

Nagaland forms SIT to probe alleged multiple salary drawals

High-level panel investigates suspected double payouts and pension fraud across fifty state departments

Kohima, Sept 4: The Nagaland Home Department has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe over 1,000 government personnel suspected of fraudulently drawing double salaries or pensions from state treasuries.

Disclosing the development during the ongoing session of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Yanthungo Patton stated that the SIT, headed by the Inspector General of Police (Intelligence), was formed after internal tracking flagged widespread irregularities. Patton clarified that the suspected fraudulent drawals are



not limited to the Nagaland Police, but extend across approximately 50 administrative departments. He emphasized that while preliminary data flags more than 1,000

potential cases, the precise scale of the scam and exact financial losses will be established once the SIT completes its field audit and forensic investigation.

The disclosure followed a starred question raised by opposition lawmakers regarding police salary disbursements and verification mechanisms. Department officials noted that following the implementation of the e-Pay system, the Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) serves as the primary verification filter for salary releases. However, legislators described the systemic gaps as alarming and demanded strict disciplinary measures, including immediate termination of service, recovery of embezzled public funds, and criminal prosecution against those found guilty to deter future administrative malpractice.

Minister Kento Jini visits Hime and Germe villages

Itanagar, Sept 4: In a major effort to address grassroots administrative concerns and promote regional stability, Arunachal Pradesh Minister for Law, Legislative and Justice, Social Justice, Empowerment & Tribal Affairs, and Sports & Youth Affairs, Kento Jini, conducted an extensive field visit to Hime and Germe villages in West Siang district.

During his visit, the Minister interacted with village elders, Gaon Burahs (GBs), panchayat leaders, and local residents to review ongoing infrastructure projects, civic amenities, and community welfare initiatives. The visit focused on assessing long-standing land boundary disputes, socio-economic developmental needs, and basic public infrastructure



across the rural habitations. Addressing public gatherings in the villages, Minister Jini reassured community members that the state government is fully committed to safeguarding traditional tribal rights while ensuring a peaceful, amicable, and lasting resolution to local

administrative and territorial disputes. Highlighting the state administration's development roadmap, Jini emphasized that sustainable growth in rural Arunachal Pradesh depends on communal harmony and mutual cooperation among neighbouring communities.

Nagaland Assembly passes historic FNTA Bill

Kohima, Sept 4: The Nagaland Legislative Assembly has unanimously passed the historic Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority (FNTA) Bill, 2026, granting legislative, executive, and financial autonomy to six eastern districts.

Moved by Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton and supported across party lines, the legislation establishes the FNTA to govern Tuensang, Mon, Longleng, Kiphire, Noklak, and Shamator districts. The bill implements the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed among the Centre, the Nagaland government, and the Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO) to resolve decades of developmental deficits and regional imbalance.

The structure of the newly constituted FNTA features a 62-member assembly—comprising 40 directly elected representatives, 20 ex-officio MLAs, and two Governor-nominated members—with a mandatory one-third reservation for women. Executive powers will vest in a nine-member Executive Council headed by a Chief Executive Member (CEM) holding Cabinet rank. Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio highlighted that the state has requested an enhanced ₹10,000 crore special developmental package from the Central government to accelerate road, healthcare, and educational infrastructure across the eastern region. To ensure constitutional balance, the act explicitly protects Article 371A safeguards.

Mechukha to host ARWS World Qualifier 2026

Itanagar, Sept 4: Mechukha, a scenic hamlet in Arunachal Pradesh's Shi Yomi district situated 6,000 feet above sea level, is preparing to host the Adventure Racing World Series (ARWS) Qualifier 2026. The event, titled "Adventure@Mechukha," serves as Asia's sole qualifying race for the 2027 Adventure Racing World Championship in Croatia and will feature 30 elite international teams competing across the Eastern Himalayas.

Organized jointly by Arunachal Tourism and NthAdventure, the 450-kilometer, 5-day non-stop expedition race will span Shi Yomi, Siang, and West Siang districts.



Teams of four will navigate harsh Himalayan terrain using maps and compasses across disciplines including trail running, mountain biking, kayaking, ropework, and orienteering. The course includes high-altitude passes, fast-flowing rivers like the Siyom, and

traditional hanging bridge crossings. Welcoming the international sports community, Arunachal Pradesh Tourism Minister Pasang Dorjee Sona highlighted that hosting the ARWS qualifier marks a pivotal moment for regional adventure tourism.

Assam-Nagaland border situation under control, says Dy CM Y Patton

Kohima, Sept 4: Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton informed the Legislative Assembly that the situation along the Nagaland-Assam border in the Disputed Area Belt (DAB) remains fully under control following recent minor confrontations in the Mekirang-Neghrebil sector.

Responding to concerns raised on the floor of the House by lawmaker Achumbemo Kikon, Patton detailed the events of August 25 and 26, where local transit disputes over agricultural saplings led to brief skirmishes near a border barricade. The Deputy Chief Minister stated that border magistrates



and senior police officials from both states intervened promptly to de-escalate tensions, verify cargo movement, and facilitate safe transit for local residents.

To ensure long-term stability and prevent recurrent flare-ups along the border,

the deputy commissioners of Wokha (Nagaland) and Golaghat (Assam) held a joint coordination meeting at Merapani. Both administrations officially resolved to activate the Border Level Peace Committee, reinforcing mutual communication and establish-

ing joint protocols for any future administrative or eviction drives in the disputed sector. Patton assured the Assembly that the state government is closely monitoring developments and maintaining constant dialogue with Assam authorities to safeguard the rights and security of border communities. Elaborating on the legal background of the region, Deputy Chief Minister Patton noted that a joint eviction drive conducted in August 2025 across Sector D of the Doyang Reserve Forest had targeted 205 illegal households. While 146 structures were cleared, the Gauhati High Court stayed action on the remaining 59 families.

Arunachal Assembly special session begins Sep 8



Itanagar, Sept 4: The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) of the eighth Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly has finalized the legislative agenda for the upcoming seventh (Special) Session of the House, scheduled to convene from September 8 to 9.

The BAC sitting was held at the Assembly Secretariat under the chairmanship of Speaker Tesam Pongte to review proposed government business and establish a structured timeline for floor deliberations. Attendees included Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Pasang Dorjee Sona, Deputy Speaker Kardo Nyigyor, and MLA Kumar Waii, who examined legislative proposals aimed at ensuring smooth, orderly, and productive proceedings during the two-day session.

The special sitting has been convened primarily to address key government legislative business and facilitate administrative proceedings. Speaker Pongte emphasized that the committee focused on maintaining parliamentary decorum and providing adequate time for members to deliberate on scheduled bills and official business during the two-day assembly meeting.

AAPSU member injured in Bordumsa electoral roll clashes

Itanagar, Sept 4: Violence erupted in Bordumsa under Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang district on Friday during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, leaving an activist from the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) injured.

The injured member, identified as Khoda Lazer, was reportedly assaulted during a confrontation linked to the hearing on claims and objections for the 49/33-Bijoypur polling station. Visuals from the location showed Lazer receiving emergency medical attention for head injuries at a local healthcare facility. The incident occurred after proceedings at the Panchayat Hall were disrupted by clashes between objectors and supporters, forcing the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) to adjourn the hearings and re-



schedule them at the Assistant Commissioner's office under heightened security. Condemning the attack, AAPSU issued a stern warning against any intimidation or physical harm directed at its members overseeing the electoral revision du-

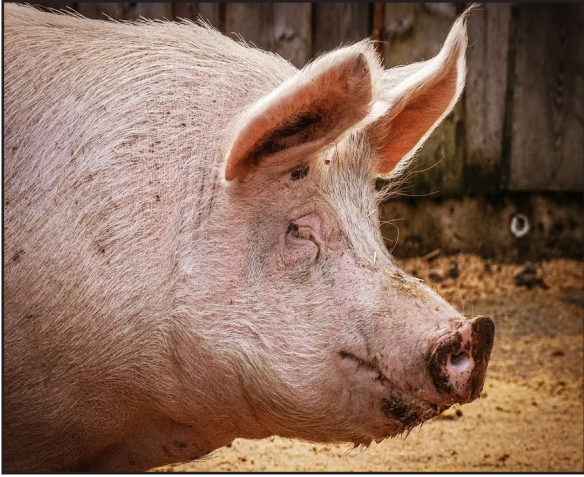
ties. The student body emphasized that it would not remain a passive spectator and demanded immediate identification and arrest of the perpetrators. AAPSU reiterated its stand on rigorous verification of voters to eliminate suspected fake entries from the electoral roll. Following the violent outbreak, security forces were deployed across Bordumsa and adjacent areas in Changlang district to enforce law and order. Meanwhile, local community organizations and student leaders have appealed to all groups to maintain peace and permit the statutory administrative procedures to conclude without further obstruction. AAPSU President Meje Taku reiterated that student volunteers were performing a vital public service to safeguard the demographic rights of indigenous communities.

Pig farm owners given 3-month deadline over carcass dumping

Dimapur colony councils and veterinary officials mandate incinerators following repeated waste disposal in Lingri River

Dimpaur, Sept 4: Local colony councils in the Burma Camp area of Dimapur, in coordination with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, have issued a strict three-month deadline to piggery owners to install incinerators or dedicated carcass disposal machines following severe environmental and public health concerns.

The directive was finalized during a joint meeting involving the Niu Colony Council, Rainbow Colony Council, United North Block-B, the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), and local piggery traders. The intervention follows repeated instances of dead pigs and offal being illegally dumped into the Lingri River, causing severe water contamination, public nuisance, and



foul odours across surrounding residential localities. During the proceedings, farm owners and wholesalers admitted to the improper waste disposal, expressed regret, and committed to immediate remedial measures. Under the agreed

resolution, farm operators have been given one week to erect robust iron barricades around their designated units to prevent waste from entering the river system. Furthermore, the three-month ultimatum mandates the installation of proper

incineration facilities to ensure hygienic disposal. Community leaders warned that strict legal and administrative actions, including operational bans, will be enforced against defaulting units failing to comply with local sanitation standards. Community leaders and veterinary officials emphasized that the indiscriminate dumping of animal remains poses heightened ecological risks due to recent African swine fever (ASF) alerts across Dimapur district. Unregulated disposal of infected carcasses into shared waterways like the Lingri River increases the probability of viral transmission among livestock populations while contaminating domestic water sources used by downstream communities along the Assam-Nagaland border.

Rio assures Article 371A untouched under FNTA framework

Kohima, Sept 4: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has sought to allay public concerns regarding the newly established Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority (FNTA), reassuring citizens that the special administrative arrangement does not represent a division of the state and that Article 371A will remain completely untouched.

Addressing the Angami Public Organisation (APO) general conference at the Kohima Village multi-purpose

building, the Chief Minister urged community members to support initiatives aimed at the holistic development of Nagaland. Referring to the FNTA Bill, 2026, passed unanimously by the Nagaland Legislative Assembly on September 3, Rio clarified that the institutional setup is designed strictly to accelerate economic growth and bridge long-standing infrastructural deficits across the state's six eastern districts—Tuensang, Mon, Longleng, Kiphire, Noklak, and Shamator.

Reiterating the constitutional safeguards granted to Nagaland, Rio stated that Article 371A—which protects Naga customary laws, social practices, and land ownership—remains fully intact and inviolable under the FNTA framework. He noted that the arrangement functions within the administrative fold of Nagaland rather than creating a separate state entity. To ensure robust financial backing for the autonomous body, the state government has sought a special developmental



grant of ₹10,000 crore from the Centre to elevate the eastern region's growth on par with the rest of Nagaland. Calling for unity among Nagas, the Chief Minister cautioned against political and social fragmentation, urging tribal bodies and community institutions to cooperate in implementing developmental roadmaps and administrative reforms efficiently. The Chief Minister further clarified that the structural formulation of the FNTA was drafted following extensive

consultations between the Ministry of Home Affairs, state government representatives, and leadership from the Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO). Under the agreed legislative framework, the territorial authority will exercise administrative oversight over 49 specific subjects—including primary education, rural development, public works, and healthcare—while remaining fiscally and constitutionally bound to the state government of Nagaland.

36,000 IDPs resettled, 24,000 in various relief camps: Mnp CM

Imphal, Sep 04: Manipur Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh on Thursday informed the Assembly that 36,000 out of around 60,000 IDPs have been resettled.

Replying to a discussion moved by Congress MLA Th Lokeshwar Singh, the chief minister said around 24,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were still living in relief camps across the state.

He attributed the progress in resettlement to the collective support and efforts of MLAs.

Singh said IDPs from both the hills and the valley had the same desire to return to their homes.

Expressing concern over the issue, Singh said he had last month called rep-



resentatives of six to seven joint associations of IDPs for discussions on ways to provide assistance and facilitate their resettlement.

Despite the resettlement of 36,000 IDPs, the government was still providing financial assistance to around 59,000 of the total 60,000 displaced people, he said.

Singh said even those who had returned home continued to face difficulties

due to a lack of livelihood and earning opportunities, and therefore the government was continuing to provide monthly financial assistance to them. The chief minister said financial assistance alone could not address the impact of a conflict that had continued for three years and that the prolonged crisis had also caused mental trauma among affected people. The health department

was taking steps to help reduce the trauma faced by them, he said.

Singh said he was also discussing the matter with the Planning Department to explore further measures and initiatives for the rehabilitation and livelihood support of affected people.

He said the government welcomed suggestions from all quarters and stressed that the issue should be viewed without any political considerations.

The ethnic conflict that erupted in May 2023 between the valley-based Meitei and the hill-based Kuki communities has so far claimed at least 306 lives, with 49 people still missing and thousands rendered homeless

Assam is set to establish an ‘Anti Narcotics Task Force’, according to Himanta

Guwahati, Sep 04: A new unit, ‘Anti Narcotics Task Force’, will be raised within Assam Police to deal with the drug menace, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Thursday.

Addressing a press meet after the conclusion of the two-day SSP conference here, he also said that Assam aims to achieve a conviction rate of 35 per cent within this year in chargesheet cases, up from the current 29.3 per cent.

“We will have a new unit called Anti Narcotics Task Force to deal with the drug menace. The Centre had also suggested it,” Sarma said. There will be several verticals within this force, like legal and financial, and it will look into matters such as ensuring that accused persons do not get bail easily and breaking down the financial network of drug cartels, he added.

“This force will work on strongly implementing the NDPS Act. We hope to raise this unit within Assam Police in the next one month,” Sarma said.

The CM also said that the conviction rate of FIRs in which chargesheets are filed has gone up to 29.3 per cent at present from around seven per cent in 2020.

“We are now targeting to achieve a 35 per cent conviction rate within this year. Currently, we are able to submit chargesheets in 80 per cent of registered cases within the stipulated time,” he added. The CM said that the two-day conference had a detailed discussion on the drugs issue and deliberated on the transit route of narcotics products. “The SSPs said that we have to work in coordination with Mizoram, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh to block this transit route. Otherwise, it will be difficult to stop the transportation of drugs,” he added. Sarma said that the SSP conference decided that two new battalions will be raised within Assam Police in the coming days. “The promotion in Assam Police was due for some time, and we have decided to go ahead with it now. This will create more posts for hiring. We will



recruit 5,000 people in Assam Police next year,” he added.

In the last five years, 21,000 youths were recruited in Assam Police and are looking to hire 15,000-20,000 people in the current term of the government, Sarma said. Talking about the conference, he said that maintenance of law and order was given top priority and that it should not be compromised at any cost.

3 surrendered militant groups

Agartala, Sep 04: Three surrendered militant groups in Tripura threatened to launch a 72-hour rail and road blockade from Friday, demanding immediate implementation of commitments made in a tripartite peace agreement signed in 2024. The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), NLFT (Parimal Debbarma group) and All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) had signed a tripartite agreement with the Centre and the state government on September 4, 2024, aimed at establishing lasting peace in the northeastern state.

“We have been demanding implementation of the promises for proper rehabilitation of all the cadres as per the peace accord. Unfortunately, our demands have not been implemented two years after the signing of the agreement,” Joint Movement Committee (JMC) convener Prasenjit Debbarma said at a press conference on Thursday.

The three surrendered militant organisations, under the banner of the JMC, had blocked national highway and railway connectivity in June, demanding implementation of the commitments made in the accord. The blockade was lifted following an assurance from the government that their demands would be fulfilled. Debbarma said the JMC had no option but to launch the agitation over rehabilitation as the returnees were facing livelihood difficulties.

“Our cadres will gather at three locations



in the state to stall connectivity — both road and railway — on Friday for the rehabilitation of each surrendered militant. We appeal to the government not to harass our cadres during the peaceful movement,” he said. Debbarma said the JMC could extend the 72-hour blockade indefinitely if the government did not provide a written assurance.

NLFT president Parimal Debbarma said that of the more than 1,200 cadres who had surrendered, only 91 had received rehabilitation packages under the agreement over the past two years, leaving the remaining cadres facing serious livelihood problems.

He also said the organisations had reservations about certain guidelines for implementing a Rs 250-crore rehabilitation project funded by the North Eastern Council (NEC) for surrendered militants.

Shillong violence High Court inquires only four leaders of the KSU have been detained

Shillong, Sep 04: The Meghalaya High Court has sought a detailed report on the police response to the August 19 Shillong violence during a black flag bike rally organised by the Khasi Students’ Union (KSU), and questioned why only four KSU leaders have been arrested despite allegations of widespread vandalism.

A bench of Chief Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice Wanlura Diengdoh while hearing a PIL, observing that the rally ought not to have been allowed to proceed after clear breaches of permission conditions.

It also noted that participants were wearing masks and covering their faces despite an undertaking by the organisers that they would not, were carrying sticks/lathis in violation of clause 8, and had covered vehicle number plates.

“We find that, if at the outset before the rally proceeded, if the same was stopped by the police for breach of these conditions on which the permission was granted, the incident would not have snowballed into



what took place thereafter i.e., destruction of vehicles/property and assault on people,” the court said. Advocate General Amit Kumar informed the court that 22 FIRs have been registered — four at Sadar, nine at Rynjah, seven at Mawlai, one each at Laitumkhrah and Lumdingjri.

Four office bearers of KSU have been arrested, two vehicles seized, call detail records of eight suspected numbers and CCTV footage from 27 locations collected and are being analysed.

The court also perused case dia-

ries relating to damage to two High Court vehicles and attack on a PSO and driver. “We also find it strange that when there were hundreds of miscreants involved in the procession, the police have been able to identify only four out of the hundreds who participated in the rally. We expect the police to identify the miscreants at the earliest and take the investigation to its logical end, so that the miscreants who assaulted/caused damage to property are not spared,” it said.

Further, the court directed the Spe-

Meghalaya High Court questioned state police regarding why only four Khasi Students’ Union leaders were arrested following widespread violence during an August 19 motorcycle rally. The division bench observed that police should have halted the procession initially due to clear breaches of permission conditions.

cial Investigation Team (SIT) constituted under IGP DNR Marak to take prompt steps to identify miscreants who paralysed the city, vandalised statues and assaulted public.

It also sought to know whether videography of the rally was done, whether police intervened to stop the assaults, and whether directions of the 2018 Supreme Court judgment to curb mob lynching and hate crimes were followed. The court has asked the Marak, East Khasi Hills Superintendent of Police and officers in charge of Sadar and Lumdingjri police stations to remain present at the next hearing on September 7, along with a fresh status.

Arunachal Assembly finalises agenda

Itanagar, Sep 04: The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly finalised the agenda for the two-day special session to be held on September 8-9 during its meeting held here on Thursday, an official statement said.

The meeting was conducted under the chairmanship of Assembly Speaker Tesam Pongte to review proposed government business and legislative matters, ensuring the smooth and orderly conduct of proceedings during the two-day session scheduled from September 8 to 9.

According to the statement issued by the Speaker’s PR Cell, the meeting was attended by Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Pasang Dorjee Sona and others.

Assam Journalists Demand Welfare Reforms from Himanta Biswa Sarma

Itanagar, Sep 04: The Assam Union of Working Journalists is demanding that Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma adopt welfare measures modeled after West Bengal. Union leaders Madhusudhan Medhi and Anjan Kumar Sarma issued a statement pressing the government to match perks currently offered across the border. West Bengal recently bumped retired journalists’ pensions to Rs 5,000 monthly, added health insurance, and issued a Rs 3,000 Durga Puja grant.

Assam has operated a pension scheme since 2017, but the union says it is not enough. They want higher payments and a broader base of beneficiaries. Medical costs are hitting workers hard. The union slammed the current Journalist Medical Welfare Scheme managed by the

Directorate of Information and Public Relations, or DIPR, as ineffective. Reimbursements are sparse and the review committee rarely meets. Accreditation remains a mess. Many journalists still lack DIPR identity cards despite waiting for months. “The union said it had raised the issue with Chief Minister Sarma on July 4.” Even after the Principal Secretary ordered the DIPR Director to move, nothing changed for two months. Now the union wants the DIPR Commissioner and Director to intervene immediately. They also demand that all stagnant welfare committees be dissolved and reconstituted. The group expects the government to announce the next pension phase by January 1. They insist that the state must finally address these social security gaps for media workers.

Gauripur School Faces Investigation Over Secret Student Registrations

Shillong, Sep 04: Public discontent is currently directed at Bidya Mandir School in Gauripur. The institution, located in the Dhubri district, faces allegations of significant academic and administrative misconduct. The controversy began when the school instructed 62 students from Class IX and Class X to cease wearing their uniforms. Local residents are concerned that this action aims to alienate these particular students. The total enrollment at the school exceeds 800 children. The ongoing dispute involves 33 students from Class IX and 29 from Class X. Community members assert that the school has clandestinely enrolled these senior students in external institutions to circumvent administrative challenges.



Documentation indicates that 20 of the Class IX students are associated with South Point School in Sapatgram, while 13 are reported-

ly registered at North East Global School in Dhubri. Furthermore, all 29 Class X students are allegedly enrolled at South Point School.

Social activist Shimul Sarkar has reached out to the District Commissioner and the Inspector of Schools to request a formal investigation. The owner of the school, M.R. Joddar, contends that his institution only provides education from Nursery through Class VIII. He maintains that the students in higher grades are simply attending what he refers to as “coaching classes.” However, parents dispute this claim, asserting that they pay standard tuition fees for comprehensive academic instruction.

Inspector of Schools Adit Kumar Sharma has assured a comprehensive investigation. Authorities intend to implement administrative measures following the conclusion of the inquiry.

Meghalaya’s legal community is locked Confrontation escalates between lawyers in Meghalaya and the Advocate General

Shillong, Sep 04: A fierce confrontation has arisen involving Advocate General Amit Kumar, with lawyers demanding his removal. The situation escalated following Kumar’s testimony in the High Court on August 3, where he addressed the sexual harassment of a junior lawyer and the assault of an advocate. Kumar asserted that the Bar had failed to safeguard women, a claim that was met with strong condemnation from both the High Court of Meghalaya Bar Association and the Shillong Bar Association, who labeled it a false accusation.

Kumar firmly denies all allegations, asserting that it was his responsibility to highlight safety issues for women within the legal profession. However, protesting lawyers disagree, taking to the streets of Shillong and refraining from participating in judicial proceedings at both the High Court and District Courts. This conflict has transcended mere courtroom disputes, as the Bar now questions the state’s decision to employ costly counsel from Delhi and the appointment of Kumar’s son as an advocate on a Supreme Court panel. They are in the process of

obtaining Right to Information records to substantiate claims of financial misconduct.

On August 5, over 400 advocates voted to expel Kumar from their membership rolls and submitted a petition to Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma requesting his dismissal. In an effort to address the crisis, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tyngson and Law Minister Lakhmen Rymbui intervened, with the government seeking two weeks to assess the complaints. They have requested that Kumar refrain from state representation during this period. The Bar has

agreed to resume court activities, although their demand for his resignation remains unchanged.

BJP MLA AL Hek is advocating for a peaceful resolution and has met with the Commissioner and Secretary of the Law Department to emphasize the necessity of a solution. “It is crucial to ensure that individuals seeking justice in the courts are not impacted by this situation,” Hek stated. The Supreme Court previously ruled in the case of Ex-Capt. Harish Upal vs Union of India that lawyers do not possess the right to boycott courts, as such actions adverse-



ly affect litigants. The Shillong Times has requested evidence from Bar leadership regarding their claims and their rationale for contravening these Supreme Court rulings, but the Secretary General has yet to respond.

Governors and chief ministers of Punjab and Haryana greet Janmashtami

New Delhi, Sep 04: Chandigarh: On Friday, the chief ministers and governors of Punjab and Haryana hailed the public on Janmashtami. On this occasion, which commemorates the birth of Lord Krishna, thousands of devotees flocked to temples in both states as well as Chandigarh. Gulab Chand Kataria, the governor of Punjab and the administrator of Chandigarh, stated that the message of morality and well-being was part of Lord Krishna's life and teachings. "Lord Krishna propagated the concept of 'nishkam karma' while enlightening the people about the attainment of the ultimate truth through the path of 'dharma'," Kataria stated. "May we be motivated to pursue virtue by this celebration. "Let's embrace the principles of righteous-



ness in our thoughts, words, and deeds as we celebrate with devotion and unity," he continued. According to Haryana Governor Ashim Kumar Ghosh, humanity is still guided toward responsibility, righteousness, courage, and selfless action by the ageless teachings of Lord Krishna, which are preserved in the sacred Bhagavad Gita.

May Lord Krishna inspire us to follow the path of truth and dharma and grant everyone peace, prosperity,

and strength," Ghosh remarked. "Heartiest congratulations on Janmashtami to all the countrymen," Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann wrote in a Punjabi post on X. May you all continue to be blessed by Lord Shri Krishna Ji. May prosperity and joy flood every home." In a Hindi post on X, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini prayed that the celebration would fill people's life with love, dedication, and good vibes.

I ask Lord Krishna to grant pleasure, prosperity, health, and serenity to every family in Haryana." May this holy festival inspire us to follow the path of righteousness and truth and fill our lives with love, devotion, harmony, and fresh positive energy," he stated.

Air India Express Regarding the Bomb Threat in Delhi-Dammam

New Delhi, Sep 04: Following the airline's complaint, Air India Express announced on Thursday that law enforcement agencies are looking into a security-related incident involving its flight from Dammam to Delhi on August 31. The airline denounced any behavior that jeopardizes or has the potential to jeopardize the safety and security of its passengers, crew, and operations and stated that it is fully collaborating with the pertinent agencies in the inquiry. We are aware that, in response to a complaint we submitted, law enforcement is looking into a security-related incident affecting our aircraft from Dammam to Delhi on August 31, 2026. According to Air India Express, "the

airline is fully cooperating with the relevant agencies in the investigation." "Any behavior that jeopardizes or could jeopardize the safety and security of our visitors, employees, and activities is categorically condemned.

Based on the investigation's findings, appropriate action will be taken," it continued. The announcement follows the emergency landing of a Dammam-Delhi Air India Express flight at Ahmedabad Airport on Monday due to a crew member discovering a tissue paper with the word "bomb" on it in the aircraft's restroom. As a precaution, security personnel thoroughly inspected the airplane after all 32 passengers had safely deboarded at Terminal 2,

according to Ahmedabad Police. After the note was discovered, security personnel examined the airplane, and agencies carried out the required security procedures. After learning of a particular bomb threat, one of our flights from Dammam to Delhi was re-routed to Ahmedabad as a precaution and in accordance with security procedures. All security protocols were instantly started, and the government-appointed Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) was notified right away. All passengers safely deboarded after the plane touched down. After the required security checks are finished, the aircraft will be made available for use, according to an Air India Express representative.

PM Modi congratulates "friend" Meloni on becoming the longest-serving prime minister in Italy

New Delhi, Sep 04: For Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Giorgia Meloni, his Italian counterpart, for becoming the longest-serving prime minister in Italy's postwar history.

Modi described Meloni's accomplishment as a testament to the confidence and trust that the Italian people have in her."

Congratulations to my friend Prime Minister Mel-



oni on becoming the longest continuously serving Prime Minister in Italy's

postwar history," the PM wrote in a post on X. The achievement, he contin-

ued, is a "reflection of the trust and confidence of the Italian people" in her leadership.

In addition, Modi emphasized Meloni's role in bolstering the Special Strategic Partnership between Italy and India, expressing his hope for the two nations' continued close collaboration and efforts to build a prosperous future for their citizens. The PM stated, "I look forward to

continuing our close cooperation to build a prosperous future for the people of our countries.

Her friendship has also been instrumental in strengthening the India-Italy Special Strategic Partnership." PM called Meloni a friend in his post and hoped her more success in the years to come. "I hope she continues to have success in the years to come," Modi remarked.

In the midst of restructuring, Ram Temple Trust will review deed modifications on December 2



New Delhi, Sep 04: On December 2, the trust that oversees the Ayodhya Ram Temple will review revisions to its deed, the first since it was established in February 2020. This is part of a reorganization for crowd control, security, logistics, and financial management in the wake of controversies around inconsistencies in donation collecting. Govind Dev Giri, general secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, stated that other urgent matters on the agenda prevented the revisions from being discussed at the September 2 meeting. It is anticipated that the proposed modifications will outline the powers, tenure, and responsibilities of the newly appointed chief executive officer (CEO). As the temple transitions from building to management and operation, the revisions are probably going to contain clauses to increase accounting and administrative openness. The trust was constituted in February 2020 after the Supreme Court awarded the entire 2.77-acre disputed land

in Ayodhya for the temple construction. The focus has since been on the temple construction and associated facilities. The temple ecosystem is now expanding and includes visitor management, infrastructure, religious activities, security, finances, and day-to-day administration. The suggested modifications are viewed as an attempt to offer an institutional framework that is more organized. An important administrative step in this change is the introduction of the CEO position.

On Wednesday, the trust welcomed three new members and named retired Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra as its first CEO. Giri was appointed general secretary. Giri was replaced as treasurer by businessman Mahesh Bhagchandka, who also oversees the Ashok Singhal Foundation. Due to the anomalies in the donations, former trust members Champat Rai and Anil Mishra resigned in July. The three-year tenure of Air Marshal (retired) Mishra signaled a change from trustee-led management to expert corporate supervision. Due to concerns over gift collecting, the appointments represented the biggest change in the trust's operations. Tej Narayan "Pawan" Pandey, the head of the Samajwadi Party, said on June 7 that donations ranging from ₹5 crore to ₹7.5 crore had been embezzled from temple offerings, sparking the donation theft issue. The first Special Investigation Team (SIT) was

established by the state government on June 13. A first information report against eight named defendants and other unidentified individuals was filed on June 25. On June 26, Anukalp Mishra, Lavkush Mishra, Ram Shankar Yadav alias Tinnu, Manish Yadav, Subhash Srivastava, Avinash Shukla, Rama Shankar Mishra, and Karunesh Pandey were taken into custody. From their residences, over ₹80 lakh was found. The SIT identified Tinnu, Rai's former chauffeur and assistant, as the mastermind of the purported money diversion. As instructed by the Supreme Court, a second SIT was established in July. The first SIT's final report, released on August 17, questioned the State Bank of India's (SBI) conduct and identified "gross lapses" in the trust's operations. It found no proof of financial misconduct at the executive level, but it did point out the trust's lack of professional financial management. Rai and Anil Mishra's resignations were accepted by the trust on July 6. It announced the appointment of a three-person panel to choose a new CEO and dismissed administrator Gopal Rao. After arriving in Ayodhya on Wednesday, Air Marshal (retired) Mishra attended a number of meetings to become acquainted with the trust's operations. He hasn't officially taken over yet. Giri stated that the trust will want him to assume leadership as soon as possible.

V Narayanan Defends the Role of the Private Sector

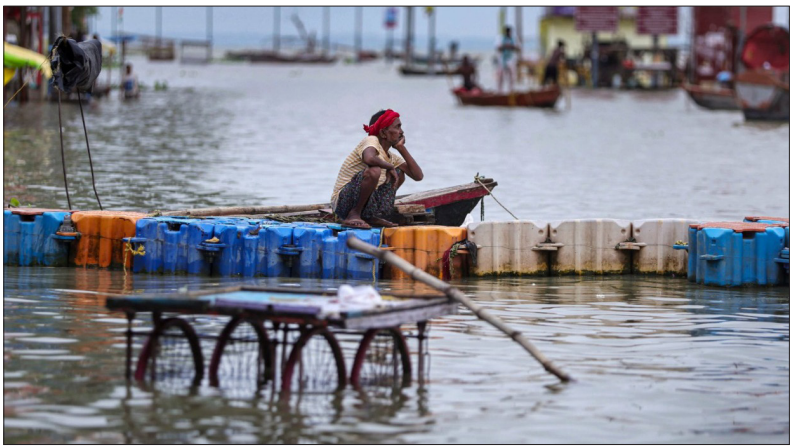
New Delhi, Sep 04: In response to criticism regarding the rising involvement of private companies in the nation's space industry, ISRO Chairman Dr. V Narayanan stated on Friday that the space ecosystem as a whole must evolve and that ISRO cannot meet India's expanding needs on its own.

In an interview with IANS, Narayanan stated that in order to satisfy the nation's growing need for satellites and associated services, India's space industry and ecosystem must expand. Please be aware that ISRO cannot cover the needs of the nation on its own, hence both the space economy and the space environment must expand. We already have 56 satellites, but hundreds of satellites are needed," he stated. He stated that the government's space sector changes were intended to facilitate increased business engagement and growth, with ISRO offering the required assistance. As a result, ISRO is overseeing the government's promised space industry reforms. It is imperative that we make sure our nation's space ecology expands. As a result, there will be plenty of employment prospects, the economy will expand, and more satellites will be manufactured," Narayanan stated. Speaking about the GSLV-F17's successful launch of the EOS-05 Earth observation satellite, he called the mission a significant accomplishment and a source of pride for the nation. "The GSLV Mark II vehicle has carried the biggest satellite for the first time, making this mission extremely significant and a proud moment for all Indians. At the beginning, the GSLV Mark II vehicle could only carry 1,536 kg. This is the heaviest satellite hoisted by this vehicle, and we have increased the capabilities by over 40% today," he stated. Narayanan provided an update on the Kulasekarpattinam spacecraft project, stating that development was moving along well and on time.

As floods impact 26 districts in Uttar Pradesh, more than 17,000 people were saved

New Delhi, Sep 04: After floods struck 26 districts in Uttar Pradesh, more than 17,000 people were evacuated and relocated to safer areas, according to officials.

The relief commissioner's office reports that the floods have impacted around 3.53 lakh people. Amroha, Ayodhya, Azamgarh, Badaun, Ballia, Barabanki, Basti, Chandauli, Farrukhabad, Ghazipur, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Hardoi, Kasganj, Kanpur, Lakhimpur Kheri, Mirzapur, Moradabad, Pilibhit, Prayagraj, Rae Bareilly, Rampur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Shahjahanpur, Unnao, and Varanasi are the districts impacted. 4,847 individuals are presently residing in the 1,312 flood relief shelters that have been set up. In order to guaranty that impacted families receive food, necessary supplies, and medical attention, relief teams have also been sent in. In order to provide rescue, surveillance, and



medical support in impacted areas, the state has activated 1,634 flood outposts, 1,697 boats and motorboats, and 1,068 medical teams.

More than 5,000 quintals of live-stock fodder and 72,897 food-grain assistance kits have been delivered by the government. More than 5.52

lakh chlorine pills and 1.87 lakh ORS packets have been distributed as part of health-related relief efforts to help avoid dehydration and water-borne illnesses. Officials stated that although over 45,000 animals have been impacted, no livestock deaths have been reported.

One daughter survives after a woman wrestler jumps into a 100-foot gorge with three kids

New Delhi, Sep 04: According to police, a national-level female wrestler and two of her three children perished after allegedly jumping down a 100-foot canyon from the old Naldurg Fort in the Dharashiv region of Maharashtra. Both the wrestler, Ashwini Manohar Paul, and her five-and-a-half-year-old kid, Ajinkya, perished instantly.

Kranti, one of her two-and-a-half-year-old twin daughters, subsequently died from her wounds while receiving medical attention. Veera, her other daughter, is presently receiving ventilator support at the Government Hospital in Dharashiv due to severe injuries. Ashwini Paul was



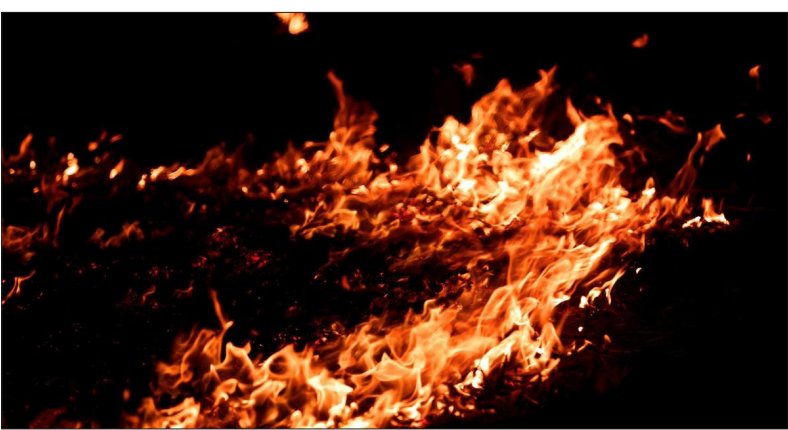
known in wrestling circles and was popularly referred to as "Maharashtra's Tigress". During her sporting career, she won five gold and six silver medals at the national level.

The incident has triggered grief across Maharashtra and the sporting community, with several people

expressing shock over the death of the athlete and her children.

According to Ashwini's father, her husband and in-laws harassed her physically and mentally on a regular basis. The accusations and the events leading up to the incident are being looked into by the police.

As a fire breaks out in a private hospital in Maharashtra, nine newborns are evacuated



New Delhi, Sep 04: In the early hours of Friday, a fire broke out in the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) of a private hospital in Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar, Maharashtra, causing nine infants to be moved, according to the hospital management. According to officials, the event happened at Asian Hospital, which is situated in

the city's Jalna Road neighborhood in the Marathwada district of the state. According to Dr. Shoeb Hashmi, who oversees the hospital, nine infants who need critical or specialized medical care were in the NICU when the staff observed smoke coming from an AC unit. "It was a minor event and nothing bad occurred. Our team

evacuated the infants and the patients in the adjacent general unit as a precaution," he stated. He claimed the patients from the general ward were returned later. The neonates were transferred to different hospitals with their families' permission, according to the doctor. The hospital staff acted quickly to contain the issue.

The incident resulted in injuries. The hospital has been cleansed and is operating normally," he stated. "A fire incident was reported to us," the Jawaharnagar police station's in-charge officer stated when contacted. The incident resulted in no casualties or injuries. The state government ordered a high-level investigation into the tragedy after a severe fire broke out in the NICU of the District Women's Hospital in Amravati, in the nearby Vidarbha area, approximately ten days ago, killing three newborns and rescuing thirty-six.

India Will Provide DNA Profiling Assistance To Relatives Of Nepal Flood Victims

New Delhi, Sep 04: According to the MEA, the Center will provide the services of central and state-level forensic labs for DNA profiling of their first-degree biological relations in India in order to make it easier to identify the lifeless remains of Nepal flood victims.

Central Forensic Science Laboratories (CFSLS), State Forensic Science Laboratories (SFSLS), National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) laboratories, and NABL-accredited laboratories with DNA profiling capability may collect biological samples and prepare DNA profiles for first-degree biological relatives living in India, including father, mother, son, daughter, or

sibling, according to a statement from the ministry.

According to Nepalese authorities, the number of fatalities from last week's flash floods has increased to at least 1,259 after more bodies were found in impacted areas by rescue workers.

Over 12,000 people have been saved by emergency responders, but search and rescue efforts are still ongoing, with about 5,000 individuals still unaccounted for.

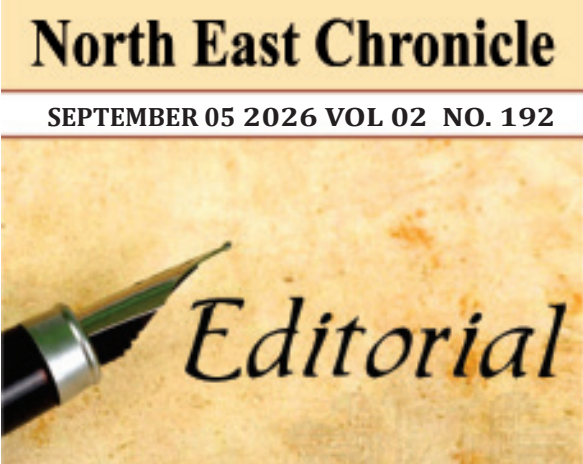
According to the MEA, the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu released a press release on Tuesday outlining the details of the processes for identifying the lifeless remains of the victims of the August 26 flash flood. In light of this, the Union Min-

istry of Home Affairs has made the services of CFSLS, SFSLS, and NFSU laboratories in India available for "DNA profiling of first-degree biological relatives of persons who remain missing following the flash flood in Nepal" as an extra step to aid in the ongoing identification process.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) also shared a list of government forensic science laboratories having DNA profiling facilities. "As advised by the Nepal Police, Autosomal STR DNA profiling may be undertaken for the purpose of identification, subject to the technical requirements communicated by the Nepali authorities. The helpline number in this

regard is: +977 9841 6160 95," it said. Once prepared, the DNA profiles, along with the preliminary information required by the Nepali authorities, may be sent by email -- dnacodis@nepal-police.gov.np -- for comparison with DNA profiles obtained from unidentified mortal remains, the statement said.

A copy of the DNA profile may also be submitted to e-ikathmandufloodsupport@gmail.com for assistance and coordination by the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, it stated. An ice-rock avalanche close to the Nepal-Tibet border caused the flash floods, which destroyed towns and villages in northern and central Nepal.



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Editorial

Overhauling slope safety in Guwahati’s hills

The four deaths in Guwahati’s latest landslide tragedy are a reminder that the city’s hills are no longer merely geological features; they are becoming zones of engineered vulnerability. On September 1, incessant rain triggered a landslide in Mathgharia that buried three members of a family inside their home. A separate rockfall in the Satgaon area killed another woman. The tragedy was sudden, but the risk was not. Assam has been known for years for its unstable slopes. What has been missing is the political and engineering resolve to act before the monsoon turns instability into mortality. Official data presented in the Assam Legislative Assembly show that 93 people died in landslides across the state between 2016 and 2025. Kamrup Metropolitan, which includes Guwahati, has repeatedly recorded the highest number of landslide fatalities. These numbers should end the habit of describing every landslide as an unavoidable natural calamity.

Guwahati’s vulnerability is unusually well documented. A rapid visual screening conducted with the Assam State Disaster Management Authority and Assam Engineering College identified 366 landslide-vulnerable sites across 20 hilllocks. The fact that the same number of vulnerable locations continues to figure in official advisories years after the original assessment raises a fundamental question: what has actually been done at these sites? A landslide occurs when the resisting forces within a slope become smaller than the forces driving its movement. Rainfall is often the trigger, but slope geometry, soil properties, geology, vegetation, drainage and human loading determine whether failure occurs. Prolonged or intense rain infiltrates soil, raises pore-water pressure and reduces effective stress. In simple terms, water can make a slope behave as though it has lost part of its internal strength. Cutting a hill steepens the slope and removes the natural toe support; leakage and poorly designed drainage add water; and vegetation loss reduces root reinforcement. A rainfall event then becomes the final trigger in a chain of failures. This distinction is crucial for policy. Guwahati’s own studies and expert assessments repeatedly point to hill cutting, encroachment, deforestation, unplanned construction and inadequate drainage as major contributors. The city’s growth significantly contributes to disaster risk. The first requirement is therefore a citywide landslide risk atlas. The existing inventory should be updated using LiDAR, satellite imagery, drone surveys and geological mapping. Every vulnerable slope should be classified according to susceptibility, exposure and consequence. A steep uninhabited slope and a steep slope carrying fifty houses should not receive the same priority. The latter is a risk-management emergency.

Second, Guwahati needs an early landslide warning. Rain gauges should be combined with soil-moisture sensors, piezometers and slope-movement instruments. Thresholds can be developed using antecedent rainfall and short-duration intensity. If rainfall crosses a scientifically established threshold while pore pressure or ground movement rises, residents should receive automatic warnings through cell broadcast, sirens and local networks. India’s Geological Survey already operates the National Landslide Forecasting Centre and has developed landslide inventories, susceptibility maps and forecasting tools. Assam should integrate these capabilities into municipal decision-making rather than treating them as specialist information. Third, slope engineering must become more scientific. Retaining walls are not universal cures. Depending on geology and failure mechanism, solutions may include reinforced-earth structures, gabions, rock bolts, shotcrete, toe protection, horizontal drains, surface drains, subsurface drainage and bioengineering. A retaining wall without adequate drainage can become a liability because hydrostatic pressure accumulates behind it. Every major slope intervention should therefore follow a geotechnical investigation and stability analysis, including factor-of-safety calculations under saturated conditions. Drainage deserves special emphasis. On a hill, water should be controlled before it enters the slope, conveyed safely across it and discharged without eroding the toe. Intercepting drains above vulnerable cuts, lined chutes, properly sized cross-drainage structures and routine desilting can reduce infiltration and surface erosion. Guwahati’s landslide problem is closely connected to its urban-flood problem: debris from failed slopes can choke drains, while poorly managed runoff can saturate slopes. The two hazards must be planned together. Land-use regulation is the harder test. No building permission should be granted on identified high-susceptibility slopes without a site-specific geotechnical assessment. Existing settlements in extremely hazardous locations require a transparent, humane relocation policy, not periodic eviction drives followed by political reversals. Development controls must also prohibit indiscriminate hill cutting and require compensatory slope stabilisation wherever excavation is unavoidable. The State should establish a multidisciplinary Guwahati Slope Safety Cell involving geologists, geotechnical engineers, civil engineers, hydrologists, urban planners, foresters and disaster managers. Its mandate should include inspection, monitoring, design review and enforcement. A public dashboard could show vulnerable sites, mitigation status and rainfall alerts, making accountability measurable.

Nuclear expansion: why fuel safety trumps financial risks

Nuclear power divides people. While some environmentalists value its zero-carbon energy, others worry about its safety, weapons potential, and waste-management risks, not to mention cost, especially when renewable energy is getting cheaper. But many countries are eyeing it for the same reason India is: energy security. NITI Aayog’s net-zero study projected a cost-effective greener pathway would need ~100 GW of nuclear power by 2047, a more than 10x growth from now. Many supporters of nuclear power projects in India have held the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010, responsible for making it difficult for India to attract foreign entrants. Now, India has signed the SHANTI

Act, 2025, which caps the liability for nuclear power system developers, specifically removing the automatic liability for equipment suppliers. This is vital since the operator could be Indian but equipment would invariably come from abroad. Traditionally, India’s nuclear power programme was domestically based, with a three-phase plan going from natural uranium in Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) to plutonium in fast breeder reactors, to thorium-based reactors over time. To accelerate the installed capacity of nuclear power, India opened up its sector to international collaboration, including under the A123 deal signed with the US in 2008. It was a period of hope, but few global partnerships materi-

alised Russia being a notable exception, with work on the Kudankulam plant pre-dating the A123 deal. The SHANTI Act is a welcome move, but will it suffice? To truly scale nuclear power, India’s planning will have to think beyond just liability towards a more holistic view of risk. Global experience, especially with international collaborations, shows that the real risks for nuclear power beyond accidents span cost overruns to never getting built. With that lens, we need to look at other dimensions. For India, details about fuel and fuel cycles matter more. But when it comes to nuclear power plants, India chose PHWR technology, which is not what most countries use. India lacks enrichment facilities

to convert natural uranium, which can only be directly used PHWRs. Enrich a little Lightly Enriched Uranium (LEU) and it’s usable in light water reactors (LWRs), but enrich much more and you can make a bomb. Thus, for typical reactors based on LEU, India would need a secure supply for fuel. This is before considering the question of what happens to spent fuel. Will the supplier be willing to take it back? Established infrastructure players such as Tatas, Adani, National Thermal Power Corporation have expressed interest in nuclear power. They would all need to build contracts around not just nuclear technology (hardware) but also assured fuel supply. India is in a position to ask for not just fuel but even LEU

production facilities as part of a package deal. India can ameliorate global concerns by placing such facilities and linked reactors open to external inspections. Such facilities would take time. Is that worth it? Given the scale of nuclear power planned, it should be, and initially, LEU fuel can be imported. If one is making a wish list, new fuel cycles, especially based on thorium, which India has in abundance, are worth developing. Not only does this address fuel security, such fuel cycles can also lead to lower spent fuel nuclear waste problems. Let’s say that the entire deal is worked out as a package. A mix of entities come together and offer technology, finance, and LEU fuel. And the plant gets built and

starts running. The question remains: How sure are we that fuel would be available for a lifespan of 50+ years? How does a country manage the risk of geopolitical considerations trumping commercial ones? These aspects aren’t independent technology transfer can be both commercial and strategic, where the intellectual property owner doesn’t want the buyer to end up becoming a competitor. Ultimately, the SHANTI Act is a vital step forward, but the real work now moves to building the ecosystems around new nuclear power technologies. India will have to take explicit calls on the interplay between costs, security, and environmental concerns the inevitable “energy trilemma” facing policy-makers worldwide.

India signed SCO’s Iran statement, but must resist China-Russia’s Brics agenda

Like any other international event, the 26th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has generated sufficient photo-ops for the government to reiterate its claim of India’s ascending status in the global arena. Such a reiteration, and rightly so, becomes all the more important in the context of Pakistan’s total marginalisation. Especially when both India and Pakistan were hyped during the granting of membership in 2017. India’s exalted standing in the assembly of member countries, the forceful arguments that Prime Minister Narendra Modi made during his address, notably on combating cross-border terrorism and his call for ending wars and creating a cooperative framework for sharing technology, were all truly worth something to write home about. But as a mature and responsible emerging economy, India needs to go beyond counting admirations and assess its decisions in global forums. At least three important aspects of the Bishkek Declaration merit deeper analysis and understanding, especially for India. New Delhi is going to host the BRICS Summit.

The Bishkek Declaration at the SCO condemned military strikes on Iran and backed a political and diplomatic resolution in direct reference to the conflict, endorsed by all ten member states, including India. However, it stopped short of naming Israel and the United States as it had done last year. Incidentally, India had disassociated itself from the statement by the SCO in June 2025, which

had condemned “the military strikes carried out by Israel on the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran”. However, three months later, India signed a declaration adopted at the SCO Summit in Tianjin, China, in September 2025. It described the strikes on Iran as “a gross violation of the principles and norms of international law and the UN Charter, and an infringement on the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran”. Emboldened by the Bishkek Declaration, it is very likely that Iran and its supporters would seek a much stronger language of condemnation at the BRICS summit. Iran is flaunting the Bishkek Declaration, especially the support for its right to develop peaceful nuclear energy under the Non-Proliferation Treaty without discrimination. It is a key tool to project solidarity and support of India, China and Russia, to secure broader geopolitical and diplomatic backing in the ongoing conflict and American sanctions. This change in stance is something that New Delhi will have to explain to its friends like the US and Israel, if not done already.

Second, the Bishkek Declaration condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and the members reaffirmed their commitment to combating terrorism, separatism and extremism. They also stressed that attempts to exploit terrorist, separatist and extremist groups for mercenary purposes were inadmissible. Yet, with Pakistan—an epicenter of terrorism—being a signatory to the declaration, it could claim

to be a victim of terrorism, as it has done at several global forums. This could weaken New Delhi’s rightful and legitimate charge that Pakistan uses terrorism as a state policy. Third, among the listed outcomes is the approval of regulations for a Universal Centre for Countering Challenges and Threats to the Security of SCO Member States. It is expected to strengthen cooperation among SCO members in dealing with terrorism, extremism, organised crime and other transnational threats, while improving coordination and information-sharing. This is easier said than done. Neither Pakistan nor any other SCO member has done this so far, nor likely to provide actionable intelligence sharing in the future. With China’s dominant position in the SCO, its ‘all-weather friend’ Pakistan, whose single-point agenda is to oppose India in every forum, is very unlikely to give up its policy of ‘inflicting a thousand cuts’ on India through terrorism. It is in this context that the forthcoming BRICS Summit in New Delhi assumes greater importance while flagging certain concerns. Had India disassociated from the Bishkek Declaration, it would have been the only member to do so and hence isolated at the SCO. By becoming a signatory, there will be attempts to create a perception that India’s traditional neutrality of judging international issues independently, rather than join China-led SCO or the Russia-led Eurasian Block that is one group of powers against another, is being diluted, if not totally abandoning the policy of

non-alignment. Moving between strategic autonomy and flexible autonomy, a complete deviation from the classical Cold War-era version of non-alignment, India reserves the right to take a position based on its national interest. Yet, given the structural geopolitical imbalance of the SCO, New Delhi runs the risk of being drawn into the emerging anti-West, particularly anti-America and Israel, narrative constructed by China and Russia. Both countries are opposed to the ‘hegemony of the West’ and the supremacy of the US dollar, as witnessed in the SCO meet at Bishkek and the BRICS Summit at Kazan. The biggest diplomatic and strategic challenge for India as the host and agenda setter of the 18th BRICS Summit will be to avert the SCO narrative from prevailing over the BRICS agenda, especially while having to deal with the US and Israel on several economic, technological and defense agreements. India’s BRICS 2026 agenda emphasises resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability, suggesting that New Delhi envisages BRICS to focus on developmental and institutional cooperation and not degenerate into a forum for geopolitical confrontation. India will have to carefully negotiate its path in the forthcoming BRICS Summit and balance between strategic autonomy and its advocacy of multipolarity to diplomatically withstand pressures from two of the strong members to carry forward the “Kazan and Bishkek spirit”.

Decarbonising India’s steel sector: the path to green growth

There are compelling reasons why the iron and steel sector has become a critical experimental ground for India’s compliance carbon market. The steel sector constitutes a critical sector of importance to the economy and positions India as the second-largest crude steel producer globally. Importantly, the steel sector is under policy scrutiny due to its heavy dependence on coal-based production routes and the energy-intensive nature of ironmaking. High carbon intensity has put the sector under stress in the emerging context of global environmental trade measures such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). Given the strategic importance of India’s steel exports, decarbonisation of the steel industry is no longer a policy choice but an implementation necessity for its business viability. The challenge, therefore, is not whether India should produce more steel, but how it can produce more steel with progressively lower emissions.

In this context, the recent notification of the emission intensity tar-

gets for the iron and steel industry under India’s Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) merits a deeper examination of its emissions implications for such a critical sector. Greenhouse gas emission intensity (GEI) targets, built on the mechanism of emissions per tonne of equivalent product, are very much in alignment with the developmental aspirations of the country. This strategic approach is designed considering the economic reality of India’s developmental trajectory, where absolute emissions reduction could jeopardise the much-needed industrial expansion of the country. An intensity-based approach instead seeks to improve the carbon efficiency of every additional tonne of steel produced, allowing economic development and climate action to advance simultaneously. The framework, therefore, attempts to reconcile two objectives that are often portrayed as competing priorities: sustaining industrial growth while steadily reducing the carbon footprint of production. The inherent design principles of GEI for the iron and steel sector, based on the

facility-specific emission intensity targets, appear to be fitting to the sectoral context, characterised by a large degree of heterogeneity in many operational aspects. India’s steel industry is far from homogeneous in its use of technology, fuel and other critical aspects of functioning. Integrated blast furnace-basic oxygen furnace plants, coal and gas-based direct reduced iron (DRI) units, electric arc furnaces (EAFs), induction furnaces, ferro-alloy producers, and rolling mills differ substantially in their production routes, energy sources, raw materials and emissions profiles. Hence, applying a uniform emissions benchmark across such diverse technologies would impose a disproportionate compliance burden on facilities. Facility-specific targets instead recognise technological diversity and firm-specific heterogeneities while ensuring that every facility contributes to the sector’s decarbonisation journey according to its operational realities. By bringing 255 obligated entities under the CCTS, the government is extending the compliance frame-

work across a substantial share of India’s steel sector rather than limiting it to a pilot initiative. Collectively, these facilities account for approximately 149 million tonnes of equivalent product output and 359 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent baseline GHG emissions based on FY 2023-24 data. According to the proposed targets, the framework could deliver an estimated 20 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions reductions by FY 2026-27, representing roughly a 5.6 per cent production-weighted improvement in emission intensity. More importantly, the notification marks the gradual evolution of India’s industrial climate policy in tune with the overarching goal of ‘Viksit Bharat’ by 2047.

The real innovation, however, lies not in the numbers themselves but in the institutional architecture governing the GEI. Effective carbon markets are built on trust in reliable and credible emissions data. Facility-specific baselines, transparent methodologies, and robust measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems form the

foundation of any credible emissions trading mechanism. Without them, carbon credits risk becoming accounting exercises rather than drivers of genuine emissions reductions. Establishing consistent MRV systems across hundreds of facilities with diverse technologies and operational practices will require institutional capacity-building, integration of digital reporting systems, development of technical expertise, independent third-party verification, and strong regulatory oversight. The GEI targets should also be viewed as the beginning rather than the culmination of India’s carbon market journey. As industries adapt to emissions reporting and intensity targets, future compliance cycles are likely to introduce more ambitious benchmarks, broader sectoral coverage, and a more active market for Carbon Credit Certificates. The credibility established during this initial phase will therefore determine the effectiveness of future market expansion and India’s ability to position carbon markets as a central pillar of industrial climate policy.

Blinkit, Instamart Raise Dark-Store Investment as Quick Commerce Expands

New Delhi: Quick-commerce platforms Blinkit and Instamart are increasing their investment in dark stores as the industry shifts from small neighbourhood delivery units to larger fulfilment hubs designed to handle wider product assortments and rising order volumes.

According to UBS, both platforms have raised their estimated capital expenditure per dark store to around ₹2.5 crore, compared with roughly ₹1 crore indicated nearly two years ago. The increase reflects the growing size and complexity of the fulfilment centres being developed by quick-commerce companies.

The cost of setting up a dark store varies significantly with its footprint. Facilities measuring 2,500-3,000 square feet require around ₹1.4-₹1.6 crore, while a 5,000-square-foot facility can cost approx-

imately ₹2.4-₹2.5 crore. Larger 7,000-square-foot facilities can require around ₹3 crore, including apportioned warehouse infrastructure costs.

Newer dark stores are increasingly being built at more than 5,000 square feet, representing a 60-100% increase in size compared with traditional 2,000-3,000-square-foot outlets. The larger facilities allow platforms to hold greater reserve inventory and a wider range of long-tail products locally, reducing their dependence on frequent replenishment from larger mother warehouses.

The warehouse-area requirement is also becoming more efficient as stores expand. UBS estimates that the warehouse-area multiple could decline from around 1.0x for standard stores to 0.8x for 5,000-square-foot hubs and 0.6x for 7,000-square-foot

facilities, indicating potential efficiency gains from larger formats.

The shift is being driven partly by a change in competition within the quick-commerce industry. Platforms are increasingly competing on product selection rather than delivery speed alone, expanding into categories such as electronics, beauty products, home goods and festival and lifestyle merchandise.

Larger fulfilment centres provide the storage capacity needed to accommodate these additional categories while supporting higher order densities. They also offer more space for dedicated picking aisles, staging areas, packing stations and rider handover points, helping reduce congestion as order volumes increase.

The move toward larger hubs involves a significant trade-off for quick-commerce companies. Higher

capital expenditure increases the upfront funding required to expand their networks, potentially making rapid store additions more capital-intensive.

However, UBS expects larger facilities to generate benefits through higher throughput, better space utilisation and larger customer baskets. If order volumes continue to increase, the additional capacity could improve store-level operating leverage and strengthen unit economics over time.

The evolution of the dark-store model indicates that quick-commerce companies are moving toward more sophisticated fulfilment infrastructure. As product categories broaden and order densities rise, the ability to combine speed, inventory depth and efficient store operations is becoming increasingly important to the sector's growth.

India's 7.8% GDP Growth Triggers Debate Over New Data Methodology

New Delhi: India's reported 7.8% real GDP growth in the April-June quarter of FY2026-27 has triggered debate over the country's revised national accounts methodology, with opposition figures and some independent economists questioning the strength of the expansion.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation reported real GDP growth of 7.8% year-on-year, while nominal GDP increased 10.3%. Gross Value Added (GVA) grew 8.2%, with services and manufacturing recording growth of around 9.2%. Critics have challenged the official figures, claiming that nominal GDP growth could be as low as 2.6%. They have argued that real economic growth may have been substantially weaker after accounting for inflation.

The disagreement has largely centred on India's transition to the new 2022-23



base-year national accounts series, which replaced the earlier 2011-12 series. Under the revised framework, nominal GDP for the April-June quarter of FY2025-26 was estimated at ₹80 lakh crore.

Against this revised base, nominal GDP of ₹88.27 lakh crore in the April-June quarter of FY2026-27 represents a 10.3% year-on-year increase. Critics arrived at the 2.6% figure by comparing the latest ₹88.27 lakh crore figure with the unrevised ₹86.05 lakh crore estimate under the older series. Government officials and economists supporting

the revised data have argued that such a comparison combines figures from two different statistical frameworks and therefore does not provide a valid measure of nominal growth. The debate has also brought renewed attention to GDP deflators and the methodology used to convert nominal economic activity into real growth. Earlier concerns raised by the International Monetary Fund over statistical discrepancies and the use of single versus double deflation across sectors have added to the scrutiny. Differences between nominal and real GVA

have been particularly visible in sectors such as mining and quarrying, where increases in crude petroleum and natural gas prices coincided with negative volume growth, highlighting the importance of the deflators used in calculating real economic activity. Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran and World Bank Executive Director Neelkanth Mishra rejected allegations of data manipulation and described the 2.6% calculation as fundamentally flawed because it mixed figures from the old and revised base-year series. Officials also pointed to several high-frequency indicators as evidence of continued economic momentum. Bank credit growth of 16.5%, strong vehicle sales and capital formation remaining at around 35% of GDP were cited as indicators supporting the underlying strength reflected in the 7.8% real GDP growth figure.

Centre Moves to Simplify Corporate Filing Rules Under Companies Act

Mumbai: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), is working on a major overhaul of India's corporate filing system under the Companies Act, 2013, with a focus on reducing repetitive compliance, expanding automation and creating rules based on the size and risk profile of companies.

A key proposal is to consolidate overlapping forms used for areas such as company incorporation, changes in share capital, deposits, loans, director appointments, restructuring and winding up. The proposed system would follow a "file once, use everywhere" approach, allowing information submitted through one filing to be re-used across related compliance requirements. Critical statutory filings, including fraud reporting, charge creation, private placement records, IEPF returns and liquidation proceedings, would continue as separate filings.

The MCA is also considering a wider rollout of straight-through processing (STP), under which routine filings could receive automated approval without manual scrutiny by Registrars of Companies. Director appointments and removals, share-capital changes, registered-office alterations and certain strike-off applications for inactive companies with no liabilities or pending cases could come under the expanded system.

The scale of automation has already increased substantially. Between 2021 and 2025, around 3.84 crore filings were submitted through the MCA21 system, of which approximately 3.33 crore were processed through STP. The proposed reforms seek to expand automated processing to a larger set of routine corporate filings.

Another major change under consideration is pre-filled and delta-based reporting. Information already available with the corporate registry would automatically populate future forms, requiring companies to report only changes or additional information instead of repeatedly entering static details.

The pre-filled information could include company master data, director and key managerial personnel details, shareholding patterns, auditor information, charge status, previous-year finan-

cial figures and corporate social responsibility disclosures. This approach is expected to reduce data-entry requirements and lower the possibility of errors in recurring filings.

The government is also examining greater data sharing between regulators through application programming interfaces (APIs). Proposed integrations could connect the MCA system with the GST Network for turnover and registration verification, the Central Board of Direct Taxes for PAN and corporate tax information, and the RBI and SEBI for matters involving charges and foreign investment limits.

Systems operated by UID-AI, EPFO and ESIC could also be integrated for authentication of directors and employees. Information submitted to one government authority could consequently be made available to another regulator, reducing the need for companies to provide the same information multiple times.

The proposed framework would also move away from a uniform compliance structure by introducing tiered requirements based on company size, turnover, paid-up capital, listing status and operational activity. The objective is to ensure that smaller and lower-risk businesses do not face the same compliance burden as large or complex companies.

For MSMEs, the MCA is considering a simplified single annual return for companies below specified turnover thresholds. Small companies could also see separate filings such as AOC-4 for financial statements and MGT-7 for annual returns replaced by a unified annual filing.

The ministry is further examining customised compliance structures for Section 8 companies, One Person Companies and producer companies, taking into account their distinct operational and regulatory requirements.

The proposed restructuring is intended to make corporate compliance more efficient by combining automation, data integration and risk-based regulation. If implemented, the changes could reduce repetitive reporting and administrative costs while allowing regulators to focus greater attention on filings and companies that require closer scrutiny.

TCS Rural IT Quiz opens new window for young technology talent beyond India's metros

Kohima: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), in partnership with the Department of Electronics, IT & BT, Government of Karnataka, has opened registrations for the 27th edition of the TCS Rural IT Quiz, highlighting the growing policy importance of developing technology awareness and digital skills among students outside India's major urban centres.

The 2026 edition, an integral part of Bengaluru Tech Summit 2026, will feature online tests, virtual quiz rounds and in-person competitions for students of Classes 8 to 12 from smaller towns and districts. Schools within city corporation limits will be excluded. The quiz will cover artificial intelligence, cloud computing, business, emerging technology trends and ap-

plications across banking, education, entertainment, robotics, media, sports, gaming and social networking.

Eight regional finals will lead to the national finals in Bengaluru in November 2026. Regional winners and runners-up will receive Rs 10,000 and Rs 7,000 gift vouchers, respectively, while national winners will receive TCS education

scholarships of Rs 1 lakh and Rs 50,000.

Recognised by the Limca Book of Records as India's first IT quiz for rural students, the initiative has reached over 22.4 million students since 2000. The previous edition attracted more than 5.62 lakh participants from 28 states and two Union Territories. Registrations close on September 30, 2026.

Vedanta Group Stocks End Five Sessions on a Mixed Note



Mumbai: A weak trend prevailed across most Vedanta Group companies during the five trading sessions from August 31 to September 4, with the recently demerged entities largely ending the period in negative territory. Hindustan Zinc was the only major group stock to record a net gain.

Hindustan Zinc emerged as the top performer, rising 1.22% over the five sessions. Vedanta Aluminium Metal declined 1.00%,

while Vedanta Ltd slipped 1.30%. Vedanta Oil & Gas fell more than 5%, Vedanta Power declined 5.76%, and Vedanta Iron & Steel registered the steepest loss at 7.40%.

Trading on September 4 remained mixed. Hindustan Zinc advanced 2.39% to ₹602 on the NSE, while Vedanta Ltd gained 1.24% to ₹273.85. Vedanta Oil & Gas also moved up 0.85% to ₹37.86.

Meanwhile, Vedanta Aluminium Metal declined

0.30% to ₹434.55, Vedanta Power slipped 0.26% to ₹34.20, and Vedanta Iron & Steel dropped 1.61% to ₹35.49.

The performance comes as Vedanta advances its broader demerger strategy, separating its business verticals into standalone entities. Chairman Anil Agarwal has said the individual businesses created through the restructuring have the potential to develop into \$100 billion revenue opportunities over the long term.

The group is targeting an increase in overall revenue from the current \$23-\$24 billion range to around \$50 billion as its separate businesses expand. Vedanta Resources is also evaluating a potential relisting on a US

or another international exchange over a three-year horizon, although no immediate overseas listing is planned.

In the oil and gas business, subsurface reservoir specialist Beicip-Franlab has been engaged for field development planning, seismic interpretation and resource assessment across key assets, including the Hazarigaon and Rudra fields.

The differing performance of the group's businesses reflects varied investor expectations as the demerger progresses. The ability of each newly independent entity to expand operations, improve profitability and unlock value will remain central to their future market performance.

Jindal Worldwide Shares Hit 20% Upper Circuit for Second Day

Ahmedabad: Shares of textile manufacturer and electric mobility player Jindal Worldwide Limited surged 20% for the second consecutive trading session on Friday, touching a fresh 52-week high of ₹57.78 on the NSE.

The stock closed at ₹48.15 in the previous session, taking its two-day cumulative gain to around 44%. Jindal Worldwide has nearly doubled in value in 2026, gaining about 99% year-to-date. Its market capitalisation rose to approximately ₹5,792 crore.

The stock has climbed sharply from its 52-week low of ₹17.85, recorded on March 30, 2026, to the latest high of ₹57.78. The sustained buying interest has come amid developments involving the company's leadership and its expansion into electric mobility.

At the company's 40th Annual General Meeting held on September 1, shareholders approved the re-appointment of Amit Yamunadutt Agarwal as Managing Director for a three-year term from September 3, 2026, to September 2, 2029. Shareholders also approved the re-appointment of Vikram Pushpak Oza as Non-Executive Non-Independent Director.

Another key development is the expansion of Jindal

Worldwide's electric mobility business through its subsidiary Jindal Mobilitric Private Limited. The company plans to establish 100 electric vehicle showrooms across India by the end of FY28.

Under the expansion plan, 40 showrooms are targeted for commissioning by the end of FY27, while the remaining 60 outlets are expected to be rolled out progressively during FY28. The move is aimed at building a wider retail and distribution network for the company's electric mobility products.

Commercial production has also commenced at Jindal Mobilitric's manufacturing facility in Ahmedabad. The subsidiary has already opened its first two retail outlets in Srinagar and Jaipur, marking the initial phase of its nationwide retail expansion.

The combination of strong stock-market momentum, continuity in the company's leadership and plans to rapidly expand its electric mobility operations has strengthened investor interest in Jindal Worldwide. The proposed showroom expansion will be closely watched as the company seeks to establish a larger presence in India's growing electric vehicle market.

Air India Phuket-Delhi Flight Incident Probe Finds Pilot Tested Positive for Psychoactive Substance

New Delhi: A preliminary investigation into an August 4, 2026 mid-air incident involving Air India flight AI-2379 has raised a serious safety concern after the pilot-in-command (PIC) tested positive for a psychoactive substance, while the Airbus A320neo experienced a temporary failure of all three hydraulic systems during the flight.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) found that alcohol breathalyser tests conducted after the flight were satisfactory for both crew members. However, mandatory screening for psychoactive substances returned a "non-negative" result for the PIC, which was subsequently confirmed through a laboratory blood test. The co-pilot tested negative in all examinations.

The AAIB described the confirmed psychoactive substance finding as a serious concern and called for immediate and appropriate action by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

The report, however, did not establish a direct connection between the pilot's test result and the technical failure experienced by the aircraft.

The incident occurred while the aircraft was cruising at 36,000 feet (FL360) over the Bay of Bengal near the Odisha coast. The Green hydraulic system failed first, followed within seconds by failures in the Blue and Yellow systems, temporarily affecting the aircraft's flight-control systems.

The hydraulic disruption resulted in an autopilot disconnect and a two-second stall warning. The aircraft



initially climbed by around 372 feet before descending 292 feet, temporarily affecting elevator and aileron control. The hydraulic systems recovered within seconds, allowing the crew to regain full control of the aircraft.

The sudden altitude change affected passengers and crew because the

seatbelt signs were not illuminated during the cruise phase. Twenty passengers and four cabin crew members were injured, with four people requiring hospitalisation for serious injuries.

The aircraft's cabin also suffered damage, including cracked ceiling panels, displaced overhead-bin doors

and damaged service units. Despite the incident, the crew decided against diverting the flight and continued to Delhi, where the aircraft landed safely with priority assistance.

Under existing aviation regulations, a first confirmed violation involving psychoactive substance use requires the pilot to be re-

moved from flying duties and undergo an accredited rehabilitation or de-addiction programme before any consideration of reinstating the flying licence.

Air India has said it maintains zero tolerance for safety violations and is cooperating fully with the AAIB and DGCA investigations.

The airline has also initiated voluntary psychoactive substance testing for all of its pilots, covering 100% of the pilot workforce, as part of measures to strengthen its safety protocols.

The preliminary findings are expected to be examined further as the investigation progresses, with the authorities continuing to assess both the technical failure and the circumstances surrounding the crew member's substance test.

Revealed: how companies ‘secretly’ use billions of litres of public water in drought-hit England

England: Less than 1% of businesses in England use more water than the daily needs of 10 million people, as millions of households face hosepipe bans and three-quarters of the country is in drought.

Businesses across England use 2.6bn litres a day from the public water supply, which includes potable and non-potable water provided by water companies. In total, businesses account for about 30% of public supply use, with two-thirds of their consumption in water-stressed areas, according to Mosl, the organisation that operates England’s business water market.

Tracking industrial water use appears difficult. Regulators say they are frustrated by a lack of data and “commercial secrecy”, and the water sector says it is prevented from planning effectively for growth industries.

The biggest users of the public water supply include oil refineries, chemical plants and paper mills, and some face no requirement to cut their consumption.

Mosl’s map of business water supply points, ranked by volume used, showed the site of Exxon-Mobil’s Esso refinery at Fawley, Southampton, as the largest user of public water supply. However, the site includes a number of other operators that also use the water, including waste, gas, chemicals and energy companies. Mosl cited the refinery’s water use in written evidence to a House of Lords committee as an example of “the high volume of water wastage in industry that is not disincentivised by government or the regulatory framework”.

Mosl did not name the refinery but described its location, which was also visible on its map of supply points.

ExxonMobil disputed Mosl’s figures, saying its water use was commercially confidential. Mosl said it planned to ask the committee to redact parts of its evidence. During reporting, Mosl also removed a report and its supply point map from its website. The refinery said the “vast majority” of the water it used came from the Solent strait for cooling, while “industrial water” was used for processes that could not easily be reduced without shutting down operating units. Potable water accounted for less than 1% of total consumption, it said. Apart from refineries, other major users of the public water supply include paper mills and companies in the chemicals and soft drinks industries. But the overall picture of business water use is incomplete. One in 10 businesses are not metered, meaning their use is not measured or reported. Of those that are metered, only 11% have smart meters.

Despite Mosl collecting data on water taken from the public supply, it is not free to share all of it, even with government de-



partments, according to Mosl’s chief executive, Sarah McMath. McMath told the House of Lords committee that when the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) or the Environment Agency requested data, Mosl had to negotiate a bespoke agreement to share it.

Mosl was working with the water regulator, Ofwat, to change this, she said, so that data would be shared when it would benefit “the environment or society”.

A lack of data is already affecting national water planning. Gaps in local authority growth plans, combined with what the Environment Agency and Ofwat describe as “commercial secrecy, especially in the energy sector”, mean plans are often based on assumptions.

The Environment Agency and Ofwat are calling for mandatory reporting of current and projected water use across all sectors to improve water security.

sources planning assumes business water consumption will fall by 9% by 2038 and 15% by 2050. But the trade body Water UK argues the assumption is unrealistic as demand grows from new homes, as datacentres, hydrogen production and other developments. It wants water companies to be able to plan for projected demand rather than government reduction targets. Companies are not required to report all their water use, and for some, the more water they use, the cheaper each unit becomes.

One operator told Mosl that a single UK datacentre uses 219m litres a year. It also has a tankered-water supply on standby if its mains connection fails, as well as its own borehole as a backup.

Businesses can also take water directly from rivers, lakes, aquifers and the sea via abstraction. This is regulated separately by the Environment Agency.

Some abstraction is invisible. Anyone can take up to 20,000 litres a day from a stream, borehole or spring without a licence or reporting it. The gap covers an estimated 850,000 people and organisations across England, mostly on farms and in rural areas. Richard Benwell, the chief executive of the NGO coalition Wildlife and Countryside Link, said: “It’s surely an injustice that petrochemical and fossil fuel companies most responsible for the climate crisis are also drain-

ing ... water supplies and drawing more water from our parched environment.

The water campaigner Feargal Sharkey said: “Yet again, regulatory ineptitude is allowed to triumph over the needs of people and the environment. While water supplies run dry, corporate bank accounts are flooded with the proceeds of corporate greed.”

Defra said the government was taking “decisive action to secure water supplies”, including planning to build nine reservoirs and investing in infrastructure.

A Water UK spokesperson said: “Supplies are increasingly at risk because England’s official forecasts for how much water the country needs rely on flawed assumptions. The water needed by fast-growing datacentres is explicitly excluded from the forecasts.

“At the same time, lower water bills have been prioritised over building a resilient system, meaning in some places water companies only have 2% of water spare to deal with increased demand.” The Environment Agency said abstraction licences had strict conditions and were reviewed regularly, and that it was working towards the 9% reduction in business water use from the public supply.

Meanwhile, England’s water companies are losing about 2.2bn litres of water a day through leaking pipes.

‘Internal exclusion’ of England secondary school students almost triples in three years

England: The proportion of secondary school students in England removed from class and placed in “internal exclusion” as a disciplinary measure has almost trebled in three years, according to new data.

The data shows the proportion of secondary pupils removed from normal lessons went up from 5% in the 2022/2023 academic year to 13% in 2025/26 – a 160% increase.

Poorer children are disproportionately affected, with more than one in five (22%) disadvantaged youngsters taken out of lessons at least once in 2025/26, up from 8% three years ago – a 175% increase, according to analysis of the data. The figure was one in ten (10%) for non-disadvantaged pupils.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (Send) are also overrepresented, with 18% of students with an education, health and care plan removed from class at least once in 2025/26.

Critics say that putting pupils into internal exclusion – which varies between schools but is sometimes described as an “isolation room” – can damage mental wellbeing and result in lost learning. Others say it is an effective tool in behaviour management.

The data was collected and analysed by Arbor, a management information system used by 13,000 schools across England, and shared exclusively with the Guardian.

Fewer than 1% of primary pupils were internally excluded at least once in a year. In 2025/6 the number of under-11s affected was almost 5,000, though the real figure is likely to be significantly higher, as Arbor does not have data for every school.

Unlike permanent exclusions and fixed term suspensions, when pupils are sent home, internal exclusions require children to remain on site and they are returned to their class at the end of the exclusion. While the government collects data on exclusions and suspensions, it does not for internal exclusions.

Arbor’s CEO and co-founder, James Weatherill, said: “Schools clearly need effective ways to respond when behaviour disrupts learning, and we know from schools that internal exclusion can be an important alternative to sending a pupil home. But the scale of this increase, particularly among disadvantaged pupils, should prompt us to look more closely at what is driving it.”

The rise in internal exclusions, as recorded by Arbor’s live national data, comes at a time when official figures published by the Department for Education (DfE) showed formal suspensions and exclusions fell last year.

“We cannot tell from these figures whether one is replacing the other, but the divergence underlines why government needs a more complete picture of how many pupils are being re-

moved from their normal lessons, for how long, and with what consequences,” said Weatherill.

Pepe Di’lasio, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: “Internal exclusions are never used lightly but only after other avenues have been exhausted. They are a step short of an external exclusion and are designed to keep the student in school with appropriate learning support.”

Lily Wielar, researcher at the Education Policy Institute, said: “Classroom removal has become a deeply embedded feature of behaviour management in England’s secondary schools.

“We urgently need to know more about how classroom removal is being used, and to ensure that removed pupils have the same legal protections and transparency that apply elsewhere.”

Tom Bennett, a leading expert in behaviour management, said: “Internal exclu-

sions are, of course, a form of inclusion. A way to show students who disrupt the learning or safety of others that their actions have consequences, but in a way that means they aren’t simply sitting at home doing nothing, or worse, exposed to unsupportive environments.

“It means that learning can be delivered on site, and in an environment where staff ratios are higher, work can be done on their social skills and behaviour, but away from the students whose learning and safety has been damaged – because they matter too.”

Dame Rachel de Souza, children’s commissioner for England, said: “Excluding a child from the classroom can be necessary to protect other children, but every child should be supported to learn alongside their peers. Where that isn’t possible, children should still be receiving a high-quality education as part of internal exclusion – and I’m concerned that might not always be the case.

Green party members back Zack Polanski to stand in London byelection



London: Zack Polanski moved a step closer in his quest to become an MP on Wednesday, with local Green party members supporting him to become the party’s candidate in the Holborn and St Pancras byelection.

The party leader in England and Wales started campaigning alongside his fellow Green, Hannah Spencer, the MP for Gorton and Denton, in the Holborn area on Tuesday, and is seriously considering putting himself forward as the party’s candidate in the seat vacated by Keir Starmer on Monday.

Green party sources said local party members would have the final say on the selected candidate, but the Guardian understands local members are supportive of Polanski running, with no clear local activist with significant support expected to oppose him. It is understood nominations will open soon and candidates will be selected by the end of next week.

Lorna Jane Russell, the leader of the Greens on the local Camden council, will not stand, having previously expressed a desire to focus on her role as the leader of the opposition at Camden Town Hall and her pregnancy.

On the anniversary of his election on 2 September 2025, Polanski said the

know Camden through and through and I do believe that we can win this,” she said.

Siddiq added: “I think the Labour vote is resilient and I think Andy Burnham’s pledges on the doorstep are being gratefully received by people in Camden. Certainly I’ll be out campaigning every day and giving it my best shot.”

Labour will not run an all-women shortlist and will announce their candidate by next Wednesday, with applications closing on Friday and shortlisting expected by the start of next week. The frontrunner is thought to be Sagal Abdi-Wali, who came to the UK as a child refugee from Somalia and has been the leader of Camden council since May. “She’s got a compelling personal story and can reach people from all faiths and backgrounds in Camden,” said one Labour source. “She’s also been really active in the local party for a long time. Lots of people know her and like her.”

Adam Hug, the former leader of Westminster council who lost his job leading the council when the Conservatives took control of it in May’s local election, is also a mooted name. Other possible candidates are Nash Ali, the former mayor of Camden, and Rishi Madlani, a former Camden councillor.

Abdi-Wali is close to Starmer and local Labour sources said any attempts to bring in a candidate not from the area would be met with fierce criticism. “It will be interesting to see if Burnham has the same appeal in north London as Makerfield,” said one. “A lot of the policies he’s been talking about feel more geared towards the rest of the country, not really London.”

Andy Burnham targets migrant crisis ahead of Macron’s visit to No 10

UK: Andy Burnham will begin the process of courting European leaders when he welcomes Emmanuel Macron as the first foreign head of state to visit him in Downing Street.

The prime minister will meet the French president at No 10 on Thursday as he looks to make inroads on a number of foreign policy objectives, including curbing irregular migration and sealing a new deal with the EU.

The meeting marks one of Burnham’s first forays into foreign policy, having previously promised to remain mostly focused on domestic issues, and comes weeks before a crunch EU summit

that could shape much of his future economic strategy. Burnham said in a statement on Wednesday: “The progress we have seen this summer [in bringing down the number of small boat crossings] shows what can be achieved when the UK and France work together. “But I am clear that we cannot be complacent. Smuggling gangs are constantly adapting their tactics, and the UK and France need to respond quickly and stay one step ahead of the criminals facilitating the dangerous crossings.

“The small boats crisis is a shared European challenge, and no country can solve it alone. Working with France

and our international partners, we will restore order and control to our borders and prevent smugglers exploiting vulnerable migrants.”

While Burnham has talked almost exclusively about domestic issues such as the cost of living since becoming prime minister, he is quickly finding himself having to deal with international crises as well. Last month he met the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, to help celebrate the country’s independence day, when he announced he would declassify sensitive military information to allow Ukraine to build more cruise missiles.

On Thursday he will discuss migration, EU relations, Ukraine and the war in Iran with Macron.

The two leaders will announce additional resources for French police to help stop small boats being launched from the country’s north coast and larger “mega-dinghies” departing from the west. Downing Street said on Wednesday that the number of French officers dealing with small boat crossings in northern France would soon rise to nearly 1,050 officers – up by roughly a quarter in four months. The teams will include a specialist 75-person team to seize equipment and arrest smugglers on land. A separate intelligence unit will

be expanded from 18 to 30, while another 45 officers will be deployed to the west coast.

Irregular migration has fallen down the political agenda in recent weeks thanks to a drop in the number of small boat crossings.

This week, Burnham said the drop in numbers to a seven-year low was a result of efforts by his predecessor Keir Starmer to tackle smuggling gangs – though experts say external factors such as an improvement in Syria’s security situation have also played a role. The prime minister will also use the meeting to press Macron to support his efforts to renegotiate Britain’s treaty with the EU.

Five shirt designs that every man should have in his closet



The wardrobes of men are evolving to be more adaptable as the distinctions between professional attire and casual clothing increasingly blur. Comfort has emerged as a significant aspect of daily dressing, while still maintaining the necessity for structure and refinement. This shift has heightened the importance of fabric and construction, as men seek shirts that can function effectively in various environments rather than being limited to a single use. Yash Jain, co-founder and sales director at D BADAMI Fashion Connection LLP, has provided insights on shirt styles that men should contemplate adding to their wardrobe.

1. The classic formal shirt
According to Yash Jain, a white or light-blue shirt remains a wardrobe essential. In a good cotton poplin or fine twill, it can work with a suit or tailored trousers and still look appropriate without a jacket. Fit matters here: a clean shoulder line and enough room for movement usually do more for the shirt than unnecessary design details.
2. The Oxford button-down shirt
“Oxford cloth has a slightly thicker feel than many formal shirts, with a visible texture in the cloth. That

gives them a relaxed look without making them too casual,” highlighted Yash Jain. The button-down collar adds some structure, so the shirt works with chinos as well as tailored trousers. It can also be paired with denim for a more relaxed outfit.

3. The linen shirt
Fabric choice becomes especially important in the Indian climate. Yash highlighted that linen is naturally suited to warm weather because of its lightweight and breathable character. It also has a texture that allows the shirt to look relaxed without appearing unfinished. White, blue, beige and muted shades make linen easy to carry from daytime occasions to informal evenings. The current interest in lightweight textiles also reflects a wider move towards comfort and climate adaptability in fashion.
4. The chambray shirt
Chambray is a useful choice for a more casual wardrobe. The fabric is made with a plain weave and is generally lighter than denim, which makes it comfortable in warm weather. Its simple texture works well with chinos and denim, while a well-fitted chambray shirt can also sit comfortably with tailored

Four Simple Do-It-Yourself Tomato Facial Treatments for Glowing Skin

Gold facials have garnered significant attention recently. However, if you prefer not to spend a considerable amount on a facial, you can achieve beauty at home using tomatoes. How to do beauty treatments with tomatoes? Tomato-honey pack

Apply a mixture of two teaspoons tomato paste and one tablespoon honey to your face. After ten to fifteen minutes, wash it off. Your skin will remain soft thanks to this blend. Additionally, it will prevent imperfections. Tomato juice

Harnessing the natural, clarifying power of fresh tomatoes provides an exceptional, chemical-free solution for managing excess sebum production, as tomato juice is inherently rich in natural astringents, fruit acids, and vital vitamins that work synergistically to brighten dull skin tones while effectively eliminating stubborn surface oiliness from the face. Because excess oil and clogged pores are the primary culprits behind common blemishes,

incorporating this simple citrus-like treatment into your skincare regimen actively helps prevent the development of troublesome acne flare-ups, deep-seated blackheads, and annoying whiteheads before they can even start. To reap these comprehensive dermatological benefits, simply extract fresh tomato juice and use a clean piece of a sliced tomato to generously smear the nutrient-dense pulp all over your face, ensuring that every oil-prone zone—such as the forehead, nose, and chin—is thoroughly coated. Allow this refreshing treatment to sit undisturbed for fifteen minutes, giving the active compounds ample time to balance your skin’s natural pH levels, tighten enlarged pores, and dissolve impurities. By consistently committing to this straightforward technique as a regular part of your weekly skincare routine, chronic issues with excessively oily skin can be permanently resolved, leaving your face looking remarkably clear, balanced, and vibrant. Aloe Vera

and Tomato

To treat your skin to a deeply nourishing and hydrating botanical boost, begin by combining one tablespoon of fresh tomato puree with one tablespoon of soothing aloe vera gel in a small bowl, mixing the two ingredients thoroughly until they form a smooth, cohesive blend. Gently massage this vibrant, vitamin-packed mixture evenly across your face, taking care to ensure a nice, uniform layer that can easily deliver its antioxidant-rich properties to your skin. Allow the treatment to rest undisturbed on your face for twenty full minutes, giving the tomato’s natural brightening agents and the aloe vera’s deep-conditioning hydration ample time to work their magic. Once the time is up, rinse your face thoroughly with clean water to completely wash away the residue, and finish the routine by applying your favorite lightweight moisturizer to lock in all that fresh hydration, leaving your skin feeling soft, balanced, and radiantly refreshed. To



mato and Multani Mitti

To refresh and rejuvenate your complexion with a natural, home-remedy approach, start by carefully peeling a fresh tomato to extract its pure, nutrient-rich pulp, and then prepare a potent face pack by thoroughly combining one teaspoon of fragrant mint leaf paste with two generous teaspoons of cooling multani mitti (Fuller’s earth) until you achieve a smooth, uniform paste. Once your mixture is ready, gently smooth this revitalizing set evenly across your entire face, ensuring complete coverage while avoiding the del-

icate eye area, and allow the mask to rest undisturbed until it has fully dried and tightened on your skin. When the time is up, rinse it off thoroughly with lukewarm water, patting your face dry to immediately reveal skin that feels noticeably taut, wonderfully fresh, and exceptionally silky to the touch. By incorporating this simple yet highly effective ritual into your routine and applying the pack consistently once a week, you will provide your skin with the ultimate clarifying boost, effectively restoring its natural radiance and bringing back that healthy, vibrant glow.

8 benefits and who should eat it carefully

- Janmashtami wouldn’t be complete without “makhan.” After all, Lord Krishna’s well-known fondness for fresh white butter gave him the moniker Makhan Chor. These tales, which range from savoring makhan misri to stealing butter from earthen pots, have been passed down through the centuries. But have you ever questioned if white butter is truly beneficial to your health, aside from its celebratory and cultural significance? Traditional handmade white butter is lightly processed and includes numerous important nutrients, in contrast to the salty yellow butter found in most supermarkets. When consumed in moderation as part of a balanced diet, it can provide certain health advantages, according to Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator Dr. Archana Batra. White butter is a fresh, homemade butter traditionally prepared by churning malai (cream) collected from milk. Since it is usually unsalted and minimally processed, it differs from commercial yellow butter in both taste and composition. It is commonly used on rotis, parathas, and festive dishes during Janmashtami.
1. Gives you a quick source of energy: White butter is naturally rich in fats, making it an energy-dense

- food. Dr Batra says it can be a good addition for people with higher energy requirements, provided it is consumed in moderation as part of a balanced diet.
2. Provides important vitamins:One of white butter’s biggest nutritional strengths is its content of fat-soluble vitamins, especially vitamins A and D. These nutrients are essential for healthy vision, immunity,y and maintaining healthy skin.
 3. Helps your body absorb nutrients better: Healthy fats are necessary for absorbing vitamins A, D,, E and K from the foods you eat. Adding a small amount of white butter to vegetables or whole-grain meals may improve the absorption of these nutrients.
 4. Supports immunity: White butter contains nutrients such as vitamins A, and D, and calcium, which contribute to normal immune function. While it is not an immunity booster on its own, it can support overall health when included in a nutritious diet.
 5. May support healthy metabolism: According to Dr. Batra, white butter contains lecithin, a natural compound that aids in fat metabolism. Combined with an active lifestyle, it may contribute to better metabolic health.
 6. Nourishes the skin: White butter also contains

- vitamin E, an antioxidant that helps protect skin cells from oxidative damage. This nutrient plays a role in maintaining healthy, radiant skin.
7. Supports brain health: White butter contains arachidonic acid, a fatty acid involved in brain growth and cognitive development. It is particularly important during childhood, making moderate intake beneficial as part of a well-rounded diet.
 8. Makes meals more satisfying: Fats increase satiety, meaning they help you feel fuller for longer. A teaspoon of white butter can make meals more satisfying without having to eliminate fat completely from your diet.
- Is white butter healthy for everyone?
- White butter does offer nutritional benefits, but it is still high in calories and saturated fat. Around 100 grams provides about 717 calories, with very little protein or carbohydrates. Dr Batra advises enjoying it in small portions, such as a teaspoon with roti or vegetables, rather than consuming it in excess. People with high cholesterol or heart disease should be especially mindful and speak to their healthcare provider about the right amount for them.

Milk-based sunscreens are gaining significant attention

I have experimented with various types of sunscreens, including lightweight gels, creamy lotions, and invisible formulas that claim to blend seamlessly under makeup. However, recently, I have been inclined to choose a different type of SPF: milk sunscreen. The name itself made me curious. Unlike the thick, creamy sunscreens I grew up using, milk sunscreens typically have a lightweight, fluid texture that spreads easily across the skin. And for someone who sometimes skips sunscreen simply because I don’t enjoy the feel of it, that difference matters. As per Dr Rashmi Ranjan, Consultant - Dermatology, Yatharth Hospital Noida, “Milk sunscreens are usually easy to blend and offer a lighter finish on the skin than thick traditional creams. This makes them very appealing to people who don’t like the sticky or heavy feeling that sometimes comes with sunscreen.”

“Milk sunscreens can be a good choice for those who like lightweight skincare products. Their smooth texture helps them to be spread easily and evenly, which may promote consistent sunscreen application. But the formulation must provide broad-spectrum protection with an appropriate SPF, and the product must be applied generously,” says Dr Ranjan.

What is milk sunscreen?

Milk sunscreen is essentially a sunscreen formulated with a thin, fluid



or milky texture. It is designed to spread easily and absorb or set comfortably on the skin without necessarily leaving the heavy, greasy feeling associated with some traditional sunscreens. When I first tried one, the texture was what stood out to me. It felt much more fluid than a conventional sunscreen, making it easy to apply evenly across my face and neck. I also liked that I could layer it over my skincare without feeling as though I had put on yet another thick product. Dr Ranjan also shares some advantages of milk sunscreens

1. Light texture:
Milk sunscreen is a fluid formulation that may feel lighter on the skin than some of the heavier cream-based formulations. This can be especially helpful for those who find traditional sunscreens uncomfortable in hot and humid weather.
2. Easily spread
The milk sunscreen has a fluid texture that is easily spread on the face and neck. Application is also important, as areas missed can be left exposed to UV.
3. Everyday Use
The better a sunscreen feels, the more likely you are to use it. Milky formulations are a practical alternative for those who rely on sunscreen as a part of their daily skincare routine.
4. Works well under makeup:
Lots of light formulas soak in or settle quickly and can work well under makeup. However, users need to

wait for the sunscreen to set before applying other cosmetic products.

5. Suitable for oily/com-bination skin:
A milk sunscreen can be a good choice for oily or combination skin depending on the formulation, if you don’t like rich, occlusive textures. However, ingredients vary widely from product to product, so check the label rather than relying on the “milky” description.

Why I started using milk sunscreen

My biggest sunscreen complaint has always been the same: I want protection, but I don’t want to feel like I’m wearing sunscreen. Some formulas can feel heavy, sticky or overly shiny, particularly when I’m layering moisturiser and makeup on top. Milk sunscreen changed that experience for me. Its

lightweight consistency makes it easy to work into my morning routine. I can apply my skincare, follow it with sunscreen and then move on to makeup without feeling like I have several layers sitting heavily on my face.

I also find the fluid texture particularly convenient when I’m applying sunscreen to larger areas such as my neck, arms and shoulders. Who is milky sunscreen for?

Dr. Ranjan elaborates on the remarkable versatility of milk sunscreens, noting that their airy, fluid consistency makes them an exceptionally wise choice for individuals navigating oily, combination, or normal skin types, as well as for those residing in notoriously hot and humid climates who require sun protection that will not melt away or clog pores in

oppressive weather. This featherlight category is also a game-changer for skincare enthusiasts who enjoy layering multiple products throughout the day and demand a breathable, non-heavy finish that avoids cumulative product buildup or pilling under subsequent layers.

Nevertheless, determining suitability for dry or sensitive skin requires looking closely at the specific formulation; for instance, dry skin types can thoroughly benefit from a milky sunscreen infused with nourishing, moisturizing ingredients to prevent transepidermal water loss, while sensitive skin types must intentionally seek out fragrance-free, hypoallergenic, and dermatologist-tested options to minimize the risk of adverse reactions. Furthermore, Dr. Ranjan strongly

emphasizes that individuals with sensitive or acne-prone skin must look far beyond the initial appeal of a lightweight texture and instead dedicate careful attention to analyzing the comprehensive ingredient list, recognizing that formulation intricacies dictate skin compatibility. Ultimately, if any chosen sunscreen begins triggering uncomfortable side effects such as stinging, burning, persistent itching, localized redness, or new acne breakouts, it serves as a definitive sign that the skin barrier is reacting poorly, making it imperative to immediately discontinue use, step back, and transition to a more gentle, compatible formulation that protects without causing irritation. How do I use it?

The last step of the morning skincare routine, before makeup, should be sunscreen. It should cover exposed areas such as the face, ears, neck and other exposed skin. Reapplication is especially important after sweating, swimming or extended outdoor activity. Dr Ranjan stresses that sunscreen is only one part of sun protection. Other protective measures include hats, sunglasses, protective clothing and staying in the shade during periods of intense sunlight. The best sunscreen is the one you will use regularly, and that will protect your skin from the UV rays. The light feel of a milky sunscreen can be easier and more convenient for everyday wear, making sun protection a breeze for many consumers.

What I like about the texture

For me, the biggest advantage is how easily it spreads. A small amount can cover a large area, although I still make sure I apply enough sunscreen rather than relying on the texture to determine the quantity. The milky consistency also makes application feel quicker. Instead of spending ages massaging a thick cream into my skin, I can spread the fluid formula evenly and give it a little time to settle. Depending on the formulation, milk sunscreens can leave a natural, dewy or more matte finish. That’s why I always check the individual formula rather than assuming every milk sunscreen will feel or look the same.

Does milk sunscreen work for oily skin?

This was another reason I wanted to try it.

Managing oily or combination skin while maintaining rigorous sun protection can often feel like an intricate balancing act, particularly when mid-day sebum production inevitably clashes with emollient-heavy formulas to create an excessively greasy or shiny complexion as the day progresses. For individuals who routinely struggle with the heavy, suffocating sensation or unwanted glossiness characteristic of traditional, dense creams, transitioning to a lightweight milk formula can represent a transformative shift in daily skin-

care, offering a breathable, fluid texture that absorbs quickly without leaving an occlusive, heavy mask behind. However, navigating the vast market of sun protection requires a discerning eye, as one must never blindly assume that every milk sunscreen on the shelf is inherently tailored for oil-prone complexions; in reality, the final finish, wearability, and oil-control efficacy vary drastically depending on the proprietary blend of ingredients, solvent bases, and active UV filters utilized in each specific formulation. Consequently, those with oily or combination skin must look far beyond generic texture descriptors, actively seeking out specialized SPFs explicitly labeled as lightweight, non-comedogenic—meaning they are scientifically formulated not to clog pores—or targeted toward balancing sebum levels, while carefully scrutinizing product claims and ingredient decks to ensure the chosen formula will successfully mattify the skin, control breakthrough shine, and provide harmonious, long-lasting wear from morning until night. Wearing milk sunscreen under makeup

This is probably one of my favourite things about a lightweight sunscreen.

When a sunscreen settles well, I find it much easier to apply foundation, concealer and other makeup products on top. A fluid formula can also feel less cumbersome than a thick cream underneath makeup.

ENTERTAINMENT

R Madhavan's GDN strong in week 4 thanks to positive word of mouth

Chennai : R Madhavan's GDN has completed four weeks in theatres, with the biographical drama continuing to draw audiences through word of mouth. Released on August 7, the film, based on the life of inventor and industrialist G.D. Naidu, has seen viewers from different age groups head to cinemas, with younger demographics reportedly joining the audience in recent weeks.

The film is a significant project for Madhavan, who plays Naidu and is also among its producers. Directed by Krishnakumar Ramakumar, GDN traces the life of the Coimbatore-born inventor, whose work across several fields made him an important figure in India's industrial history. Rather than focusing only on the better-known aspects of his life, the film attempts to present his ambitions, setbacks, and unconventional approach to innovation. Its theatrical journey has also been somewhat different from the usual pattern for releases, where audience interest can fall considerably after the first



week. GDN has sustained its run into its fourth week, with word of mouth playing a key role in bringing in viewers who may not have watched it immediately upon release.

"We made this film to honour a man who fought every odd to bring so many things to Indians at an affordable cost, and to put that story in front of every generation," Madhavan reflected. That cross-generational appeal appears to have become one of the more notable aspects of the film's run. While families and older audiences were among those who watched the film earlier in its theatrical journey, school

and college students have also reportedly been turning up in increasing numbers. For a film centred on a historical figure, the interest from younger viewers gives its theatrical run another dimension.

Madhavan, who has previously worked across Tamil and Hindi cinema, has been closely involved with the project beyond his performance. His decision to take on the role of Naidu was tied to his interest in bringing the inventor's story to audiences who may be unfamiliar with his contributions. Producer Dr. Varghese Moolan believes the film's

appeal across age groups has been particularly encouraging. "What has struck us most is how this film has clicked with everyone, grandparents, parents, and now their children. To still run to packed houses in the fourth week purely on word of mouth tells us this story has found its heart."

While the film's eventual box-office performance will provide a clearer picture of its commercial standing, its four-week theatrical presence indicates that GDN has managed to sustain audience interest beyond its initial release period. The response is also notable because the film is built around a historical personality rather than a conventional commercial-film premise. For Madhavan, the project's reach among younger viewers could be particularly meaningful. G.D. Naidu's story belongs to an earlier period of Indian history, but the themes of experimentation, self-reliance, and perseverance explored in the film have helped introduce his work to a new audience.

Om Ka Hari trailer: Raghubir Yadav predicts his death in emotional Varanasi journey

Mumbai : The trailer of Om Ka Hari, directed by Harish Vyas, is now out, offering a glimpse into one of life's oldest and most familiar rivalries — Father vs Son. Starring Anshuman Jha and Raghubir Yadav in the titular roles, the family dramedy also features Soni Razdan and Ayesha Kapur in key roles. The film releases theatrically on September 18.

The trailer of 'Om Ka Hari' focuses on the complicated relationship between a father and son. Hari believes he doesn't have much time left and wants to spend his final days in Varanasi, while Om struggles to understand the father he has spent years arguing with. Their journey brings out old differences, family tensions and plenty of emotions along the way. At the heart of Om Ka Hari is Hari Prasad (Raghubir Yadav), a father who, following a medical incident, becomes convinced that he has only a few days left to live. Faced suddenly with the possibility of death, he decides to spend what he believes could be his final days in Varanasi. His son Om (Anshuman Jha), with whom he shares a relationship defined as much by love as by disagreement, is forced to accompany him on the journey.

The trailer captures the friction between the two as they navigate their journey together, while also introducing the larger family and the chaos surrounding them. Their disagree-



ments, generational differences and contrasting ways of looking at life provide the film with both its dramatic and comic situations. As father and son travel towards Varanasi, the film places mortality alongside the everyday battles of family life — the arguments, expectations, resentments, humour and affection that often go unspoken.

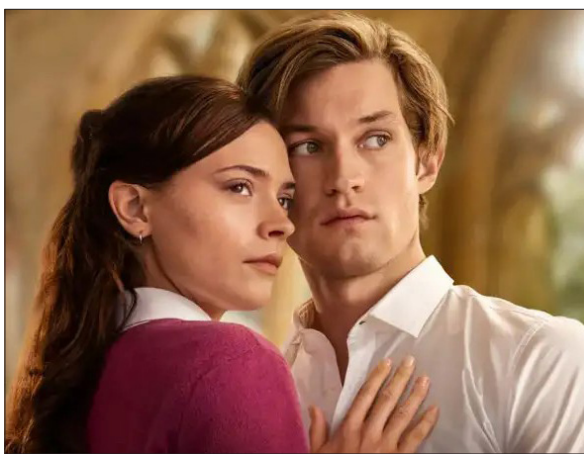
Speaking about playing Hari Prasad, Raghubir Yadav says, "A father and son can disagree about almost everything and still be deeply connected. Hari thinks he is going to Varanasi to prepare for death. What he doesn't realise is that the journey is going to make him look at his life. He is stubborn, opinionated and sometimes completely impossible, but beneath

all of that is a father who loves, just doesn't know how to express it. That is where much of the humour and emotion in the film comes from. The relationship is very recognisable because these conflicts exist in nearly every family." Anshuman Jha, who plays Om, says, "What makes Om Ka Hari special is that it doesn't romanticise family. Sometimes the person you fight with the most is also the person you love the most. Om is not someone who easily accepts what his father says or does, and that is what makes their relationship complicated. He loves his father, but hasn't seen an example on how to express it. The journey to Varanasi forces them to spend time together in a way they perhaps never have before."

Prime video announces premiere date for Maxton hall final season

Los Angeles : The wait is finally over. Prime Video just confirmed it. Maxton Hall: The World Between Us returns for its final season on December 9, 2026. And this time, there's no turning back.

Ruby (Harriet Herbig-Matten) and James (Damian Hardung) are walking into their toughest chapter yet. Ruby has been suspended from Maxton Hall College. Her Oxford dream, the one she's fought so hard for, is slipping right out of her hands. But she isn't the type to go down quietly. With James by her side, she sets out to clear her name and prove her innocence. Here's the catch. The deeper they dig, the messier things get. Truth has a way of dragging old secrets into the light, and not everyone is ready for



what comes next. Friendships crack. Loyalties get tested. And somewhere in the middle of all this chaos, Ruby and James are forced to face the one question the whole show has been building towards. Is love actually enough?

Along with the season 3

date, fans also got their first teaser today, with a proper first look promised for September 3. Millions of viewers across the world have been waiting for this moment, and it's finally close. The film brings back its full ensemble, including Sonja Weißer as Lydia, Eidin Jala-

li as Graham, Ben Felipe as Cyril, Fedja van Huet as Mortimer, Runa Greiner as Ember, Justus Riesner as Alistair, Govinda Gabriel as Kesh, Andrea Guo as Lin, Frederic Balonier as Kieran, Eli Riccardi as Elaine and Dagny Dewath as Ophelia.

Martin Schreier returns to direct the final season, with Ceylan Yildirim, Markus Brunnemann and Eike Adler on board as Executive Producers. Sandra Stöckmann and Ceylan Yildirim lead the writers' room, joined by Catharina Junk, Marlene Melchior and Aylin Kockler. Valentin Deblter produces. Mark your calendars. December 9 is when Maxton Hall says goodbye, and it's shaping up to be the ending fans have been dreading and waiting for all at once.

Alia Bhatt, Shahid Kapoor not part of Jr NTR's dragon: makers clarify

Mumbai : Rumours about Bollywood actors Alia Bhatt and Shahid Kapoor being part of NTR and Prashanth Neel's much-awaited Dragon have been dismissed by a source close to the production.

"There is no truth in these rumours. We haven't signed either of them," says a source close to Mythri Movie Makers, the production house backing the film. Dragon stars Jr NTR in the lead, with Prashanth Neel at the helm. Kannada actress Rukmini Vasanth is paired opposite NTR. The film is being mounted on a large scale, with the makers reportedly planning a substantial production budget.

"Shooting is expected to commence soon, but no date has been fixed yet," the source adds. Meanwhile, NTR's recent shoulder surgery has resulted in changes to the film's shooting schedule. The actor is expected to take around two to three months to return to his normal routine, but the production is not expected to come to



a complete halt during his recovery. With NTR temporarily away from the sets, Prashanth Neel is expected to use the period to focus on the pre-production and other groundwork for Salaar 2: Shouryaanga Parvam, his next collaboration with Prabhas.

However, the source maintains that Dragon remains Neel's immediate

priority and that the film is expected to be completed first. "NTR's film is expected to be completed by February next year, after which Prashanth Neel will move on to Salaar 2. Dragon is being made on a budget of around Rs 400 crore and is one of the most eagerly awaited films," the source says.

Zombies star Carla Jeffery dies at 33

Agency : Disney actress Carla Jeffery, best known for playing Bree in the Zombies franchise, has died at the age of 33. Her talent management company confirmed that the actress died on September 1, 2026. The cause of her death has not been disclosed.

Jeffery had been associated with Alexanders Talent Management since she was 12 and spent more than two decades working in television and films. Following confirmation of her death, Disney Entertainment Television and several of her Zombies co-stars remembered the actress, with Milo Manheim and Chandler Kinney sharing emotional tributes. Carla Alexander of Alexanders Talent Management announced the news through a statement shared on Jeffery's official Instagram account. "It is with profound sadness that we share the passing of our beloved Carla Jeffery, who passed away on September 1, 2026, at just 33 years old," the statement read. Remembering their long association, Alexander said Jeffery had joined the agency when she was only 12. "For more than 20 years, we had the privilege of watching her grow into a beautiful, vibrant, and incredibly talented woman whose radiant smile could light up any room."

'Kalki 2898 AD' makers issue alert over fake casting calls

Mumbai : The makers of director Nag Ashwin's magnum opus 'Kalki 2898 AD', on Thursday issued a statement, cautioning the public to be aware of fake casting calls and individuals who were falsely claiming to represent them. Well known production house Vyjayanthi Movies, which is producing the immensely popular franchise featuring a number of top stars including Prabhas, Amitabh Bachchan and Ka-

mal Haasan, took to its social media timelines to share a statement in this regard.

It shared the statement, saying, "Important Clarification: Please beware of fake casting calls and individuals falsely claiming to represent #VyjayanthiMovies. #Kalki2898AD." In its statement, the production house said, "Vyjayanthi movies would like to clarify that we are not associated with, nor have we authorised, any third-party



agency, company, individual, or casting representative to conduct auditions or cast-

ing on our behalf."

The production house urged people not to share

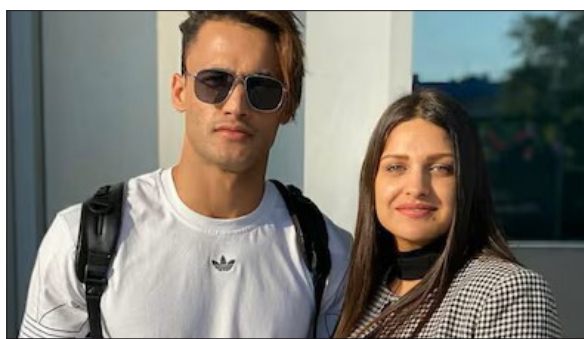
their details with any such persons or agencies. It wrote, "Please do not share personal information, audition material, or make any payments to anyone claiming to represent us." Vyjayanthi Movies pointed out that it reserved all rights to take appropriate legal action against any unauthorised use or misrepresentation of its name. "For authentic information, please rely only on Vyjayanthi Movies' official social

media handles." It may be recalled that the first part of Nag Ashwin's magnum opus 'Kalki 2898 AD', which had emerged a huge blockbuster, had won two National awards at the 72nd National Film Awards, announced by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Stating that they were deeply honoured and grateful to receive the two National Awards that had been awarded to their film, the

makers of the film had said that awards like these inspired them to keep dreaming bigger, tell stories that resonated across generations, and take Indian cinema to even greater heights. At the awards, Nag Ashwin's 'Kalki 2898 AD' won in two categories. The film won the Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment Award and the Award for Best Production Designer.

Himanshi Khurana slams Asim Riaz: "stop playing victim amid controversy"



Mumbai : Himanshi Khurana has taken an indirect dig at her former boyfriend Asim Riaz. Recently, the Punjabi singer-actress took to her Instagram stories and quoted singer Miley Cyrus. Even though she did not name Asim directly in her post, netizens are speculating that Himanshi was referring to him.

"I felt Miley Cyrus when she said: I didn't talk badly about you. I talked about what you did to me. If that makes you look bad, that's between you

and your behavior." Himanshi shared. "Because telling the truth about my experience isn't bitterness. It's clarity," she continued and then added, "when they had no problem damaging my peace." "Sometimes the truth only sounds harsh because someone benefited from the silence," it further read.

Besides this, Himanshi also reacted to Vishal Aditya Singh's latest post, in which he was bashing Asim Riaz. Commenting on Vishal's post, Himanshi wrote, "Apko bhi kya pdi thi

podcast me jake bolne ki, zarorat nahi thi podcast me bolne ki." Vishal also responded to her and said, "@iamhimanshikhurana bura tumhe lagna chahiye tha after that podcast...lekin bua ji rooth gai humari."

For the unversed, former partners Himanshi Khurana and Asim Riaz have been making headlines for all the wrong reasons for a long time now. The two, who fell in love with each other in Bigg Boss 13, announced their breakup in 2023 citing differences in their religious beliefs. However, their breakup recently became the talk of the town after Himanshi's conversation claims. While Himanshi has spoken about the pressure she felt regarding her faith, Asim has denied ever asking her to change her religion. The dispute has since escalated, with both making strong claims about what happened during their relationship.

Jailer 2 set for oct 15 release; sun pictures dismisses delay rumours

Superstar Rajinikanth returns on Dussehra 2026

Chennai : After months of wait and several reports about its release, Rajinikanth-starrer 'Jailer 2' finally has a release date.

The highly-awaited sequel to the 2023 blockbuster Jailer will arrive in theatres on October 15, 2026. The makers, Sun Pictures, announced the release date on X, putting an end to the earlier speculation that the film could release in September. Sharing the update, the production house wrote, "October 15th Alappara Kellappurom! #Jailer2."

The release date falls during the Dussehra period, giving the film a festive window at the box office. There had also been reports



that the Nelson Dilipkumar directorial could face a delay due to reshoots. Rajinikanth will return as Tiger Muthuvel Pandian in the sequel, with Nelson once again directing the film. An-

irudh Ravichander is also back as the music composer.

The first part, Jailer, released in 2023 and went on to become one of Rajinikanth's biggest hits. The success of the film raised

expectations for its sequel, which has been among the most awaited Tamil films. The makers have already started building interest around Jailer 2 with promotional material, including an announcement teaser and the song 'Ala Bolelo'. The sequel also has an expanded cast. Vijay Sethupathi is set to make a cameo appearance, while SJ Suryah, Ramya Krishnan, Yogi Babu and Vidya Balan, among others, are part of the film.

With Rajinikanth returning as Muthuvel Pandian and the original team back for the sequel, Jailer 2 is set for a theatrical release on October 15, 2026.

In the China Masters, Kidambi Srikanth dazzles Victor Lai, and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty also triumphs

Shenzhen: Kidambi Srikanth, a seasoned Indian shuttler, shocked world No. 9 Victor Lai of Canada advanced to the men’s singles quarterfinals of the China Masters Super 750 badminton competition in Shenzhen on Thursday after winning consecutive games. The 33-year-old Srikanth, who had advanced to the US Open Super 300 final earlier this year, overcame Lai, who had won his second bronze at the World Championships in New Delhi last month, 21-18, 21-19. “The score wasn’t really on my mind. Srikanth stated, “I was only thinking about what I have been doing throughout the match and what I need to do going forward.” He has been playing really well for last 12-14 months but I just feel like it is a new day and if I can play my best, I will have my chances. I wasn’t thinking about how he has been playing. I was only thinking about how I should play.” A former world No. 1 and 2021 World Championships silver-medallist, Srikanth will face Hong Kong’s Lee Cheuk Yiu in his next match.Men’s doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty overcame a mid-match wobble to beat French brothers Christo and Toma Junior Popov 21-15 22-24 21-9 and progress to the quarterfinals.In women’s singles, Tanvi Sharma, who won the Taipei Open World Tour Super 300 title recently, showed gumption to fight but imploded at the



back end to go down 17-21 21-18 16-21 to world No. 9 Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan in the second round. India’s Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto also bowed out after losing 18-21 18-21 to Chinese Taipei’s Liu Kuang Heng and Hsu Yin Hui in mixed doubles.Srikanth vs Lai Srikanth showed his ability to fight and rained down thunderous jump smashes to telling effect. After an initial 3-3 start, Srikanth fell behind 3-7 but recovered to 8-8 as Lai committed a series of unforced errors.The Canadian, who won his maiden Super 1000 title in Indonesia this year, went into the interval with a two-point cushion.Lai seemed to find his rhythm as he cramped Srikanth with his smashes to move to 15-11. However, the veteran Indian

pushed one to the backline, followed it up with a jump-smash winner and then outwitted his rival at the net. Lai sprayed one into the net as it became 15-15.Another cross-court smash took the Indian to 18-16. Srikanth soon grabbed three game points with a net shot and sealed it on his second chance when Lai found the net again.After the change of sides, Srikanth was again lagging but kept breathing down his rival’s neck.Srikanth fell 5-9 behind after a series of unforced errors.Left to do the catching up act again, Srikanth kept fighting. From 9-14, two smashes from Srikanth and a couple of net errors from his rival helped the Indian make it 13-14. An attacking cross-court return made it 14-15 as Srikanth kept snapping at his

rival’s feet. He soon clawed back to 18-18. Lai then went long and Srikanth sent one into the forehand corner to earn match points. The Canadian sprayed wide again as Srikanth pumped his fist after sealing the win.Satwit-Chirag vs Popov brothers The Indians were in control from the outset, taking an 11-6 lead at the interval in the opening game. There were hardly any long rallies as Satwik and Chirag kept the exchanges tight.The French pair struggled against the Indians’ interceptions and angled returns, with the Popovs repeatedly offering loose lifts that were punished. Satwik and Chirag surged to 18-11 before a return to Toma Junior’s hip area left him cramped and earned the Indians seven game points. They eventually sealed the opener with a fortunate net cord. The Popovs led 11–10 at half-time in the second game, which was much more competitive. The French pair tied the score at 18-18 thanks to a wide lift from Satwik and a moment of uncertainty after the Indians had taken an 18-15 lead.Before gaining a game point at 23-22 and forcing a deciding when Chirag’s return reached the net, the Popov brothers preserved two match points.In response, Satwik and Chirag raced to a 6-1 lead and had an 11-5 lead at the half. They won an incredible 33-shot comeback to go to 15-6 and then easily finished the game. They never looked back.

AAP vs. BJP Slogans and Torn Kurtas During the Delhi Civic Body Panel Election

New Delhi, Sep 04: The Municipal Corporation of Delhi’s Scheduled Caste Welfare Committee election took place on Thursday, and there was a lot of drama as the AAP and BJP traded accusations. The AAP claimed that the poll was rushed to guaranty panel positions for the BJP councilors, while Delhi Mayor Pravesh Wahi accused AAP councilors of interfering with the election process.Following the poll, which the AAP said was held in contravention of the rules, the BJP candidates for the panel were proclaimed unchallenged. The poll was supposed to take place on Thursday at 3 p.m., but according to AAP councilors, it was postponed and held without them present. Additionally, they claimed that the SC panel’s seats were unilaterally cut from 35 to 21 in order to provide the BJP the positions of chairperson and vice-chairperson.Leader of Opposition and AAP Councilor in the MCD Ankush Narang stated: “The BJP-ruled MCD reduced the number of Dalit members in the SC/ST Welfare Committee from 35 to just 21 with the objective of appointing



its own chairperson and vice-chairperson.” He further stated that he had also written to the MCD against reducing the number of members and had urged it to postpone the election. He had demanded that the number of Dalit members be increased from 21 back to 35 before the election was conducted.“However, the BJP acted arbitrarily and went ahead with the election.”The AAP leaders later protested at the Mayor’s chamber, which led to a heated argument between the two sides and a confrontation with security officials. AAP leaders barged into the Mayor’s office and raised slogans. A heated verbal confrontation took place between the councillors and the Mayor. Amid the commotion, AAP councillor Prem Chauhan also tore his kurta

in protest.The Mayor said AAP had not nominated a candidate for the election and questioned the party’s decision to oppose the process despite not fielding a candidate .”When the dates for filing nomination forms for the election were announced, the Aam Aadmi Party did not submit a form; consequently, the candidate was declared elected unopposed,” Mayor Wahi remarked.

The mayor also chastised Chauhan for ripping his garments and accused the AAP council members of misconduct. “They behaved indecently in front of the women councilors by tearing their clothes,” the Mayor stated.AAP council members, according to Narang, will keep fighting for what they called the rights and entitlements of Delhi’s Dalits.

“Proud Moment For Nation”: PM Modi Applauds the Launch of ISRO’s GSLV-F17 Rocket



New Delhi, Sep 04: On Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his delight in the accomplishment and congratulated the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on the successful launch of the GSLV-F17 rocket carrying the EOS-05 Earth observation satellite.“Yet another outstanding achievement by ISRO and a proud moment for our nation,” PM Modi said on his social media account, “X.” India’s space industry is characterized by quality, innovation, and expanding capabilities, as seen by the successful launch of GSLV-F17 carrying EOS-05, the country’s first imaging satellite from geosynchronous orbit. “The growing partnership between ISRO and Indian industry

is adding new strength and scale to our space programme and expanding India’s capabilities across the entire space ecosystem,” he said. The GSLV-F17 rocket lifted off successfully from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, at 2:55 a.m. IST on Friday in a pre-dawn launch. The EOS-05 satellite was subsequently placed into its designated sub-geosynchronous transfer orbit. ISRO Chairman Dr V Narayanan expressed satisfaction over the mission’s outcome, saying the GSLV-F17 had precisely injected the advanced Earth observation satellite into its intended orbit.Mission Director Thomas Kurian described the achievement as a significant milestone for the GSLV programme.

He said the mission marked the 19th flight of the GSLV and carried a specially configured Earth observation satellite capable of providing near-real-time imaging.Kurian also pointed out that EOS-05 is the heaviest satellite that the GSLV has placed into a geosynchronous transfer orbit or sub-GTO orbit. He credited the successful launch to years of extensive preparation and dedicated efforts by scientists, engineers and other teams involved in the mission. The EOS-05 mission is designed to strengthen India’s Earth observation capabilities. The satellite is expected to provide a continuous view of the country from an altitude of nearly 36,000 km above the Earth, supporting advanced imaging and observation applications.The GSLV-F17 launch vehicle is 51.7 metres tall and has a liftoff mass of approximately 420.5 tonnes, making it one of India’s major operational launch systems.Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh also welcomed the successful mission, stating that India’s space programme continues to achieve new milestones and reinforce the country’s standing as a major global space power.”EOS-05 is a state-of-the-art Earth Observation satellite and India’s first imaging satellite from geosynchronous orbit, enabling advanced imaging across visible, infrared, multispectral and hyperspectral bands,” Jitendra Singh stated about X.

Sourav Ganguly supports India’s high-profile friendlies with Uruguay, Brazil, and Panama

Bengaluru: With just one month till India and Brazil’s international friendly, former Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly hailed Brazil’s footballing history and expressed his optimism that they will travel to India with a formidable team. He thinks that playing against elite teams will provide Indian football players important exposure and aid in their development. India and Brazil will play their international friendly on October 3 in Kolkata. India will play three international friendlies against higher-ranked teams: on September 26 in Bengaluru, they will face Panama; on October 3 and October 6, they will play Brazil, the five-time world winners, and Uruguay, the two-time world champions, all in Kolkata. “Football is a brilliant sport, and I really enjoy watching it. Brazil is one of the greatest footballing nations in the world, so I hope they come here with a very strong team.

It will give our footballers valuable exposure because that’s what you need. When you play against players who are better than you, it helps you improve and become a better footballer.” Sourav Ganguly told reporters on Thursday. Ganguly also stated that the arrival of Brazil, Uruguay and Panama in Bengal is a major boost for Indian football,



providing players with valuable international exposure and opportunities to develop.He also stressed the importance of making such high-level fixtures a consistent feature.“It’s very good for Indian football, and it’s not just Brazil. Uruguay and Panama are also coming to Bengal to play football. Hopefully, this continues consistently because playing against such teams will give our players a lot of valuable exposure and help them develop.” Ganguly added. The three matches will provide India with valuable opportunities to test themselves against World Cup opposition, with all three nations having featured at the FIFA World Cup

earlier this year.India football squad for Brazil, Uruguay and Panama friendlies-Goalkeepers: Albino Gomes, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Prabhsukhan Singh Gill, Som KumarDefenders: Abhishek Singh Tekcham, Akash Mishra, Anwar Ali, Bijoy Varghese, Hmingthanmawia Ralte, Jay Gupta, Pramveer, Ricky Meetei HaobamMidfielders: Anirudh Thapa, Ashique Kuruniyan, Farukh Choudhary, Lalengmawia Ralte, Macarton Nickson, Mohammed Sanan, Ricky Shabong, Sahal Abdul SamadForwards: Edmund Lalrindika, Irfan Yadwad, Manvir Singh, Rahim Ali, Ryan Williams, Vikram Paratap Singh.

To prepare Indian boxers for the Asian Games, a multinational camp and a stint in Japan are planned



Punjab: In preparation for this month’s Asian Games, Indian boxers are honing their craft at a global camp at the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports here. On September 8, they will go for a training period in Nagoya, Japan. Boxers from Iran and the Dominican Republic, including bronze medalists at the Paris Olympics Junior Alcantara (51 kg) and Cristian Pinales (80 kg), are present in the camp. The second-ranked boxers are

among the national campers who will depart on September 9 for a training camp in Nagoya, Japan.The remaining boxers will return to India after the spell, while the Asian Games-bound group would head straight to the team hotel for the continental tournament. “We are training hard for the Asian Games. The competition will be quite hard there. But the preparation is going well,” Commonwealth Games gold medallist Sachin Siwach told

PTI.The Asian Games begin on September 19. The Indian boxing team enters the final stretch of preparation on the back of an exceptional campaign at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games last month, when they returned with a record-breaking haul of 10 medals, including seven golds.

However, the field at the Asian Games promises a much stiffer challenge, with Indian pugilists set to go toe-to-toe with traditional powerhouse countries like Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. “Asian Games will be tough. At the Paris Olympics Kazakhs took home five gold medals, while Kazakhstan boxers won 3,” a coach in the camp said.To put things into context, boxers from Uzbekistan dominated the Paris Olympics with five gold medals, while Kazakhstan claimed three medals.A realistic marker for the team’s prospects remains the recent Asian Championships, which featured a similar competitive field.The Indian contingent delivered a strong performance there, finishing second overall on the medal table with 16 medals, comprising five gold, three silver, and eight bronze.

Proposed traffic measures in Bengaluru include parking curbs and tax SOPs

Bengaluru, Sep 04: Major amendments to Bengaluru’s parking laws have been suggested by the Karnataka government, including exemptions from property taxes for vacant lands turned into parking lots.A number of initiatives to control parking and enhance traffic management are included in the draft Comprehensive Parking Rules for the Greater Bengaluru Area.For empty lands utilized for mechanized parking or multi-level car parking (MLCP), a 100% property tax exemption is suggested. 50% exemption is proposed for vacant plots used for surface-level parking.A scientific, fee-based on-street parking system will be introduced, with fees determined based on the type and location of the road.Parking could be banned on major high-traffic corridors and restricted during peak hours to improve traffic flow.Roads around major public transport facilities may have parking restrictions to encourage the use of designated parking facilities.

Keyaa Banerjee, an Indian powerlifter, lifts Three Times Her Bodyweight in an Amazing Show



South Africa: Following her incredible 140 kg deadlift in the 2026 IPF World Sub-Junior & Junior Classic Powerlifting Championships in South Africa, Indian weightlifter Keyaa Kunal Banerji became an overnight superstar. Fans have taken notice of a video that went viral on social media, in which she is shown deadlifting a weight that is more than three times her body weight. Keyaa, who weighed 45.70 kg, won a silver medal in

the Sun City tournament with a 140 kg deadlift. Fans have praised Keyaa for making India proud at the championships and celebrated her accomplishment in the widely shared video of her performing the deadlift. Who is Keyaa Kunal Banerji?Keyaa is a 21-year-old powerlifter from Haryana, India. She competed in the Junior Women’s 47kg category at the 2026 IPF World Sub-Junior & Junior Classic Powerlifting Championships.

She won a silver medal at the competition despite finishing fifth in the overall standings, with a combined lift of 280kg, including a 90kg squat, a 50kg bench press, and a 140kg deadlift. Ireland’s Blathnaid O’Dwyer also lifted 140kg, but Keyaa took the silver after finishing ahead of her in the deadlift section. She only fell behind to France’s Ines Herbaux, who lifted 165kg.Her 280kg total was a massive improvement on her recent outings. She had recorded an 82.5kg squat, a 47.5kg bench press and a 127.5kg deadlift for a total of 257.5kg at the National Championships last year.At the latest National Championships, Keyaa pulled off a 95kg squat, a 52.5kg bench press and a 140kg deadlift for a total of 287.5kg.

The pilot of an Air India Phuket flight tested positive for psychoactive substances

New Delhi, Sep 04: According to a preliminary investigation looking into the incident, the co-pilot of Air India aircraft A12379 from Phuket to Delhi, which had a 300-foot altitude drop

during its cruising phase over Odisha, tested positive for psychotropic substances.

Technical and other factors are being thoroughly investigated. In this in-

stance, the confirmatory test revealed that the PIC was non-negative for psychoactive substances. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) preliminary report stated.

Naomi Osaka Calls for Respect as Influencers Transform the US Open Experience

New Delhi: Naomi Osaka has urged social media influencers attending the US Open to respect tennis etiquette, saying their growing presence at the tournament needs to be “managed a lot better.” The issue has emerged as a talking point in New York after videos circulated online showing some influencers appearing to pay little attention to matches. Osaka’s first-round win over Anastasia Zakharova was also briefly disrupted by a group of spectators staging a photo shoot while she was serving. After beating Katerina Sinia-kova 6-2, 5-7, 6-1 to reach the third round, Osaka said there was a place for influencers in the sport, but they should not interfere with play. “Obviously, if you come to a sporting event, you have to respect the sport,” Osaka said. “I feel like it could be a good thing for people to make the sport of tennis popular to their specific audience, but I think it has to be managed a lot better, especially in a situation like my first-round match.” The four-time Grand Slam champion also noticed the noise



from the stands during her second-round match, saying the chair umpire had repeatedly asked the crowd to quieten down. “I normally just focus on the match and the court, but there was a moment where there were people shouting and stuff, and you could hear it quite clearly,” Osaka said. “I think it bothered my opponent, too.” Influencers and content

creators have been a prominent presence at this year’s US Open, with smartphones and ring lights becoming a familiar sight around the tournament grounds. Organisers said around 100 content creators were given credentials, including 20 focused on covering the food and beverage offerings. Thousands more social media users have attended as ticket

holders. The trend has not been without controversy. A chair umpire reprimanded a group of patrons for staging a disruptive photo shoot while Osaka was serving against Zakharova. Another social media user attracted criticism after posting photographs from inside Arthur Ashe Stadium while Madison Keys was playing a point against Alina Korneeva.

Nick Kyrgios Cleared to Return After Cocaine Ban Reduced to One Month Kyrgios Cleared for Tennis Return

New Delhi: Nick Kyrgios has been cleared to return to competitive tennis after the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) accepted that his cocaine use took place outside competition. The Australian is eligible to play again from September 4 after serving a reduced one-month suspension. According to the ITIA, Kyrgios tested positive for benzoylecgonine, a cocaine metabolite, after providing a sample at an ATP 250 tournament in Mallorca in June. He was provisionally suspended on August 4 and initially faced a three-month ban, but the punishment was reduced after he agreed to enter an approved treatment programme. The 31-year-old told investigators that he had used cocaine socially during a night out several days before competing in Mallorca. An independent scientific expert from a World Anti-Doping Agency-accred-



ited laboratory found his explanation consistent with the level of cocaine detected in his sample, leading the ITIA to accept that the use occurred outside competition. Kyrgios had earlier described the failed test as a “huge mistake” and a “wake-up call”. He also apologised to his family, fans, sponsors and young supporters, while taking responsibility for the violation and saying he

would focus on getting himself right. Under anti-doping regulations, an out-of-competition cocaine violation carries a standard three-month suspension. That can be reduced to one month if the player commits to an ITIA-approved treatment programme, which Kyrgios agreed to do. The Australian has also forfeited the 6,570 euros he earned in Mallorca, where he lost in the opening

round to fellow Australian Adam Walton. His suspension prevented him from playing, coaching or attending tournaments sanctioned by the men’s and women’s tours as well as national-level events in Australia. Kyrgios did not challenge his provisional suspension and instead accepted the sanction while entering the treatment programme.

The ITIA said the positive test was confirmed by a WADA-accredited laboratory on July 17. Kyrgios’ return comes after another injury-hit period in which his playing time has been severely restricted. Knee and wrist problems have required surgery, while he has played only a limited number of tournaments in each of the past two seasons. The former world No. 13 last appeared in men’s doubles at Wimbledon on July 2, when he and Alexander Bublik lost in the first round.

Kidambi Srikanth’s China Masters Run Ends Against Lee Cheuk Yiu

Shenzhen: Kidambi Srikanth’s impressive run at the 2026 China Masters came to an end on Friday as Lee Cheuk Yiu defeated the former world No. 1 21-16, 21-16 in the quarter-finals. The Indian was unable to extend his campaign at the BWF World Tour Super 750 event in Shenzhen. Srikanth began the opening game with two quick points, but Lee soon settled into the contest and established control. The Hong Kong shuttler maintained his advantage through the remainder of the game, with Srikanth mounting a late challenge that ultimately came too late to change the outcome. The second game offered Srikanth more opportunities to turn the contest around. He raced to a 4-0 lead but surrendered the advantage with four consecutive unforced errors, allowing Lee to move back in front. Srikanth continued to fight and produced a couple of sensational points to take a 15-14 lead,



but Lee responded strongly and eventually closed out the match in straight games. The result also extended Lee’s advantage in their head-to-head record, with Srikanth now having lost their last four meetings in a row. His only victory against the Hong Kong player came in the opening round of the 2018 India Open. Despite the quarter-final exit, Srikanth’s campaign represented an important step forward. It was his first quarter-final appearance at a BWF

World Tour Super 750 event or higher in three years, having entered the tournament without reaching that stage at this level during that period. Srikanth had opened his China Masters campaign with a convincing 21-16, 21-15 victory over Chinese Taipei’s world No.

21 Chi Yu-jen in just 35 minutes. He then produced one of the tournament’s notable results by defeating world No. 9 Victor Lai 21-18, 21-19 in the round of 16. The victory over Lai

had raised expectations around Srikanth’s prospects in Shenzhen, particularly after the Canadian had recently beaten India’s Lakshya Sen and arrived at the tournament following a bronze-medal finish at the BWF World Championships. However, Lee proved too strong in the quarter-finals and brought Srikanth’s campaign to a close. Srikanth’s run nevertheless gave him a quarter-final finish at one of the season’s biggest BWF World Tour events.

BCCI Backs Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s Sachin-Like Career Aspirations

Mumbai: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s astonishing rise has prompted the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to take a long-term view of his development, with secretary Devajit Saikia insisting the 15-year-old must be prepared for sustained success. The board wants the teenage sensation to follow the path of legends such as Sachin Tendulkar and build a lasting international career. Sooryavanshi’s future was discussed at the BCCI’s high-level review meeting in Mumbai on Thursday. Speaking after the meeting, Saikia said the board was closely monitoring the youngster, while his participation in the Duleep Trophy final will depend on India head coach Gautam Gambhir’s decision. “We want Vaibhav Sooryavanshi or any player of his stature to continue and serve like Sachin Tendulkar did for the country or other players who in the past became legends,” Saikia said. “So we look at Vaibhav in a very serious manner. He’s



monitored from every angle and every step he is taking forward in his international career. The BCCI is taking a very close look at his future.” Saikia made it clear that the board’s priority is to protect Sooryavanshi’s long-term prospects rather than chase immediate results.

“We are very cautious that every right step he should take forward so that it should not be a one series or one year wonder,” Saikia added. The teenager has already ex-

perienced both the highs and challenges that come with his rapid rise. After his sensational IPL 2026 campaign, Sooryavanshi became India’s youngest men’s international debutant, although his first T20I series against England did not go entirely to plan before he responded with 151 runs in three matches against Zimbabwe. Sooryavanshi’s domestic form has continued to attract attention. He scored 92 off 81 balls in the Duleep Trophy semi-final against

Central Zone, becoming the youngest batter in the tournament’s history to register a half-century, before adding a brisk 40 in the second innings as East Zone reached the final. His place in the final, however, remains subject to Gambhir’s call. East Zone will face South Zone at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai from September 6, with KL Rahul, Devdutt Padikkal and Mohammed Siraj asked to play for South Zone.

Smriti Mandhana Scripts History With Record T20I Century Against Hong Kong, Sets New Milestone

New Delhi: Smriti Mandhana produced a stunning batting display against Hong Kong on Thursday, smashing a record-breaking century to send a strong warning to Pakistan ahead of their Women’s Asia Cup clash on September 5. The India opener reached her hundred off just 57 balls, becoming the first Indian woman to score multiple centuries in T20Is. Her latest landmark also took her tally to 18 centuries in international cricket, moving her clear of Australia’s Meg Lanning and South Africa’s Laura Wolvaardt, who have 17 each. Mandhana eventually scored 124 runs off 64 balls with 14 fours and seven sixes. Mandhana’s innings came at an important time for India.

The seven-time champions had opened their campaign with a 94-run win over Thailand, but their batting had shown vulnerability as several top-order batters struggled. Smriti Mandhana became the leading century-maker in women’s international cricket with 18 centuries. She went past Meg Lanning and Laura Wolvaardt, who jointly held the record with 17 hundreds. Smriti Mandhana became the first Indian woman to score multiple T20I centuries. Smriti Mandhana recorded the highest individual score by an Indian in Women’s T20Is, surpassing her own previous best of 112 against England



in Nottingham last year. Smriti Mandhana became the leading run-scorer in women’s international cricket, surpassing Mithali Raj’s tally of 10,868 runs. Smriti Mandhana recorded the highest individual score in Women’s T20 Asia Cup history, surpassing Chamari Athapaththu’s 119 against Malaysia in 2024. Smriti Mandhana became the second batter to score a century in Women’s Asia Cup history, after Chamari Athapaththu. Mandhana initially took her time before

launching into Hong Kong’s attack. She brought up her half-century from 39 balls, but accelerated dramatically thereafter. The left-hander began finding the boundary with greater regularity in the middle overs. She drove an overpitched delivery through the off side before pulling and sweeping the Hong Kong bowlers into the gaps. She then took the attack to Maryam Bibi, launching successive sixes — one straight down the ground and another over deep square leg.

FIFA Accuses UEFA of Smear Campaign Against Gianni Infantino Over Claims

New Delhi: FIFA accused UEFA of waging a “smear campaign” against it and President Gianni Infantino, escalating a dispute over the abandoned proposal to sell a stake in the governing body’s commercial rights, according to a court filing seen by Reuters. UEFA last week submitted an ex parte application in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York seeking permission to obtain testimony and documents from U.S.-based entities for use in potential criminal proceedings in Switzerland. “While these applications are styled as legal pleadings with captions and docket numbers, they are little more than press releases in further support of UEFA’s smear campaign against FIFA and its leadership,” FIFA said in the filing. Reuters has contacted FIFA and UEFA for comment. UEFA said it was considering criminal proceedings against Infantino and other FIFA officials over FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE), a proposed entity that would have held commercial rights linked to the men’s and women’s World Cups. UEFA alleged the proposal was developed without adequate consultation with FIFA’s governing bodies and 211 member associations. In a motion to intervene seen by Reuters filed on September 1 by FIFA (AMERICAS) Inc. and FWC2026 US, Inc., FIFA asked the court to defer ruling on UEFA’s application or allow it



to oppose the request. FIFA argued that UEFA was seeking discovery for “purportedly contemplated (but non-existent) Swiss criminal proceedings” and that the world governing body also alleged UEFA had sought to derail the FFE proposal from the outset. The proposal was withdrawn on July 31 after opposition from UEFA and other regional governing bodies. Infantino, up for re-election for a fourth term in March 2027, has been criticised since tabling the now-abandoned proposal, with several countries withdrawing their support for his candidacy. The Swiss-Italian administrator is under pressure from three confederations to resign, including UEFA, the Asian Football Confederation, and CONCACAF, which represents North and Central America and the Caribbean. The regional governing bodies have discussed a potential vote of no confidence in Infantino. Infantino, who retains support from the African and

South American confederations, has sought to sideline the confederations and appeal directly to individual members. FIFA accused UEFA of a smear campaign over a failed proposal to sell a stake in FIFA’s commercial rights, leading to legal disputes in the US. UEFA seeks testimony for possible criminal proceedings related to FIFA Forward Enterprise, a plan to hold World Cup rights, which UEFA opposed for lack of consultation. The proposal was withdrawn amid regional opposition. FIFA President Gianni Infantino faces mounting pressure and calls for resignation from UEFA and other confederations ahead of his 2027 re-election bid. The three confederations issued a strongly worded open letter on Monday, taking aim at the way FIFA president Gianni Infantino and his administration handled the proposal. They rejected FIFA’s explanation that the controversy was simply a communication failure and argued that the episode reflected a much deeper problem with how decisions are being made at the top of world football. “This is about something more fundamental: the integrity of the game, and the integrity of those elected to lead it,” the three confederations said. They also questioned FIFA’s decision to review the episode internally, insisting that any investigation must be carried out by a fully independent third party.