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weather report

Kolkata Weather

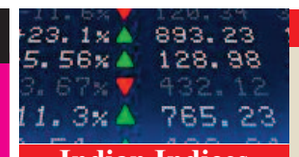
33 ℃ | ℉

Precipitation 75%

Humidity 90%

Wind 8 km/h

Mostly cloudy with a t-storm



Indian Indices

NIFTY 50		
25149.85	-205.40	-0.81
SENSEX		
82500.47	-689.81	-0.83
NIFTY BANK		
56754.70	-201.30	-0.35
NIFTY IT		
37693.25	-683.40	-1.78
BSE SMALLCAP		
54484.76	-383.93	-0.70

Gold Rates

Today gold price in Kolkata

99,710 91,400

»

Today gold price in Bangalore

99,710 91,400

»

Today gold price in India

99,710 (₹710) 91,400 (₹650)

SUNDAY, 13 JULY 2025. KOLKATA VOLUME 3 ISSUE 73 . PAGES-8 . RS : 4/- MORNING DAILY

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Karan Johar Rebuts Health Rumours, Declares "Main Zinda Hoon Aur Zinda Rahunga"
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"Youth Are India's Capital and Guarantee of a Bright Future," PM Modi at 16th Rozgar Mela
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Bumrah Maintains Composure Amid Dukes Ball Controversy at Lord's
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ilgrims wait outside Saraswati Dham Registration Centre for registration of the annual Amarnath Yatra in Jammu.

Clarify If Detained Migrant Workers From Bengal: Court Asks Delhi Government



Kolkata, 12 July: Taking up two habeas corpus petitions alleging illegal detention of migrant workers from West Bengal in Delhi, the Calcutta High Court Friday directed the administration in the northern state to clarify whether they are under detention. The petitioners, who are relatives of those allegedly detained, also sought direction to the authorities concerned for their release and production before the court.

It was claimed in the two petitions that Sweety Bibi, Kurban Sheikh, their minor son, Sunali Khatun, Danish and his minor grandson have been illegally detained in New Delhi.The advocate appearing for the petitioners submitted that Bengali-speaking people have been detained in Delhi on suspicion that they are Bangladeshi citizens and that the officials did not even cross-check their identities.

"In view of the nature of allegations made, prima facie, we are of the opinion that the writ petition is maintainable and this court cannot be a silent spectator," the division bench presided by Justice Tapabrata Chakraborty said. The division bench, also comprising Justice Reetobroto Kumar Mitra, directed the Delhi government to place before it relevant documents on whether the two had been detained or were missing.The Delhi government was also directed to answer if the "detention" was in connection with the order of any court and the grounds for that.

The high court also asked the Delhi government to inform it whether they had been detained after informing them of the grounds.The administration of Delhi was also asked whether their detention was related to any investigation being conducted by the police authorities or state officials.It was also asked to answer whether there was any correspondence between the governments of the two states in this regard.

The bench directed the West Bengal chief secretary to coordinate with his counterpart of the national capital territory of Delhi for compliance of the order.The court fixed July 16 as the next date of hearing.Lawyers representing the West Bengal government submitted that necessary steps are being taken by the state authorities to avail instructions from the Delhi administration.The Calcutta High Court passed similar orders on the Odisha government on Thursday over allegations that two migrant workers from West Bengal were under illegal detention in the neighbouring state.

It directed the Odisha government to clarify whether migrant workers Sainur Islam and Rakibul Islam are under detention by the Odisha Police in Jagatsinghpur district of the neighbouring state.Two habeas corpus petitions were moved before the high court seeking their immediate release and production before it. This matter will come up for further hearing on July 14.



NDRF and police personnel with others during a rescue operation after a four-storey building collapsed at Welcome area, in New Delhi, Saturday.

"Too Many Restrictions At Home": Radhika Yadav's WhatsApp Texts To Coach

New Delhi, 12 July: State-level tennis player Radhika Yadav faced too many restrictions at home and wanted to travel abroad for a couple of months to "enjoy life".WhatsApp messages exchanged between 25-year-old Radhika, who was shot dead by her father Deepak Yadav on Thursday, and one of her coaches Ajay Yadav revealed that the tennis player wanted to stay away from home in October, November and December, to "live an independent life for a while".

In one of the messages, Radhika is seen telling Ajay that she does not want to consider travelling to China, since she may not be able to adjust with the local food. "China toh dekho khana peena will be an issue. Dubai australia wagerah theek hai. Australia family hai. Dubai mein aap ho (See, food will be an issue in China. Dubai, Australia, etc is alright. I have family in Australia, and I have you in Dubai)," she said.As Ajay responded in the form of a voice message, Radhika said: "1-2 months. Oct nov dec kuch bhi merko nikalna hai idhar se thode time ke liye (Anything will do, I want to get out of here for some time)."

Ajay sent another voice note to which Radhika replied with a laughing emoji. "Ghar wale toh theek hai. Lekin thode time rehna hai independently. Wanna enjoy life idhar kaafi restrictions hai. Baaki dekho aim toh yeh hee hai thode bohot course karle (Family members are fine. But I want to live an independent life for some time)," she said.

Another set of chats showed Radhika telling Ajay that she spoke to her father but he isn't agreeing. "But phir maine papa se baat ki toh mana kar rahe they sab sunke. Ki koi point nahi hai kitne hee bacchenge paise (But I spoke to my father but he has refused despite listening to everything. He is saying there is no point and not much money will be saved)," she said. The context of this image could not be immediately ascertained.

As Ajay once again responded in the form of a voice note, Radhika said: "Voh toh samajh rahi hoon (I understand that)". Ajay then responded through another voice text.Another coach of Radhika, Ankit Patel, told NDTV he never found anything amiss between the father and daughter.

"Moment Of Pride": Amit Shah After Maratha Military Landscapes Get UNESCO Tag

New Delhi, 12 July: Union Home Minister Amit Shah expressed happiness after the "Maratha Military Landscapes of India" earned the UNESCO World Heritage status, saying that it is a moment of immense pride for all countrymen.

In a post on X, Amit Shah said, "It is a moment of immense pride for all countrymen that UNESCO has included 12 forts associated with the life of Maharajadhiraj Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the UNESCO World Heritage list."

"Just a few days ago, I visited the Raigad Fort and had a spiritual experience of the symbols associated with the life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. These forts have been the main pillars of protection of Hindu Swaraj and from here, crores of countrymen have been getting continuous inspiration towards their mother language and culture," the post further reads.



The 'Maratha Military Landscapes of India' have been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List, becoming India's 44th property to receive this recognition.

The inscription took place during 47th session of the World Heritage Committee in Paris, France, marking a significant milestone in the global acknowledgment of India's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Spread across the states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, the selected sites, include Salher, Shivneri, Lohgad, Khanderi, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala, Vijaydurg, and Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, along with Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu.

While Shivneri fort, Lohgad, Raigad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala fort, Vijaydurg, Sindhudurg and Gingee fort are protected under the Archaeological Survey of India whereas Salher fort, Rajgad, Khanderi fort and Pratapgarh are protected by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Maharashtra.

The Maratha Military Landscape of India was nominated under criteria (iv) and (vi), recognizing their exceptional testimony to a living cultural tradition, their architectural and technological significance, and their deep associations with historic events and traditions.

The purpose of including these heritage sites in UNESCO's list is to preserve and promote shared heritage based on OUVs (Outstanding Universal Values) found in cultural, natural as well as mixed properties across 196 countries. On its part, India became a member of the World Heritage Committee from 2021-25.

Union Minister Amit Shah on Friday chaired a high-level meeting in Delhi on the rejuvenation of Yamuna River, where he emphasised on cleaning the river and enhancing the capacity of Delhi's Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs).

He directed that the current capacity of 607 million gallons per day (MGD) be increased to 1500 MGD by 2028, a step that would significantly reduce the untreated wastewater flowing into the Yamuna.

Speaking about the pollution from industrial and dairy waste, the Home Minister directed the Delhi government to "work in action mode" to control water pollution. He also asked the Delhi government to collaborate with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) to manage waste generated from dairies and cow shelters across the city.

Expert Claims Pilot May Have Deliberately Crashed Air India Flight

New Delhi, 12 July: A leading aviation safety expert has suggested that the fatal crash of Air India Flight 171 may have been the result of deliberate human action, raising, for the first time, the possibility of a pilot-induced crash. Captain Mohan Ranganathan, one of India's leading aviation experts, has pointed to the sequence of fuel cutoff switches and cockpit audio to suggest that the crash may have stemmed from deliberate actions taken in the cockpit, potentially even suicide. When asked if one of the pilots intentionally switched off the fuel, fully aware that doing so could cause a crash, Captain Ranganathan said, "Absolutely."

"It has to be manually done," Captain Ranganathan told when asked if there is any way fuel can be shut off to the engines of the Dreamliner. "It cannot be done automatically or due to a power failure because the fuel selectors are not the sliding type. They are designed to stay in a slot, and you have to pull them out to move them up or down. So, the possibility of inadvertently moving them to the "off" position doesn't arise. It's definitely a case of deliberate manual selection to move it to 'off'." His remarks come just 24 hours after India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) published its preliminary findings into the June 12 crash, which killed 241 people onboard and 19 more on the ground. The crash marked the first fatal accident involving a Boeing 787 Dreamliner since the aircraft entered commercial service in 2011.

DK Shivakumar's Tongue-In-Cheek Remark Amid Power Tussle With Siddaramaiah

Bengaluru, 12 July: One should always seize the opportunity to sit if one finds a chair, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has said in a tongue-in-cheek remark that came amid possible talks of a power-sharing agreement with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.Speaking at the Kempegowda Jayanti celebrations organised by the Bangalore Advocates Association on Friday, Mr Shivakumar said: "I see many lawyers here who are not sitting despite the availability of vacant chairs, while we are all scrambling to find one. Getting a chair is not easy. When you get the opportunity, you must sit and not let go of the chance."

He added: "It seems many of you are very sacrificial by nature. Such a good building has been made with great chairs, make use of the opportunities when you get them."The Deputy Chief Minister's comments drew chuckles from the audience but is also seen as a veiled reference to the ongoing power struggle



within the ruling Congress in the southern state. Rumours had persisted since the Congress came to power in May 2023 that a power-sharing deal existed between Mr Siddaramaiah and his deputy. According to the purported agreement - which the Congress neither confirmed nor denied - Mr Siddaramaiah was to serve the first two-and-a-half years, after which Mr Shivakumar would take over as Chief Minister.

On Thursday, Mr Siddaramaiah, however, firmly asserted that he would complete the full term and that the Chief Minister's post was "not vacant." "The question of leadership is not with the high command. It (Shivakumar's challenge) has been resolved. I am getting the full support of the Congress high command... I wouldn't have continued if they had not supported me," he told after returning from New Delhi.Mr Shivakumar, who also returned from the Capital, refused to comment on the Chief Minister's remarks. "The Chief Minister has already communicated what the high command has said. He has answered all your questions. After that, it's not right for me to keep making statements or for you to keep asking them. I don't know why you're so concerned or in such a hurry about me. I'm certainly not in a hurry," he said.State Home Minister G Parameshwara said the confusion could have been avoided if the party's general secretaries had addressed the issue earlier.<

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has doubled down in the power struggle with his deputy, DK Shivakumar, claiming the full support of the Congress' top leaders, including the Gandhi family."The question of leadership is not with the high command. It (Shivakumar's challenge) has been resolved. I am getting the full support of the Congress high command... wouldn't have continued if they had not supported me," the Chief Minister told Friday in Delhi.Siddaramaiah and DKS, as Shivakumar is popularly called, are both in the city, ostensibly to discuss party appointments and invite Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for a state event.

Weather Permitting, Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla Likely To Reach Earth On July 15

New Delhi, 12 July: India's space exploration efforts are poised to mark a historic milestone as Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, the first Indian to visit the International Space Station (ISS), prepares to return to Earth following a successful mission under the Axiom-4 program. This mission, named Akash Ganga, is a collaborative effort among Axiom Space Inc., NASA, and ISRO, representing a significant step forward in India's human spaceflight ambitions, including the upcoming Gaganyaan mission and the proposed Bhartiya Antariksha Station. Mr Shukla and three crew members lifted off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida on June 25. They docked with the space station on June 26, and, weather permitting in the descent corridor, the mission, which Mr Shukla is piloting, will safely splash down on July 15. ISRO has confirmed that the splashdown is scheduled for 3:00 PM IST on July 15, 2025. According to NASA's Commercial Crew Program Manager Steve Stich, the undocking of the Crew Dragon spacecraft carrying Mr Shukla and three other astronauts is scheduled for July 14, 2025, at 4:30 PM IST. Following a series of orbital maneuvers, the spacecraft is expected to splash down in the Pacific Ocean near the coast of California, USA. In an update on July 11, Axiom Space reported that after spending 17 days living and working aboard the International Space Station, the Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4) crew is wrapping up their research projects.

"Pragmatism": Foreign Ministry Report 2024 Highlights Key Diplomatic Achievements

New Delhi, 12 July: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has released its annual report for 2024, highlighting India's key diplomatic engagements and achievements. According to the report, India's foreign policy demonstrated "vibrancy and pragmatism" in advancing national interests amid a rapidly evolving global landscape. In the year 2024, India engaged actively with the world in advancing its national interests amid a rapidly evolving global landscape. Indian foreign policy demonstrated vibrancy and pragmatism, yielding significant achievements that also enhanced India's global stature and goodwill, the Ministry of External Affairs wrote in its annual report 2024 on Friday.

Bilateral engagements with like-minded partners were complemented by India's proactive initiatives and leadership in plurilateral and multilateral platforms. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) played a pivotal role in steering India's foreign policy and global diplomacy towards pragmatic goals, it added. India remained steadfast in expanding its strategic autonomy, championing meaningful reforms of multilateral institutions, addressing the priorities of the Global South, and safeguarding its security within the framework of the rules-based international order. These efforts underscored India's commitment to shaping a more equitable and inclusive global governance framework.

The year witnessed continuing economic fluctuations, climate change impacts, geopolitical tensions, and social disruptions, with persistent challenges on global health and environmental fronts.India remained actively engaged on the global stage, addressing major global challenges through high-level discussions and collaborations.This included strengthening partnerships bilaterally and active participation in notable regional and global groupings such as the UN, G20, G7, Quad, SCO, and BRICS. By virtue of being the preceding G20 President, India continued to work with Brazil under the Troika grouping (India, Brazil, and South Africa).

Building on the work done during India's G20 Presidency, Brazil identified three priorities for 2024, which broadly involved social inclusion, energy transition, and the reform of multilateral governance institutions.The report notes that India remained actively engaged on the global stage, addressing major global challenges through high-level discussions and collaborations.The MEA report highlighted PM Modi's participation in the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro on 18-19 November. Prime Minister's interventions were widely appreciated across the spectrum of developed and developing countries for being human-centric, constructive, and development-oriented.

This was also the first G20 Summit in which the African Union participated as a permanent member, following its inclusion at the New Delhi G20 Summit in September 2023. In August, India hosted the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit in virtual format under the overarching theme 'An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future,' MEA stated.India also hosted the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit, which saw the participation of 173 dignitaries from 123 Global South countries. During the summit, PM Modi proposed a "global development compact" to promote sustainable development in the Global South--the compact focuses on trade, capacity building, technology sharing, and financial support.

The report highlights India's commitment to combating terrorism, with the country collaborating actively with the global community to counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. India also reinforced its credentials as a reliable "first responder" in crises, undertaking three major Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations during the year.

Counselling Session Turns Tragic: Management Student Arrested for Alleged Assault at IIM-Joka Boys' Hostel

Our Correspondent

Kolkata, 12 July: A chilling incident has rocked the Indian Institute of Management-Joka in Kolkata, as a second-year management student was arrested for allegedly drugging and raping a female acquaintance inside the boys' hostel. The accused reportedly lured the victim under the guise of a counselling session, provided her with laced food and drink, and then carried out the assault once she had lost consciousness .

According to the FIR registered at Haridevpur Police Station, the victim had been called to the hostel with the pretext of seeking emotional and academic counselling. She was offered pizza and a beverage that were allegedly spiked with drugs. After consuming the items, she alleges she lost consciousness. On regaining awareness, she found herself in the boys' hostel premises and realised she had been raped.

Shaken by the experience, the victim reported the matter to the police and initiated proceedings against the accused. Detectives from Haridevpur coordinated with staff at the institute to gather evidence. The accused was taken into custody late Friday night, marking a swift, decisive response from law enforcement .



Police officials have confirmed that the accused is a student enrolled in the second year of the management programme. Charges against him are expected to include rape, administering drugs with intent, and criminal intimidation should he have threatened the victim .

This disturbing episode has emerged just weeks after a high-profile gang-rape case at a law college in Kolkata, further unsettling the academic community. The incident has ignited debate over campus safety, particularly within hostels where policies regarding guest access and surveillance may be lax.

Members of student communities at IIM-Joka and other institutes meanwhile are calling for stronger safeguards. They are demanding tighter control on access to hostel premises, enhanced monitoring, and mandatory sessions on consent and gender sensitivity to protect all students, especially women, from similar harm.

Institute authorities have yet to issue a detailed statement. While it is understood they are cooperating fully with the police investigation, administrators are reportedly reviewing protocols around guest invitations, counselling procedures, and incident reporting. Stricter measures are expected to be introduced to ensure student safety and prevent recurrence.For now, the accused remains in police custody, and investigation teams are expected to collect forensic evidence from the hostel room, including CCTV footage and physical samples, to build their case. The victim has been provided medical attention and psychological support through authorised local agencies.

This case is drawing national attention and raising a fundamental question: can elite institutions effectively guard against incidents of violence when trust and familiarity become tools of betrayal? The tragedy also highlights a disturbing trend, with crimes against women allegedly occurring inside academic spaces where students presume safety.

CPIML Leader Dipankar Bhattacharya Condemns BJP Over Alleged Torture of Bengali-Speaking Migrant Workers

Kolkata, 12 July: Dipankar Bhattacharya, national general secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist–Leninist) Liberation, has sharply criticised policies emerging from the current central administration, alleging they target Bengali-speaking migrant workers through intimidation and violence. Speaking at a rally in Kolkata, Bhattacharya sounded an alarm over what he described as systematic harassment of migrants—actions he labelled as divisive, dangerous, and violating constitutional rights.

Bhattacharya's address drew on recent reports of mistreatment of Bengalis across BJP-ruled states. He spotlighted incidents of detention, beatings, and forced deportations aimed at individuals who spoke Bengali or showed ethnic identity, insisting that these people are being treated as "enemy aliens." He framed such tactics as a coordinated campaign of "ethno-linguistic profiling" and coercion targeting India's poorest citizens, particularly rural migrants seeking work in construction, factories, and services in Delhi, Odisha, and elsewhere.

Citing allegations documented by opposition parties and left-wing groups, Bhattacharya accused the administration of ignoring legal safeguards. He called for accountability at the highest levels, urging judicial intervention to curtail what he called a slide toward authoritarianism rooted in nationalism and xenophobia. Bhattacharya warned that these abuses represent a threat not only to Bengalis, but to democratic pluralism and social equity across India.

The CPIML leader contrasted these developments with constitutional values, emphasising that discrimination based on language, origin, or religion is anathema to India's founding principles. He pointed to the surge in migrant-worker repression coinciding with political setbacks for the ruling party in states like West Bengal, alleging a linkage between electoral frustration and punitive cultural targeting.

Bhattacharya described the harassment as extending beyond mere investigation and demanded a robust federal response. He urged state governments—particularly Opposition-led administrations—to act boldly, verifying migrants' documents, providing legal support, and resisting what he termed "illegal overreach" by central agencies. The CPIML offered to assist victim families in filing legal cases and public interest litigation, aiming to protect affected migrants' constitutional guarantees.

They pointed to several disturbing high-profile cases: in Delhi, Bengali residents alleged they were wrongly arrested and beaten to coerce confessions, despite documentary proof of their citizenship; in Odisha, more than 200 Bengali workers were detained and branded illegal immigrants, even after producing valid identity cards. Such events, Bhattacharya argued, echo a broader history of anti-Bengali sentiment in India—seen during past upheavals in Assam, Tripura, and other states—reviving dangerous patterns of exclusion and violence .

Bhattacharya called out Chief Ministers, law ministers, and state police as failing to act swiftly or decisively enough. He demanded immediate remedial action: the release of detainees, the return of confiscated documentation, and full compensation for harm inflicted. Speaking with urgency, he warned that continued negligence risked serious communal tensions, prompting migrant-worker unrest and reactions among Bengali communities across India.

Critics of his stance accused the CPIML of exaggeration, suggesting security measures are driven by national concern over illegal immigration. In response, Bhattacharya dismissed such arguments as excuses for jingoism, reiterating that verifiable Indian citizens should not be harassed for linguistic identity. He underscored that most victims were not undocumented migrants but long-term Indian residents whose only "crime" was speaking Bengali.

Looking ahead, Bhattacharya announced a CPIML campaign to elevate these cases nationally, pressing the Supreme Court to investigate and directing party cadres to organise legal clinics in migrant-heavy regions. He emphasised that such mobilisations will intensify unless state governments act assertively to uphold migrant rights and inter-state mobility protections. The party also plans to document each allegation comprehensively, compiling dossiers for tabling in Parliament and filing in high courts. Bhattacharya concluded with a warning: "If unchecked, the targeting of one community today could become broader tomorrow. We fight not for Bengali pride, but for Indian democracy."

Nearly 800 Palestinians Killed at Gaza Aid Sites, UN Warns of Ongoing Tragedy

Gaza, 12 July: The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has released a harrowing report confirming that at least 798 Palestinians were killed in the past six weeks while attempting to access food aid in Gaza. This grim tally includes 615 fatalities near distribution centres run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF)—a U.S.- and Israeli-backed operation—plus another 183 deaths along aid convoy routes .Since May 27, the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation has operated just four aid hubs across the enclave, replacing the more extensive UN-led network of around 400 sites. The result, according to OHCHR spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani, has been chaotic and deadly: "Up until the seventh of July… we've recorded 798 killings," she announced in Geneva. "Most of the injuries are gunshot wounds" .

Video and witness accounts have portrayed desperate crowds gathering at aid points in zones under heavy Israeli military presence. The UN has expressed concern over potential atrocity crimes occurring when people queue "for essential supplies such as food." It called the GHF's model "inherently unsafe" and said it violates longstanding humanitarian standards.

The GHF, for its part, has strongly rejected the UN figures. It asserts that "the most deadly attacks on aid sites have been linked to UN convoys," not their operations, and denies responsibility for any fatalities near its hubs, accusing Israeli forces of being to blame. Nevertheless, independent reports and witness testimony have repeatedly pointed to gunshots—sometimes from



soldiers—as people jostled for a share of limited supplies.

Medical teams from Médecins Sans Frontières warn that malnutrition in Gaza has reached "unprecedented levels." Cases of acute hunger and deprivation have nearly quadrupled at clinics, with hundreds of pregnant women and young children now requiring emergency nutritional care . Food prices have soared—flour now costs up to $30 per kilo—forcing families to ration meals to a single bowl of lentils or rice each day .

Meanwhile, conflicts continue on other fronts. Israeli airstrikes carried out Friday killed at least seven people in northern Gaza, including five inside a school sheltering displaced civilians in Jabalia al-Nazla, according to local emergency services . Such incidents only heighten the insecurity faced by families already struggling to access food.

The broader humanitarian crisis is stark: more than 2.3 million people remain displaced, and hospitals are on the verge of collapse due to fuel shortages and lack of supplies . International efforts to broker ceasefire agreements continue, but violence and civilian suffering persist daily.In response, the European Union has initiated measures aimed at strengthening aid flow, and has even weighed the possibility of punitive action against Israel for alleged human rights violations . However, the deeper question remains unaddressed: how to safely distribute food within a conflict zone where distribution points themselves have become deadly sites. The UN has called for rigorous investigations into each aid-related fatality and demanded that any ongoing operations be restructured to ensure civilian protection. Time is desperately short. As the OHCHR report starkly warns, aid in Gaza has become a matter of life and death—not just for those struggling with starvation, but even for those simply seeking it.

Metro Services Halted at Central Station After Suicide Attempt, Normalcy Restored After an Hour

Kolkata, 12 July: A mid-day suicide attempt at Central Metro Station disrupted services along both the Up and Down corridors on Saturday, plunging thousands of commuters into confusion and inconvenience. Around 11:55 am, a person apparently attempted to jump onto the tracks, prompting metro authorities to halt trains between Dakshineswar–Kavi Subhash on the North–South line. Services resumed around 12:55 pm after the individual was safely retrieved and taken to hospital .

Announcements over station public address systems advised passengers that the power supply had been shut off to facilitate rescue operations, and that truncated services were in place. Trains continued running on unaffected stretches—between Girish Park and Dakshineswar in the north, and Maidan and Kavi Subhash in the south—while the Central-to-Girish Park and Dakshineswar-to-Central segments were suspended .

The incident sparked considerable disruption for morning and midday travellers. Commuters stranded at Central, Esplanade, and Shakespeare Sarani stations reported overcrowding and delays. With buses and taxis already running near capacity, many resorted to private cabs or informal ride-sharing to reach their destinations.

This disruption follows a trend of recent interruptions on the city's blue-line metro network. Just days earlier, a mechanical fault at Jatin Das Park station had delayed down-line services for roughly ten minutes, though north- and south-bound trains continued unaffected .Earlier in the week, a power failure at the Noapara carshed impeded the introduction of new train rakes, leading to partial services between Dakshineswar and Dum Dum for over an hour during the morning commute .

Metro officials emphasised that passenger safety remains the top priority, and acknowledged the sensitivity inherent in decisions to cut power or isolate track sections. A spokesperson noted that while these steps may inconvenience a temporary number of commuters, such measures are essential whenever individuals risk their lives on the tracks .

Trump Ramps Up Trade War, Slaps 30% Tariffs On European Union, Mexico

New Jersey, 12 July: US President Donald Trump on Saturday announced he's levying tariffs of 30% against the European Union and Mexico.Trump announced the tariffs on two of the United States' biggest trade partners in letters posted to his social media account.

In his letter to Mexico's leader, Trump acknowledged that the country has been helpful in stemming the flow of undocumented migrants and fentanyl into the United States. But he said the country has not done enough to stop North America from turning into a "Narco-Trafficking Playground."

"Mexico has been helping me secure the border, BUT, what Mexico has done is not enough," Trump added.

Trump in his letter to the European Union said that the US trade deficit was a national security threat.

"We have had years to discuss our Trading Relationship with The European Union, and we have concluded we must move away from these long-term, large, and persistent, Trade Deficits, engendered by your Tariff, and Non-Tariff, Policies, and Trade Barriers," Trump wrote in the letter to the EU. "Our relationship has been, unfortunately, far from Reciprocal."

Trump is in the midst of an announcement blitz of new tariffs with allies and foes alike, a bedrock of his 2024 campaign that he said would set the foundation for reviving a US economy that he claims has been ripped off by



other nations for decades.

With the reciprocal tariffs, Trump is effectively blowing up the rules governing world trade. For decades, the United States and most other countries abided by tariff rates set through a series of complex negotiations known as the Uruguay Round. Countries could set their own tariffs, but under the "most favoured nation" approach, they couldn't charge one country more than they charged another. With Saturday's letters, Trump has now issued tariff conditions on 24 countries and the 27-member European Union.

The European Union's chief trade negotiator said earlier this week that a trade deal to avert higher tariffs on European goods imported to the US could be reached "even in the coming days." Maros Sefcovic told EU lawmakers in Strasbourg, France on Wednesday that the EU had been spared the increased tariffs contained in the letters Trump sent on Monday, and that an extension of talks would provide "additional space to reach a satisfactory conclusion."

The bloc collectively sells more to the US than any other country. US goods imports from the EU topped $553 billion in 2022, according to the Office of the US Trade Representative.

Trump on April 2 proposed a 20% tariff for EU goods and then threatened to raise that to 50% after negotiations did not move as fast as he would have liked. Sefcovic did not mention any tariff figures.The higher tariffs as well as any EU retaliation had been suspended as the two sides negotiate. However the base rate of 10% for most trade partners as well as higher rates of 25% on autos and 50% on steel and aluminum had gone into effect.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former Congressional Budget Office director and president of the center-right American Action Forum, said the letters were evidence that serious trade talks had not taken place over the past three months. He stressed that nations were instead talking amongst themselves about how to minimise their exposure to the US economy and Trump.

"They're spending time talking to each other about what the future is going to look like, and we're left out," Holtz-Eakin said. He added that Trump was using the letters to demand attention, but "In the end, these are letters to other countries about taxes he's going to levy on his citizens."



Today's Horoscope

ARIES : You're stepping into the spotlight today, Aries! The sun abandons the dreary waters of Pisces and marches into your sign today, bringing a much desired change.

TAURUS : A sensation from deep within is beckoning you into a quiet, private headspace, Taurus. It's important to listen to that inward call—as the sun's forward movement into individualistic.

GEMINI : You've been pushing ahead with everything you've got, Gemini. Now, it's time to enjoy the fruits of your labor! The sun departs from feel-it-all Pisces.

CANCER: It's your time to shine, Cancer. The sun departs from deep-feeling Pisces and moves forward into pioneering Aries today, propelling you into the most important career month of your year.

LEO : You're coming back to the light today, Leo. After weeks of psychological digging and relationship rumination, you're ready to begin crafting a new philosophy to apply towards life.

VIRGO : The sun departs from passive Pisces into passionate Aries today, propelling you deeper into the relationship stories you've been exploring in recent weeks.

LIBRA : As a Libra, part of your mission in life is to explore the complex world of human relationships. This narrative sees heaps of new development in the weeks ahead.

SCORPIO : It's time to get your ducks in a row, Scorpio. The sun moves forward into pioneering Aries today, rerouting your focus from play towards productivity.

SAGITTARIUS : Sagittarians were made to bring laughter and life to this world. In recent weeks, you've been so enmeshed in family drama and personal problems that that's felt exceedingly difficult.

CAPRICORN : As a Capricorn, it's not always easy for you to discern when you need to slow down and take a break. The cosmos arrive with a helping hand today.

AQUARIUS : This time of year has you coming back to the basics of who you are, Aquarius. After weeks of reconnecting with your talent and abilities, it's now time to foster a deeper relationship.

PIECES : Your season is coming to a close today, Pisces. After weeks of leaning into self-exploration and sorting out who it is you want to become, you're ready to take things to the next level.

Israel Vows to Resume Strikes on Iran 'With Even Greater Force' If Threatened Again

Gaza, 12 July: Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz issued a stern warning on Thursday, declaring that Israel stands ready to resume military strikes on Iran "with even greater force" should Tehran continue to pose a threat. Katz made the announcement during a ceremony marking the graduation of a new class of Israeli Air Force pilots, framing the event as a message aimed directly at the Iranian leadership.

Katz emphasised the strategic reach of Israel's air power, stating emphatically that "Israel's long arm will reach you in Tehran, Tabriz, Isfahan and anywhere you try to threaten or harm Israel." He added, "There is no place where you can hide. If we need to return, we will do so with greater force" .

The minister's remarks came just weeks after a 12-day air campaign—dubbed "Operation Rising Lion"—in which Israeli jets targeted Iranian nuclear and missile infrastructure. That offensive inflicted notable damage, including the destruction of uranium enrichment sites and missile launchers, and reportedly removed key IRGC leaders .

Despite a U.S.-brokered ceasefire declared on 23 June, Katz's statement reflects continued belief within Israeli defence circles that Iran remains capable of rebuilding its strategic capabilities. He stressed that the recent campaign should serve as a deterrent to future Iranian provocations—and affirmed a posture of readiness should those provocations resume .

Katz's address echoed the tone struck by IDF Chief



of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, who described the operation as a "defining milestone" and a clear demonstration of Israel's aerial dominance .Such statements underscore a shift in Israeli defence strategy—from reactive strikes to a sustained posture anchored in aerial superiority over Iran.

Experts see this stance as Israel adopting a "mowing the grass" doctrine—intended not to eliminate threats permanently, but to degrade Iran's capacity to pose immediate military risks .With the recent CEASEFIRE fragile and Iran withdrawing IAEA inspectors, Israel appears intent on maintaining pressure and preventing any strategic recovery.

In Washington, meanwhile, former President Donald Trump has signalled tacit approval of Israel's right to strike Tehran if deemed necessary, while expressing a preference for renewed diplomacy . U.S. airstrikes in June had reportedly delayed Iran's nuclear progress by several months .

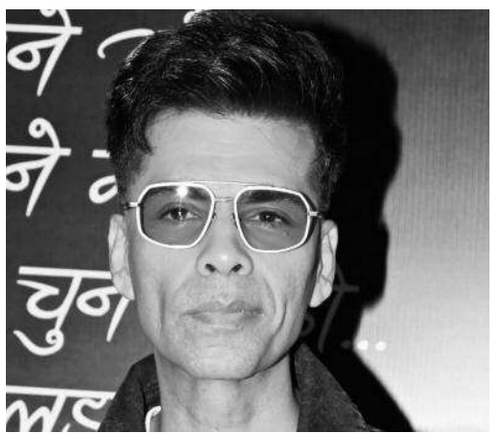
Iran, for its part, maintains its nuclear programme is peaceful and sees external threats as justification for defensive measures. Earlier missile strikes on an American base in Qatar and other regional attacks mirrored, but did not fully match, Israel's operational scope. The region remains on alert, with neither side signaling willingness to de-escalate significantly .

In essence, Katz's warning signals that the ceasefire has not diminished Israel's appetite for action—and that any renewed threat from Iran would be met with force greater than before. This posture underscores Israel's determination to maintain a strategic edge and sends a clear message to Tehran: deterrence, backed by capacity and intent, remains firmly in place.

Karan Johar Rebuts Health Rumours, Declares "Main Zinda Hoon Aur Zinda Rahunga"

Mumbai, 12 July: Recent online chatter around Karan Johar's significant weight loss sparked concern among fans, with many speculating about his well-being after a viral photo showed him looking noticeably slimmer. Addressing the rumours at the Dhadak 2 trailer launch, the filmmaker spoke candidly about his transformation, firmly dismissing any claims of illness. Johar began with a lighthearted jab at social media's dramatic tone, confessing, "Main internet par logon ne toh mujhe maar hi daala tha," translating to, "People virtually killed me reading into my transformation." He reassured the audience that he feels healthier than ever, describing a newfound lightness and joy in his movements. "I have never felt lighter on my feet," he said.

When asked about the cause of his weight loss, Johar attributed it to lifestyle changes—emphasising a disciplined routine of exercise and mindful eating. He denied using any weight-loss medications like Ozempic, which had been circulating in online rumors . "There's only one reason behind the weight loss—I have adopted many healthy habits to change wellness in my life," he explained, adding, "Main zinda hoon aur zinda rahunga... I want to live for many more years, especially for my children". Johar's transparency struck a chord with fans, many of whom had voiced worries and criticisms—some joking that he resembled a Simpsons character, gleefully tagging him "Mr Burns." Yet amidst the humor, comments about potential illness also took root, with speculation growing on platforms like Reddit, prompting Johar's clarifying response.At the event, he stressed that his weight loss was entirely intentional and healthy: "I have never felt better, I'm very happy," he affirmed . He shared that his healthier habits include structured workouts—such as swimming and paddle-ball—and a reduced meal plan, although he stressed moderation over extremes.



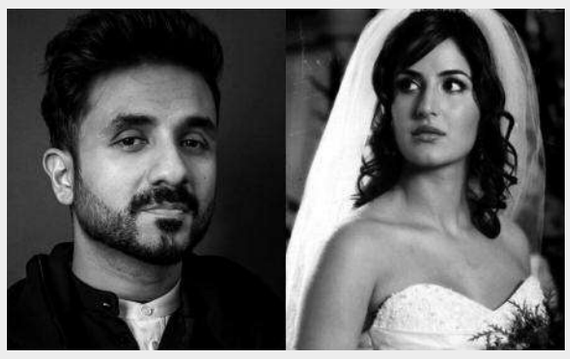
Event attendees saw in Johar's words more than reassurance—they saw a message of wellness and resilience. His mention of his children underscored the personal stakes, reflecting his desire for longevity and storytelling. He said plainly, "I have many stories left in me, I want them to reach the audience".The comments surfaced soon after Johar's image circulated online, fueling speculation about declining health and aging. Some worried his transformation was "shrinking and aging faster than expected," while others launched conspiracy theories about medical interventions . Johar's response served as a corrective to unfounded rumors, anchoring the truth in his own experience.

This health narrative intertwines with Johar's other recent initiative: the Dhadak 2 trailer launch. The sequel to the 2018 hit stars debutants Triptii Dimri and Siddhant Chaturvedi, directed by Shazia Iqbal and co-produced under Johar's Dharma Productions . The event signified Johar's confidence and vitality, suggesting that his career ambitions remain undiminished.Bollywood commentators noted the significance of Johar's declaration. In a media culture where appearances trigger viral speculation, his straightforward confrontation of rumors stood out. By embracing accountability rather than deflecting, he reclaimed control of his narrative—not just about personal health, but about how celebrities communicate online.



Sangeeta Bijlani Spotted At Mumbai AirportDeparture.

Vir Das Recalls Bollywood Humbling: "Rishi Kapoor, Katrina Kaif Left Me Baking in the Sun"



Mumbai, 12 July: On a recent episode of his podcast Moments of Silence, comedian and actor Vir Das revisited a vivid memory from his early days in Bollywood, when he played the third prospective groom in the 2007 hit Namastey London. The story he shared shines a spotlight on the class distinctions and hierarchies that persist behind the glamour of Indian cinema.

Das began by reminiscing about his lack of film-set awareness at the time—a background far removed from the theatrical training of other actors. The scene in question was shot on a terrace near London, featuring industry luminaries Rishi Kapoor, Katrina Kaif, and Nina Wadia. Das and his on-screen mother were placed on the other side of the terrace, both forgotten by the crew when it came time for their close-up. They stood unprotected in the sun, baking under its heat, while red-carpet names enjoyed the sheltered comfort of umbrellas overhead. He recalled how Katrina, affected by voicing issues during shooting, repeated her few lines in a whisper behind all of them. When their close-up moment came for him, the principal actors left for lunch without warning, leaving him stranded under the sun with only a third assistant director for company. It was a moment of stark contrast—protection and comfort reserved for stars, while young artists were overlooked .

Yet amidst this discrepancy, Das found a moment of humanity from Rishi Kapoor. The veteran actor reached out with warmth, grasping Vir's hand and sharing words of encouragement. "He said, 'You are a great actor… promise me you will never leave acting,'" Das shared, describing how those words buoyed him at a vulnerable moment . The gesture left a lasting impact, even as the umbrellas descended over Vir immediately after Kapoor left.

Looking back, Das considers that instance among his first instructive exposures to Bollywood's unspoken pecking order. He had been unaware of "how cameras move," how dubbing affects production, or how closely film sets follow schedules while preserving star comfort. The experience didn't dissuade him, but rather steeled his resolve, especially after Kapoor's affirmation.

The episode also underscored how ephemeral celebrity treatment can be: one moment shaded from the sun, the next hustling through the heat. Das described realizing that fame on set is partly about presence—but mostly about the privilege of hierarchy. The umbrella, Das quipped, symbolized far more than protection from sun—it represented the designated spaces stars occupy on camera and off it.

Since his Bollywood debut nearly two decades ago, Vir Das has forged a successful career spanning stand-up comedy, streaming specials, television and film roles. He has been recognized at the International Emmy Awards and remains a vocal critic of inequities both on and beyond the screen. Revisiting this story now adds a reflective footnote to his journey—one that blends youthful ignorance, industry protocol, kindness from strangers, and eventual triumph.

Just days after this podcast aired, a flurry of articles resurfaced the anecdote, sparking a wave of social media responses. Many readers expressed admiration for Rishi Kapoor's genuine gesture and gratitude for Das's openness. The candid recollection also prompted deeper conversations about how young actors are treated on sets, and the casual micro-aggressions that can shape early career experiences.

This glimpse into backstage life at a mainstream Bollywood flick underscores an important truth: working in film is seldom glamorous for newcomers. Das's narrative throws into relief the layered accommodations made for established actors—the waiting rooms, the props, the umbrellas—versus the raw exposure of emerging talent. It recalls a line from his podcast: knowing the flow of film production early could have saved him discomfort—but he might have missed the lesson that led him to persevere.

The story also highlights Rishi Kapoor's mentorship legacy. Though he passed away in 2020, Kapoor's memory remains strong via moments like this one—when a seasoned actor acknowledged, advised, and inspired a young man to stay the course. For Das, that union of humility and influence proved pivotal, inspiring a promise that shaped a career.

Farah Khan Jokes Her Cook Is a 'Thief' After He Surprises Her With Her Own Credit Card

Mumbai, 12 July: The latest YouTube vlog, filmmaker and choreographer Farah Khan brought her trademark humour and spontaneity to centre stage—only to find herself momentarily honest-to-goodness startled. The vlog feature, filmed alongside her longtime cook-assistant Dilip, kicks off at a kitchenware store, where the duo buys a tawa to surprise TV actor Ankit Gupta's bachelor-pad culinary preparedness. What was meant to be light banter took an amusing, candid turn when Dilip fished out Farah's own credit card from his wallet, prompting Farah to jokingly accuse him of thievery. The impromptu moment unfolded as Farah and Dilip wandered the shop debating a frying pan purchase. Amid playful back-and-forth—Farah threatened to deduct the cost from his salary; Dilip coolly reminded her that he'd use her card—all seemed like standard comic repartee. But when he calmly withdrew her card and offered to pay, Farah's reaction was instantaneous. She darted back to the counter, demanding: "Nikal mera card!" Her mock exasperation gave way to laughter as the tag "Chor hai yeh aadmi" ("This man is a thief") rolled playfully off her tongue—delightfully unfiltered, yet affectionate. The comic moment revealed the genuine warmth of their relationship: Farah's tone was teasing, not accusatory; Dilip's grin spoke of shared mischief. Their rapport, built over years of collaboration, turned a flinch-worthy moment into collective laughter—instantly relatable to anyone who's watched a trusted helper hold their credit card.

The vlog then transitioned to the next destination: actor Ankit Gupta's apartment. A self-styled bachelor, Gupta had declared minimal cooking skills, prompting the duo to bring a tawa. Yet they found his kitchen fully equipped and staffed with a house help named Anjini. This contrast in expectations set the stage for domestic banter—throwing light on bachelordom and modern urban living. During a cooking session featuring tawa chicken—a recipe freshly mastered by the trio—Gupta revealed deeper personal narrative: a recent gastric health scare that led him to vegetarianism. He described a "gastric panic attack"—one involving palpitations, breathlessness, spikes in blood pressure and sugar—culminating in him abandoning non-veg entirely. The confession added a poignant undertone to the otherwise playful kitchen camaraderie. The vlog ends on another revealing note: Farah hinted at her possible return to television hosting, speculating that season 19 of Bigg Boss may feature her alongside Salman Khan and Anil Kapoor, with rotating guest hosts including Karan Johar. Though she didn't confirm fully, hints of her return to mainstream visibility seemed deliberate and timely—earning applause from fans and boosting the vlog's relevance. Across platforms, the video resonated with audiences. On Reddit and YouTube, many applauded Farah's openness, spontaneity, and comedic timing. They praised the "thief" moment as authentic and endearing—refreshingly devoid of calculated PR messaging.

Four-Year-Old Yishaans Becomes "Chef" for Mom Nusrat Jahan with Perfectly Rolled Rotis

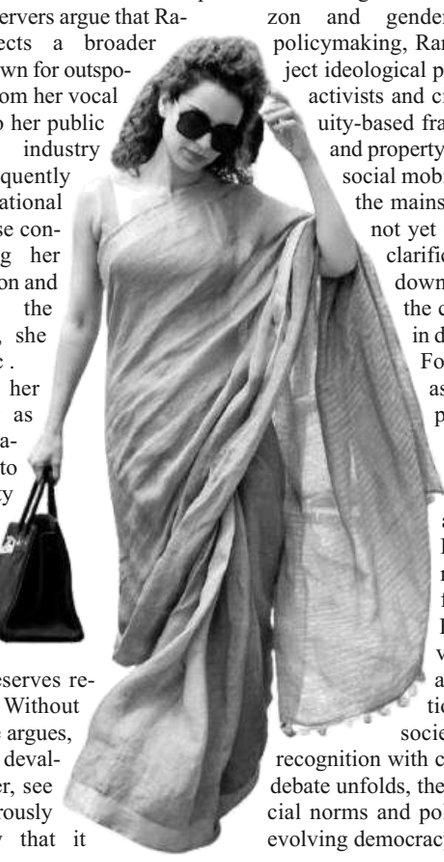
Mumbai, 12 July: The heartwarming moment that's won Tollywood fans over, actress-politician Nusrat Jahan shared an endearing glimpse of her son, four-year-old Yishaans, donning the role of a budding chef. The Instagram Story posted earlier today captures Yishaans proudly presenting a plate of perfectly round rotis — crafted with his own tiny hands — for his mother. Nusrat's simple caption, "When your son makes rotis for his mama," reflected a surge of maternal pride and affection . Yishaans, born in August 2021, recently began attending preschool. Like many children his age, he balances academics and play with boundless enthusiasm. However, this roti-making episode revealed a more composed and responsible facet of his personality. Audiences have responded with delight and admiration, with one amused fan exclaiming that Yishaans's rotis outshine their own — a testament to the boy's unexpected culinary flair . Tollywood star kids often captivate the public with their charming antics—be it mischievous pranks or playful moments. Yet, witnessing a preschooler confidently preparing rotis brings a refreshing authenticity. The flawless roundness of the rotis has sparked playful awe and affection online, reinforcing the timeless appeal of genuine, unscripted moments . whose daily agenda balances film schedules and political commitments, this kitchen interlude provided a precious pause. It allowed her to honor an intimate milestone in her son's early life—one that many parents cherish deeply yet rarely have broadcasted. In Mumbai's high-paced celebrity culture, a toddler's culinary experiment becomes a touching reminder of life's simple joys. Cooking, especially in South Asian households, carries deep cultural and emotional significance. Preparing meals is often an act of love, bonding, and nurturing. Seeing Yishaans take initiative in the kitchen signals not just affection toward his mother, but also early independence. The rotis serve as tangible proof of his growth and care — qualities any parent would proudly document. Beyond its familial warmth, this story taps into evolving cultural norms. Traditionally, cooking has been considered a female domain, and boys are rarely showcased in the kitchen, especially at such a young age. Yishaans's step into this role comes across as a quiet yet powerful nudge toward more inclusive gender roles within the household — a subtle shift that resonates widely. Nusrat has proactively shared glimpses of this dynamic in the past. While promoting her film *Aari*, she affectionately described her son as a delightful presence at home, ruling the roost with laughter and mischief.

Kangana Ranaut Sparks Debate, Dismisses Equality as a 'Moronic' Idea

Mumbai, 12 July: Kangana Ranaut once again made headlines with a blunt declaration that stirred a firestorm of controversy. In an interview with Times Now, the actor-turned-MP from Mandi argued that the prevailing belief in universal equality fosters a generation of self-assured yet ignorant individuals. She warned that the notion of equality, especially when applied indiscriminately, undermines genuine admiration, effort, and individual merit—leading, in her view, to societal decline.

The remark came as Ranaut reflected on her own identity and accomplishments. She cited her four National Film Awards to illustrate that talent and achievements naturally create inequality. Equating herself to none—including magnates like Mukesh Ambani—she explained that a woman is by nature not equal to a man, a child not equal to a woman, a worker not equal to an entrepreneur. Her perspective, she insisted, stems from respect for expertise and hierarchy—not disdain for individuals .

Her words sparked immediate backlash. Social media was awash with criticism, with many accusing her of regressing into a hierarchical mindset reminiscent of outdated patriarchal values. Taking to Reddit, users condemned her remarks as dismissive of meritocracy and egalitarian ideals. One commenter observed, "You can't believe it's 2025 and she still believes in 'fixing' societal roles," while others defended equality as the cornerstone of a progressive society .Observers argue that Ranaut's stance reflects a broader ideological shift. Known for outspoken commentary—from her vocal support of the BJP to her public skirmishes with industry peers—she has frequently embraced confrontational rhetoric. Despite these controversies, including her past Twitter suspension and involvement in the #MeToo movement, she remains unapologetic .



Ranaut framed her critique of equality as concern for a generation that, according to her, disdains authority and shirks rigorous work. By praising experienced professionals and acknowledging class distinctions, she said, society preserves respect for diligence. Without such recognition, she argues, genuine excellence is devalued. Critics, however, see her rhetoric as dangerously elitist. They worry that it serves to reinforce caste, gender, and economic divides by legitimising differential treatment. In an era striving for women's empowerment and inclusive justice, Ranaut's assertion that women are inherently unequal to men rekindles old debates on patriarchy and agency.Her remarks also stand in stark contrast to her own transformation from actress to politician—a journey built on claiming equal footing in a male-dominated film world. In a 2018 Cannes session, she had recognized the shift toward gender parity, arguing that men and women achieved comparable status when performing the same work . That earlier advocacy makes her recent statements seem contradictory to many.

Beyond headlines, this moment touches a deeper cultural conflict between hierarchies and egalitarianism. Should success be celebrated through distinct recognition, or should accomplishments empower everyone equally? Ranaut's audacity in questioning the latter spotlights the ongoing tension in Indian society between respecting seniority and championing equal opportunity.

This discourse matters because Ranaut, now serving as an MP, wields influence beyond cinema. Her perspective may shape legislative attitudes toward gender equality, labour laws, education, and economic justice. By rejecting "equality" in favour of defined roles, she risks reinforcing structures that many see as oppressive.With general elections looming on the horizon and gender discourse central to policymaking, Ranaut's recent comments inject ideological punch into public debate. As activists and citizens mobilize around equity-based frameworks—from equal pay and property rights to representation and social mobility—her stance challenges the mainstream narrative.Ranaut has not yet issued a formal apology or clarification. Whether she doubles down, reframes, or shifts tone, the coming days will be pivotal in determining public reactions. For now, her statements serve as a sobering reminder: the path to equality remains contested territory, even among its most prominent champions.In rejecting equality as a "positive concept," Kangana Ranaut forces us to revisit what we mean by fairness, merit, and justice. Her words may unsettle conventional wisdom, but they also provoke a crucial question: how will a democratic society reconcile individual recognition with collective aspiration? As the debate unfolds, the answer will shape both social norms and policy frameworks in India's evolving democracy.

Anurag Kashyap Blasts Netflix Leadership, Says Ted Sarandos 'Doesn't Understand India'

Mumbai, 12 July: Veteran filmmaker Anurag Kashyap has, once again, taken aim at Netflix's leadership, accusing the platform's top executives of a fundamental misunderstanding of Indian storytelling. In a candid conversation with The Juggernaut, K busy lambasted what he described as "bulls**t" narratives fed to Ted Sarandos by Netflix India, and warned that the streamer's approach reflects the very same formulaic content that once dominated Indian television—and now sells at a premium for subscribers.

Kashyap began by challenging Sarandos's claims of Netflix pioneering bold content in India, asserting that the global boss has been misled by local staff lacking cinematic vision. "He doesn't understand India. Whatever the India office tells them, they believe that bulls**t," he said, calling out the company's leadership for an embrace of algorithms over artistry. "They are doing exactly what bad television has been doing to India…and they're charging money for it," K wrote .

The director revisited his critique of Netflix's strategic choices, noting that many of the platform's so-called successes—including Squid Game, Adolescence, and Black Warrant—were acquisitions, not original productions. Kashyap argued that shows Netflix chose to produce locally, like Kohhra and Trial by Fire, were sidelined with minimal promotion despite delivering compelling narratives. Success, he lamented, often arrived through series picked up from other markets—while domestically commissioned projects languished in obscurity .

At the heart of Kashyap's disillusionment lies the platform's obsession with subscription growth and



algorithmic data, rather than artistic risk-taking. Targeting India's vast population as mere subscriber potential, Netflix, he charged, is blind to the need for better storytelling. "They need to be better than their competitors for the subscriptions to come. It won't come to them otherwise. And they don't understand what quality is," he told The Juggernaut .

This litany of grievances is far from new. Earlier this year, Kashyap took public issue with Sarandos's comments questioning whether Sacred Games—Netflix India's inaugural show—was the right project to launch the platform. Sarandos suggested that more mainstream, populist content might have delivered faster growth. In response, Kashyap shot back on social media, calling him "the definition of dumb" and sarcastically asking whether Netflix should have begun with "saas-bahu" soap operas instead .

This quip ignited a broader row, drawing rebuttals from industry figures like Ektaa Kapoor, who defended the cultural resonance and popularity of mainstream television formats. The clash highlighted a yawning creative divide: Kashyap champions bold, unconventional storytelling, while others point to the undeniable reach of traditional genres .

Kashyap's frustrations go deeper than a clash between art and commerce. He revealed that he had personally authored a 900-page, handwritten script for an ambitious Netflix adaptation of Maximum City by Suketu Mehta—but the project stalled without explanation. Kashyap said he was effectively "ghosted," left in limbo despite his emotional and creative investment. He recounted how this silence—and the lack of communication—wore on him emotionally enough to cause illness .

Labeling the Netflix India team as "morally corrupt" and "lacking courage," Kashyap argued that bureaucratic caution and corporate fear—backed blindly by Sarandos—had stifled a once-promising creative partnership. "They don't have the courage to produce good projects… It breaks you," he said, lamenting that groundbreaking storytelling was quietly being sacrificed in favour of mediocrity .

Editorial

"Fertiliser as a Weapon: India's Agrarian Crossroads Amid Covert Chinese Embargo"

A quiet crisis is unfolding in India's farming heartlands. Amid the onset of the kharif sowing season, farmers in regions such as Bihar are facing a stark choice—not just of what to cultivate, but whether to sow at all. Reports from Siwan, Samastipur, and Darbhanga describe long queues at mandis, sporadic supply of Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP), and black-market prices soaring to ₹1,750 per bag—₹400 above the fixed rate . This is not a localized supply glitch; it is the result of a deliberate export squeeze by China. China, which supplies around 80% of India's speciality fertilisers and is the top exporter of DAP to India, has effectively imposed an informal export ban. Without issuing any formal notice, Chinese customs and port authorities have withheld shipments bound for India. As a result, India's current fertiliser stocks are roughly half of what they were at this time last year, triggering sharp price hikes and sowing season uncertainty. The weaponisation of fertiliser echoes the rare-earth export embargo China used against Japan in 2010, employed as leverage in territorial disputes. India, too, finds itself coerced amid ongoing border tensions. Yet Delhi's response has been muted. Instead of decisive action, the government has resorted to slogans of "Atmanirbhar Bharat," while substantial measures to curb dependence on Chinese supply remain pending . The human toll is stark. One farmer in Bihar posed a chilling question: "Why even farm?" when confronted with erratic electricity and absence of DAP . In Maharashtra alone, over 750 farmer suicides have been reported in recent months—a tragic indicator of deepening agrarian distress . Without fertiliser, kharif yields could decline sharply, inflating food prices and draining rural incomes, with ripple effects extending to urban middle classes. Parallels with Japan's 2010 response offer a potential blueprint. Japan took the rare-earth export issue to the WTO and simultaneously diversified its supply sources, reducing reliance on China by 30% by 2014. India, however, is only now initiating similar steps—months too late, several analysts warn . Much of India's DAP production infrastructure dates back to Congress-era investments.

A decade of BJP governance has focused more on symbolic messaging than on enhancing domestic fertilizer capacity . The current crisis starkly reveals this oversight: Atmanirbhar slogans have failed to translate into agricultural resilience. Adding to the pressure are emerging supply disruptions in other sectors. Chinese firms have withheld spare parts for key infrastructure projects like tunnel-boring machines, citing procedural delays—indicative of a broader strategy of economic coercion . Even rare-earth magnets critical to defence, electric vehicles, and electronics are caught in the chokehold of import dependence . Despite these clear threats, policy response remains reactive. Recent moves to diversify supply chains and boost domestic production have begun, but critics describe them as late and inadequate. The resilience of India's agricultural core demands swift, multi-pronged action: formal WTO challenges, incentives to scale up domestic fertiliser production, and persistent diplomatic brinkmanship are prerequisites.A turning point has arrived. India can heed lessons from Japan's rare-earth strategy—engaging the WTO, forging new partnerships, and ramping up domestic output. Or it can allow dependency to metastasise, risking national food security and rural livelihoods.

Ultimately, this fertiliser crisis transcends agriculture; it is a test of India's strategic autonomy, economic foresight, and capacity to withstand unconventional forms of geopolitical coercion. As farmers appear ready to question whether to sow, not just what to sow, India's leadership must summon urgency that matches the stakes. Fields cannot wait.

Who's the Big River Daddy?": A Strategic Watershed Test for India



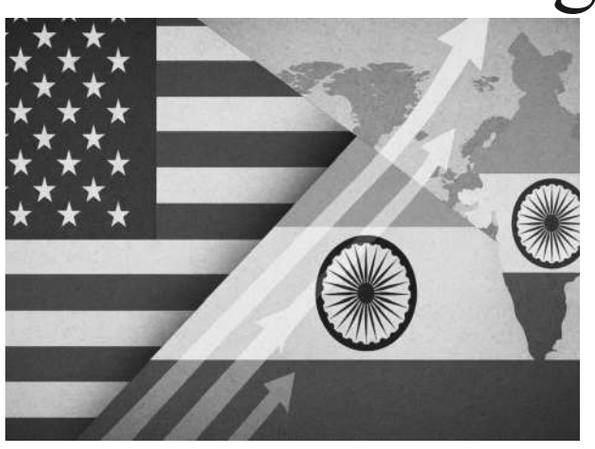
A growing hydrological inflection is quietly unfolding in India's northeast, captured "Who's the Big River Daddy?" . At the heart lies the Brahmaputra—known in China as the Yarlung Tsangpo—a river whose control may redefine strategic advantage between India and China. The piece marks this not merely as an environmental or local concern, but as a potential national crisis. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu's description of China's planned 60 GW mega dam as a "ticking water bomb" underscores the existential anxiety gripping India's northeast. China's upstream control over the Brahmaputra equips it with unilateral leverage that can threaten ecosystems, agriculture, livelihoods, and national security downstream—a scenario eerily similar to Pakistan's concerns over the Indus under Indian control.

India falls short of the downstream peril Pakistan faces in its Indus basin. The Brahmaputra's broader flow and India's geography provide buffer—but that isn't cause for complacency. Rather, he argues, it presents a unique opportunity to intervene timely, before Beijing's full control triggers irreversible pressure on India's water future .China's strength lies not just in dams, but in hydrological data. Advanced monitoring—via satellite, IoT sensors, and weather models—grants Beijing real-time oversight that India lacks. Without similar infrastructure, India remains reactive rather than proactive, unable to forecast water flow critical to emergency or agricultural management .Sinha urges India to invest heavily in its own upstream intelligence: deploy sensor networks, satellite imagery, and research partnerships to simulate, predict, and respond. A science-based shield may make all the difference between controlled flow and catastrophic restriction.Building physical infrastructure like reservoirs or barrages offers only partial solutions. Sinha contends India needs a multi-layered strategy: enforce water-sharing treaties with upstream neighbors, collaborate on joint forecasting, and integrate basin-wide planning spanning Tibet, Arunachal, and Assam. Absent such collaboration, states like Arunachal and Assam will bear the brunt—altered monsoon patterns, flood surges, and displacement. India's focus should also center on decentralised water storage—community reservoirs, check dams, and rainwater harvesting—to buffer local disruption. These efforts must be legislated and budgeted as strategic priorities.Alarm bells from local leaders signal an urgency that must resonate in New Delhi's corridors of power. Sinha warns that bureaucratic inertia and institutional fragmentation will doom effective preparedness. India needs an inter-ministerial task force—and swift cabinet-level commitment to fund sensors, hydrological research, and basin coordination.The northeast, long deprived of infrastructure investments, warrants particular attention. Beyond bridges and roads, India must invest in water security systems tailored to Brahmaputra's geographic realities. It's not just development—but national resilience. Sinha's analysis spotlights a broader regional contest. South Asia's rivers cross political borders, but if China asserts dominance over Brahmaputra, it sets a precedent India cannot ignore. Controlling both water and data gives Beijing not just tactical leverage but structural power over regional optics and diplomacy.India, by anchoring its water diplomacy on science and enforceable agreements, can tilt this dynamic. Cooperative frameworks—diplomatic, technological, and legal—may shape not just bilateral but multilateral water regimes in Asia's highlands.WHO'S THE BIG RIVER DADDY? isn't a flashy headline—it's a call to strategic clarity. Brahmaputra is more than a river; it is a fulcrum where climate, power, and geography intersect. India's response—scientific, infrastructural, and political—must be swift and decisive. Building mirror hydrology systems, fortifying local storage, and negotiating data-sharing mechanisms can safeguard $100 billion agricultural zones and tens of millions of lives downstream. More than that, it tells the world India is not a downstream passenger—it is a stakeholder with agency, autonomy, and resilience.

The Brahmaputra may rise in Tibet, but its fate lies in India's hands as much as China's. This isn't just about managing floods—it's about asserting strategic balance through data, diplomacy, and decentralization. To remain passive is to invite crisis; to act is to signal resolve, innovation, and stewardship. In shaping Asia's next "river order," India must decide whether it stands as water's junior partner—or as its guardian.

America's Retreat from Its Pillars: India Confronts a Defining Opportunity

A transformative shift is unfolding in global affairs as the United States steps back from the foundational strengths—elite universities, boundary-pushing corporations, and open immigration—that powered its post–Cold War ascendancy. Manish Sabharwal warns that this retreat, though painful in the short term for India, might mark the end of the Pax Americana. Yet precisely this unraveling offers India an unprecedented strategic opening—provided it moves decisively in the next 180 days to enact bold reforms . Sabharwal traces America's global pre-eminence to three interlocking strengths. First, its universities, which have nurtured half of all Nobel laureates, and federal science funding—via NIH, for example—helped bring virtually every major drug to market between 2010 and 2019. In 2024, U.S. government investment in biotech matched global venture capital in scale. Second, U.S. corporate giants built vast global supply chains. These companies catalysed innovation and drove productivity growth worldwide. Third, America's open immigration policy served as a magnet for exceptional global talent—forming "brain gain" accelerators for Silicon Valley, biotech research, and academia, with a particularly strong flow from India . However, this ecosystem now shows signs of strain.



Universities face ideological scrutiny, corporate globalization is under protectionist pressure, and immigration is tightening. For India, these trends have led to immediate backlash: falling remittances, constrained student mobility, delayed job placements, and disrupted trade flows. While current developments may feel episodic, Sabharwal argues they signal something deeper—the shifting climate of a world order shaped by American dominance since circa 1992, when the USSR collapsed and U.S. influence became unchallenged . Yet, beneath this retrenchment lies a strategic opening. India, by bold design and timely action, could channel this moment of flux into a new trajectory of national capability.Sabharwal advocates for a 180-day sprint across three fronts. First, deregulation for employers—simpler labor laws, tax clarity, and administrative ease—would position India as a business magnet. Second, decentralizing decision-making—empowering states and localities—can foster innovation closer to citizens and regional strengths. Third, a deep investment in human capital—education, skilling, and research—is needed to match global talent ecosystems . As U.S.-centric global supply chains disrupt, India can become the "factory of the future." Yet, while global manufacturers eye alternatives to China, few leap to India. Sabharwal points out that only about 10% of India's labor force is factory-based. To change that, India needs business-friendly policies, production-linked incentives (PLI), efficient infrastructure, and manufacturing clarity . Equally, India must nurture its own innovation engine. The American model—public support for basic science paired with private-scale R&D—serves as a template. This approach may not recreate America's blueprint, but it can build India's version of knowledge-led growth. Open immigration powered India's diaspora and economic bonds with the U.S.: remittances crossed $120 billion from some 17 million Indians abroad. Sabharwal suggests ambitious gains—30 million Indians generating $300 billion in remittances—as well-structured guest-worker programs gain shape .However, as U.S. tightening limits that option, India's talent retention and global outreach require homegrown solutions. It must elevate domestic research funding, lean into public–private partnerships, and establish collaborative frameworks with other global powers. Achieving this strategic pivot is no simple task. Sabharwal underscores the political complexity: labor reform, decentralization, and deregulation confront entrenched bureaucracies and ideological resistance . Moreover, global volatility—in geopolitical conflicts or macroeconomic shocks—could undercut confidence in Indian reforms.What's vital is leadership resolve. Sabharwal argues for bringing together executives, policymakers, and citizens around a unified, ambitious goal—matching global shifts with domestic strength. This is more than an economic story. With America pulling inward, India has agency to populate a new international architecture. Stronger trade ties, robust technology partnerships, and strategic autonomy can coexist—if India steps forward, rather than waits for global tides to ferry it forward.Sabharwal's perspective is unambiguous: U.S. retrenchment is both disruption and dialogue. It's a rare spur for India to break old constraints around governance, skill, and scale. India must seize this 180-day window to reform—and prove that the 21st century can be the Indian century, not merely the American one .Failure to act, argues Sabharwal, may cement dependency. But success—rooted in swift, synchronized reform—could launch India onto a self-sustaining pathway of manufacturing leadership, research excellence, and inclusive growth. As the structures that once underpinned U.S. global influence waver, India finds itself at a strategic crossroads. The choice is stark: harness bold reform to fill the emerging vacuum, or risk standing by as fading institutions lose relevance. For India to move from potential to power, speed and scale must now define policy. The clock is ticking—and 180 days may determine whether India leads the next world order or watches it pass by.

India's AI Ambition Calls for Democratic Backbone: Parliament Must Take Charge

As artificial intelligence becomes the defining axis of global power, India aspires to be on the vanguard of innovation and governance. But its current AI strategy—under the IndiaAI Mission—lacks democratic anchoring. Ruchi Gupta warns that without political legitimacy and bipartisan consensus fostered through parliamentary oversight, India risks seeing its AI ambitions falter despite significant investments .The IndiaAI Mission, with its ₹10,000 crore allocation and thousands of GPUs, signals technological ambition. Yet its placement in a Section-8 nonprofit under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, rather than in Cabinet-driven policy, undermines its potential . Absent a Cabinet-endorsed, Parliament-backed national strategy, the mission lacks the political heft necessary for cross-departmental coordination and long-term stability. That political weight is crucial: without it, policies remain bureaucratic, siloed, and vulnerable to shifting administrations. India's private tech sector remains largely service-oriented. Venture capitalists openly view the country as an AI consumer market, rather than a hub for foundational deep-tech research. Unlike the U.S. and China, which build core AI capabilities through university-industry-government collaborations, India's AI investment remains downstream—focused on application rather than original innovation. Without foundational research and industrial-scale AI champions, India lapses into follower status. Parliament's negligible involvement underscores the democratic gap. Less than one percent of parliamentary questions touch upon AI, and no dedicated committee exists to scrutinise AI strategy or ethics . Parliamentary processes in other democracies have played vital roles in securing bipartisan support, ensuring transparency, and aligning AI development with public values. In contrast, India's technocratic approach has left strategic debates—on data sovereignty, surveillance, energy consumption, and security—unaddressed at a national level. As a result, India's international standing is affected. While the country chairs the Global Partnership on AI, its credibility rests on the domestic legitimacy of its approach. Without democratic accountability, its global voice risks appearing hollow . The consequences of this democratic deficit are practical as well as symbolic. AI governance cannot be separated from the larger ethical and strategic questions it raises. India needs democratic tools—parliamentary oversight, hearings involving experts and citizens, bipartisan legislation—to ensure that AI supports public good and strategic autonomy. Anchoring AI policy in Parliament would safeguard long-term planning, foster public trust, and connect innovation to democratic values. It would elevate AI from a bureaucratic project to a national project—resilient, transparent, and inclusive. democratic legitimacy can catalyse deeper engagement from academic institutions, startups, and international partners. To bridge the gap between infrastructure and innovation, India must integrate public-private-academic ecosystems under a strategic, democratic framework.



In this pivotal moment—when AI funding and compute capacity are on the rise—India must commit to a legislative foundation that gives its ambitions enduring strength. Parliament's role is more than symbolic; it is essential to crafting policy that is coherent, credible, and capable of harnessing AI's transformative potential. Without this democratic anchor, India may find itself technologically equipped but institutionally unmoored—an AI powerhouse in equipment but a flounderer in strategy.

Foxconn Begins Trial Assembly of iPhone 17 in India as Part of Apple's Supply-Chain Strategy



New Delhi – 12 July 2025: Foxconn, the principal manufacturing partner of Apple, has commenced the import of vital components into its Indian facility for the upcoming iPhone 17 series, signalling the start of trial production this month. Customs data reveals that approximately 10 percent of Foxconn's shipments from China in June comprised parts intended for the new model, with the remainder bound for ongoing production of the iPhone 14 and 16 series . In preparation for assembling Apple's flagship smartphone domestically, Foxconn received a range of sub-assemblies—including display units, cover glass, mechanical housings, and rear camera modules—last month.Industry insiders suggest that these initial shipments likely support prototype builds and quality-testing, ahead of broader manufacturing efforts expected to scale up in August .Foxconn is advancing its strategic roadmap to align India's production timeline closely with China's. While India entered the assembly process for iPhone 14 about six weeks after China, it achieved near simultaneous output with iPhone 15. With iPhone 16, India was integrated into Apple's New Product Introduction (NPI) pipeline; now, Apple intends that India and China will begin iPhone 17 production on the same day . A senior executive tracking Apple's India presence noted that trial production will begin this July, with mass production slated for August. The official global release of iPhone 17 is expected in September, marking another step in India's elevation as both a domestic manufacturing hub and an export base .Foxconn's shift follows Apple's broader ambition to reduce reliance on Chinese output and diversify its global supply chains. A pronounced increase in U.S. tariff pressures—particularly historically elevated charges under the Trump administration—has encouraged Apple to accelerate its shift of U.S. bound production to India, aiming for a full transition by 2026.

Indeed, recent data from S&P Global Market Intelligence shows a 219 percent year-on-year increase in iPhone exports from India to the United States in March, highlighting the commercial momentum of the "Make in India" initiative . Yet, this rapid pathway has not been without challenges. India's expanding role in Apple's NPI phases coincides with a steep learning curve—particularly in mastering precision-assembly requirements. Foxconn's manufacturing in India has also been rocked by a significant reduction in on-site Chinese technical personnel, with reports indicating the exit of over 300 engineers and technicians amid China's tighter controls on skilled labour exports.

An industry observer cautioned that iPhone 17 production demands high-precision assembly, where even a one-millimetre deviation can trigger quality failures . This underscores the risk to throughput and process discipline during the ramp-up phase. Foxconn is reportedly back-filling skill gaps through deployment of engineers from other countries, and bolstering local training programmes to mitigate disruptions . India's Electronics and IT Ministry, meanwhile, has expressed confidence in the country's ability to absorb and overcome such temporary setbacks. Senior officials say the structural resilience of India's emerging electronics ecosystem and growing technical workforce will support continuous production targets . Concurrently, Apple's footprint in India continues to expand beyond smartphones. Foxconn's announced $1.5 billion investment in a display module assembly plant near Chennai—backed by the Tamil Nadu government—reflects commitments to strengthen regional capacity and further decouple from China-centric output. This facility is expected to generate approximately 14,000 jobs and produce components that feed directly into iPhone and other Apple product lines . For India, the intensified involvement in Apple's production cycle signals both economic and reputational gain. The move reinforces India's brand as a viable large-scale manufacturing destination, invites greater foreign investment, and aligns strategically with national ambitions to build high-value electronics supply chains. From Apple's perspective, the successful launch of iPhone 17 from India underscores a maturation of its global manufacturing strategy. The company has steadily narrowed the production gap across geographies: the iPhone 14 began six weeks later in India than in China; production of the iPhone 15 unfolded almost simultaneously; and in India, Pro models of the iPhone 17 will roll off the same lines as in China for the first time . Yet the real test lies in ensuring consistency, quality, and scale. With China tightening control of exportable technical labour, India's local supply chain must rapidly absorb operational knowledge. Apple's deployment of foreign expertise and expanded investments in domestic infrastructure will need to swiftly move from pilot phases to high-volume execution. The coming months will reveal whether trial production this July can seamlessly shift into full-scale operations by August, paving the way for the September global rollout. Success would mark a strategic inflection in Apple's supply-chain diversification; any delay may underscore the complexity of shifting legacy manufacturing ecosystems.

Foxconn's India ramp-up for iPhone 17 will be watched closely—not just by investors and consumers, but also by global manufacturers surveying India's readiness for high-precision assembly demanding strict reliability and repeatability.

HCL Tech Braces for Muted Q1 Performance Amid Tariff Uncertainty, Focus Shifts to Deal Pipeline



Mumbai – 12 July 2025: India's third-largest IT services firm, HCL Technologies, is poised to release its April–June quarter results on Monday, 14 July. Expectations of subdued growth, tempered by seasonal headwinds and tariff-related jitters, underscore the market's cautious anticipation. Investors are keeping a close eye not just on revenue and profit figures, but also on executive commentary regarding deal traction, guidance for fiscal year 2026, and the total contract value (TCV) pipeline. The June quarter, traditionally the weakest in India's tech calendar, is likely to reflect both routine seasonal softness and demand weakness in select sectors. Analysts expect year-on-year revenue growth to be in the mid-single digits—some forecasting 7 to 9 percent—but sequential figures are likely to show a flat to slight dip in constant currency terms. Brokerage firm Phillip Capital predicts around 0.8 percent QoQ growth in revenue and a modest 1.1 percent rise in adjusted profit after tax (PAT) from the last quarter. However, margins may contract by approximately 10 basis points sequentially amid lingering tariff concerns . Motilal Oswal Financial Services anticipates a modest 7.2 percent annual rise in revenue, coupled with a 0.4 percent growth in PAT compared to the same quarter last year, but a 0.7 percent decline from March to June . Kotak Institutional Equities echoes this sentiment, forecasting a 0.8 percent sequential dip in constant currency revenue, offset partially by a strong currency tailwind of around 214 basis points. The brokerage anticipates margins could shrink by approximately 60 basis points quarter-on-quarter. The muted topline trends are set against a backdrop of restrained discretionary spending from clients, particularly in the manufacturing and automotive verticals. However, demand in banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), along with hi-tech segments, appears steadier .Cost pressures due to the rupee's appreciation against the dollar are expected to weigh on reported profits, even as currency gains soften the blow to revenue . Console focus will centre on the company's outlook and its commentary on the health of its deal pipeline. Analysts expect HCL Tech to report strong new bookings, with Kotak predicting fresh wins worth $2 billion to $2.5 billion and a robust pipeline for large deals in the quarter . Broader indicators of spending momentum in engineering and R&D services, business applications, infrastructure management services, and digital transformation areas will be crucial for gauging future growth. FY26 guidance will also be a significant focal point for investors. Following its fiscal 2025 performance—6.5 percent growth in Indian rupee terms and 4.7 percent on a constant currency basis, with EBIT margin at 18.3 percent—some analysts believe management will maintain guidance of 2–5 percent revenue growth and 18–19 percent EBIT margin for the year .However, Phillip Capital suggests there could be a narrower outlook of 3–5 percent YoY growth in constant currency for FY26. Currency shifts are expected to play a role in the earnings release. Analysts anticipate a cross-currency tailwind of 200–230 basis points for the quarter, which would offset some underlying currency-neutral weakness . These gains are likely to be reflected in stronger reported growth, despite constant currency stagnation. Analysts also anticipate a margin contraction as productivity passes reset and billing lags typical in the June quarter come into play. Estimates range between 50 and 80 basis points of sequential margin decline . The extent to which management can articulate efficiency gains or deal-driven margin offsetting will be pivotal for creating investor confidence. Beyond the headline numbers, focus will also be on commentary regarding discretionary spending trends and macro uncertainties tied to global trade. The tariff-induced caution clouding boardrooms abroad may linger into FY26, particularly affecting clients' digital transformation projects. HCL's stance on cushioning these pressures or redirecting growth toward resilient verticals will be closely scrutinised .Finally, attention will fall on capital allocation signals, including any announcement of interim dividends. The company's board is scheduled to evaluate unaudited results for the quarter ended June 30 and may consider a second interim payout to shareholders—a move that would reassure investors amid the slowdown . HCL Tech faces a delicate balancing act: delivering stable financials despite a soft June quarter, reinforcing confidence in its long-term guidance, and providing clarity on its deal pipeline and margins. The Q1 results will offer the first major glimpse into how the IT bellwether navigates a challenging external environment while charting its growth trajectory for FY26.

India pushes for accelerated delivery of X-Guard decoy system to strengthen Rafale fleet



New Delhi – 12 July 2025: Amid growing tensions in West Asia, India is expediting the acquisition of the X-Guard fibre-optic towed decoy from Israel to fortify its Rafale fighter jets' defensive shield against hostile missile threats. Defence sources confirmed that the Indian Air Force has formally requested earlier deliveries of the sophisticated system, aiming to enhance its operational readiness in contested airspace. The X-Guard, produced by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, functions by imitating an aircraft's radar return to lure away incoming radar-guided missiles. Attached via a fibre-optic cable and stowed in a pod under the aircraft, it can be released mid-flight, deploying a decoy that emits high-power counter-signals. These signals mimic genuine aircraft signatures, confusing both air-to-air and surface-to-air missile systems, and are retractable for reuse. The system's capability to project a credible false target significantly raises the survivability of fighters in hostile zones . The X-Guard has already undergone successful integration and testing on Indian Rafale jets. However, global supply chain disruptions, compounded by heightened regional conflict and domestic priority commitments within Israel, have delayed expected delivery timelines. In response, New Delhi has sought a fast-tracking of shipments to ensure the Indian fleet can field the system well ahead of projected threats . The swift procurement move comes as India reassesses its aerial defence posture, propelled in part by lessons from its recent "Operation Sindoor". During that cross-border campaign in May, Rafale fighters carried out precision strikes utilising air-launched SCALP cruise missiles. Though not officially disclosed, multiple reports suggest that electronic warfare suites, including decoys and radar warning systems, played an instrumental role in evading adversary defences . The X-Guard's effectiveness was highlighted whenused by the Israeli Air Force on missions reportedly described by military analysts as "the best spoofing and deception we've ever seen." One expert noted it had "redefined the rules of electronic warfare". With electronic countermeasures at the core of modern air combat, such capabilities are seen as essential to maintain parity with regional animations.Technically, the X-Guard weighs around 65 kg and injects a powerful 500-watt jamming signature in all directions via its towed decoy, creating plausible false targets for hostile missile seekers. Its AI-driven adaptive algorithms mirror Doppler shifts and radar changes, increasing the deception's fidelity .India's call for expedited deliveries follows announcements of supply chain bottlenecks across Israeli defence manufacturing. A substantial volume of defence production has been rerouted to support Israel's domestic military during its ongoing regional operations, affecting export schedules and shipping logistics. Experts warn that redirection of key manpower to reserve duties, raw material constraints, and maritime route disruptions—especially through the Red Sea—have exacerbated delays.Apart from improving survivability, the X-Guard integration reflects India's evolving military strategy that relies on layered defence—combining hardware upgrades with digital and electronic systems. The Rafales already feature extensive customisations: including helmet-mounted displays, infrared search-and-track sensors, upgraded engines, and indigenous electronic warfare pods . This push for advanced decoys forms part of a broader trajectory toward deep integration of Israeli systems in Indian platforms. Recent acquisitions—from long-range cruise missiles to helmet displays and radars—illustrate the strategic depth of the Indo-Israeli defence relationship .

Strategic analysts suggest that rapidly bolstering countermeasure capabilities serves multiple purposes: it protects pilots and assets in volatile theatres, deters adversarial adventurism, and signals India's determination to maintain technological edge in modern warfare. With the IAF operating on a two-front threat doctrine, survivability measures like the X-Guard are viewed as critical force multipliers. Deliveries of the decoy system are expected to begin later this summer, though precise timelines remain undisclosed. Indian procurement agencies are also in active talks to integrate additional electronic warfare suites and AI-enhanced countermeasure systems across various fighter platforms. These include upgrades under "Make in India" drives and deeper collaboration with both French and Israeli technology partners.

In the broader geopolitical landscape, the expedited X-Guard acquisition comes as Western nations reassess supply chains and electronic warfare dynamics in the wake of recent conflicts. India's approach—balancing domestic manufacturing with selective high-tech imports—demonstrates its ambition to build a strategic autonomy grounded in advanced operational capability. Once integrated, the decoy will not only shield Rafales during potential West Asia deployments but also serve as a force enhancer in any high-threat scenario—whether across the northern mountain front, over the Indian Ocean, or deeper into contested airspaces.By ensuring its Rafale fleet can field state-of-the-art decoy systems on fast notice, India sends a clear message: in the skies over future battlefields, protection and performance will travel hand in hand.

Festive Season Triggers 20–25 Percent Surge in Hiring Across Retail and E-Commerce Platforms



New Delhi – 12 July 2025: As India readies for its festive season, a wave of recruitment is sweeping across consumer goods firms, retailers, e-commerce platforms and logistics companies. Reports from industry insiders and staffing agencies indicate that hiring is up an estimated 20 to 25 percent compared to last year. This surge is seen as a direct response to expectations of a strong rebound in consumer sales after a subdued summer affected by unseasonal rains and slack demand. Hiring for temporary and gig roles has dominated the landscape. Senior executives at leading staffing firms reveal that the bulk of new hires this season will not be full-time employees but contract workers brought in to manage peak sales periods. This model gives companies the flexibility to scale up operations without long-term commitments.

A prominent online marketplace is expected to add over 75,000 workers to its workforce. In logistics and quick commerce, some players anticipate even sharper rises in staffing—estimates range from 30 to 35 percent growth in temporary hiring. Beyond the digital retail space, consumer goods and hospitality sectors are adopting similar strategies, bolstered by optimism about seasonal consumer behaviour. Major electronics and smartphone brands, including Samsung, Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo and Haier, are expanding their retail store teams in tandem with this overall trend. Haier, for example, has already begun recruiting and training staff months ahead of the actual festival rush. It projects a workforce increase of at least 15 percent over last year to capitalise on pent-up demand. Staffing consultancies also report a shift in timing. Hiring is commencing earlier than usual, with planning kicking off after Raksha Bandhan in August and extending through Diwali and Christmas. The early start reflects the advanced onset of festival sales and an urgency among businesses not to fall behind. The festive season remains India's peak consumption window, contributing roughly 30 to 40 percent of annual sales in sectors like apparel, consumer electronics, fast-moving consumer goods and automobiles. After several quarters of tepid single-digit sales growth, companies are pinning hopes on holiday shopping to turn the tide.Staffing firm leaders say the current environment underscores a broader economic recovery. With recent income tax cuts, lower interest rates and a strong monsoon supporting rural prosperity, they expect consumer sentiment to rebound. A banking report issued in July also supports this optimism, citing healthier urban discretionary spending.E-commerce companies are enhancing staffing not only in warehouses and delivery networks but also in customer support roles. One e-commerce platform's vice-president of HR emphasised how supply-chain resilience and last-mile logistics serve as focal points in their operational readiness. In the electronics retail space, leading chains have signalled intent to increase temporary hiring. One major retail group plans to boost temporary headcount by around 15 percent compared to 2024, focusing on floor staff and sales personnel ahead of the festival season. Retail heads report incentives and training programmes being rolled out to ensure staff engagement during peak shopping periods. The gig economy's role in this expansion is notable. A report from WorkIndia published in June found that in 2024, blue-collar gig hiring grew by 92 percent year-on-year, driven mainly by e-commerce, food delivery and ride-hailing platforms. This trend has carried forward into 2025, with seasonal hiring surges reflecting deeper structural shifts. Businesses increasingly rely on gig workers to rapidly address temporary surges in demand, particularly in logistics and last-mile delivery. Investment in this workforce surge is part of a broader strategic thrust. Companies are aiming to offset summer-season slump and build momentum heading into the final quarter of the fiscal year. Some online marketplaces and logistics firms have already activated hiring pipelines, with plans to bring in tens of thousands of gig and contract workers.Beyond metros, hiring activity is picking up in smaller cities and towns. Tier-2 and Tier-3 urban centres are gaining attention as core markets—pushing firms to service demand more geographically widely than before. Staffing analysts note that expanding into these markets is essential to sustaining sales growth, particularly in consumer durables, FMCG and fashion. Growth in these cities ranges between 22 and 25 percent, exceeding that in larger metropolitan areas.

While e-commerce continues to dominate the temporary hiring landscape, physical retailers are also preparing for a busy season. Retail chains with stores across India are offering incentives to staff, with bonuses and rewards tied to performance metrics. In many cases, the monetary incentive varies based on the product category, advertised deals and sales targets. Paradigmatically, this hiring surge reflects more than just a seasonal pickup. It marks an evolution in staffing strategy, one that remains agile, demand-driven and aligned with broader economic signals. Firms are now treating festive season recruitment almost as year-round planning, recognising that sustaining consumer interest and supply-chain robustness require proactive preparation. Looking ahead, October will likely be the busiest month, with Navratri, Diwali and other key festivals creating a concentrated demand window. Hiring projections suggest the surge will continue well into November and early December, with emphasis on surveying consumer markets and quickly adjusting rosters.For employers, the challenge will be ensuring these temporary workers deliver customer service and logistical efficiency on par with full-time staff. Training programmes are being expanded, with many seasonal hires receiving orientation focused on brand standards, delivery protocols and customer interaction norms.Most importantly, this hiring wave carries broader significance for India's economy. The combination of tax relief, good monsoon performance and rural demand are converging to restore a growth trajectory. As the festive season unfolds, a well-supported workforce could enable industries to translate these macro trends into measurable sales and revenue gains. India's readying of its workforce ahead of the festivals signals confidence. Not only are companies investing in manpower—they are also positioning operations to meet consumer expectations with agility, scale and service quality reminiscent of global retail markets.

BEML Board to Deliberate First-Ever Stock Split, Eyes on Share Liquidity and Performance

Bengaluru – 12 July 2025: State-run engineering giant BEML Limited has set the stage for a potential watershed moment in its corporate journey. Its board is scheduled to convene on 21 July 2025 to consider a proposal for a stock split—the company's first-ever such action since listing. The move is being closely watched by investors and market analysts, as it could significantly impact the affordability and liquidity of its shares . The announcement comes amid mixed sentiment in the markets. Shares of BEML closed around 3.7 percent lower on Friday, trading at approximately ₹4,425, reflecting profit-booking in the broader defence and heavy equipment universe .Some market watchers see the stock split as a timely intervention to counteract these pressures and revive trading activity. A stock split, often undertaken to lower the face value of shares, is designed to make them more accessible to a broader base of retail investors. While the exact ratio under consideration remains undisclosed, the rationale appears rooted in enhancing liquidity and widening ownership.

Tender Notice

NIT NO: 5(e)/GIIGP, 6(e)/GIIGP, 7(e)/GIIGP & 8(e)/GIIGP dated 04/07/2025Separate sealed tender is hereby invited by Pradhan Gazole - II GP by the undersigned from the resourceful, bonafide, experienced Contractors, Registered Societies formed by unemployed Engineers and Labor Co-operative and either enlisted of any Gazole-II Gram Panchayat or bonafide outsiders, Govt. Contractors. Receiving Date of the bid will start from 07.07.2025 and ends on 15.07.2025. For more details, please contact with the undersigned or visit the website wbtenders.gov.in.

SD/-Pradhan
Gazole - II Gram Panchayat

NOTICE

I am Tanmoy Sarkar son of Tapan Sarkar and Maya Sarkar Das residing at Santrapara, kataganj, Bedibhawan, Nadia, West Bengal, Pin-741250 India, holder of passport no: C9498655 and Aadhaar No: 2093 3622 1815 do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as follows: On 26/05/2025 my marriage was solemnised at Hindu Marriage Registrar Isdair road, Fatullah, narayanganj with Anuradha Shil Daughter of Raton Chanda Shil and Sima rani a resident of Markundi para, Barodi, Sonargaon, Barodi-1442, Narayanganj, Bangladesh. Anuradha Shil holds a passport number A16605830. Since that date, we have been living as husband and wife.

My father's contact number is +91 9903431103

My father-in-law's contact number is +88 01957970495

I affirm that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

IMD predicts spells of rain and thundershowers across city and suburbs through next week

Kolkata, 12 July: India Meteorological Department has forecast consistent presence of rain and thundershowers across the city and its surrounding areas, including Dumdum, Salt Lake, and Howrah next week.

Beginning today, July 12, the city can expect a cloudy sky with a high likelihood of light rain or thundershowers. The maximum temperature is predicted to reach 32 degrees celsius, with the minimum settling at 28 degrees celsius.

This pattern will persist through July 13 and 14. Temperatures for July 13 are forecast at a maximum of 32 degrees celsius and a minimum of 27 degrees celsius. For July 14, a slight dip is expected, with the maximum temperature at 30 degrees celsius and the minimum at 26 degrees celsius.

Mid-week, on July 15, the city will again experience one or two spells of rain or thundershowers, maintaining the maximum and minimum temperature.

Light rain is expected on July 16. The maximum temperature is anticipated to be 31 degrees Celsius, and the minimum 27 degrees Celsius.July 17 will bring back one or two spells of rain or thundershowers under a generally cloudy sky.Rounding off the seven-day forecast, July 18 is predicted to have a partly cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershowers. The maximum temperature is expected to reach 33 degrees Celsius, with the minimum at 28 degrees Celsius.

BSF nabs two Bangladeshi 'smugglers', seizes 10kg cannabis on North 24-Parganas border

Kolkata, 12 July: The BSF apprehended two alleged Bangladeshi smugglers and seized 10kg of cannabis from them along the international border in North 24-Parganas district in the early hours of Friday.

However, the duo's apprehension was preceded by the alleged smugglers' attack on the BSF personnel, one of whom was injured.

The BSF swiftly launched a counter-operation that led to the arrest and the seizure of cannabis packed in small pouches.The incident occurred around 1.50am near Border Outpost (BOP) Tarali 1 under the jurisdiction of the 143 battalion of the BSF's south Bengal frontier.

A jawan deployed at a forward check post noticed some suspicious individuals approaching the international border carrying loads. When challenged, the intruders turned violent, began pelting the BSF personnel with stones and flashing high-power lights to disorient the jawan.

Despite repeated warnings, the suspects continued their aggression. One of them attacked a jawan with a sharp weapon, injuring his left arm.

"Nevertheless, showing much restraint, the jawan fired a warning shot from a pump-action gun. Reinforcements soon arrived, and in the ensuing chase through the darkness and nearby houses, BSF troops managed to apprehend two smugglers," said a BSF officer. A subsequent search of the area led to the recovery of 10kg of cannabis, 100 bottles of phensedyl cough syrup, and a sharp-edged dah (machete) used in the attack. The arrested individuals were taken to BOP Tarali-1 for interrogation.

Horror on NH-16: Four Killed as SUV Plows Head-On into Truck Near Belda

Malda, 12 July: A morning journey turned deadly on National Highway 16 near Belda in Paschim Medinipur today, when a private SUV veered into oncoming traffic and collided head-on with a heavy goods vehicle just after sunrise. The incident claimed the lives of all four occupants in the SUV, believed to be pilgrims travelling to the Jagannath Temple in Digha.

Police sources confirm the accident occurred around 6 am near the Rani Sarai area. Driving from Asansol through Kharagpur toward Odisha, the Scorpio reportedly lost control, swerving into the opposite lane and colliding with a large truck heading toward Paschim Medinipur from the Dantan direction . The impact was devastating; the SUV was mangled beyond recognition, and all occupants were killed instantly.

Eyewitnesses describe horrific scenes, with the vehicle twisted under the truck's front. Local volunteers and highway patrol quickly alerted the Belda police. Rescue teams arrived swiftly and employed gas cutters to reach inside the wreckage, but tragically found no signs of life .

The drivers and passengers have yet to be identified. Authorities believe the occupants were residents of Asansol, but have not disclosed names. The bodies were transferred to the Kharagpur Sub-Divisional Hospital for autopsy procedures .

Following the crash, officials impounded both the SUV and the truck pending further enquiry .Traffic on NH-16 was halted temporarily as debris was cleared and forensic teams conducted their investigations. The highway has since reopened, although traffic flow is still regaining normalcy.

Preliminary police reconstruction suggests the SUV may have been speeding and lost control, entering the truck's lane with no time for evasive action. Whether driver fatigue, mechanical failure, or external conditions played a role remains under investigation.

This tragedy casts a grim shadow on regional pilgrimage travel, especially as devotees journey long distances. Kharagpur police have reached out to local transporters and travel circles to alert them of the dangers—particularly on busy stretches of NH-16 where high-speed overtaking is common.

Local authorities have urged drivers to follow speed limits strictly, especially during early morning and late-night operations. They emphasize the importance of timely vehicle maintenance and adherence to lane safety, warning that a moment's lapse can have irreversible consequences.

In the aftermath of the accident, community members from Belda and adjoining areas offered assistance, providing refreshments and emotional support to the distraught relatives who gathered at the hospital. Local officials stated aid would also be provided to cover post-mortem and transportation costs in accordance with state protocols.

A senior officer involved in the case remarked, "It's a devastating loss—the entire family wiped out. We urge families undertaking long drives to exercise restraint and caution. Tragic mornings like this are a stark reminder of life's fragility."

As investigations continue, police are hopeful that surveillance footage from nearby toll plazas, dashcams, and mobile CCTV may shed light on the sequence of events leading up to the crash—such as whether the SUV abruptly veered or if road conditions played a role.

For now, this collision leaves four families grieving, while serving as a blunt warning about safe driving norms on India's highways. In places like Paschim Medinipur—where highways are lifelines for trade and pilgrimage alike—this tragedy underscores an urgent need for stricter enforcement and greater public awareness.

Further updates will follow as identities are confirmed and the investigation deepens. Emergency services and local administrations reiterate their commitment to supporting the bereaved families and ensuring communities harness such tragedies to build safer roads for all.



Police personnel deployed outside IIM Calcutta after a student was allegedly raped inside the boys' hostel of the institute, in Kolkata, Saturday, July 12, 2025.

Midnight Crackdown at Bandel Junction: Railway Clears Hawker Encroachments in Blink and Miss

Bandel, 12 July: Eastern Railway launched a sudden and sweeping operation to demolish illegally constructed shops and stalls in front of Bandel Junction. The demolition drive, aimed at reclaiming public space for commuter access and upcoming infrastructure projects, sparked anger and despair among hawkers who accuse the authorities of acting without warning or compassion.

Sources at the station report that over thirty stalls, ranging from food vendors and newspaper kiosks to mobile recharge counters, were removed. Bulldozers and backhoes moved in after 2 am, accompanied by railway police. Vendors, many of whom have depended on the steady flow of passengers for decades, were caught off guard. Some were still packing up when the machines roared to life, flattening wooden sheds and tearing down tin roofs in minutes.

One displaced stall-owner, who ran a tea and packet snack business, recalled how she found herself watching her livelihood vanish. "It was as if I woke from a nightmare. One minute everything was normal, the next my shop was gone," she said, her voice trembling. For her, the loss is more than property—it is the loss of income, routine, and dignity.

Railway officials justified the action as essential preparatory work for the Amrit Bharat Station redevelopment plan, designed to widen the forecourt, enhance pedestrian flow, and improve accessibility for an estimated half a million daily passengers. An unnamed Eastern Railway spokesperson said repeated notices had been issued over the past month, but encroachers had not complied .

That spokesperson added that clearing encroachments is an imperative step in ensuring both safety and convenience ahead of anticipated construction work. However, many affected hawkers contest this claim, asserting that notices came just days ago and lacked clarity on alternate arrangements. The notices reportedly cited a July 10 deadline for vacating the premises—a deadline they say was unrealistic given their reliance on daily turnover.



Local civic leaders and residents have demanded a reconsideration of the timetable. A municipal representative argued that the timing and method of eviction lacked sensitivity, particularly since some shuttered units had no legal documentation but had functioned openly for years. He questioned why authorities chose a late-night raid instead of coordinated resettlement or alternative stall provision.

Opposition political voices have turned the demolition into a larger debate about the march of urban development over informal livelihoods. They note that many vendors are women, migrants, and small earners who support entire families through modest earnings. Critics argue that sudden evictions deepen poverty and reflect a disregard for the social fabric of towns like Bandel, where station-side commerce is woven into daily life. Local residents have also complained of the aftermath on commuting experience. The bulldozing debris filled much of the forecourt, temporarily forcing pedestrians onto the road. "People are struggling to walk with luggage," said one daily commuter. "It is chaos."

Looking ahead, officials say the cleared space will accommodate improved passenger facilities: wider walkways, additional seating, and accessible ramps. The Amrit Bharat scheme envisages a modern station complex where ease of movement outweighs untidy vendor clusters. But hawkers now face an uncertain path. Some have been temporarily relocated to less visible corners of the premises, but the makeshift arrangements lack electricity, water, or foot traffic. Many fear their businesses may never recover.

Civil society groups are stepping in, urging a balanced solution that preserves vendor dignity, while allowing infrastructure upgrades. They propose phased relocations, support grants, and transparent communication—especially to people lacking formal tenancy. Similar redevelopment projects elsewhere in West Bengal have found success using vendor-integrative planning rather than blanket clearance. In the days ahead, Bandel Junction will be a test case in inclusive development. Can railway and civic authorities work with local traders to create a revived station that accommodates both commuters and street-level entrepreneurs? Or will bulldozers continue to echo, while livelihoods vanish in silence?

At dawn each day, thousands continue to pass through Bandel's red-brick arches. Yet behind that routine rush lies a more complex narrative: one where the promise of modernisation must reconcile with human hunger, aspiration, and resilience. Whether the City of Bells and Bells Junction find a humane harmony remains to be seen.

To send away the evil forces, we will have to take an oath at the July 21 rally



Kulpi, 12 July: State Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and All India Trinamool Congress General Secretary and MP Abhishek Banerjee have called for "Dharmatala Chalo" in memory of the immortal July 21 martyrs. To make that rally a success, a preparatory meeting was held at the party office in Usti district on Saturday afternoon at the call of the Minority Cell of the Sundarbans Organizational District. The chairman of the District Minority Cell and MLA of Magrahat West, Gias Uddin Molla, Kulpi Block Minority Cell President Abdur Rahim Molla and the presidents of 17 blocks were present at that preparatory meeting. At that meeting, Kulpi Block Minority Cell President Abdur Rahim Molla said that the evil force called BJP in the state is trying to destroy the unity and harmony of Bengal by doing politics of division among us. Our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is fighting against this and from that rally our leader Mamata Banerjee and our MP Abhishek Banerjee. Our leaders are calling for a religious procession on the occasion of the martyrdom of July 21. Responding to their call, we must fill the streets of Kolkata on that day and give a message that BJP has no existence in our state. Keeping in mind the message that our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and MP Abhishek Banerjee will give from that day's rally, we must expel that evil force from Bengal in the 2026 assembly elections.

Political Storm Erupts in Khejuri After Double Death Sparks Murder Claims

Khejuri, 12 July: A double fatality in the rural village of Bhangonmari under Khejuri police station has escalated into a heated political confrontation, drawing in regional leaders and casting a shadow over communal harmony. The unfortunate incident, which occurred in the early hours following a Muharram night event, has divided opinion sharply between rival political factions and spotlighted tensions in this hinterland district of Purba Medinipur.

Friday night's Muharram gathering, attended by residents of Bhangonmari, concluded without incident. However, tragedy struck the next morning when two villagers, identified as Sudhir Paik and Sujit Das, were discovered dead a short distance from the event site. Both men, long-time community members, showed multiple injuries. Their families quickly alleged foul play, insisting they had been murdered during the night. No formal police statement has been issued thus far.

BJP leader and Nandigram MLA, Suvendu Adhikari, visited Khejuri on Saturday morning and vehemently accused those affiliated with the ruling party of orchestrating the killings. He proclaimed loudly that there was "no doubt this is murder", urging the state government to permit an autopsy at a central hospital with independent doctors present, and also called for the presence of family members during the proceedings. Adding clout to his words, Adhikari announced forthcoming protests: a sit-down demonstration from 12 to 2 pm on Saturday, and a district-wide shutdown on Monday called by Hindu organisations .

In response, local TMC representatives fiercely countered the accusations. District-level leader Shyamal Mishra insisted that the deaths were the tragic result of accidental electrocution while attending the cultural event the previous evening. He condemned the BJP's statements as a politically motivated campaign to exploit a personal family tragedy .

The absence of clarity from law enforcement has only intensified tensions. The police have confirmed the recovery of the bodies but have not specified the cause of death. Their silence on whether foul play or accidental electrocution is to blame has allowed speculation to grow. Local leaders from both parties are now demanding a post-mortem process that is transparent, impartial, and includes external oversight.

Families of the deceased are caught in the middle of this political tug of war. Angry petitions have been submitted demanding answers and justice, and the proximity of the cultural event has sparked broader concern about undercurrents of communal tension—even though families confirm both men were active participants in the gathering . The unfolding conflict has injected emotional distress into a village where harmony is still fragile. Regional journalists and civil society voices warn that politicising the tragic deaths may inflame existing rifts. Local residents say that both victim families are deeply upset by the intense public attention and intruding political narratives. One villager told us that the simplest wish of the grieving families is calm and dignity, not demonstrations or headline churn.

Asked about the situation, a senior official attached to Khejuri police station said, "Our immediate focus is concluding the post-mortem and forensic reports. Only then can we say if this was accidental or homicidal." The official added that investigations are encompassing medical scrutiny and interviews with event organisers, neighbours, and any eyewitnesses present overnight.

The district administration in Tamluk has taken note. Officials informally acknowledged awareness of scheduled protests and are considering deploying additional security in Khejuri to maintain order. They emphasise that the law will run its course, and urge political leaders to exercise restraint until facts emerge.

For now, Khejuri village remains tense. Mother's lament over lost children and elderly villagers walking solemnly amid saffron flags and police barricades paint a poignant image. The deaths of Sudhir Paik and Sujit Das have also spotlighted the evolving role of grassroots politics in Bengal, where local tragedies can rapidly become rallying cries—or points of confrontation—depending on who speaks first.

As demonstrators gather on Monday and social media campaigns amplify political demands, the credibility of the post-mortem findings will be pivotal. An independent and timely forensic report must be an anchor to prevent further unrest. Above all, both parties face a test: whether they will seek unity in the face of loss, or risk deepening divides for electoral or narrative gain.

Fairness and humanity should guide the response. Two lives have been lost; a grieving community deserves closure. Only transparent, humane action can prevent this tragedy from becoming another flashpoint in West Bengal's political turf war.

Land Dispute Turns Violent: Hasin Jahan Accused of Beating Woman in Suri

Suri, 12 July: A land conflict that reportedly simmered for nearly a year erupted into violence in Suri, Birbhum district, as Hasin Jahan, former spouse of cricketer Mohammed Shami, stands accused of physically assaulting a neighbour. The incident, captured on social media and quickly circulating online, has reignited tensions in the area surrounding the contested property.

According to local accounts, Jahan's daughter, Arshi, owns a parcel of land in Ward No. 5 of Suri, known as Senator. For nearly a year, a neighbouring woman, referred to as Guddu Bibi, has purportedly been encroaching upon its boundaries. Matters escalated last Friday, when construction work commenced, prompting Jahan to intervene. Witnesses say the dispute boiled over into a physical altercation, with Jahan allegedly striking the woman on the head causing injury. The victim was reportedly taken to Suri Sadar Hospital for treatment following the incident .Video footage shared online appears to show Jahan repeatedly hitting the woman. Although the authenticity of the footage has not been independently verified by authorities, its circulation has triggered immediate criticism from residents, who claim the violence disrupted the area's peace.

Ward No. 5 Councillor Kazi Farzuddin expressed alarm over Jahan's behaviour, suggesting the altercation may signal deeper emotional distress. He pointed out that Jahan once sought refuge in his home after her separation from Shami. Highlighting her litigious nature, he remarked: "She files cases in the names of her mother, father, sister... and even her ex-husband—and now she is disturbing the peace of the locality." Farzuddin further noted that neighbours have submitted a petition calling for strict action against Jahan .

Local law enforcement have reportedly registered a formal complaint and are investigating the matter. Medical examination records of the injured woman and the exact charges under which Jahan may face trial were not immediately available. Police have yet to release a public statement, but district officials are expected to provide clearer information in due course.

The incident sheds light on the broader issue of private land disputes in the region, which often escalate into public conflict. Observers warn that if such incidents continue unchecked, they could undermine communal harmony in neighbourhoods like Sonator, where residents have expressed deep concern over the disregard for legal processes and civic decorum.

This case also underscores the challenges faced by women involved in high-profile personal disputes. Jahan's previous public controversies—including legal battles and media scrutiny—appear to have followed her into her new surroundings. Now, allegations of assault risk reigniting media focus and legal consequences, both regionally and potentially beyond. As the investigation proceeds, authorities have called for calm while establishing the facts.

"Youth Are India's Capital and Guarantee of a Bright Future," Declares PM Modi at 16th Rozgar Mela

New Delhi, 12 July: Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually hosted the 16th edition of the Rozgar Mela today, marking the occasion with the distribution of more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly selected Central Government recruits. Held simultaneously at 47 centres across India, the employment drive saw young appointees destined for departments such as Railways, Home Affairs, Posts, Health, Financial Services, Labour and Employment, and others.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister described India's youth and democracy as its two "infinite powers". He asserted that the nation's true wealth lies in its demographic dividend, with youth representing both the capital and guarantee of a prosperous future .. Emphasising this, Modi said policies must adapt to the 21st-century job landscape, preparing young people for emerging sectors in technology, research, energy and materials. Modernisation of recruitment processes—branded "Bina Parchi, Bina Kharchi" (No recommendation, No expense)—was presented as a hallmark of transparent governance, and the vast scale of today's initiative underlined this commitment.

He reflected on his recent tour of five nations, noting that agreements struck in fields like defence, pharmaceuticals, digital technologies and rare earth materials would directly benefit the nation's youth. "India's manufacturing and service sectors will get a huge boost", he said, signalling optimism for job creation.

Drawing attention to the changing nature of work, the Prime Minister said: "New sectors are emerging… our focus is to prepare youth for these opportunities." He mentioned government initiatives aimed at supporting first-time private sector employees—the Employment Linked Incentive Scheme—which will provide ₹15,000 towards their initial salary, supporting the creation of some 3.5 crore jobs .



Modi highlighted the resurgence of India's manufacturing base under Make in India and PLI initiatives, stating that electronics manufacturing has surged five-fold in the past 11 years, with nearly 300 mobile phone production units now operational. Defence manufacturing too has soared beyond ₹1.25 lakh crore, while locomotive, rail-coach, metro and automobile production have similarly driven employment and investment.

He also noted how welfare missions—such as PM Awas, Swachh Bharat, Ujjwala, rooftop solar, drone pilots, and entrepreneurship programmes for women—have collectively brought over 25 crore people out of poverty. He cited a recent ILO report and comments from the World Bank, which praised India for its inclusive growth and equality .

Modi urged the new recruits to embrace their roles with the ethos of "Citizen First" and national service, telling them they now form an integral part of India's collective mission to build a developed nation. He extended his congratulations and blessings, expressing confidence in their ability to contribute meaningfully to public service .

Since its inception, the Rozgar Mela initiative has led to over one million government appointments, significantly boosting the public sector's recruitment efforts. This year's wave of letters marks another milestone, and the government remains committed to sustaining high levels of employment generation through both public and private-sector channels .

The Prime Minister's message was clear: India's youth form the backbone of national progress, and their empowerment through transparent, large-scale public outreach programmes like the Rozgar Mela is key to fulfilling India's demographic promise. The drive blends modern governance with ambitious economic planning, reinforcing youth participation as essential to the nation's long-term trajectory.



BJP workers stage a protest against Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over his remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, in Amritsar.

ED Files Supplementary Chargesheet Against Rohit Pawar In Bank Scam Case

Mumbai, 11 July: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a supplementary chargesheet against NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar in the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank (MSCB) scam case. The chargesheet, filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, names Mr Pawar along with his associates. The court is yet to take cognizance of the document.

This development comes months after the ED provisionally attached assets worth over Rs 50 crore belonging to Mr Pawar's company, Baramati Agro.The agency said these assets - which include land in Kannad (Aurangabad), a sugar mill, machinery, and buildings - were acquired through an irregular auction process linked to the defunct Kannad Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd (Kannad SSK).



The ED alleged the assets are "proceeds of crime" and that Baramati Agro benefited from undervalued auctions enabled by violations of standard procedures. The investigation began after a 2019 FIR filed by the Mumbai Police's Economic Offences Wing, which alleged that MSCB officials and directors had sold several cooperative sugar factories to private entities and relatives at throwaway prices, sidestepping established norms.The agency has so far attached properties worth Rs 121.47 crore in the case.

Responding to the development, Mr Pawar issued a public statement suggesting that the ED's action was politically motivated. Without naming anyone, he hinted at pressure from certain quarters."Everyone knows that the action taken against me by the ED was because I didn't listen to certain people - there's no need to elaborate further," Mr Pawar said in a post.

He said officers of the Enforcement Directorate were merely following orders and that now, with the chargesheet filed, the matter has shifted to the judiciary."The ball is now in the judiciary's court, a decision we've long been waiting for. I have full faith in the judiciary, and I believe the truth will come out - the milk will be separated from water."Mr Pawar maintained that he is prepared for any struggle required to uphold his beliefs, invoking Maharashtra's tradition of resistance."Maharashtra has never given space to subservience or betrayal - it has always embraced struggle. That is our history."

Air India Flight 171 Crash: Preliminary Report Reveals Devastating Fuel Cutoff Seconds After Takeoff

New Delhi, 12 July: A preliminary report released by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has provided stark insight into the catastrophic crash of Air India Flight 171, a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which met a tragic end shortly after taking off from Ahmedabad on 12 June. In only half a minute, the aircraft lost thrust due to an unexplained interruption of fuel flow to both engines, culminating in the death of 260 individuals, including 241 onboard and 19 on the ground—making it India's most devastating aviation disaster in decades .

Flight data indicates that at roughly 180 knots—just seconds into the climb—both engine fuel cutoff switches were moved from "RUN" to "CUTOFF" in rapid succession, each within approximately one second of the other .Normally used for engine shutdowns on ground or in emergencies, these guarded switches require intentional lift-and-toggle action, making accidental activation highly unlikely. The cockpit voice recorder captured a confused exchange: one pilot asking "Why did you cut off?" and the other denying responsibility .

Within a second after the switches were activated, engine thrust dropped off abruptly. Although switches briefly returned to the "RUN" position—allowing at least one engine to relight—the aircraft had already begun a rapid descent. The Ram Air Turbine deployed automatically, indicating a full loss of primary power systems .Sadly, the relight effort came too late; the aircraft struck ground just 29 seconds after takeoff, failing to clear the airport perimeter wall .

The configuration and guarded nature of the fuel cutoff switches suggest deliberate activation. But investigators stress that there's no definitive evidence regarding deliberate action or mechanical fault .Aviation experts note the improbability of accidental toggle given the design safeguards ,while AAIB has not ruled out other possibilities such as system malfunctions or unrecognized cockpit interactions.

Recorder analysis is ongoing, but investigators have found no indications of bird strike, structural failure, or external interference .Nor has any mechanical defect been identified in Boeing or GE engine systems so far. The aircraft had recently undergone a comprehensive inspection in 2023, and its engines were overhauled earlier this year . Furthermore, a 2018 FAA bulletin flagged possible disengagement of fuel cutoff switch locks, but inspections were advisory and not mandated. Air India reportedly did not carry out those checks on this aircraft .

India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had launched fleet-wide inspections of Air India's 787s following the crash, scrutinising fuel systems and other critical subsystems . Meanwhile, Boeing and GE are cooperating with the probe; regulators including the FAA and NTSB are also participating, indicating an extensive and coordinated international inquiry .

Aviation analysts point out that, while the preliminary findings clear Boeing's airframe and engine design of blame, deeper examination is required to determine exactly how and why the switches were activated mid-flight .The official report does not attribute fault or raise immediate airworthiness concerns, yet lingering questions around cockpit protocol and human-machine interaction remain unresolved .

The lone survivor, British-Indian passenger Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, has shared haunting memories of lights flickering and sudden tilt before wakefulness in rubble, further humanising the technical tragedy. Air India has affirmed its cooperation, while Boeing has offered full support for the investigation.

As the AAIB compiles a comprehensive final report—in line with international accident-investigation standards that allow up to a year—aviation watchdogs in India and abroad are expected to analyse findings that could impact operational protocols globally .

The tragedy prompts urgent questions: were cockpit procedures and human factors properly structured to prevent such an incident? Could switch lock mechanisms or pilot training be revised to guard against inadvertent error? And above all, how must regulation evolve to ensure that safety systems function as intended, even under rare and extreme circumstances?

Tragedy in Seelampur: Four-Storey Building Collapses, Leaves Dead, Injured and Trapped

New Delhi, 12 July: A four-storey residential building in Seelampur, North East Delhi, collapsed on Saturday morning, plunging the neighbourhood into panic and grief. At approximately 7 am, a loud roar echoed through the narrow bylanes of Gali No. 5 as the structure crumbled unexpectedly. The building's sudden collapse trapped residents beneath the rubble, with early estimates suggesting that at least a dozen individuals may still be buried.



Emergency services scrambled to the scene within minutes. Seven fire tenders, National Disaster Response Force teams, police, and local volunteers converged on the unstable debris, working under immense pressure to retrieve survivors. Despite the efforts, two victims—a man and a woman—were tragically pulled lifeless from the wreckage. Eight others were rescued alive and rushed to nearby hospitals, where they are receiving treatment for varying injuries. Officials have warned the death toll and casualty figures could rise as rescue operations continue.

Local eyewitnesses recounted a scene of utter chaos. One resident, Asma, described the moment of collapse: "I was lying on my cot when I heard a deafening crash. Stepping outside, dust filled the air—people were crying and running everywhere." Authorities estimate at least ten members of one family were inside at the time—a grim reminder of how quickly daily life can turn tragic .

This distressing incident marks the second collapse in Delhi within just 24 hours—a pattern that has raised serious alarms about construction quality and regulatory oversight in the city. While investigations are still at an early stage, preliminary reports suggest significant structural weaknesses may have contributed to the disaster. Residents claim they detected no prior warning signs, indicating the collapse may have occurred without any visible distress. Emergency responders now face the difficult task of working in cramped lanes and unstable terrain under constant threat of further cave-ins .

Delhi Fire Services and Civil Defence officials are leading the operations, meticulously combing through the debris to locate survivors. Canines have been deployed alongside cameras and listening devices to aid in the search. Rescue teams are emphasising extreme caution, fearing that any sudden movement could cause additional collapses. The Delhi police have cordoned off the vicinity, diverting traffic and setting up temporary shelters for displaced families.

The atmosphere in Seelampur remains tense. Distraught relatives and neighbours gather at the perimeter, anxiously awaiting news. Relief workers are providing blankets, water, and medical aid. Community leaders have appealed for public support, urging them to donate essentials and comfort the affected families.

In a broader context, the incident has sparked renewed scrutiny of building safety regulations. The fact that this is the second collapse in such a short span raises questions about the effectiveness of municipal inspections and adherence to construction norms. Urban planning experts are already calling for an immediate review of mapping and structural compliance in high-risk localities.

Delhi's political leadership has responded swiftly. The Chief Minister's office has announced compensation for the families of the deceased and ordered an urgent audit of similar buildings across the city. A high-level task force, including civic engineers, fire officials, and disaster response experts, is being formed to prevent recurrence. Senior opposition voices have also demanded accountability, emphasising the need for stricter enforcement of building codes and more rigorous oversight.

As rescue workers race against time, their mission is clear: recover lives and reassure a shaken community. For now, the priority remains clear—locate every trapped individual and provide support to those injured. Beyond the immediate tragedy, the collapse underscores a pressing need for systemic reform in urban safety and governance.

Saturday's disaster reminds residents of Delhi's precarious infrastructure vulnerabilities. It serves as a stark warning that, in the heart of India's capital, hidden dangers can lurk beneath the most familiar facades—unless safety standards are upheld and vigilance remains constant.

Major Eviction Drive In Assam's Goalpara To Remove Forest Land Encroachment

Guwahati, 12 July: A massive eviction drive is being undertaken against those encroaching on forest land in Assam's Goalpara district. The eviction drive aims to reclaim over 140 hectares, or about 1,040 bighas, of encroached forest land in the Paikan Reserve Forest, primarily to curb human-elephant conflict and restore ecological balance.

The eviction drive is being carried out as per a high court order, said government sources, following a July 10 deadline given to the encroachers to vacate the area voluntarily.The drive will focus on two major encroached zones - Bidyapara and Betbari - under the Krishnai range of the reserve forest, where several families are said to have been residing unlawfully for years.

"We are clearing 149 hectares. Several JCBs have been deployed. We want to complete the process by tomorrow. About 2,070 concrete structures need to be dismantled. This is a forest land that has been encroached upon. We had given notice twice; the first was in December.

"Goalpara district has recorded the highest human-elephant conflicts across the country. So, the high court has directed us to remove all encroachments on forest land," Tejash Mariswami, District Forest Officer (DFO), Goalpara, told . In the run-up to the eviction drives, joint teams of the Forest Department and Assam Police have been conducting intensive patrolling, making public announcements via loudspeakers, and urging illegal occupants to leave peacefully.

Heavy deployment of police personnel, along with bulldozers, excavators, and senior officials, is in place to ensure the drive is conducted without disruption.

Maharashtra Assembly Tables Bill Redefining 'Urban Naxal' Language Amid Security

Mumbai, 12 July: The Maharashtra Assembly has introduced a revamped Public Security Bill mandating tough action against extreme Left-wing organisations. The bill, originally focused on "urban Naxals," underwent careful revision before being tabled, now replacing that terminology with reference to "extreme Left-wing ideology." The change follows inputs from a bipartisan joint select committee, which received over 12,500 public suggestions before endorsing a diluted version of the proposed law designed to safeguard state security while avoiding political misuse .

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who holds the Home portfolio, presented the report from the select committee during the Monsoon Session. He clarified that while the intent remains to curb urban Maoism—a point he reiterated—the bill steers clear of targeting political parties or ideological dissenters. Instead, it introduces stronger checks through an Advisory Board comprising a retired or serving High Court judge, a district judge, and a government pleader to oversee any declarations of organisations as unlawful .

The Assembly's approval of the bill, by voice vote, marks the fifth state to enact such legislation after Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Jharkhand. Unlike earlier drafts, this version emphasises procedural safeguards: any investigation must now be led by officers of at least Assistant Commissioner rank in cities or Deputy Superintendent in rural districts, rather than sub-inspectors .



According to the bill, every offence under its provisions is non-bailable and cognizable. These include membership, fundraising, harbouring, or active participation in unlawful activity—all defined expansively to encompass incitement, violence, or efforts to undermine public order and constitutional institutions. Penalties range from imprisonment of two to seven years and accompanying fines .

Despite adjustments, the bill has elicited concern across the political spectrum. Opposition leaders, including Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP, Congress, and Left-aligned legislators, warned that the measures remain vague and susceptible to misuse. They cautioned that activism, peaceful protest, or ideological discourse might fall under the bill's broad definitions. Some repeated terminology such as "Left wing extremist organisations," but emphasised that ambiguity threatens civil liberties .

While critics stressed that existing laws like the UAPA and provisions under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita already existed, proponents point to growing threats in urban areas. Chief Minister Fadnavis argued that although Maoist violence has diminished in rural Maharashtra, ideological infiltration through urban pockets and front organisations remains a concern. He stressed that this bill offers a necessary, legally sound mechanism—balanced by oversight—to prevent extremism without curtailing democratic dissent .

The legislative council is expected to consider the measure within days. Once passed there, it will proceed to the Governor for approval before becoming law. Advocates hope its passage will empower law enforcement while containing civil liberties safeguards. If it becomes operational, Maharashtra joins a national trend of states legislating more robust anti-extremism frameworks tailored to local dimensions.

Yet the underlying challenge remains: achieving a careful equilibrium between vigilance against ideological violence and protecting the constitutional right to dissent. As the bill advances toward enactment, state watchers will assess whether this reworded and recalibrated version successfully maintains that balance—or further ignites debate about its limits and potential overreach.

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Bumrah Maintains Composure Amid Dukes Ball Controversy at Lord's

London, 12 July: The second day of the third Test at Lord's once again placed Jasprit Bumrah in the headlines—but this time, not for his lethal seam bowling. As debates erupted over the recurrent replacement of the Dukes ball, India's pace spearhead navigated the controversy with characteristic restraint and a hint of wit, deftly keeping the focus on performance and diplomacy.Early in the day's play, the Dukes ball underwent a perplexing replacement after just ten overs. On-field inspections highlighted failures in standard tests, prompting complaints from the Indian camp. Skipper Shubman Gill was seen engaging in a heated exchange with the umpires over the issue, underscoring the team's growing frustration. The removal only sparked further debate, as another ball replacement followed 48 deliveries later—setting the stage for questions on consistency and fairness of the equipment .

When approached during a press conference, Bumrah offered a measured response, emphasising his lack of influence over the matter. In his typically deadpan manner, he remarked: "The ball changes, I don't really control that… I don't want to say any controversial statements and get my match fees deducted… We were bowling with the ball that we were given… Sometimes it goes your way. Sometimes you get a bad ball. That's how it is." .

The remark drew a subdued chuckle from those



present, reflecting Bumrah's ability to quash tension with humour, while reminding the world of his professionalism. By addressing the issue head-on—yet without inflaming the situation—he kept scrutiny away from the team and firmly on the match itself.

On the field, despite the distraction surrounding the ball, Bumrah delivered a sensational performance, claiming five wickets for 74 runs across 27 overs. Among his prized scalps were Harry Brook, Ben Stokes, and most notably, England captain Joe Root—once again demonstrating his dominance at Lord's . His impact shifted the momentum back to India, stranding England on 387 before the hosts' reply stood at 145 for 3 at stumps. Beyond his bowling, Bumrah's off-field comments captured the spirit of a leader determined to rise above controversy. As his captain's on-field exchange with officials grabbed headlines, Bumrah's words anchored the team's focus on what truly mattered: cricket, not controversy.

His candour extended to broader reflections on the ball's behaviour. Bumrah noted that, during prior tours of England, the Dukes ball retained hardness and swing longer, while this edition's rapid fading highlighted new playing conditions . By framing the situation as a product of environmental factors rather than conspiracy, he further dissipated tensions.

Teammates and coaching staff praised his dual role—as a world-class bowler and a calming senior presence. By refusing to be baited, he set a tone of resilience and unity, qualities vital in turbulent match scenarios.As the series advances, Bumrah's influence will remain pivotal. His bowling prowess is already shaping this Test's outcome; his measured approach off the field places him at the heart of India's campaign.

Unlike flamboyant media statements, Bumrah's words and deeds convey a sharp intellect. He neither sought to escalate the ball issue nor allowed it to distract him from cricket. And through his five-wicket spell, he underlined that action on the pitch speaks louder than protests off it. For cricket enthusiasts, this episode is yet another illustration of Bumrah's profound insight into the game's intangible aspects.



India's batter Rishabh Pant tries to reach the crease during the third day of the third Test match between India and England, at the Lord's Cricket Ground, in London.

AIFF Defends Its Actions as ISL Season Placed on Hold Amid MRA Deadlock

Kolkata, 12 July: The announcement from Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) declaring the Indian Super League (ISL) 2025–26 season temporarily on hold has set off a wave of uncertainty across Indian football. FSDL has cited the lack of clarity over the renewal of the Master Rights Agreement (MRA) with the All India Football Federation (AIFF) as the principal cause behind this decision, The federation issued a statement outlining its actions to resume negotiations and placed much of the blame on procedural hindrances stemming from a recent Supreme Court directive .

AIFF clarified that it initiated discussions with FSDL in November 2024 and participated in formal meetings held in February and March this year—in Delhi and Mumbai respectively—to explore terms for extending the MRA . The federation highlighted that FSDL submitted a renewal proposal in early March, to which it responded with a counter-proposal on 21 April . However, in late April, the Supreme Court issued a directive suspending further negotiations until it issued a final verdict on the federation's constitutional reforms .AIFF maintains that legal counsel advised pausing discussions following that ruling .

FSDL's decision to delay the season has sent shockwaves through clubs, players, staff, and fans, with pre-season plans now hanging in limbo. Multiple teams have



expressed confusion and concern—some having already withdrawn from tournaments or deferred foreign signings as a precaution . Kerala Blasters, for instance, reportedly informed their foreign recruits they were free to pursue opportunities elsewhere until the situation resolved .

The crux of the dispute lies in the MRA, which grants FSDL commercial control of the ISLand designates revenue sharing terms, including a payment of ₹50 crore annually to the AIFF. FSDL underscored in its letter that the current MRA expires on 8 December 2025, approximately one-third into the next season, making it "impossible to plan, organise, or commercialise" future league campaigns without clarity .Their communication emphasized the need for transparency, urging clubs to remain informed about emerging developments.

AIFF's clarification statement framed its stance as one of legal compliance rather than neglect. The federation insists it respected the Supreme Court's instructions to halt negotiations, despite understanding ISL's importance to club operations, player contracts, and the broader ecosystem . It acknowledged the gravity of the situation but maintained that it must act within judicial directions before entering further agreements .

Nonetheless, criticism has mounted within football circles. Officials and media pundits questioned why the federation delayed initiating formal MRA talks until late in the calendar, and why a task force was formed only in April—mere days before the court directive halted discussions.Prominent voices have accused the AIFF of bureaucratic drag and mismanagement, alleging that the pause jeopardizes the entire football calendar—from grassroots to elite levels .

The Supreme Court's upcoming verdict, expected by mid-July, on AIFF's constitution could determine whether negotiations can resume. AIFF officials say they anticipate new talks once legal clarity arrives, and they remain optimistic about reaching a fair agreement within the original MRA framework .

"Tank Half Full": Djokovic Confirms Plan to Return to Wimbledon in 2026 After Semi Final Defeat

London, 12 July: Novak Djokovic, the 38-year-old Serbian tennis legend, confirmed after his semi final defeat at Wimbledon that this is not likely his final appearance at the All England Club. Though his physical reserves may be diminishing, his desire to return remains undimmed.

Djokovic bowed out in straight sets to Jannik Sinner, 6-3, 6-3, 6-4, ending his streak of six consecutive Wimbledon finals dating back to 2018 and marking his first semifinal exit at this event since 2017 . Sinner, the reigning world No. 1 and 23 years old, showcased sharper movement—a growing theme in what appears to be the ascent of a younger generation.

He sustained a thigh injury late in his quarterfinal victory and carried this throughout his clash with Sinner. He said the knock affected his ability on court quite significantly.He admitted that longer best-of-five matches are harder to endure these days, pointing out that younger rivals bring relentless pace and stamina .Djokovic was reflective yet resolute. He acknowledged the impact of age and wear and tear, saying the body, not luck, had caught up with him. Yet he maintained that when fully fit, he's "still capable of playing really good tennis" . He openly hinted at a comeback next year: "I'm not planning to finish my Wimbledon career today. I plan to come back at least one more time" .

This optimistic stance came despite visible physical strain. Observers noted that Djokovic was visibly hampered during the semifinal, and he admitted he entered the match with his "tank half empty" as a result of his earlier fall . Nonetheless, he praised Sinner's performance and expressed respect for the youth leading men's tennis now.Djokovic's journey in 2025 has been a roller-coaster of triumph and fatigue. He claimed his 100th ATP title in Geneva earlier in the year, yet endured semi-final losses in both the French and Australian Opens. In all three Slams, he reached the final four but fell short, highlighting how fine the margins now are .

Across his career, Djokovic has rewrote the record books, but this season has underscored the encroaching physical limitations that come with age. He himself admitted that, despite meticulous physical upkeep, the body simply does not respond as it once did . He compared the current moment to the peak of his career, when he could muscle through exhaustive Grand Slam runs.The semifinal showed flashes of classic Djokovic: resilience, precision, and mental grit. But Sinner's superior youth and athleticism, coupled with Djokovic's physical constraints, proved decisive. Analysts say this adds to mounting evidence that a new generation—led by Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz—is ready to inherit the mantle at tennis's top tables.

Djokovic bid goodbye to Centre Court to a standing ovation, clearly emotional, reinforcing his status as one of the sport's all-time greats . He watched as Alcaraz and Sinner progressed to the final, a symbolic passing of the guard moment.While this loss diminishes his chase for an eighth Wimbledon crown and record 25th Grand Slam title, Djokovic signalled that he is not closing the book.

Family of World Cup Winner Nahuel Molina Escapes Violent Home Invasion

Buenos, 12 July: A terrifying incident unfolded in Lanús, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, last Monday evening when eight armed intruders stormed into the home of football star Nahuel Molina's in-laws. Among the victims, his father-in-law, Claudio Occhiuzzi, described a harrowing face-to-face confrontation with the assailants, who menacingly pressed a gun against his head and ruthlessly demanded money, as his family cowered in fear.

The break-in occurred around 8:30 pm while the family was gathered in the living room watching television. Suddenly, they heard unsettling noises from the dining room window. When Occhiuzzi investigated, four men dressed entirely in black, including one who entered first, forced their way inside. One held a pistol to Occhiuzzi's temple while the others followed closely, herding the family into a bedroom. There, the armed intruders became increasingly aggressive—beating him and threatening his life—as they intensely questioned the whereabouts of any valuables.

The real escalation occurred when police, alerted nearby by municipal surveillance, confronted the gang. A fierce exchange ensued as the intruders opened fire at officers within and outside the apartment. Occhiuzzi recalled gunfire erupting after they attempted to flee, shouting at him that they would kill him, perhaps assuming he had triggered the alarm . He recounted the terror: "I thought they were going to kill me…" .

As panic set in among the attackers, they attempted to exit through the back gate. Completion of their getaway depended on opening a padlocked door—a task that Occhiuzzi, trembling and traumatized, tried to perform, only to be threatened again when he failed. In the chaos, three of the assailants managed to flee the scene, while police successfully captured three others aged 20, 22, and 23, seizing weapons, burglary tools, and spike strips designed to stop police pursuit .Remarkably, none of the family members, including children present, sustained physical injuries during the ordeal, though the mental impact of such trauma will likely linger. The swift intervention by local law enforcement, po-



sitioned nearby after the stolen vehicle used by the gang was spotted moments earlier, proved decisive .

The assault has rocked the local football community and Molina's extended family. As a standout right-back for Atlético Madrid and a key figure in Argentina's 2022 World Cup victory, Molina has represented his country over 50 times. Yet even recognition on the global stage offers no shield against the alarming rise in violent crime that has swept parts of Buenos Aires Province in recent months .Societal reaction has ranged from expressions of relief at the family's physical safety to fervent calls for tighter measures against home invasions and armed robberies. The deeply personal nature of the attack underscores a broader concern about security—no one, not even families of high-profile athletes, is immune from the threat.

Authorities continue to pursue the five remaining fugitives while the case proceeds under prosecutor María Alejandra Bonini's oversight. She has appealed for community assistance in locating the escapees. Meanwhile, Claudio Occhiuzzi has confirmed the family's intent to remain in their home, signalling resolve in the face of intimidation .

Molina, currently away on club duties abroad, has not publicly commented. Representatives for Atlético Madrid have expressed empathy and a readiness to support their star player and his loved ones through this ordeal.

The assault's chilling events highlight the intersection of global fame and local vulnerability. Fans and colleagues alike have rallied to offer support. Social media reactions have been filled with sympathy as many acknowledge the courage it took for Occhiuzzi to recount his trauma so openly—"They put a gun to my head," he told reporters, underscoring the raw horror endured by him and his loved ones .

This incident serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of security, even for those in the public eye. For Molina, it is a deeply personal crisis arriving far from the stadiums and the accolades. The football world now stands united in solidarity, hoping that the legal pursuit brings both justice and reassurance—and that the victims can rebuild a sense of safety at home.

As police continue their investigation, the football community remains vigilant, and many are now turning attention to systemic fixes. Ensuring the safety of public figures and private citizens alike has become part of a larger urgent debate focused on curbing crime and reinforcing security—a conversation that has grown increasingly necessary in the wake of this chilling attack.

Crystal Palace Demoted to UEFA Conference League After Multi-Club Ownership Breach

London, 12 July: Crystal Palace, fresh from their historic FA Cup victory, have been moved down to the UEFA Conference League for the upcoming season after a ruling by European football's governing body found them in breach of regulations on multi-club ownership. The decision has sent shockwaves through Selhurst Park, uprooting what should have been their debut in the Europa League.

The controversy centres on the shared control of Crystal Palace and French club Olympique Lyonnais. Both teams qualified for European competition—Palace through their FA Cup triumph and Lyon via a sixth-place finish in Ligue 1. However, both are under the partial ownership of Eagle Football Holdings and businessman John Textor, placing them in violation of UEFA's rules that bar clubs with significant shared influence from entering the same tournament. UEFA's Club Financial Control Body determined that as of 1 March 2025, both clubs were in breach of Article 5.01 and thus ineligible to both compete in the Europa League .

While Lyon had initially faced demotion to Ligue 2 on financial grounds, their successful appeal kept them in the Europa League—an outcome that sealed Palace's fate. UEFA confirmed Lyon's admission and, for the first time, rejected Palace's spot, assigning them a place instead in the third-tier



Conference League play-offs .

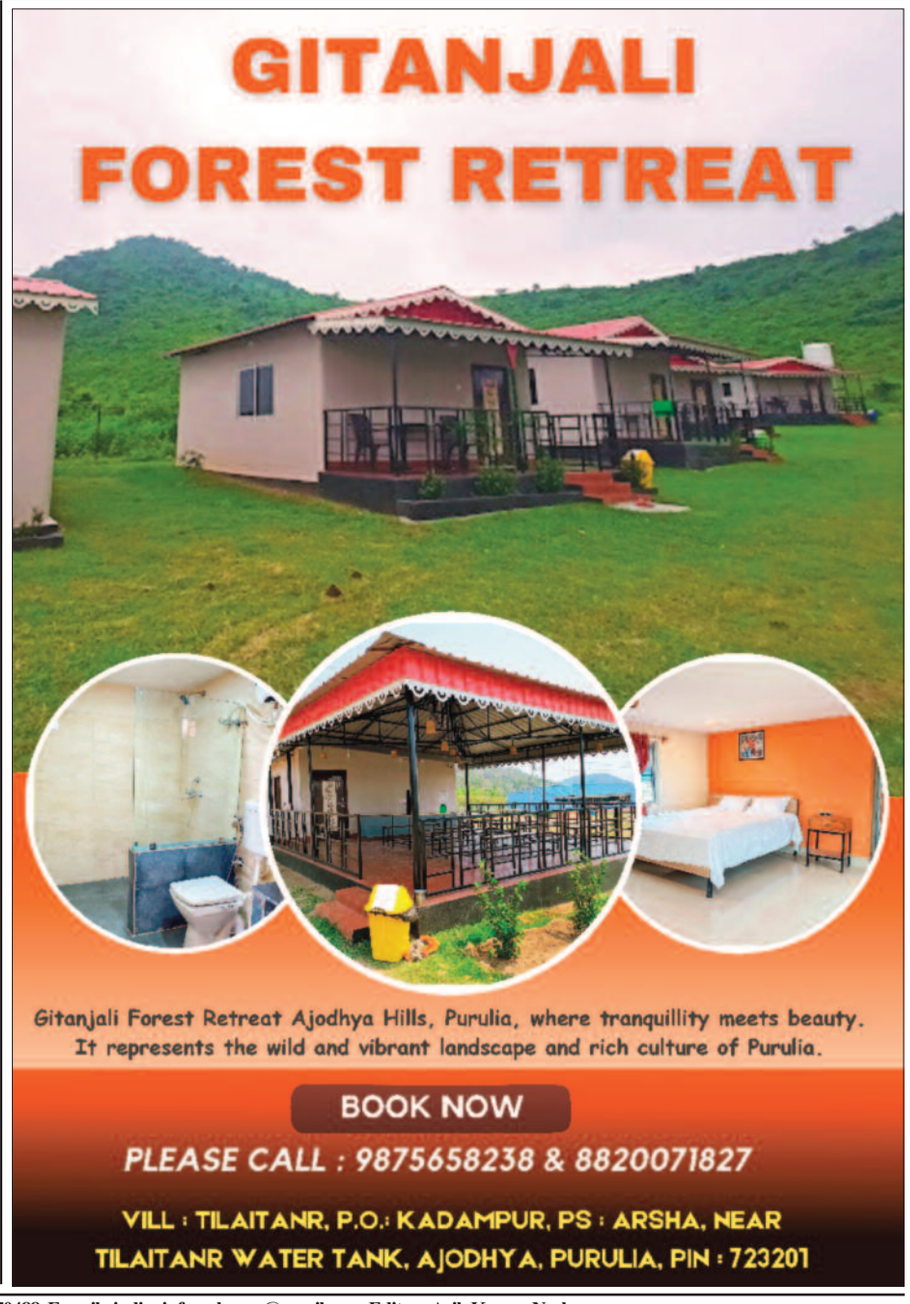
Chairman Steve Parish was outspoken in his condemnation of the ruling, calling it a "terrible injustice" and a "travesty of justice." He emphasized Palace's clean financial record and the fact that Textor held no decisive influence in team operations. Parish called on UEFA to reconsider, arguing that smaller clubs are being unfairly excluded .

Crystal Palace had initiated a plan to comply with UEFA's deadline by arranging the sale of Textor's 43.9 percent stake to Robert Wood Johnson, owner of the New York Jets. However, that sale was announced after the March 1 deadline, and UEFA judged it insufficiently timely. Additionally, Textor had resigned from Lyon's board, but this came too late to affect the ruling .

As a result of Palace's demotion, Nottingham Forest, who finished seventh in the Premier League, are set to take the Europa League place, pending final approval and awaiting the outcome of Palace's appeal . Forest also benefit from the enhanced prize money—approximately £3.9 million—and prestige that come with Europa League participation.

Palace, however, are preparing to challenge UEFA's decision at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). They reject the notion of shared control and urge UEFA to uphold the principle of fair competition. The club statement affirms that fans, players, and staff deserve restitution for their achievements, with CAS seen as the ultimate arbiter .

This case highlights a growing tension in European football, where multi-club ownership with shared controlling interests is increasingly common. Critics argue that UEFA's enforcement of ownership rules is inconsistent and often untimely, penalizing clubs whose governance frameworks may not neatly align with evolving regulations . For Crystal Palace fans and stakeholders, the decision is devastating. The FA Cup victory was not only their first major silverware in 164 years, but it also unlocked a long-awaited European adventure. Instead, the club finds itself cast aside by bureaucracy and timetable, forced to compete in a lesser competition.



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