggested an ‘Underperform’ rating on the stock with a lower target of Rs 1,650 against Rs 1,810 earlier. Centrum Broking turned ‘Neutral’ on the stock after keeping ‘Buy’ call

for nine months, with a lower target of Rs 2,073 against Rs 2570 earlier. DAM Capital revised its target lower on the stock to Rs 1,680 against Rs 2,020 earlier

Choice Institutional Equities said near-term growth is expected to remain ARPU-led amid elevated churn, softer buyer enquiries and evolving LLM-driven search dynamics.

“We retain our ‘ADD’ rating but lower our multiple to 20x (earlier 22x) to arrive at a

target to Rs 2,060, as a meaningful re-rating is contingent on sustained improvement in subscriber additions, buyer traffic and marketplace activity,” it said.Foreign brokerage Nomura, which suggested a target of Rs 1,810 on the stock, said Indiamart lost 1,800 paying subscribers in Q1FY27 against a loss of 1,200 subscribers in Q4FY26 and 1,000 in Q3FY26 Gross addition remains anaemic and customer churn remains elevated, aggravating the subscriber addition

problem, it said.Following the development, the IndiaMart stock fell 7.51 per cent to hit a low of Rs 1,775 apiece on BSE. The scrip has fallen 26.60 per cent in the past one year.Indiamart’s customer collections rose 8 per cent YoY, largely driven by increased average revenue per user (ARPU). Recall, the company had increased prices of its Silver Monthly and Annual products by 33 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively, in Q3FY26.

IndusInd Bank shares hit 52-week high ahead of Q1 FY27 results

New Delhi: Shares of IndusInd Bank Ltd gained 0.67 per cent in Wednesday’s trade to touch a fresh 52-week high of Rs 1,071.45. At last check, the stock was up 0.23 per cent at Rs 1,066.80, extending its one-month gain to 15.58 per cent.The private sector lender, which had previously faced accounting discrepancies, is slated to announce its June quarter (Q1 FY27) results later in the day. In the preceding quarter (Q4 FY26), IndusInd Bank returned to profitability, reporting a net profit of Rs 594 crore against a net loss of Rs 2,329 crore in the corresponding period last year.Its net interest income (NII) increased to Rs 4,371 crore in Q4 FY26 from Rs 3,048 crore in Q4 FY25. Fee and other income also jumped to Rs 1,714 crore from Rs 709 crore a year earlier. However, core fee income declined to Rs 1,524 crore from Rs 2,304 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.According to the bank, its balance sheet size stood at Rs 5,43,394 crore as of March 31, 2026, compared with Rs 5,54,107 crore as on March 31, 2025. Kranthi Bathini, Director of Equity Strategy at WealthMills Securities, stated, “IndusInd Bank has shown a V-shaped recovery recently, but corporate governance concerns could weigh on the stock in the near to medium term.”

He added, “Investors with a high risk appetite and a long-term horizon may consider adding IndusInd Bank on meaningful dips, given the potential upside

in India’s banking and financial services sector. This stock is best suited to those willing to accept higher risk for long-term opportunities.

Technical view
Osho Krishan, Chief Manager - Technical & Derivative Research at Angel One, noted, “IndusInd Bank has witnessed a strong resurgence following a decisive breakout from its consolidation phase around the Rs 960 zone, indicating improving near-term momentum. The immediate resistance is positioned near Rs 1,080, which is expected to act as a key hurdle after the recent sharp rally. On the downside, the Rs 1,000-990 zone is likely to provide strong support and should help cushion any near-term corrective moves.” Virat Jagad, Senior Technical Research Analyst at Bonanza, said, One can consider buying the stock around Rs 1,045–1,060 with a stop loss placed at Rs 995 and target Rs 1,150. The stock has delivered a strong breakout above a consolidation zone and is trading above all key EMAs with bullish alignment. Positive price action and sustained strength above breakout levels suggest further upside potential.Jigar S Patel, Senior Manager – Technical Research at Anand Rath, stated, “Support is placed at Rs 1,000, while resistance is seen near Rs 1,080. A decisive move above Rs 1,080 could trigger a further upside move towards Rs 1,100. The stock is expected to trade within the Rs 1,000-1,100 range in the short term

SBI Funds Management shares slip 4% on Day 2

New Delhi: The SBI Funds Management shares fell 4% to a low of Rs 585.30 on the NSE a day after listing at a premium of nearly 7%. However, the stock closed the first day of trade on a lower note and continued to trade in the red today. On July 21, it settled 0.5% lower at Rs 610.15 on the SBI Funds Management managed Rs equity and hybrid categories, alongside 21 ETFs and 21 index funds. Among large AMCs, SBIAMC has the least concentrated scheme mix, with only one scheme accounting for over 10% of AUM versus 3-4 schemes for key peers. Equity AUM is also more diversified by category, with the top-3 categories contributing 30% of equity AUM, compared with 50% for HDFC AMC and Nippon Life India Asset Management and 35% for ICICI AMC.

UK inflation falls by more than expected to 2.6% in lift for Andy Burnham

UK: UK inflation dropped by more than expected in June to 2.6%, in a boost for Andy Burnham's plans to reduce the cost of living.

The new prime minister has pledged to bring down the cost of living to give households more disposable income and improve the outlook for the economy, announcing a winter VAT holiday on electricity bills and lowering the national cap on bus fares.

Last month's consumer prices index reading outdid economists' forecasts of a slide from 2.8% in May to 2.7% , amid a fall in the prices of fuel, particularly diesel, helped by the unstable truce in the Middle East conflict.

The Office for National Statistics said clothing also dropped in price month on month along with the cost of transport and food, offsetting modest price increases in most other goods and services.

Grant Fitzner, the ONS chief economist, said: "Food prices fell this month, driven by products including chocolate, margarine and beef. Clothing prices also fell with the start of summer sales, with bigger discounts than last year.

"The cost of raw materials dipped for the first time since January, mainly due to the lower price of crude oil, while the increase in the costs of goods leaving factories slowed again."

The new chancellor, John Healey,



said the drop in prices growth was "news families want to hear" but warned "there is much more to do to give people the breathing space they need".

He added: "That is why yesterday we cut VAT on electricity bills and today we're announcing a £2 cap on bus fares from January. We have chosen to focus on the cost of living in our first week, signalling that concern for working people will be

at the heart of everything we do.

"Both these changes are a win-win. They help keep inflation down, while helping people afford the essentials."Joe Nellis, the economic adviser at the accountancy firm MHA, said the fall in inflation to 2.6% marked "a welcome piece of good news for the incoming prime minister and his chancellor as they look to set out their policy agenda".

Nellis, an emeritus professor at

Cranfield University, added: "The escalation of tensions in the Middle East in February led to fears of inflation spiralling out of control, as supply chains were disrupted and oil prices surged."However, while inflation has remained consistently above the Bank of England's 2% target, it remains far below expected levels – in its world economic outlook published in April, the IMF predicted inflation to head towards 4% by the end of the year.

"For Andy Burnham, the easing of inflation creates a more stable platform for his fledgling administration. As he looks to support those struggling with the cost of living crisis and encourage job creation, lower inflation rates will help to improve household spending power and boost business confidence, as long as earnings growth continues to outpace price rises."

Concerns that the Bank of England could increase interest rates later this month are likely to ease. Several members of the central bank's monetary policy committee have said they are worried about inflation running persistently above their 2% target unless they push up interest rates from 3.75%.

However, the recent escalation of hostilities in the Middle East will pose a problem for Burnham and the central bank after it pushed the price of Brent crude back up above \$90 a barrel.

India opposition leader Gandhi freed after detention



New Delhi: Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi has been released after he was detained during growing protests over the education system.

The protests, which have been led predominantly by students and a social media-driven movement, the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), have emerged as one of the biggest challenges to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. Protesters have called for the resignation of Modi and Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan after a leak of medical school test papers forced more than two million medical students to retake their exams and was linked to at least 12 student suicides.

Gandhi and other opposition leaders were detained

on Tuesday during a sit-in outside Modi's residence in New Delhi while accusing the government of ignoring student demands.

They also protested against the aggressive response to the student protests, which are demanding educational reform and greater government accountability.

Gandhi was released late on Tuesday.In his first comments since protesters marched on parliament on Monday, Pradhan condemned Gandhi's sit-in in a post on X on Tuesday night, saying he continues "to shamelessly exploit students as political tools to manufacture disruption".

"The students of India deserve far better than being treated as props in a political campaign. They

deserve certainty over chaos, solutions over slogans, and responsibility over disruption," he wroteIn his first comments since protesters marched on parliament on Monday, Pradhan condemned Gandhi's sit-in in a post on X on Tuesday night, saying he continues "to shamelessly exploit students as political tools to manufacture disruption".

"The students of India deserve far better than being treated as props in a political campaign.

They deserve certainty over chaos, solutions over slogans, and responsibility over disruption," he wroteOn Tuesday, he was moved to a private hospital by court order after a petition from his wife alleged he had been illegally detained

Rebel Wilson wins defamation case brought by co-star after bitter dispute

Australia: After a blistering dispute that spanned continents and years, Hollywood A-lister Rebel Wilson has been found not to have defamed her co-star in a series of social media posts.

The Pitch Perfect star was sued by Australian actor Charlotte MacInnes, who played the lead role in Wilson's directorial debut film The Deb.

fter the verdict on Wednesday, Wilson thanked the judge and the Australian legal system, saying the process had tested her and reinforced her belief in "standing up for what I believe is right, while continuing to create work that brings people joy".

MacInnes claimed Wilson defamed her in a series of social media posts that implied she was a liar and a sellout who walked back a sexual harassment complaint to further her career.

The posts alleged the young actor confided in Wilson – and later recanted – that she felt uncomfortable when the film's co-producer Amanda Ghost asked to have a shower and a bath together.MacInnes denied making or retracting a complaint, insisting she had not been uncomfortable when the pair shared a bath in their swimwear after Ghost suffered a medical episode in September 2023.

Two months after the conclusion of the hotly contested court battle in the federal court, justice Elizabeth Raper found in favour of Wilson. "MacInnes has failed to establish that the publications

have caused or were likely to cause serious harm," she said on Wednesday.

MacInnes' barrister, Sue Chrysanthou SC, accused Wilson of a "complete revision of history" littered with dishonesty during her emphatic closing address in May.

"She is a fantastical liar who has made up terrible, terrible allegations about multiple people and her own witnesses have discredited her," she said.

But Wilson repeatedly denied accusations she fabricated the complaint or raised it for leverage during disputes with her co-producers over the film's budget and writing credit.

That was what she had been doing when she posted the stories to her 11 million social media followers, the Bridesmaids star said. "I don't classify it as an attack. I classify it as telling the truth," she told the court.

Her barrister, David Sibtain SC, said his client had "no motive to lie" about something that would endanger her film by driving a wedge between her lead actor and a producer.

ESPN is undergoing a significant round of layoffs for the first time in three years after taking over NFL Network in April.

Chairman Jimmy Pitaro said in a memo to employees Tuesday morning, obtained by the Associated Press, that most moves are the result of ESPN's acquisition of NFL Network and other league digital assets last year.



The deal was announced last August and also included NFL Fantasy and the rights to distribute the Red-Zone channel to cable and satellite operators. In return, the NFL got a 10% equity stake in ESPN.

It was approved by government regulators in January. NFL Network employees became part of ESPN on 1 April.

"Over the past several months, we've made significant progress integrating the NFL assets that we acquired into ESPN," Pitaro wrote in the memo. "Throughout this process, we have taken the time to carefully evaluate our collective teams, resources and organizational structure to best position us for the future. As a result, we had to make some difficult decisions about job impacts that we will be communicating today.

While most of the layoffs affect production and behind-the-scenes personnel, some on-air talent were affected. Ryan Clark, who joined ESPN in 2015 as an NFL analyst, learned of his layoff while on NFL Live on Monday. A person familiar with the situation said Clark was originally going to be told Tuesday morning before reports leaked about the decision.

Clark was told by company executives rather than

hear about it elsewhere. He did not finish his appearance on the show.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not at liberty to discuss personnel decisions. Clark took to social media on Tuesday to address the layoffs. He also shared a video of himself working out.

"Sending prayers and love to all those laid off today by ESPN. So many of you have poured your life into that company, + I know how you're feeling right now," Clark wrote on X. "My hope is as this door closes another opens for you all. God bless!"

Other notable names include Karl Ravech, who had been with ESPN since 1993 and had been an integral part of its baseball coverage. Ravech was the voice of "Sunday Night Baseball" from 2022-25 before the package moved to NBC this season. He did call Monday night's game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and Philadelphia Phillies.

Tom Pelissero, who had been with NFL Network since 2017, is also part of the cuts. ESPN had recently signed NFL insiders Ian Rapoport and Adam Schefter to extensions.

Fox News reported Cam Newton was also released only one year after signing a contract extension.

The ESPN cutbacks are also part of other reductions that are taking place throughout the Walt Disney Company this week.

UK military 'eyes innovative electric flying taxi' as 2029 launch planned

UK: British flying taxi startup Vertical Aerospace has said the UK government has expressed interest in buying a military variant of its aircraft as it races to gain approval for flights with paying passengers.

Vertical also welcomed another £10m grant from the government, taking its total UK state funding to £48m.

The company demonstrated its prototype model of the flying taxi on Monday at the Farnborough international airshow, an industry event at an airfield west of London.

The aircraft is one of several electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft which manufacturers are hoping will revolutionise urban transport by landing quietly – relative to a helicopter – in built-up areas with no direct emissions. However, those companies have found it much harder than initially expected to start flying passengers, and several have collapsed after an investment bubble during the coronavirus pandemic burst.

Vertical itself faced a cash crisis in 2024 which led to the eventual exit of founder Stephen Fitzpatrick, the owner of energy company Ovo. It was taken over by the US distressed debt investor Jason Mudrick.

The company survived and is now going through the complex process of gaining certification for a totally new aircraft from the UK's Civil Aviation Authority.

It is racing against its US rival Joby Aviation, which has also switched from conventional to vertical flight in public tests from New York's JFK airport to Manhattan. Other rivals that are further behind are Eve, owned by Brazilian jet maker Embraer, and the US startup Archer Aviation – as well as several Chinese companies.

Monday's flight was the first public demonstration of



Vertical's aircraft transitioning from conventional flight using its aeroplane wings to vertical flight – when four of its propellers tilt upwards.

The aircraft flew in to land on the runway at Farnborough, before hovering in the air, helicopter-like, and dropping slowly to the tarmac.Vertical's focus remains on its electric model, which offers the prospect of flight with no direct carbon dioxide pollution, but it is also working on a hybrid system that will add a gas turbine.

While burning fossil fuels to power the motors would cause significant emissions, it could also allow greater range and quicker refuelling than recharging batteries.

Stuart Simpson, the Vertical chief executive, said in an interview that the hybrid option opens up "dual use" – civilian and military.

He said: "It leverages the commercial airframe, but with a different powertrain, which the military are very interested in."Because silent takeoff and landing, you can cruise up to 1,000 miles in it, low noise signature, low heat signature – [it is] really interesting."

Vertical said the UK government had "confirmed interest from the Ministry of Defence in the defence applications for Vertical's eVTOL, hybrid-electric and autonomous capabilities".

The company plans for similar flights for four pas-

sengers in its Valo production aircraft in 2029, after announcing a further delay to certification earlier this month. The company had originally aimed to be in service by 2025.

Simpson said "we're really confident" the company would meet the new target timeline after communications with the regulator.

"I set 2028 hand in hand with them," Simpson said. The CAA and EU Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) "both signed up to work towards 2028, and they're both comfortable with 2029 because they knew they could do 2028".Vertical said the government money was offered "in connection with Vertical finalising the down-selection of UK sites for its aircraft and battery facilities".

It intends to build about 150 aircraft a year at its existing facility in Kemble, Gloucestershire, but it eventually wants a larger site to build 1,000 a year, as well as to assemble its battery packs.

The company said building in the UK would make it easier to certify the aircraft. Vertical says flights should cost about the same as a taxi ride, because the same aircraft will be able to do several return trips in the time a cab could do a journey such as from London's Heathrow airport to the centre of the city.

Flash Floods Kill 20 in Afghanistan's Nuristan Province

Kabul: Heavy rainfall has caused widespread devastation across Afghanistan, resulting in significant loss of life and property. Torrential rains triggered flash floods in the eastern province of Nuristan on Monday, leaving at least 20 people dead, more than 80 injured, and around 100 others missing, according to government authorities.

According to a report by Afghanistan's Pajhwok



News Agency, the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (AND-

MA) has confirmed the incident and warned that the death toll could rise as res-

cue operations continue.

The authority said that, according to preliminary information, the recent flash floods in Parun, the capital of Nuristan Province, claimed the lives of at least 20 people. More than 80 others sustained injuries, while over 100 people remain unaccounted for.

In an official statement, the authority described the casualty figures as preliminary, noting that emergency

response and rescue teams are still operating in the affected areas. It added that verified information would be shared with the media after the completion of detailed surveys and damage assessments.

Officials said the flooding has caused extensive destruction across the affected region, and the number of fatalities and injuries may change as rescue and assessment efforts progress.

Steps to Prepare Rosemary Hair Spray in Your Own Home



Hair loss is a prevalent concern regarding hair health today.While it is normal to lose a few strands each day, excessive shedding can ultimately result in thinning hair and, in certain instances, significant hair loss.

In addition to maintaining a nutritious diet and appropriate hair care, some individuals seek natural remedies to promote scalp health.One such remedy gaining popularity is rosemary hair spray. While research suggests rosemary may support hair growth in some people, it is important to note that scientific evidence for homemade hair sprays is limited, and results can vary from person to person.Here’s how you can make it at home.

Ingredients You’ll Need

4–5 fresh rosemary sprigs,1 tablespoon fenugreek seeds
1 tablespoon nigella seeds 500 ml filtered water,1 teaspoon aloe vera gel,How To Make Rosemary Hair Spray

Step 1: Soak The Seeds

The night before, soak 1 tablespoon each of fenugreek and nigella seeds in water for 8–12 hours. The next morning, bring 500 ml of filtered water to a boil. Remove it from the heat, immediately add the fresh rosemary sprigs, and cover the pot. Let it steep for 30–40 minutes.Step 3:

Combine Everything

Add the soaked fenugreek and nigella seeds to the rosemary-infused water, along with the soaking water. Cover again and let the mixture sit for another 30 minutes.

Step 4: Strain And Store

Strain the liquid thoroughly, pressing the seeds and rosemary to extract as much liquid as possible. Allow it to cool completely, then mix in 1 teaspoon of aloe vera gel.Transfer the finished spray into a dark-coloured glass spray bottle and store it in the refrigerator. It stays fresh for 7–10 days. How To Use It

Divide your hair into sections.Spray the mixture directly onto your scalp.

Gently massage for about 5 minutes.Leave it on—there’s no need to rinse it off.The spray can be used daily as part of your hair care routine. Why These Ingredients Are Popular For Hair Care

Step 2: Prepare The Rosemary Infusion

Rosemary: Rosemary has attracted attention for its potential to improve blood circulation to the scalp, which may help support healthy hair follicles.

Fenugreek Seeds: Fenugreek is rich in protein, iron, and plant compounds that may help nourish the scalp and strengthen hair. It is also believed to contain compounds that may influence DHT (dihydrotestosterone), a hormone associated with pattern hair loss, although evidence in humans remains limited. Nigella Seeds (Kalonji): Nigella seeds contain thymoquinone, a natural antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compound. Some preliminary studies suggest it may support scalp health, but more clinical research is needed to confirm its effectiveness for reducing hair fall. When Can You Expect Results?

The daily use of the solution may show visible improvements in 6–8 weeks. However, individual results can differ depending on the underlying cause of hair fall, overall health, nutrition, and hair care habits. It is pertinent to note that while ingredients like rosemary, fenugreek, and nigella seeds have shown promising properties in early research, they are not a guaranteed cure for hair loss.

10 Ideal Kurta Selections for Hot and Humid Conditions



Stay cool in elegance with these breathable cotton kurtas, which are lightweight, comfortable, and ideal for office attire, casual outings, and warm weather. When humidity is at its peak, getting dressed can feel like a challenge. Fabrics that cling, heavy embroidery and synthetic materials quickly become uncomfortable, making breathable cotton kurtas the easiest solution. They’re lightweight, airy and comfortable enough to wear through long office hours, weekend errands and festive gatherings without feeling weighed down.

A well-made cotton kurta also happens to be one of the most versatile pieces you can own. Style it with cigarette pants for work, jeans for casual outings or palazzos for a more traditional look. If you’re looking to refresh your wardrobe for the rainy season or simply want everyday ethnic wear that feels comfortable, these breathable kurtas deserve a spot in your collection.

10 Breathable kurtas for the hot and humid weather

1. Plus Size Cotton Kurta for Women & Girls: Designed with comfort in mind, this cotton kurta offers a relaxed silhouette that’s ideal for hot, sticky days. The breathable fabric

is perfect for long summer and monsoon days.

4. FIRSTRAIN Printed Cotton Kurti: If you enjoy classic everyday kurtas, this printed cotton option delivers exactly that. The breathable fabric keeps things comfortable even during humid afternoons, while the straight silhouette ensures a polished appearance suitable for office wear and casual outings alike.

Why you’ll love it: A fuss-free staple that combines comfort with timeless styling.

5. FIRSTRAIN Cotton Straight Printed Kurti: This kurta focuses on simplicity, making it an easy addition to any capsule wardrobe. The lightweight cotton fabric feels gentle against the skin, while the versatile print makes accessorising incredibly easy. Whether paired with leggings or palazzos, it works effortlessly.

Why you’ll love it: Comfortable enough for everyday wear and versatile enough for repeat styling.

6. SAMAYRA Pink Floral Printed Cotton Kurta: Floral prints instantly brighten a wardrobe, and this pink cotton kurta does exactly that. The square neckline gives it a contemporary touch, while the breathable fabric keeps you cool throughout the day. The lace-up detail at the back adds a subtle design element without affecting comfort.

Why you’ll love it: Feminine, airy and perfect for everything from office days to weekend brunches.

7. FIRSTRAIN Cotton Straight Printed Kurti: Another everyday essential from FIRSTRAIN, this kurta combines soft cotton with an easy-to-style silhouette. The fabric feels breathable enough for warm weather, while the printed design ensures you won’t have to rely heavily on accessories to complete the outfit.Why you’ll love it: A practical everyday kurta that works across seasons.

8. GRECIILOOKS Cotton Printed Anarkali Kurta Set: If you prefer something slightly dressier

than a basic straight kurta, this printed Anarkali set offers the perfect middle ground. The cotton fabric keeps it breathable despite the fuller silhouette, while the elegant flare makes it suitable for office events, festive lunches and family gatherings.

Why you’ll love it: Breathable comfort with a more elevated ethnic look.

9. Amazon Brand – Tavasyya Cotton Solid Straight Kurta: Solid kurtas are some of the most versatile pieces you can own. This cotton straight kurta can easily be styled with printed dupattas, statement jewellery or colourful bottoms depending on the occasion. Its breathable fabric also makes it a reliable choice for everyday wear.

Why you’ll love it: Timeless design that you’ll wear far beyond one season.

10. FIRSTRAIN Cotton Straight Printed Kurti: Rounding off the list is another breathable cotton option that focuses on everyday practicality. Lightweight, comfortable and easy to maintain, this kurta is ideal for women looking to build a wardrobe of reliable daily essentials that don’t sacrifice style.Why you’ll love it: Comfortable enough to wear from morning meetings to evening errands.Tips for dressing comfortably in humid weather

Choose breathable fabrics like cotton, linen and mulmul.Opt for relaxed silhouettes that allow airflow.

Stick to lighter colours, which absorb less heat.Pair kurtas with cotton palazzos or straight pants instead of heavy leggings.Keep accessories minimal to avoid feeling weighed down. Finish the look with comfortable kolhapuris, flats or juttis.When temperatures rise and humidity refuses to budge, breathable clothing becomes a necessity rather than a luxury. These cotton kurtas prove that staying cool doesn’t mean compromising on style. Whether you’re dressing for work, casual outings or everyday errands, they’re the kind of wardrobe staples you’ll happily wear on repeat.

Hoop earrings represent an excellent means to elevate your fashion sense



Selecting the appropriate pair of earrings to complement my outfit is one of the challenging decisions I face when preparing for any event. This is why hoop earrings have emerged as my preferred choice. A significant benefit of hoop earrings is their adaptability. They are available in various sizes, materials, and designs, ranging from small, subtle hoops suitable for daily use to large, eye-catching pieces that enhance the elegance of special events.And with my hoop earrings, I’m rest assured that I can wear them on practically any outfit I like. From ethnic wear to my western outfits, hoop earrings are my go-to for any occasion. Small hoops offer a subtle and elegant look, while oversized hoops create a bold and fashionable statement. Modern designs include textured finishes, twisted patterns, diamond embellishments, and unique geometric variations, allowing wearers to express their individuality.

What are the best hoop earrings?

So, here is my choice of the top 7 hoop earrings you should add to your vanity:

1. SHAYN Women 925 Sterling Silver Gold Plated Hoop Earrings Gold Vermeil: Crafted from 925 sterling silver with a gold vermeil (thick gold plating) finish, these hoop earrings offer a timeless look for everyday wear and special occasions. Their lightweight design makes them comfortable for extended use, while the polished finish pairs easily with both casual and formal outfits. Customers often praise the elegant appearance, comfortable fit and premium feel. Many reviewers appreciate the lasting shine and versatile design, though

some recommend storing them carefully to help maintain the gold finish.

2. PALMONAS Silver & Gold-Plated Stainless Steel Anti-Tarnish Circular Hoop Earrings: Made from stainless steel with silver and gold plating, these circular hoop earrings are designed to resist tarnishing and everyday wear. Their simple yet stylish shape complements a wide range of outfits, making them suitable for work, travel and daily use. Customers frequently appreciate the sturdy construction, lightweight feel and easy styling. Many reviews note that the earrings retain their shine well with regular wear, while some recommend gentle cleaning to keep the finish looking its best.

3. GIVA Gold-Plated Hoop Earrings: These hoop earrings feature a base metal finished with gold plating, creating a classic accessory that works effortlessly with everyday and occasion wear. The smooth finish and lightweight design make them comfortable for long hours, while the timeless silhouette suits a variety of personal styles. Customers often compliment the attractive design, value for money and comfortable fit. Many reviewers enjoy their versatile appearance, although some recommend careful handling to help preserve the plated finish over time.

4. ELRA 18k Gold Plated Stainless Steel Waterproof & Anti-Tarnish Crystal Huggie Earrings: Crafted from stainless steel, finished with 18k gold plating and decorated with crystal stones, these huggie earrings combine sparkle with everyday practicality. Their waterproof and anti-tarnish design makes them suitable

for frequent wear, while the compact style offers a secure and comfortable fit. Many customers often praise the durable finish, elegant sparkle and lightweight feel. Many reviewers appreciate that the earrings remain bright after regular use and find them ideal for daily styling.

5. SWAROVSKI Circular Hoop Earrings: These circular hoop earrings are crafted with metal finished in a premium plating and embellished with Swarovski crystals for a refined sparkle. Their elegant design makes them suitable for parties, celebrations and everyday sophistication. Customers frequently admire the brilliant shine, luxurious finish and premium presentation. Many reviewers appreciate the comfortable fit and eye-catching sparkle, describing them as an excellent gift choice, while some recommend storing them in the original box to maintain their brilliance.

6. Anushka Jain Jewellery 925 Sterling Silver Gold Plated Circular Shaped Cubic Zirconia Hoop: Made from 925 sterling silver with gold plating and embellished with cubic zirconia stones, these circular hoop earrings offer classic elegance with a sparkling finish. Their lightweight construction ensures comfortable wear throughout the day, making them suitable for both casual and festive occasions. Many customers often praise the fine craftsmanship, attractive sparkle and elegant design. Many reviewers appreciate the premium quality and comfortable fit, while some advise proper storage to help maintain the gold-plated finish.

7. Isharya Circular Hoop Earrings: These circular hoop earrings are crafted from high-quality metal with a premium plated finish, reflecting Isharya’s contemporary jewellery style. Their elegant silhouette complements ethnic, western and fusion outfits, making them a versatile addition to any jewellery collection. Customers often appreciate the stylish design, premium finish and statement look. Many reviewers enjoy the sophisticated appearance and comfortable wear, describing them as ideal for special occasions, while some recommend careful storage to preserve the finish.

Discover the top walking shoes available for under ₹5,000

If your daily activities involve pursuing a step goal, commuting on foot, running errands, or standing for extended periods, investing in a quality pair of walking shoes can significantly impact your comfort. The appropriate footwear minimizes foot fatigue, provides cushioning with each step, and ensures that your knees and ankles feel more comfortable by the day’s end. Fortunately, you do not need to break the bank to find a suitable pair. Many of the top walking shoes available today are priced comfortably under ₹5,000 and are equipped with features that were once exclusive to high-end models. Consider attributes such as lightweight design, plush cushioning, breathable materials, and durable soles suitable for daily wear. If you are considering purchasing your next pair, here is all the essential information you should review before finalizing your order.

What makes a good walking shoe?

Walking may seem simple, but your feet take thousands of steps every single day. A shoe that feels fine for a quick stroll may not be comfortable after an hour on the road.

Here are a few things worth checking before you buy.Cushioning that feels comfortable all day

Every foot is different, so the amount of cushioning you need depends on your walking style.

Neutral feet usually do well with balanced cushioning and a flexible midsole.Flat feet benefit from better arch support and a stable heel that helps keep the foot aligned.

High arches often feel more comfortable with softer foam that absorbs impact across the foot.

A shoe should feel supportive without feeling stiff.

A roomy toe area

Your feet naturally swell after long hours of walking. Shoes with a cramped front section can leave your toes sore by the end of the day.Aim for enough space to wiggle your toes comfortably. A small gap between your longest toe and the front of the shoe usually works well.

Flexible soles with reliable grip

A walking shoe should bend near the front of the foot, not through the middle. This allows your feet to move naturally with every step.A rubber outsole with good grip is also worth looking for, especially if you regularly walk on pavements, tiled surfaces or uneven roads.

Why buying walking shoes online makes sense

Many people still prefer trying shoes in stores, but online shopping comes with several practical advantages.

Better prices

Popular brands regularly offer discounts during sales events, along with app offers and bank promotions.



Shoes that normally sit above ₹5,000 often drop into a much friendlier price range online.

More sizes and colours

Physical stores usually stock limited sizes and colours. Online listings often include the complete range, making it much easier to find your preferred fit.

Reviews from real buyers

Customer reviews can tell you things that a quick trial in a shop cannot. You will often find useful details about sizing, comfort after long walks, durability and grip after months of use.

Easy exchanges

Most major shopping platforms offer simple return and exchange policies. That gives you time to check the fit indoors before making your final decision.

A few buying tips before you place your order

Shop later in the day, as

feet tend to be slightly larger by evening.

Wear the socks you normally use for walking while checking the fit.

Do not buy shoes that need time to become comfortable. They should feel good from the first wear.

Replace walking shoes once the cushioning starts feeling flat or the outsole shows noticeable wear.

Many trusted brands now offer comfortable, supportive options under ₹5,000 that are more than capable of handling daily walks, office commutes and weekend outings.Focus on fit before anything else. Good cushioning, proper support and a flexible sole will always matter more than flashy colours or marketing claims. Pick a pair that feels comfortable from the first step, and your feet will thank you every day.

ENTERTAINMENT

3 Idiots re-release reports are false, clarifies production house



Mumbai : The news of 3 Idiots’ re-release recently surfaced on social media, with many claiming that the Aamir Khan starrer will hit theatres on September 4. But now, Vidhu Vinod Chopra Films has issued an official clarification. While responding to recent media reports claiming that its iconic film 3 Idiots will be re-released in theatres on September 4, the production house stated that the news is factually incorrect. The official statement shared by the

production house read, “With reference to recent media reports claiming that 3 Idiots will be re-released on 4th September, Vidhu Vinod Chopra Films would like to clarify that these reports are false and factually incorrect. We request members of the media and fans to rely solely on official announcements made through Vidhu Vinod Chopra Films’ verified channels. We urge media publications to refrain from publishing or circulating unverified information.” Released

in 2009, 3 Idiots is a coming-of-age comedy-drama directed by Rajkumar Hirani and produced by Vidhu Vinod Chopra. Starring Aamir Khan, R. Madhavan, Sharman Joshi, Kareena Kapoor Khan, and Boman Irani, the film follows three engineering students as they navigate college life, friendship, and the pressure of academic success. It went on to become one of the biggest blockbusters in Bollywood.

Aamir Khan addressed the question himself during a Q&A at the British Film Institute (BFI) and shut the theory down. “I didn’t know about Mr Sonam at that time when we were doing the film. I saw a video of Chatur just recently, and he said that. But he is wrong,” he said, adding that neither director Rajkumar Hirani nor writer Abhijat Joshi knew of Wangchuk either while the film was being written. Aamir didn’t stop at the denial, though. He also spoke about Wangchuk’s health, now 19 days into his fast at the time, saying, “All of us are very concerned for his health and his life. We hope it ends well. All of us are hoping that he ends his fast.”

Archie horror series afterlife with Archie targeting 2027 release

Washington : The series version of the ‘Afterlife With Archie’ comics is in the works, reported Variety. The show was originally reported to be in development at Disney+ in 2025 with a script-to-series commitment. Disney is slating the series for a potential launch around Halloween 2027. The show is based on the comic book series from Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa and Francesco Francavilla. The logline states, “When a supernatural spell from a certain teen-witch backfires, unleashing an army of the possessed dead upon Riverdale, Archie and his friends must fight to stay alive, testing the friendships, romances, and loyalties that have always held them together,” reported Variety. According



to Variety, Aguirre-Sacasa wrote the script and serves as executive producer via Muckle Man Productions. Greg Berlanti, Sarah Schechter, and Leigh London Redman of Berlanti Productions also executive produce, along with Jon Goldwater of Archie

Comics Studios and Jimmy Gibbons of Muckle Man. Warner Bros. Television, where both Berlanti Productions and Muckle Man are under overall deals, is the studio.

“‘Afterlife With Archie’ has always been about more than just zombies --

it’s about the friendships, loyalty and humanity that make Riverdale worth fighting for,” said Ayo Davis, president of Disney Kids & Family. “Roberto, Greg, Sarah and Jon have such a deep appreciation for these characters, and they’ve built something that’s equal parts thrilling and heartfelt. Fans are going to fall hard for this new version of the gang ... and maybe scream a little too,” added Ayo Davis, as quoted by Variety. Aguirre-Sacasa and Berlanti previously collaborated on the series ‘Riverdale,’ which served as a dark reimagining of the Archie comics rife with murder, mystery, and jingle jangle. The show aired for seven seasons on The CW and remained highly popular throughout its run.

Aishwarya Lekshmi steps away from social media to protect her originality

Chennai : Malayalam actress Aishwarya Lekshmi has once again made headlines with her candid views on social media. The actress, known for speaking her mind, has made it clear that she has no intention of returning to social media platforms, regardless of how much money she is offered.

Aishwarya, who pursued medicine before entering films, has carved a niche for herself by choosing performance-driven roles over glamorous ones. Her impressive filmography includes Ponniyin Selvan 2,

King of Kotha, Thug Life, Matti Kusthi, Godse, and several other successful films. She is currently working alongside Sai Durgha Tej in the upcoming Telugu film Sambarala Yeti Gattu. Her comments come at a time when several actors are reassessing their relationship with social media.

Earlier, actress Anushka Shetty also announced a temporary break from social media. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), she shared a handwritten note explaining that she wanted to step away from the digital world and reconnect with real life.

“Trading blue light to candle light... I will be stepping away from social media for a bit, just to reconnect to the world and work beyond the scrolling, to where we all actually started. See you all soon with more stories and more love... Smile always,” Anushka wrote.

She captioned the post, “Love... always forever,” drawing an emotional response from fans. One admirer commented, “Omgg you’re coming back to the real world. Can’t wait to see you, sweetie.” With both Aishwarya Lekshmi and Anushka Shetty choosing

to distance themselves from social media, it reflects a growing trend among celebrities who are prioritizing personal well-being and meaningful real-world experiences over constant online engagement. Aishwarya Lekshmi’s departure reflects a broader movement among prominent actors stepping away from digital platforms to protect their mental space and focus on real-world experiences. Encouraged by fans who respected her honesty, the actor invited audiences to support her future work the “old style” at the cinema.

Bigg Boss 20 drops new logo; Salman Khan set to host landmark season



Mumbai : The wait is finally over for Bigg Boss fans as the makers have officially announced Bigg Boss 20! Months after the successful run of Season 19, the Salman Khan-hosted reality show is all set to return with a brand-new season. On July 21, JioHotstar officially unveiled the new logo of Bigg Boss 20 on Instagram.

While the makers have not revealed the premiere date for Bigg Boss 20 yet, they confirmed that the reality show will return ‘soon.’

On Tuesday, JioHotstar and Colors TV unveiled a quick motion logo for Bigg Boss 20, introducing a revamped eye design with vibrant, multi-coloured elements. The teaser ended

with the message, “Bigg Boss coming soon,” teasing the highly-anticipated new season. The caption further heightened fans’ excitement. “2 decades later... still the most eye-conic one #Bigg-Boss20, jald aa raha hai! #BiggBossOnJioHotstar #BB20OnJioHotstar,” wrote the makers. Check out the post below!

The announcement has created excitement among fans who have been eagerly waiting for updates about the upcoming season. “Excitement on peak bro,” wrote one fan, while another one commented, “Can’t wait.” A third comment read, “BB 20 plz achhe achhe interesting contestants laana,” while another fan wrote, “Ohh yeah my

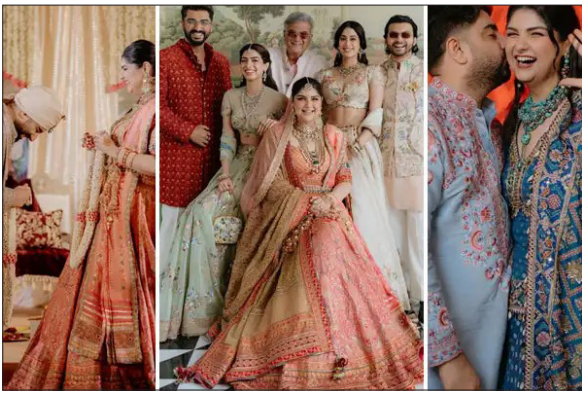
fav show is back with new season.” While details about the premiere date, contestant list and format changes are yet to be revealed, JioStar recently announced a major update about the Bigg Boss franchise, with six language editions of the reality show set to premiere together in September 2026.

While the contestant list of Bigg Boss 20 hasn’t yet been unveiled, several speculative names have been floating on the Internet since last month. Rapper Santy Sharma, Janant Zubair, Faisal Shaikh (Mr Faisu), Ruru Thakur, Arbaz Patel, Uorfi Javed, Anjali Arora, are among those reportedly being speculated as potential participants.

Creating Anshula Kapoor & Rohan Thakkar’s dream wedding: experts share details

Mumbai : One of the most talked-about celebrity weddings this month was Anshula Kapoor and Rohan Thakkar’s intimate yet star-studded celebration in Mumbai. The daughter of producer Boney Kapoor, Anshula married her longtime partner surrounded by the Kapoor family, including Arjun Kapoor, Janhvi Kapoor, Khushi Kapoor, Anil Kapoor, Sunita Kapoor, Sonam Kapoor, Rhea Kapoor and Shanaya Kapoor, among others.

The celebrations also welcomed several familiar faces from the film industry, with Rekha, Javed Akhtar and Shabana Azmi, Riteish and Genelia Deshmukh, Bhumi Pednekkar, Bobby Deol, Jackie Shroff, Aditya Roy Kapur, Sonu Nigam and Himesh Reshammiya among those in attendance. As pictures and videos from the wedding flooded social media, here’s the sincerity of the emotions,” shares Himanshu Patel. “Anshula and Rohan have a very



it to life. When it comes to documenting celebrity weddings, Epic Stories, led by Himanshu Patel, has become one of the most trusted names in the business. Having captured some of India’s biggest celebrations, including the wedding of Radhika Merchant and Anant Ambani, the team approached Anshula and Rohan’s wedding with one clear goal: to keep it authentic.

“What made this wedding creatively exciting was the sincerity of the emotions,” shares Himanshu Patel. “Anshula and Rohan have a very

effortless warmth about them, and that came through in every celebration. Whether it was the way they looked at each other every time they met or the moments they shared with their families, there was so much honesty to capture. For us, the brief was never about creating perfect photographs. It was about preserving those emotions in a way that would still feel just as real years from now.” Celebrity wedding planner Devanshi Patel, Founder of Shreem Events, who has recently curated the weddings of Anshula Kapoor and Rohan

Thakkar and Allu Sirish and Nayanika Reddy, has built a reputation for planning deeply personal celebrations for celebrities, business families and discerning clients across India and internationally.

With over a decade of experience, she and her team manage every aspect of a wedding, from guest experience and hospitality to production, entertainment, logistics and flawless execution, bringing together luxury, precision and meaningful storytelling. “Every wedding we plan begins with one question, not ‘How can we make this grand?’ but ‘How can we make this feel completely theirs?’ Luxury isn’t measured by scale alone; it’s measured by how personal every moment feels. Whether we’re planning a celebration for a celebrity or a private family, the trust our clients place in us is always the greatest responsibility. They invite us into one of the most important chapters of their lives, and we never take that lightly.”

Godzilla vs. Kong actress Kaylee Hottle dies at 18 in car crash

Agency : ‘Godzilla vs Kong’ actress Kaylee Hottle lost her life in a car accident on Tuesday. She was 18. The news of her demise was announced by her father, Joshua Hottle, via a Facebook livestream using American Sign Language. He also confirmed her death to TMZ, saying that she died in a car accident in Maryland and he was flying from Texas to claim her body, as per Variety.

Texas School for the Deaf, where Hottle was a senior, also confirmed the news in a statement on social media. Hottle and her father are both deaf and come from a multi-generational deaf family. “It is with profound sadness that we share the heartbreaking news that one of our TSD seniors, Kaylee Hottle, tragically passed away yes-



terday in a car accident in Frederick, Maryland,” Texas School for the Deaf’s post read.

“Our hearts are with Kaylee’s family, friends, classmates, and everyone who knew and loved her during this incredibly difficult time. At this time, we have very limited information and ask that everyone respect the privacy of Kaylee’s family and refrain from sharing or speculating

about the circumstances surrounding the accident,” it added. Hottle is best known for playing Jia, a deaf orphan who forms a close bond with Kong and is taken in by Dr Ilene Andrews (Rebecca Hall), in 2021’s ‘Godzilla vs Kong’ and 2024’s ‘Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire.’ For the latter, Hottle was nominated for the Saturn Award for best performance by a younger actor.

Sehban Azim alleges police assault in Delhi

New Delhi : Television actor Sehban Azim, known for his role in Tujhse Hai Raabta, was alleged beaten up by the police officials during the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protests in New Delhi on July 20. In a recent interview, Azim claimed that he was hit by sticks multiple times due to which he got injured and his hand is now swollen.

“It was an extremely heartbreaking sight to witness. I went for the protest to support the students, and my two female friends from Mumbai had also come. I got hit while I was saving them from the lathi there. My hand has been swollen. They hit me a few times on my arm, legs and all,” he told Mid-Day. Sehban claimed that the protesters were stopped by the police even before they reached the designated site at Jantar Mantar. “We didn’t even get to reach inside Jantar Mantar where the protest was actually happening. The police had put barricades all around and trapped us in the middle and started hitting us. They weren’t even bothered who they were hitting, be it young kids, women, nobody,” he claimed. The actor further accused cops of deliberately attacking students and added, “It felt like the whole lathi-charge was deliberate. They just wanted all of us to go from there.” Uorfi Javed also took to her social media to condemn the violence and question the authorities’ response during the Chalo Sansad march.

Richie Mehta’s Phoolan to premier at Toronto international film festival 2026

Mumbai : Prime Video has announced that its upcoming Original film Phoolan will have its world premiere in the Special Presentations section at the 51st Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). The prestigious festival is scheduled to take place from September 10 to 20, 2026, with the Richie Mehta directorial set to screen on September 16 at 6 PM ET at Toronto’s Princess of Wales Theatre.

Based on I, Phoolan: The Autobiography of India’s Bandit Queen, the film revisits a pivotal chapter in the life of Phoolan Devi. It chronicles the events surrounding a deadly siege in which thousands of armed men surrounded an entire village with the intent of hunting her down. Written and directed by acclaimed filmmaker Richie Mehta, Phoolan is produced by Shareen Mantri Kedia, Kishor Arora, Kanwal Kohli, and Mehta. Newcomer Sneha Kumari leads the cast in the titular role, alongside Anurag Thakur, Vikram Pratap Singh, Aakash Dahiya, Prateek Pachori,



and Dev Dutt Budholiya, who play key characters in the film. Set against the backdrop of rural India, Phoolan follows the extraordinary journey of a 17-year-old girl from a poor family who rose to become one of the country’s most infamous outlaws. The film centres on a gripping 48-hour siege during which nearly 2,000 heavily armed men were deployed in an attempt to capture and kill her, bringing one of the most dra-

matic chapters of her life to the screen.

Recognised as one of the world’s most prestigious film festivals, the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) showcases acclaimed films and emerging voices from across the globe each year. At its 51st edition, Phoolan has earned a place in the coveted Special Presentations section, where it will be screened alongside several high-profile international titles.

Rahul Gandhi’s Five Demands to the Centre Following His Dharna and Detention

New Delhi, July 22: Tuesday saw extraordinary drama, dharnas, and detentions as the Opposition escalated its criticism of the government for cracking down on student demonstrators. The day concluded with the Leader of the Opposition presenting five requests to the Centre, setting the stage for further political conflict in Parliament on Wednesday. On Tuesday, Rahul Gandhi accused the government of exploiting children and sought the resignations of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Home Minister Amit Shah over the NEET paper leak incident. Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and several Congress leaders were detained by Delhi Police during a sit-in outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s residence at Lok Kalyan Marg and later released. Rahul Gandhi was taken to Chhatrasal Stadium while Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was taken to Mandir Marg police station. Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi visited Priyanka at the police station. Both siblings were released around 9 pm. While in detention, Rahul Gandhi

released a video statement listing five demands from the government: Resignations of Home Minister Amit Shah and Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. Action against police who assaulted students on Monday and withdrawal of cases against students. Apology from the Prime Minister for Monday’s crackdown. Discussion on the issue in Parliament. Education and exam reforms at the earliest. Questioning the state of the education system, LoP Rahul Gandhi asked: “Why is the Indian education system collapsing? Why are papers leaking? Why is education so expensive in India? Why do families have to destroy themselves financially to educate their children? These are legitimate questions, and there’s absolutely nothing wrong with asking them.” He added that the entire Opposition wanted the issue debated in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. Thanking supporters, he said: “To everyone fighting together for the cause of the students, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.” The confrontation highlights the deepening



rift between the government and the Opposition over paper leaks in competitive examinations, an issue affecting lakhs of students across the country. Earlier on Tuesday, as Rahul Gandhi led the Congress sit-in outside the Prime Minister’s residence, Minister of State in the PMO Jitendra Singh met Gandhi at the dharna site and spoke to him for about half an hour, listening to his demands. Singh later accused Gandhi of “backtracking” from his earlier demand for a debate, saying the Congress leader was now demanding Prad-

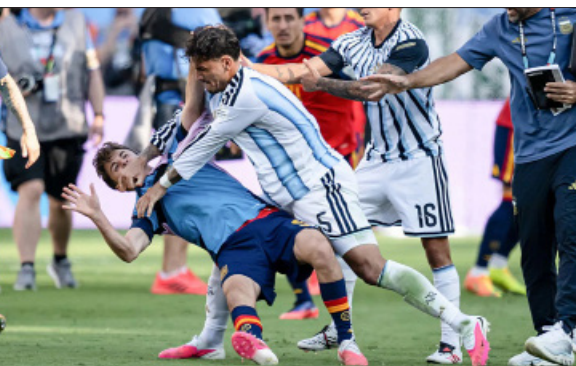
han’s resignation. “This does not befit a leader of Gandhi’s stature. A senior leader like Rahul Gandhi going back on his word is unfortunate and contrary to every norm of democracy,” he said. “The government is ready to discuss in Parliament all issues related to NEET and the associated movement. Rahul Gandhi’s behaviour does not align with the principles of democracy,” Singh added. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who is at the centre of the storm, also launched a scathing attack on Gandhi

on Tuesday night, accusing him and the Congress of “exploiting students”. “Even after the government expressed its willingness to engage in a comprehensive discussion, the Congress preferred political spectacle over democratic debate.” The education minister wrote on X that their goal was to disrupt political headlines rather than provide answers for kids. For Rahul Gandhi, it is not about the students. This is about creating conflict after every legitimate channel of conversation has been explored,” he continued.

Spain Star Gavi’s Surprise Message To FIFA About Argentina’s World Cup Final Fight

East Rutherford: Argentina players seemed to be the instigators of a violent altercation between them and Spanish players following the completion of the FIFA World Cup 2026 Final in New York. Argentina’s Leandro Paredes hit Spain’s Eric Garcia, grabbed his throat, and tossed him to the floor. While FIFA has yet to publish a statement declaring penalties for the Argentinian players involved in the post-match fight, Gavi does not want Paredes banned for his post-match actions. The severity of Paredes’ aggressive behavior might result in at least a three-match penalty. However, Gavi is prepared to look beyond what transpired on the field. No, really? I don’t think Leandro Paredes should be suspended. I recognize that it is not a healthy picture for children, but football does have a more physical, violent aspect. “The logical thing would have been to send him off during the match, and that’s it,” Gavi told El Partidazo de COPE after returning from the World Cup in North America.

“At the end of the day, it’s football, and I think it should always stay that way.” “No



creo que deba ser suspendido. Lo logico hubiese sido expulsarle en el partido” “No es una imagen para los ninios pero creo que hay esa parte de futbol que es un poco mas violenta” Ferran Torres struck in the 106th minute of extra time to seal a dramatic 1-0 victory for Spain over defending champions Argentina, securing La Roja’s second FIFA World Cup title and their first since 2010. A tempestuous clash reached boiling point late in normal time when Argentina were reduced to 10 men following Enzo Fernandez’s dismissal for a challenge on Pau Cubarsi. Lionel Scaloni’s side struggled to maintain discipline throughout, racking up six yellow cards across the match.

The hostility spilled over past the final whistle when

Leandro Paredes confronted Eric Garcia and Gavi. The dispute swiftly escalated into a chaotic brawl involving players, substitutes, and backroom staff before match officials and teammates managed to restore calm. On the ground, it was announced that Paredes was sent-off by the referee for his violent actions but the red card was later “deleted” by FIFA. According to a report, the red card was “incorrectly reported” on FIFA’s commentator information system, which initially showed that Paredes had been shown a red card by the referee Slavko Vincic for fighting with Spain’s Eric Garcia. “The mistake was corrected shortly afterwards,” FIFA confirmed to BBC Sport, suggesting that no disciplinary action was taken at the time.

Hashmatullah Shahidi Steps Down As Afghanistan’s ODI Captain



New Delhi: Hashmatullah Shahidi, a seasoned batsman, has stood down as Afghanistan’s ODI captain but will continue to play in the 50-over format. Shahidi, 31, took over as ODI captain at the start of 2022 and led Afghanistan to the 2023 ODI World Cup and the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy. He is also the captain of Afghanistan’s test team. The left-handed batter’s greatest innings as captain came

against India in the 2023 World Cup, when he scored 80 off 88 balls to assist Afghanistan reach 272. Nonetheless, Rohit Sharma’s team easily chased down the objective. “Today I announce with full respect and consent that I am resigning as captain of my team at my personal decision,” Shahidi posted on social media. Shahidi oversaw a memorable ODI campaign, guiding Afghanistan to wins over England, Paki-

stan, Sri Lanka and the Netherlands at the 2023 World Cup in India. Those results left them just short of a maiden semifinal berth, before he also captained the side at the Champions Trophy. “It was a great honour for me to perform this responsibility as a Captain. I am proud to have served alongside my team with honesty, unity and commitment,” he added. He has so far scored more than 2600 runs in 96 ODI with

one century. “By the grace of Allah, with the efforts of the officials, coaches and players, we have achieved many victories, won important matches, defeated big teams and made the name of the team higher.” Shahidi said he will continue to be available for ODI selection, with Afghanistan set to name a new captain before their five-match ODI series against Ireland next month. “All these achievements are not just mine, but also the result of the teamwork, sacrifices and coordination of the entire team. “I thank all the players of my team from the bottom of my heart who always supported me and stood shoulder to shoulder with me in every victory and every challenge,” he said. “I also thank the officials and the administration of the team who believed in me and always supported me. Your trust and cooperation will always be an honour for me,” he added.

“Centre Ready For Parliament Discussion, PM Called Paper Leak Ghor Paap”



New Delhi, July 22: As the Opposition intensified its assaults on the Centre over the NEET paper leak and the crackdown on student demonstrations, government officials denied the claims, claiming that the Centre has taken aggressive steps to address the NEET paper leak issue. According to sources, as soon as the document leak issue became public, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan accepted moral responsibility and launched a number of corrective procedures. According to government sources, the Opposition’s demand for Pradhan’s resignation is “politically motivated”. On Tuesday evening, the Leader of the Opposition presented the administration with five demands, the most pressing of which was Pradhan’s resignation. According to reports, a CBI investigation is now underway,

and more than 13 culprits have been detained as a result of the NEET paper leak. According to insiders, the administration is dedicated to conducting a fair investigation and punishing anyone who are found guilty. Referring to the Prime Minister’s remarks on the controversy, sources said the PM called it “ghor paap” (a grave sin). In his first remarks on NEET irregularities after massive protests in the heart of Delhi over the issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that strong action had been taken against those involved in the “grave sin” of paper leaks so that no one could play with the future of the youth. PM Modi said all state governments and the Centre must join hands on the issue as it is “not a matter of party politics but a matter of national interest”. He also

told NDA MPs that they should remain closely connected with the people with “warmth and affection” and that the “trust of the youth” needed to be won. The Prime Minister, sources said, conveyed clearly that there should be no injustice to students and suggested that it was easy to misguide them but difficult to show them the right path. Sources also maintained that the government is ready for a detailed discussion in Parliament on the NEET controversy, as demanded by the Opposition. Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday accused the government of exploiting students and demanded the resignations of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Home Minister Amit Shah over the NEET paper leak controversy. Gandhi, who was detained by Delhi Police during a dharna outside the Prime Minister’s residence on Tuesday, has also demanded a discussion in Parliament, action against policemen who assaulted students, and an apology from the Prime Minister over Monday’s crackdown. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who is at the centre of the storm, also launched a scathing attack on Gandhi on Tuesday night, accusing him and the Congress of “exploiting students”. “Even after the government conveyed its readiness for a comprehensive discussion, the Congress chose political spectacle over democratic debate. Their objective was never solutions for students, it was disruption for political headlines,” the education minister wrote on X.

Vijay’s TVK Demands Complete Scrapping Of The NEET Amid Raging Protests

Chennai, July 22: Tamil Nadu’s governing TVK has joined the opposition chorus in the wake of the NEET paper leaks and student protests. Thalapphy Vijay’s party increased the ante on Tuesday, stating that it was not only opposed to NEET anomalies, but also wanted the medical entrance examination eliminated entirely. It also urged that governments be granted complete control over medical education. Amid student demonstrations in Delhi against NEET, the Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam stated that the national-level admission test for medical students should be eliminated. The TVK, without identifying the major opposition DMK, stated that it would never engage in “fraudulent politics” of fooling people with votes by falsely promising to “scrap NEET ourselves.” The DMK had, in the run-up to the 2021 Assembly elections, promised to scrap NEET after coming to power. In a statement issued here, the TVK called for shifting education from the



Concurrent List to the State List of the Constitution as part of the solution to the issue. “If there are any legal or procedural hurdles in doing so, a Special Concurrent List should be created as an interim measure until they are resolved to grant powers to state governments.” It said this would ensure that states have full authority over education, including medical education. “This is our vision for both a permanent and an interim solution. Our victorious leader (Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay) has already emphasised this,” the party said. The party said

those indulging in the unethical politics of “putting their own label” on others’ hard work, ideas and struggles should immediately stop targeting the TVK. The TVK’s statement comes against the backdrop of criticism by Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin over the government’s handling of rap singer ‘Therukkural’ Arivu, who has taken a strong stand against NEET. Before being whisked away by the police, Arivu briefly raised anti-NEET slogans outside the Tamil Nadu Secretariat in the Fort St George campus here.

Ravi Shastri describes Rohit Sharma’s Lord’s 138 as a “tight slap”

New Delhi: The Lord’s One-Day International between India and England was expected to be Rohit Sharma’s final game in the Indian jersey, but the veteran opener’s brave century in the match has put an end to the speculation over his retirement. Rohit was in the grandstand on Tuesday as MI London and Sunrisers Leeds faced off at the Kia Oval in the first match of The Hundred 2026 tournament. When Ravi Shastri, India’s former coach and match commentator, saw Rohit watching the action at the Kia Oval, he couldn’t help but comment on the discussion about his future. Shastri expressed his opinion on Rohit Sharma’s future, stating that his century at Lord’s was a “tight slap with the bat”. Well, Ravi, the hitman has arrived. Yes, he’ll be pleasant and calm after quieting his detractors.

Nihal Sarin defeats Arjun Erigaisi at the Chennai Grand Masters, while D Gukesh suffers his second loss



Chennai: On Tuesday, GM M Pranesh upset world champion D Gukesh for the second time in a row, while GM Nihal Sarin beat compatriot Arjun Erigaisi in the last round of the Chennai Grand Masters. Erigaisi’s defeat means that French GM Alireza Firouzja, who drew his Round 6 game against GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov, now has the sole lead with four points. Erigaisi and Abdusattorov share second position with 3.5 points. Organised by MGD1, the tournament witnesses eight grandmasters face off in a round-robin format and offers a prize purse of ₹75,00,000 and valuable FIDE Circuit points. After Narendra Ku-

mar, Managing Trustee of Chola Foundation and WGM Aarthie Ramaswamy made the first ceremonial move, it looked like Gukesh could finally score a win. But the world champion erred more than once with his calculations and Pranesh made the most of these opportunities to register his first win of the competition in 39 moves. Erigaisi needed just a draw against Nihal to stay in joint lead with Firouzja and for the most part of their game that result looked a distinct possibility. But a brilliant rook sacrifice by Nihal turned the game decisively in his favour and Erigaisi resigned after 60 moves.

Devika Sihag and HS Prannoy Lose On Day 1 of China Masters

China: Devika Sihag fought valiantly before losing in three games, while HS Prannoy suffered a straight-game setback as India had a poor start to the USD 2,000,000 China Masters on Tuesday. Devika, the Thailand Open Super 300 winner, rebounded after losing the first game but couldn’t keep it going, losing 19-21, 21-19, 13-21 against World No. 20 Thailand’s Busanan Ongbamrungphan in the women’s singles opening round. Prannoy, who won bronze at the 2023 World Championships, was also eliminated in the men’s first round by Malaysia’s Leong Jun Hao, 10-21, 14-21. PV Sindhu, the newly crowned Japan Open champion, will open her campaign against compatriot Unnati Hooda on Wednesday.

HS Prannoy and Devika Sihag both suffer first-round exits at China Open 2026

Changzhou : Indian shuttlers endured a disappointing start to the China Open 2026 badminton tournament as both HS Prannoy and Devika Sihag suffered first-round exits in Changzhou, China, on Tuesday. At the Olympic Sports Centre Gymnasium, world No. 36 HS Prannoy went down 21-10, 21-14 to Malaysia's world No. 27 Leong Jun Hao in the men's singles opening round, as per Olympics. Prannoy's first-round exit further extended a difficult 2026 campaign, with the Asian Games medalist yet to advance beyond the second round in any of the eight tournaments he has featured in this season. Unable to find his rhythm from the start, the 34-year-old Indian was put under pressure early by Leong Jun Hao, trailing 11-2 at the interval before surrendering the opening game with little resistance. The Indian



shuttler showed more fight in the second game, staying within touching distance at 11-8 at the interval. However, Leong Jun Hao pulled away after the break, with Prannoy managing only six more points as the Malaysian wrapped up the contest in 32 minutes. The victory marked Leong Jun Hao's second win in four meetings against HS Prannoy. Devika Sihag, the only other Indian shuttler in action on the opening day of the BWF Super 1000 tournament, also suffered a first-

round exit after losing 21-19, 19-21, 21-13 to Thailand's Olympian Busanan Ongbamrungphan in the women's singles event. The 21-year-old put up a spirited fight in the opening game but narrowly missed out. She bounced back strongly in the second game to level the contest and force a decider, before Busanan regained control to seal the match. However, Busanan Ongbamrungphan raised her level in the decider, racing to an 11-2 lead and maintaining her momen-

tum to close out the match in one hour and one minute. Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu and Paris 2024 semi-finalist Lakshya Sen will begin their China Open campaigns on Wednesday. Sindhu, the 2016 China Open champion, enters the tournament on the back of a title-winning performance at the Japan Open last week. She will face compatriot Unnati Hooda in the opening round. Sindhu rediscovered her vintage best to capture her maiden Japan Open title, defeating home favourite and world No. 3 Akane Yamaguchi 21-17, 21-17 in the women's singles final of the BWF Super 750 tournament on Sunday. Vice President CP Radhakrishnan hailed Sindhu's Japan Open triumph as a landmark achievement for India, praising her pursuit of excellence and saying her success will inspire future generations of athletes.

Eight Punjab players selected in India's squad for FIH Hockey World Cup

Jalandhar: Eight players from Punjab have earned places in the Indian men's hockey team for the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, to be held in the Netherlands and Belgium from August 15 to 30. The Punjab players have captain Harmanpreet Singh, former captain Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, Germanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Sukhjeet Singh, Dilpreet Singh and Mandeep Singh. Among them, Manpreet, Hardik, Mandeep and Sukhjeet hail from Jalandhar, while others have strong ties to the city, having honed their skills at Surjit Hockey Stadium. Manpreet, who recently became India's most-capped hockey player, is the most experienced member. The former captain continues to be one of the pillars of the national team. Sukhjeet Singh's journey is equally inspiring. After battling partial paralysis a few years ago, he fought his way back to represent India at the Paris Olympics, where the team won the bronze medal. On that achievement, Sukhjeet had earlier told The Tribune, "The day we won the bronze medal, I was up all night, looking back at my life's journey. Life had never been easy; I had struggled with my health... I had



come a long way." Congratulating the selected players, Hockey Punjab president Nitin Kohli and general secretary Amrik Singh Powar expressed confidence in India's chances at the World Cup. They said Punjab was proud that Harmanpreet Singh would once again captain the national side, while Manpreet Singh's vast experience would be invaluable to the team. "The team is an ideal blend of experienced senior players and talented young players. We are confident India has the potential to win the World Cup," they

said. The victory lifted India to seventh in the standings and came in the first meeting between the two sides since the 2024 Asian Champions Trophy in China, where the Harmanpreet Singh-led side had prevailed 2-1. Ahmad Nadeem gave Pakistan the lead in the eighth minute through a penalty corner before Abhishek (22nd) struck from a field effort to draw parity. Nilakanta Sharma then gave India the lead converting a penalty corner in the 24th minute as the Harmanpreet Singh-led side went into the breather with a 2-1 lead.

Vishal TK targets strong Commonwealth Games debut as Indian sprinting rises



Mumbai: Indian quarter-miler Vishal Thennarasu Kayalvizhi (Vishal TK) heads into the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow on the back of a historic season that has firmly established him as one of the country's premier sprint talents. The 22-year-old created history earlier this year by becoming the first Indian man to break the 45-second barrier in the 400m, clocking 44.98 seconds to set the current Indian National Record in the event, according to a press release. Glasgow will stage the 2026 Commonwealth Games from July 23 to August 2, marking the return of

the multi-sport event to the Scottish city. A four-time National Champion, Vishal has rapidly emerged as one of Asia's leading quarter-milers and now heads into his maiden Commonwealth Games carrying the confidence of a breakthrough campaign. His remarkable rise has also been underlined by success on the continental stage. Vishal played a pivotal role in India's relay teams at the Asian Athletics Championships, winning gold in the mixed 4x400m relay and silver in the men's 4x400m relay. Ranked among the top 60 men's 400m runners in the world, the 22-year-old is

now one of India's leading hopes in the sprint events as the country looks to continue its resurgence in one-lap running. As he prepares to don the Indian colours at one of the biggest multi-sport events in the world, Vishal says his focus remains firmly on delivering his best performance when it matters most. "I'm entering the Commonwealth Games with a winning mindset. Months of hard work, honesty, discipline, consistency and self-belief have brought me to this stage, and I trust the process and my coach Jason Dawson completely. My focus is on performing at my

highest level and making every second count on the track. I don't set limits on what I can achieve. I believe in pushing my boundaries every time I compete. Representing India is the biggest motivation, and I'll give everything I have to make the nation proud," said Vishal. Vishal credits the support system around him for helping him prepare for the demands of elite international competition, highlighting the role of the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) in his journey. "Success is never an individual effort, and I'm fortunate to have an incredible team supporting me. The Inspire Institute of Sport has provided everything an athlete needs—from world-class coaching and sports science to nutrition, recovery and mental conditioning. Their belief in me has given me the confidence to keep improving every day. Having such a strong support system allows me to focus entirely on giving my best performance," he said. The rise of Indian men's 400m running has been one of the country's biggest success stories in athletics in recent years, with Indian athletes consistently competing with the world's best.

Bangladesh remains hopeful for India tour despite Mustafizur Rahman IPL saga

New Delhi: Bangladesh is hoping to use sports diplomacy to repair strained cricketing ties with India as it pushes ahead with plans to host the neighbouring country for a white-ball series in September. Relations between the two boards deteriorated earlier this year after Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman was withdrawn from Kolkata Knight Riders' squad ahead of the Indian Premier League following directions from the BCCI. The controversy snowballed into a wider diplomatic issue, eventually leading to Bangladesh's withdrawal from the T20 World Cup, with the board citing security concerns. The fallout also affected India's scheduled tour of Bangladesh. Originally slated for August 2025, the six-match series was deferred to September 2026 amid tensions between the two countries. According to the revised itinerary released by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), India are expected to arrive on August 28, with the three ODIs scheduled for September 1, 3 and 6, followed by three T20 Internationals on September 9, 12 and 13. Bangladesh's State Minister for Youth and Sports, Aminul



Haque, said the government was placing significant emphasis on sports diplomacy to restore normalcy. "We have already spoken to the Indian Embassy, they have also spoken to us and they are all waiting for India to come to Bangladesh in September," Aminul told Cricbuzz, expressing confidence that the tensions between the two nations would ease. Despite the uncertainty surrounding the tour, the BCB has continued preparations. Earlier this month, it floated a tender for television and digital media rights covering its home international fixtures in 2026 and 2027, including India's

visit, signalling optimism that the series will proceed as planned. BCB media committee chairman Asif Rabbani recently reiterated the board's confidence in hosting one of world cricket's biggest teams. Bangladesh have also shown their commitment by postponing a scheduled tour of Ireland to keep the September window free for India. The board has further indicated that it is ready to strengthen security arrangements if necessary. For Bangladesh, successfully staging India's tour would represent far more than just another bilateral series—it would be a powerful demonstration of cricket's

ability to mend fractured ties. Bangladesh aims to use sports diplomacy to mend strained cricket relations with India by hosting a white-ball series in September 2026. Tensions arose after India's BCCI withdrew Bangladeshi pacer Mustafizur Rahman from the IPL, leading to Bangladesh's withdrawal from the T20 World Cup and postponement of India's Bangladesh tour from 2025 to 2026. Despite uncertainties, Bangladesh is preparing for the series, including media rights tendering, postponing other tours, and enhancing security, viewing the series as key to repairing bilateral cricket ties.

Anjum Chopra says India lack depth across departments, not just bad captaincy

New Delhi: Former skipper Anjum Chopra doesn't think that removing Harmanpreet Kaur from captaincy is a solution as the Indian women's team do not have quality back-up options in any of the departments. While another legendary former skipper Mithali Raj has urged the selectors to look at the bigger picture and groom young captain like Shafali Verma for WT20Is, Chopra doesn't find it a feasible course correction. "Why are we even talking about a change (in captaincy)? You can make anybody the captain. That doesn't mean that the rest of the 10 players will start performing differently. And if that has to happen, then I think we're in a very bad zone or a wrong place," Chopra told PTI in an interview. "I'm not saying that nobody can become a captain. It's not a permanent position for anyone. And if change of captaincy is the solution, then I think in every series, we should keep changing captains if



that is the way that we are going to get results," the stylish southpaw of yesteryears said. The 49-year-old all-rounder believes that there aren't many strong options beyond the current core whether it is top order, middle-order, pace or spin. "We're obviously lacking in

the pace department. We are lacking options in the spin department. Presently, there is Sneh Rana, there is Deepti Sharma and there is Shree Charani. On the fringes is Radha Yadav. "We are also lacking (in quality) in the middle order. We are lacking in batting options in the

top order. So there are a lot of areas that we are a very much a work-in-progress team," she observed. Chopra also questioned the preparation of the team and the lack of faith in reserve players beyond the core 12. "Let's just go back to the 2025 ODI World Cup. We didn't have

a 13th player in this Indian team. We had to get Shafali Verma, who was playing domestic cricket in Surat, and she had to come in and walk straight into the playing 11. "So we didn't even have a 13th player on this team who could step in and replace an injured Pratika Rawal. We had to get a player from outside," she made some harsh observations. She stressed the need for more options in the team to achieve optimal results. "Yes, we have good players, but we are looking at players, if you're wanting to win World Cups or you're wanting to win championships, we have to have options. One player gets injured, we are looking for options and we have to wait for somebody to come from outside. So let's start strengthening the bases first." She cited Australia as an example of a team with many options for every position. "Australia, I always feel that they have more than one player in that line-up.

La Liga chief Javier Tebas urges FIFA President Gianni Infantino to resign

Madrid: La Liga President Javier Tebas said FIFA chief Gianni Infantino should step down from his position, arguing that his tenure has run its course. Tebas expressed little confidence that a change in leadership would happen, claiming FIFA's current system discourages challengers. He also stressed that while many privately disagree with Infantino's leadership and decisions, they are unwilling to publicly oppose him or mount a serious challenge. "In my opinion, yes, I think his time is up. He shouldn't stay, but the current state of affairs means he won't leave," Tebas said as per Reuters. "There's no opposition candidate; no one wants to run to lose. This is the system, and it's a system that's flawed from the ground up. I've heard a lot of people against Infantino, who don't agree with what he's doing. They say it, but then they don't do anything," he added. Tebas also criticised FIFA's decision to reverse the one-match suspension of United States striker Folarin Balogun after his red card at



the World Cup, calling it an "extremely serious matter." He claimed FIFA was fortunate that Belgium eliminated the US, arguing that the controversy could otherwise have escalated into a major issue with consequences for FIFA president Gianni Infantino. Tebas described the incident as just "the tip of the iceberg" regarding broader concerns over FIFA's governance. "The suspension of the American player's ban is an extremely serious matter. They were lucky that Belgium eliminated the U.S., because otherwise a case could have arisen that might have cost Infantino his job. Since Belgium won,

they managed to bury the matter. But these things are just the tip of the iceberg." Balogun's tournament ended amid controversy after FIFA suspended the one-match ban he had received following his red card in the United States' 2-0 Round of 32 victory over Bosnia and Herzegovina, allowing him to feature against Belgium. The decision prompted a challenge from Belgium, but FIFA dismissed the protest and upheld Balogun's eligibility for the Round of 16 encounter. However, Belgium ended the United States' campaign, making them the last of the tournament's three co-hosts to be eliminated after Canada and Mexico.