



Uddhav Thackeray questions PM's meeting, assurance to Shinde faction amid Supreme Court hearing

TRUMP'S EX-LAWYER TODD BLANCHE NARROWLY CONFIRMED AS US ATTORNEY GENERAL



Manasa Choudhary Is Serving Garden Goddess Vibes



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

07-08-2026

Total pilgrims: 75,533

Tonnes: 35.551

Hundi kanakulu: 3381 CR

Laddu sale: 4461 Jc

Annaprasadam: 265 Lac

Aswini hospital: 3.551

Waiting Compartments: Outside line at Sathoranam.



Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tolens): 10 H.

India in tight spot after US Senate passes Russia sanctions bill

New Delhi (TSIT) India's carefully crafted ties with the United States and Russia came under intense pressure after the American Senate approved legislation that could expose countries buying Russian oil and gas to tariffs of up to 100 per cent, potentially placing New Delhi at the centre of a fresh economic and diplomatic confrontation. Passed by 86-11 vote, the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 gives President Donald Trump the power to impose punitive tariffs on major purchasers of Russian energy, with India, China, Azerbaijan, Hungary and Slovakia among the countries currently most exposed. The legislation also targets Russia's "shadow fleet" of tankers and extends the Iran Sanctions Act for another five years. However, the bill must first clear the US House, which is currently on recess until September.

FOREIGN FORCES MUST LEAVE REGION TO END INSECURITY: IRAN SUPREME LEADER'S ADVISER

Tehran (TSIT) Ali Akbar Velayati, senior adviser on international affairs to Iran's Supreme Leader, said Saturday that foreign forces must leave the region, arguing that their presence is the main source of insecurity. "The U.S. and Zionist regime's defeat reinforced the belief that foreign forces, the main cause of insecurity, must leave the region," Velayati said in a post on X. He said recent developments had demonstrated "the resilience of the armed forces, the steadfastness of Iranians, and the courage of the Resistance Axis."

'Your real race is with yourself': PM Modi's message to students at IIT-Delhi convocation

New Delhi (TSIT)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday attended the 57th convocation ceremony of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi as the chief guest, where more than 3,000 students, including 587 PhD scholars, were conferred degrees.

During his visit, Modi also inaugurated Param Pragma, an artificial intelligence-powered high-performance supercomputing facility at IIT-Delhi's Sonepat campus, underlining the growing importance of advanced computing and AI in India's technological development.

Addressing the graduating students, the Prime Minister congratulated them and their families, teachers, and mentors, saying the students were leaving the institute with more than just degrees. He said their IIT journey had equipped them with the ability to solve complex problems and the responsibility to contribute to the country. Recalling his earlier virtual participation in an



IIT-Delhi convocation during the COVID-19 pandemic, Modi said it was particularly special to be physically present among the students this time. Highlighting the rapid pace of technological change, Modi said the world could look very different over the next 20-30 years. While technology, industries, and professions would continue to change, he stressed that continuous learning would remain essential. "The one who learns will win," the Prime Minister said, urging stu-

dents to develop the courage to find new solutions to emerging challenges and turn difficulties into opportunities.

Drawing a comparison between academic life and the world outside the campus, Modi said that while examinations at IIT have a defined syllabus, "in the examination of life, everything is out of syllabus." He encouraged students to remain curious, question established ideas, and have the courage to find solutions. Modi also high-

lighted the expanding opportunities for young Indians in sectors such as space technology, semi-conductors, drones, artificial intelligence, data centers, critical minerals, quantum computing, electric mobility, and energy storage. He said India's startup ecosystem and digital economy had also been strengthened by the innovation and enterprise of young people. South Asians & Diaspora Calling research another major opportunity, the Prime Minister referred to initiatives including the Prime Minister's Research Fellowship, the Research, Development and Innovation Scheme, and the Anusandhan National Research Foundation.

He said India needs greater commitment from young researchers to strengthen its research ecosystem. Modi urged the graduates to see their careers as part of India's journey towards becoming a developed nation and to consider the national interest while making important decisions.

'Dard, data, daulat': Rahul Gandhi tells youth to confront fears, change system at Prayagraj event



Prayagraj (TSIT)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said India's youths are the country's greatest strength, and their potential is unparalleled in the world. Addressing the 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' programme at KP Ground here, Gandhi said, "You are the power and pride of India. When I say this, I am talking about every

Indian citizen." He added, "This evening I want to speak to you about dard (pain), data, and daulat (wealth)."

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said India's 40 crore youths constitute its "greatest strength." He said that while there is much talk about America, China and Russia, "India's youths are unparalleled."

Jharkhand 'paper leak' protests: No breakthrough in talks with govt, aspirants continue stir

Ranchi (TSIT) The Jharkhand government on Saturday held talks with various outfits amid the massive agitation over the alleged paper leaks in recruitment exams, but failed to break the deadlock as the protesting aspirants decided that their stir would continue until all their demands are met. A five-member panel of the government, which included state ministers, first met the faction of protesters led by JMKM leader Devendra Nath Mahto, whose fast over the issue entered its seventh day. They then separately met delegations of the Congress-backed NSUI, ACS and JCM.

KCR Performed More Yagams Than Anyone: KTR

KTR WARNS OF FRESH TELANGANA MOVEMENT TO PROTECT STATE'S WATER RIGHTS

Hyderabad (TSIT):

BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) said no one in the country has performed as many Yagams as former Chief Minister and BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR). Speaking to the media on Saturday, KTR said divine grace could be achieved only through human effort and stressed that governments must discharge their responsibilities properly along with performing religious rituals.

KTR criticised Congress leaders for engaging in what he termed petty politics and said it was inappropriate to mock senior BRS leader T. Harish Rao for visiting temples. He alleged that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy lacked a basic understanding of agriculture and farmers'



problems. KTR questioned the Chief Minister's failure to ensure adequate irrigation water to the Palamuru region, despite claiming to be a son of the region.

KTR also accused the state government of failing to protect Telangana's water rights. He questioned what the government was doing while alleg-

ing that Andhra Pradesh was diverting water through the Pothreddypadu project. He also demanded clarity from the government on its position regarding the Godavari Board meeting.

The BRS Working President said his party would continue to prioritise Telangana's interests whether in power or in the opposition. He challenged the government to identify areas where 24-hour uninterrupted power supply was actually being provided.

KTR further alleged that the government was targeting poor people in the name of HYDRA. He warned that the BRS would prepare for another massive struggle, similar to the Telangana movement, under KCR's leadership to safeguard the state's water rights.

Women's quota rollout sparks Rijiju-Rahul war of words

Responding to Rijiju's comments on X, Gandhi hit back, saying, "Mr Rijiju, who would know better than you, as the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, that the Women's Reservation Bill 2023 has already been passed unanimously, with the full support of the Congress."

New Delhi (TSIT):

The Congress and BJP sparred on Saturday, August 8, over the women's quota and delimitation bills after Rahul Gandhi said that no country can be successful if its women do not express themselves, prompting Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju to call it a "visible change of heart" and express the hope that the opposition party will support the proposed legislation.

Responding to Rijiju's comments on X, Gandhi hit back, saying, "Mr Rijiju, who would know better than you, as the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, that the Women's Reservation Bill 2023 has already been passed unanimously, with the full support of the Congress."

<https://publish.x.com/?url=https://twitter.com/RahulGandhi/status/2085959154972365019#>

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"The question is why it has still not been implemented even after three years, and why do you now want to unnecessarily link it to delimitation?" Gandhi asked in a post on X. "Implement the 2023 law. Without any conditions," he added.

Rijiju hits back Responding to Gandhi's retort, Rijiju said the Congress leader knows "very well" that the reservation of seats for women in the House of the People and Legislative Assembly of the State is provided in the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023. He said that Gandhi also knows that it shall come into effect after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken based on the census figures published after the year 2023, which means the census figures published after the year 2026. "The exercise for



publishing the census figures after the year 2026 is currently underway. However, this may take substantial time due to the caste-based census to be finally published. In view of this, it may result in considerable delay in the implementation of women's reservation, at least

not before the 2034 General Elections," the senior BJP leader said.

Therefore, to implement the women's reservation at the next general elections in 2029, the delimitation exercise needs to be undertaken at the earliest, based on the latest avail-



able Census figures, as published, he added. Rijiju said the implementation methodology has been proposed under the Delimitation Bill 2026, introduced in the Lok Sabha along with the amendments to the Constitution. However, the Constitution (131st

Amendment) Bill, 2026, which was introduced for this purpose, has been defeated, the minister said. "Also, a reminder to Rahul Gandhi again: There's no woman in Karnataka DK Shivakumar's Cabinet! This raises serious questions over Congress's stand on the 33% women's quota," Rijiju said in another post on X. "Congress piloted the bill," says DK Shivakumar

Reacting to the criticism, Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said, "We are the ones who piloted (the women's reservation bill); we are the ones who passed (the bill)." "The Congress party believes in it (giving priority to women). You know how many seats we gave (to women) in Parliament; I think you remember. So, in Karnataka, definitely we are sorting out that issue. Rijiju may not worry about the Congress Party," the Chief

Minister said. On Friday, Gandhi said no country can be successful and will remain stunted if its women do not express themselves.

The Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha said it is important to bring women back into the conversation and allow them to do what they want to do. His remarks in an Instagram post came as an addition to his reply made during his Thursday's "Ask Me Anything" session.

Rijiju on Thursday had a telephonic conversation with Gandhi to seek support for the passage of the women's reservation and delimitation bills, but the leader of opposition insisted on convening an all-party meeting on the proposed legislation, sources aware of the matter had said. This was the second time in a couple of days that the parliamentary affairs minister spoke with Gandhi on the phone.

Uddhav Thackeray questions PM's meeting, assurance to Shinde faction amid Supreme Court hearing



Mumbai, Aug 8 : Shiv Sena (UBT) chief, Uddhav Thackeray, on Saturday criticised Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his faction's MPs meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

Thackeray raised strong objections to PM Modi's reported reassurance of, "Do not fear, I am behind you," allegedly given to Shinde, questioning who the message was truly intended for, while legal proceedings regarding the Shiv Sena's identity and symbol remain pending before the Supreme Court.

Addressing a press conference, Thackeray questioned the underlying motive behind the Prime Minister's assurance to the Shinde faction.

"When Shinde used to visit earlier, he met Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Now it seems their boss has

changed, and they directly meet PM Modi. What does 'Do not fear, I am behind you' signify? Is this threat-like message given to the Supreme Court? To Amit Shah? To Devendra Fadnavis, or to the administration? PM Modi must clarify who he was actually speaking to," he said.

Thackeray pointed out that the meeting took place while critical hearings regarding the party's name and election symbol were actively underway in the top court. "While our case is being heard, the Prime Minister, who didn't meet Gen Z representatives, is meeting traitors and telling them not to fear. This is highly objectionable. It is not just for the public to notice, but the Supreme Court should also take note and ask who this message was intended for," he said.

Thackeray further asked whether the reassurance

was an open invitation to potential defectors across parties, signaling that they could defect without fearing consequences.

He emphasised that the ongoing conflict has moved beyond the internal control of the Shiv Sena, characterising it as a national fight for democratic values.

Stating that "the virus of betrayal is taking the life of democracy," Thackeray urged patriots and citizens from Kashmir to Kanyakumari who respect the Constitution to unite against such political practices. Confirming that these developments would be brought to the notice of the Supreme Court, Thackeray questioned why the Shinde group continues to display apprehension despite political realignments.

Further, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP, Sanjay Raut, criticised Prime Minister Modi over his meeting with the Shinde faction MPs. Referencing the ongoing disruptions in Parliament, he accused the Prime Minister of avoiding parliamentary proceedings while finding time to host faction leaders.

"PM Modi has time to throw parties with fadfa, dhokla, and jalebi for traitor MPs, but has no time to step into Parliament," Raut stated in a social media post, labeling the meeting an "insult to the public and the Constitution".

Yogi-Modi meeting puts 2027 UP battle in focus as Ayodhya, exam leaks test BJP's political strategy

New Delhi(TSIT) Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Saturday, giving rise to speculation that the discussions may have centred on the political and administrative situation in Uttar Pradesh as the BJP begins laying the groundwork for the 2027 Assembly elections. The meeting assumes significance against the backdrop of the BJP's need to recalibrate its strategy in a state that remains central to its national political project. The 2024 Lok Sabha election exposed weaknesses in the party's once formidable social coalition in Uttar Pradesh, with the Samajwadi Party emerging as the single-largest party and the INDIA bloc making substantial gains. The coming Assembly election will therefore test whether the BJP can restore that coalition while defending the record of the Yogi Adityanath government.

What could make the 2027 contest particularly challenging is the emergence of issues that cut across the BJP's traditional electoral narratives. Allegations concerning the alleged theft or misappropriation of donations

linked to the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and the growing anger among students and job aspirants over examination leaks, irregularities and delays could become politically significant if the Opposition succeeds in turning them into broader questions of accountability and governance.

The two issues operate on very different political planes. Ayodhya and the Ram Mandir represent the BJP's most powerful cultural and ideological narrative, while examination leaks directly affect the aspirations of the state's young population. But politically, they could converge around a common question: whether the government can deliver transparency, accountability and tangible results alongside its larger claims of cultural revival and development.

The allegations concerning Ram Mandir donations are particularly sensitive because Ayodhya occupies a central position in the BJP's political narrative. The Opposition is likely to use the controversy to demand greater transparency in the handling of funds associated with the temple and to question whether institutions connected with the



Ram Mandir should be subject to the highest standards of financial accountability.

The BJP, for its part, is unlikely to allow the allegations to become a wider political indictment of the Ram Mandir project. It can be expected to stress that allegations must be established through due process and that individual claims should not be used to discredit the larger transformation of Ayodhya. Yet politically, the issue could prove difficult to contain if it acquires a wider resonance. The Opposition could seek to frame it as a test of the BJP's own claims of clean and accountable governance. The question may not sim-

trovery strikes much closer to its governance and development claims.

The agitation by students and job aspirants over alleged examination leaks, irregularities and recruitment delays could become one of the most consequential issues of the 2027 election if the discontent continues to spread. In Uttar Pradesh, government recruitment examinations carry enormous social and economic significance. For thousands of young people and their families, years of preparation are tied to the hope of securing a government job and achieving economic stability.

An examination leak can therefore become more than an administrative failure. It can be perceived as a betrayal of opportunity.

The Opposition is likely to seize on this sentiment and attempt to turn individual examination controversies into a broader narrative of institutional failure. The BJP will have to convince young voters that recruitment examinations are secure, appointments are timely and deserving candidates will not lose opportunities because of paper leaks, cancellations or administrative lapses.

Gold posts 4.73 pc weekly gain as US Fed rate hike bets weaken

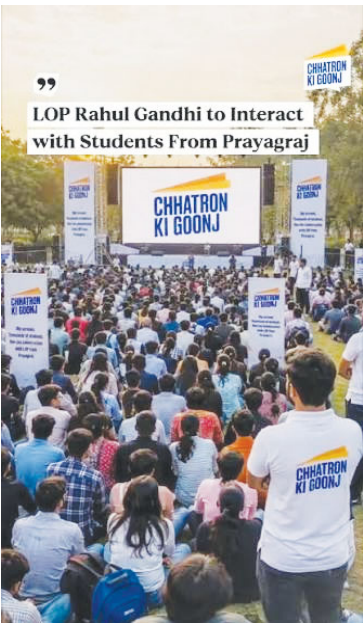
Mumbai, Aug 8 : Gold prices surged 4.73 per cent on a weekly basis as the US Dollar weakened and weaker-than-expected US labour data cut the odds of further US Federal Reserve tightening. On Friday, gold futures (October) gained 0.11 per cent while silver futures (September) advanced 0.15 per cent on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). The yellow metal stood at Rs 1,51,985, while the white metal was at Rs 2,31,804 per kg. The price of 10 grams of 24-carat gold was at Rs 1,49,621 on Friday, up from Rs 1,42,863 seen on Monday at market opening.

Thousands of students gather in Prayagraj for Rahul Gandhi's 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' programme

Prayagraj, Aug 8 (UNI) Thousands of students from Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring Madhya Pradesh and Bihar gathered in Prayagraj on Saturday to attend Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's "Chhatron Ki Goonj" programme, where he is scheduled to address issues including unemployment, paper leaks and alleged police action against students. Rahul Gandhi reached Prayagraj earlier in the day and is scheduled to remain in the city until 6 p.m.

The Congress has claimed that around three lakh students are expected to attend the event, while authorities have estimated that the turnout could be closer to one lakh.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha is set to address



students on issues including unemployment, paper leaks and lathi-charges, targeting the BJP government over these concerns. According to the Congress, Gandhi will directly interact with students from 23 districts during the "Chhatron Ki Goonj" programme. A pandal with a capacity of approximately one lakh people has been set up at KP College Ground.

Gandhi is scheduled to participate in the programme at the ground from 6 pm. to 8:30 pm.

Gandhi will first travel from Bamrauli Airport to Anand Bhawan, the ancestral home of the Gandhi family, at around 5 pm. After spending some time there, he will proceed to the event venue. He is scheduled to return to Delhi at around 9:30 p.m. on a special flight. According

to the Congress, the event is part of its nationwide student outreach campaign, aimed at seeking greater accountability from the government on issues related to education and employment. The party claims that more than two lakh students have registered, both online and offline, for the programme, which will bring together students from 23 districts, including Prayagraj.

Contrary to the party's claim, the pandal has been equipped to accommodate only around 1,00,000 people. A waterproof pandal, 140 metres long and 70 metres wide, has been constructed using German hangar technology, covering an area of approximately 10,000 square metres. Seating has been arranged for around 1,00,000 people.

Medicover Hospitals, Hitec City Completes 100 Robotic-Assisted General Surgeries in a Year

A SINGLE-YEAR ROBOTIC SURGERY VOLUME IN THE HIGH-VOLUME BAND BY INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKS



Hyderabad, 08 August, 2026: Dr. Sharath Chandra Kaushik, FALS (Bariatric), FISC, Consultant – General, Laparoscopic, Bariatric & Minimally Invasive Surgery at Medicover Hospitals, Hitec City, has completed 100 robotic-assisted general surgeries over the past year. The volume reflects the growing adoption of robotic surgery at the hospital and Dr. Kaushik's focus on minimally invasive techniques across a range of general surgical conditions.

The 100 procedures spanned inguinal hernia repairs (35), gallbladder surgeries (25), complex abdominal wall reconstructions (20), bariatric surgeries (10) and gastrointestinal procedures (10). Around half were classified as complex cases, including the abdominal wall reconstructions and bariatric procedures, where the robotic platform's visualisation and instrument control can support precision that is harder to achieve through conventional laparoscopy. Of the 100 procedures, 96 were completed robotically as planned.

Three were converted to conventional laparoscopy and one to open surgery — a decision Dr. Kaushik describes as a matter of intra-operative judgement in the interest of patient safety, rather than a limitation of the approach.

Speaking on the milestone, Dr. Sharath Chandra Kaushik said, "Completing 100 robotic general surgeries in a year is a meaningful marker in my practice. Every case reflects a patient's trust. Robotic assistance complements surgical judgement — it can help reduce surgical trauma and, in many patients, supports faster recovery with less pain and a shorter hospital stay. But the outcome always rests on clinical decision-making, not the technology alone."

For suitable patients, robotic-assisted surgery can offer smaller incisions, reduced post-operative pain and a shorter recovery. Clinical benefit varies by procedure and patient, and the approach is selected case by case. The surgeon's experience and judgement remain central to the result.

Dr. Kaushik credited the milestone to close teamwork across anaesthesiology, robotic OT specialists, nursing staff, surgical assistants and technicians, whose coordination underpins patient safety in every procedure.

Medicover Hospitals, Hitec City, continues to expand its minimally invasive and robotic surgery capability, with a focus on appropriate patient selection and consistent clinical outcomes.

Golden hour critical in neurotrauma and road accident care, says Dr. Bhaskar Rao

HYDERABAD, AUGUST 8, 2026: Timely treatment within the first hour after a road accident, head injury, or spinal trauma can significantly improve survival and reduce disability, said Dr. Bhaskar Rao Bollineni, Chairman and Managing Director, KIMS Group of Hospitals, while inaugurating the three-day National Conference on Neurotrauma and Neurotrauma Nursing in Hyderabad on Friday. The conference is being organised by the Neurotrauma Society of India in collaboration with the Department of Neurosurgery, KIMS Hospitals.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Bhaskar Rao said road traffic injuries had emerged as a major cause of disability among young people in India. He noted that head injuries due to falls were more common among children, motorcycle accidents were a major contributor among young adults, road traffic injuries predominated in middle-aged individuals, and falls among the elderly frequently resulted in brain and spinal injuries. "The pattern of injury varies across age groups, and treatment strategies must be tailored



accordingly," he said. Dr. Manas Panigrahi, Head of the Department of Neurosurgery and Senior Consultant Neurosurgeon at KIMS Hospitals, described traumatic brain injury (TBI) as a growing public health challenge in India. Citing the World Health Organization's 2023 report, he said the global incidence of TBI had declined by 5.5%, whereas India had recorded an 11.1% increase.

India accounts for 10% of global road traffic deaths despite having only about 1% of the world's vehicles, he said, adding that this

reflected serious gaps in road safety systems. Referring to World Bank 2021 data, he pointed out that while the United States recorded about 2.21 million road accidents and 27,461 deaths, India reported 480,652 accidents but 150,785 deaths, indicating a disproportionately high fatality burden.

More than half of road traffic deaths in India involve pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists, Dr. Panigrahi said. About 66% of crashes occur in rural areas, and mortality is nearly twice as high among low-income house-

holds. He stressed that proper helmet use could reduce the risk of TBI by up to 74%, but helmet compliance remains low, ranging from 22% to 55%. Nearly one-third of trauma patients reach hospital more than 24 hours after injury, a delay that substantially worsens outcomes, he added. Quoting a NIMHANS study, Dr. Panigrahi said 77% of patients had mild TBI and 48% had normal CT scans, underscoring the need for medical evaluation even when a head injury appears minor. He called for stronger public aware-

ness, strict enforcement of helmet laws, improved emergency services in rural areas, and systems that ensure accident victims reach hospital within the golden hour, which could significantly reduce TBI-related mortality.

Highlighting the importance of nursing care in neurotrauma, he said early assessment of airway, blood pressure, level of consciousness, pupillary response, and limb movements immediately after admission often plays a decisive role in saving lives. The scientific programme includes ses-

sions on emergency neurotrauma care, golden-hour management of road traffic injuries, brain swelling monitoring, neurocritical care, postoperative care, spinal trauma management, neurotrauma in children and the elderly, artificial intelligence in neurotrauma, and rehabilitation.

A dedicated Neurotrauma Nursing Symposium is conducting practical workshops on early recognition of neurological deterioration, operating theatre safety, spinal trauma nursing, neuro-ICU monitoring, and safe transfer of patients from intensive care units to wards. Leading neurosurgeons, neurocritical care specialists, trauma experts, and nursing educators from across the country are participating in the conference. Dr. Panigrahi said the meeting aimed to strengthen coordinated neurotrauma care involving doctors, nurses, and emergency medical personnel. Among those present were Dr. Raghavendra, Consultant Neuro and Spine Surgeon, KIMS Hospital Gachibowli; Dr. Swetha, Neurosurgeon, KIMS Hospitals Secunderabad; Dr. Sumit Sinha, President of the Neurotrauma Society of India; and members of the organising committee.

EDITORIAL

84 Years After Quit India Movement, The Nation We Must Still Build

On August 8, 1942, at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Bombay, the Indian National Congress launched the Quit India Movement, or “Bharat Chhod Aandolan”. That evening, Mahatma Gandhi delivered a historic address that redefined India's struggle for self-determination. Striking at the core of colonial subjugation, Gandhiji issued an unequivocal mandate to the nation: "Do or Die."

Eighty-four years later, as India reflects on this pivotal milestone, the Quit India Movement stands out as the ultimate mass movement that rendered British rule in India untenable. By 1942, the geopolitical landscape of World War II had brought the global crisis to India's doorstep. Japanese forces were advancing rapidly across Southeast Asia, while the British imperial administration unilaterally dragged India into the global conflict without consulting its elected leadership in the provinces. The failure of the Cripps Mission in early 1942 shattered any remaining hope for a peaceful constitutional transition to self-rule during the war. Frustration turned into resolute action as Gandhi, alongside leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, recognised that incremental demands were no longer sufficient. Nothing short of immediate, complete independence (Purna Swaraj) would suffice. Gandhi called upon every Indian to imprint the mantra of "Do or Die" upon their hearts, declaring that they would either free India or perish in the attempt.

The British authorities moved swiftly to crush the rebellion before it could organise. In the early morning hours of August 9, 1942, the colonial government arrested almost the entire top leadership of the Indian National Congress under emergency war regulations. Far from smothering the movement, this widespread crackdown transformed it into an unprecedented, decentralized groundswell of popular defiance. Courageous figures who evaded arrest stepped up to guide the nation from underground networks. Aruna Asaf Ali famously hoisted the Indian Tricolour at Gowalia Tank Maidan on August 9, while leaders such as Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, and Usha Mehta (who operated a secret underground radio station) kept the public informed and motivated. Across the country, students, farmers, factory workers, and women took to the streets in massive numbers. Boys hawking newspapers chanted “Times of India! Quit India!”. Strikes, public demonstrations, and non-cooperation crippled communications and the colonial administrative machinery. In regions such as Ballia in Uttar Pradesh, Tamluk in Bengal, and Satara in Maharashtra, local citizens went so far as to temporarily oust imperial officials and establish independent parallel governments. Though countered with severe state repression, including tens of thousands of arrests, military firings, and strict censorship, the sheer scale of public resistance demonstrated that British moral and administrative authority had collapsed beyond repair.

The Quit India Movement served as the final countdown to independence in 1947. While the immediate uprisings were forcefully suppressed within months, the movement made it unmistakably clear to the imperial power that governing hundreds of millions of rebellious citizens was an impossibility. Five years later, the ultimate goal was achieved. There is one negative that must be acknowledged.

GEN-Z: Is it Changing the Mindset of Indian Politicians?

Saurabh Varshney

Today, India is not only the world's largest democracy but also its youngest. Nearly half of the country's population is under the age of 35, and in the coming years, Gen-Z and the subsequent Gen-Alpha will constitute the largest segment of the electorate. At such a juncture, when Mohan Bhagwat, the Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), speaks openly about the temperament, mindset, and democratic role of the youth, it transcends mere social commentary; it brings to the fore significant political, ideological, and social implications. In a recent event, Mohan Bhagwat remarked that Gen-Z and Gen-Alpha are more honest, patriotic, and rational than his own generation. He further stated that if the new generation asks questions or voices dissent, they should not be labeled as 'anti-national.' In a democracy, questioning, expressing disagreement, and demanding accountability from the system are natural processes. This statement is not merely praise for the youth but also an acknowledgment of the reality of a changing India. At the same time, one wonders: is this generation changing the mindset of Indian politicians?

Generational shifts in India represent more than just a change in age; they signify a transformation in mindset, lifestyle, technology, education, politics, and social behavior. Gen-Z is the generation that has witnessed the internet, smartphones, social media, and the digital revolution since childhood. Meanwhile, Gen-Alpha is growing up in an era defined by artificial intelligence, machine learning, automation, and digital education. A defining characteristic of both these generations is their refusal to accept anything without logic or reasoning. They seek evidence, examine data, gather information from multiple sources, and only then form their opinions. This is precisely why contemporary politics cannot rely solely on slogans; it must measure up to the standards of facts, transparency, and accountability.

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is considered the country's largest socio-cultural organization. Its ideological influence on Indian politics—particularly on the broader nationalist discourse—has long been a subject of discussion. Consequently, any public statement by the Sangh chief is not viewed merely as a personal opinion but is interpreted within a wider socio-political context. Mohan Bhagwat's observation—that while his generation accepted the words of elders without question, today's youth ask questions, and that this is a positive development—is essentially an acknowledgment of the changing nature of Indian society. The recognition that the new generation seeks dialogue rather than commands conveys a significant message in itself.

The future of Indian elections now rests in the hands of the youth. Data from the Election Commission indicates that millions of new voters are added with every election, the majority of whom belong to 'Gen Z'. Over the next decade, this demographic will emerge as the country's most influential political force. This is why all political parties are recalibrating their strate-

gies. Elections previously relied heavily on caste equations, local influence, and traditional campaigning methods. Today, however, social media, digital campaigns, data analytics, online engagement, and youth-centric policy announcements have become integral to electoral politics. In this context, Bhagwat's message—that the youth are more rational and deserve to be heard with respect—serves as a signal to political parties that the politics of the future will be driven by dialogue rather than mere speech-making.

In recent years, the country has witnessed protests regarding various issues, including student movements, competitive examinations, recruitment processes, education policy, employment, agriculture, and social concerns. Political parties and society at large have held divergent views on these movements. Mohan Bhagwat's assertion that not every act of dissent amounts to being anti-national serves as a reminder of a fundamental democratic principle. The Constitution grants citizens the freedom of expression; peaceful protest and the act of questioning are the very soul of democracy. At the same time, it is equally essential that such protests remain peaceful, constitutional, and constructive. Violence, damage to public property, or social discord undermine the strength of any democratic movement. Therefore, in a democracy, rights and responsibilities are equally important. Bhagwat also emphasized the need to reform the education system. These remarks come at a time when issues such as irregularities in competitive examinations, delays in

recruitment processes, skill development, and employment are constantly being discussed. Today's youth do not merely seek a degree; they desire quality education, employment, research opportunities, a startup ecosystem, and the ability to excel in global competition. If the education system fails to meet these expectations, discontent among the youth is inevitable. Thus, this statement serves as a signal to policymakers that educational reform is not just about changing the curriculum but also about expanding opportunities. The defining characteristic of Gen-Z and Gen-Alpha is their digital lifestyle. While newspapers, television, and radio remain important, social media has completely transformed the flow of information. This generation instantly verifies news from multiple sources. Fake news, disinformation, and incomplete information are also challenges inherent to this digital world; consequently, credibility will be the greatest asset in future politics. Political parties face the challenge of moving beyond mere emotional appeals to strengthen fact-based and policy-oriented dialogue.

Mohan Bhagwat described the youth as patriotic. However, the nature of nationalism today is far broader than in the past. For the new generation, patriotism is not limited to guarding borders or respecting national symbols. To them, nation-building also encompasses a clean environment, quality education, corruption-free governance, scientific temper, technological progress, gender equality, better healthcare, and India's success in the global arena. The question arises: is the Sangh's language changing?

Many political analysts believe that as society evolves, so too do the language and communication styles of organizations. An organization's ideology need not change, but adapting the mode of communication becomes a necessity of the times. If the Sangh chief praises the youth's right to question, it can be seen as an evolution of communication style in tune with changing social expectations. Conversely, some analysts view this as an attempt to convey a positive message to young voters. Both perspectives are part of democratic discourse and can be the subject of healthy debate. The significance of this statement is not limited to the ruling party; it is equally relevant for the opposition.

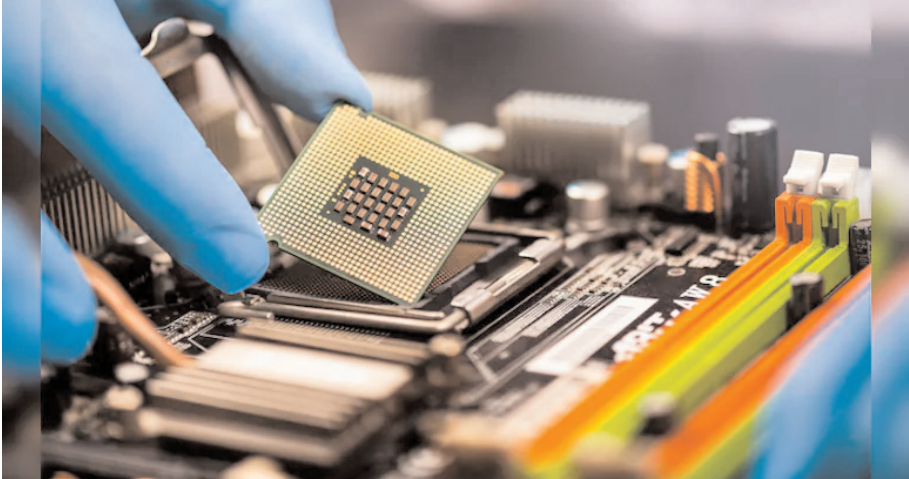
If the youth seek logical answers, the opposition must also present clear policy alternatives rather than merely engaging in criticism. Similarly, the government faces the challenge of delivering tangible results in areas such as employment, education, health, agriculture, digital security, data protection, and innovation. Today's voter evaluates results rather than announcements. Most members of Gen Alpha are currently below the voting age, yet over the next 10-15 years, this cohort will shape the trajectory of Indian politics. This generation will grow up amidst artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality, and the digital economy. Their priorities may well differ from traditional political issues; climate change, cybersecurity, data privacy, mental health, global employment, and technological innovation will be just as significant to them as jobs and education are today. The strength of a

democracy lies not merely in holding elections, but in dialogue, respect for dissent, transparency, and accountability. If the new generation asks questions, it should be viewed as a testament to the democracy's vitality rather than a sign of weakness. In a diverse nation like India, a plurality of views is natural. The challenge lies in ensuring that differences of opinion do not devolve into personal animosity, and in strengthening the culture of dialogue while maintaining faith in democratic institutions.

Mohan Bhagwat's remarks regarding Gen Z and Gen Alpha go beyond mere praise for the youth; they acknowledge the social reality of a changing India, where the new generation seeks respectful dialogue, transparency, opportunities, and accountable governance. These statements can be interpreted on multiple levels: some may see them as a sign of shifting political discourse, others as an ideological message directed at future voters, and some as an acknowledgment of the need for democratic dialogue. Yet, one fact remains indisputable—the future of Indian politics can no longer be written in isolation from the aspirations, questions, and expectations of Gen Z and Gen Alpha. In the years ahead, success will belong to those political parties, social organizations, and policymakers who view the youth not merely as voters, but as active participants. The true strength of democracy lies in dialogue rather than directives, and in trust rather than slogans; the future belongs to those who move forward by understanding the language, aspirations, and energy of the new generation.

10 Years Of Losses, One Historic IPO: How China Built A \$488 Billion Chip Miracle

On July 26, 2026, CXMT Corp., formerly ChangXin Memory Technologies, sold 6.688 billion shares at 8.66 yuan apiece on the Shanghai Stock Exchange's STAR Market. Read those numbers again. In Chinese numerology, six signifies smoothness, and eight, prosperity. An issue price and share count composed entirely of sixes and eights is not an accident of arithmetic. Somewhere in the structuring of the second-largest IPO in China's history, exceeded only by Agricultural Bank of China's 10-billion-dollar sale in 2010, someone decided that the state's memory chip champion needed luck as well as capital. It received both. On July 27, the first day of trading, the stock rose 466% to close at 49 yuan, valuing the company at 3.3 trillion yuan, about 488 billion dollars, making it the most valuable company listed on the mainland. Turnover in the single stock was 141 billion yuan, nearly 7% of all transactions in China's onshore market that day. The retail tranche had been oversubscribed 212 times, with 9.4 million individual orders worth 7.07 trillion yuan. The debut was not really about one company. It was a referendum, conducted in household savings, on whether China can build a semiconductor industry the world cannot ignore. The verdict deserves examination. It Was Never A Smooth Sail First, the facts, shorn of froth. CXMT was founded in 2016 in Hefei, capital of Anhui, a city better known then for white goods rather than wafers. The Hefei municipal government took an 80% stake in the first phase of a 150-billion-yuan memory fab (semiconductor fabrication) project, the largest single industrial investment Anhui had made.



For a decade, the company lost money, about 5 billion dollars in total. Then, demand for dynamic random access memory, the workhorse chip that feeds data to processors, exploded with the AI data centre buildup. Revenue grew roughly 700% between 2025 and 2026, reaching 7.5 billion dollars in the first quarter of 2026 alone. Counterpoint Research puts CXMT's share of the global DRAM (Dynamic Random-Access Memory) market at 8%, up from 3% a year earlier; Omdia had it at 7.67% in the fourth quarter of 2025, fourth in the world behind Samsung, SK Hynix and Micron. All this happened after the Bureau of Industry and Security's export controls of October 7, 2022, which cut Chinese chipmakers off from advanced equipment, and despite Washington's on-again, off-again threat to put CXMT on the dreaded 'Entity List', a designation planned in 2025 and then withdrawn as part of a bargain over tariffs and rare earths. What does this mean for the world? Five implications suggest themselves. The Disruptor Arrives First, the memory oligopoly is broken,

or, at least, breached. For three decades, DRAM has been a three-firm affair, prone to brutal cycles: losses in 2023, gross margins above 80% at Micron and SK Hynix in 2026. Chris Miller, author of Chip War, calculates that the world will spend nearly 0.7% of global GDP on memory chips this year, against a two-decade average in which all semiconductor makers together took 0.47%. Into this seller's market walks a fourth producer, roughly half owned by government-linked entities, which has already demonstrated a ten-year tolerance for losses. Prices will, obviously, eventually reflect that. Second, export controls have produced a paradox their authors did not intend. Denied the most advanced lithography tools, CXMT and its peers concentrated on advanced packaging and on wringing more from older equipment, working with end users such as Huawei. Limiting CXMT may help it leapfrog over incumbents who delay innovation to protect returns on existing machines. Necessity, as ever, is unsentimental about intellectual property regimes. Third, the world's technology market

is bifurcating. Apple, facing memory prices that forced it to raise iPad and MacBook prices, has lobbied Washington for permission to buy Chinese DRAM. On July 16, 2026, the chairman of the House Select Committee on China wrote to the Commerce Secretary demanding the opposite: CXMT's addition to the Entity List and a directive barring American firms from buying Chinese memory. When the world's most valuable company must petition two governments to purchase a commodity chip, the word "market" is doing heavy lifting. Learn From The 'Bog Fund' Fourth, capital markets have become an instrument of industrial policy. China's Big Fund, a massive state-backed investment vehicle established in 2014 to achieve self-sufficiency in semiconductors and critical tech, has committed roughly 680 billion yuan of state money in total across three phases; the STAR Market (China's tech equities market) now channels household savings into the same sectors, with Yangtze Memory, Baidu's Kunlunxin and possibly DeepSeek, queued behind CXMT.

SILENCE ON PURCHASED BRIDE, PANCHAYAT ON LOVE MARRIAGE?

Society seeks balance between tradition and constitution



The reported decision by the Mahapanchayat of the Naugama Khap in Haryana's Jind district to bar couples who have married for love from entering 21 villages has once again reignited a debate that has periodically confronted Indian society—can social traditions trump the constitutional rights of an adult citizen? This controversy is not limited to a single Panchayat or a single village, but also highlights the challenge of balancing democratic values and social structures in a changing Indian society. Khap Panchayats have a centuries-old history. In rural society, they have served to resolve disputes, maintain social discipline, and strengthen community cooperation. On numerous occasions, they have played a positive role in decisions related to water conservation, drug de-addiction, social harmony, and collective interests. Therefore, it would be unfair to view them solely from a negative perspective. However, when a decision appears to affect the individual freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, it is natural to raise questions. The Indian Constitution grants every adult citizen the right to choose a life partner of their

choice. The Supreme Court has also clarified in several decisions that marriages between two consenting adults are completely legal. In such circumstances, any social organization banning such marriages or declaring social boycotts cannot be considered in accordance with a democratic system. Amidst this controversy, a video of a young woman, which went viral on social media, became the center of discussion. She raised a question that cannot be dismissed as a mere emotional reaction. Her question was that when the number of girls in Haryana continued to decline for years due to female foeticide, and many families began purchasing women from other states to marry them, why was the collective consciousness of society not as vocal? If consensual love marriages are considered a social crisis, why is the same severity not shown against inhumane practices like human trafficking? This question is a matter of introspection not just for Khap Panchayats, but for society as a whole. We still face many social crises, such as dowry, domestic violence, child marriage, harassment of women, the growing trend of drug addiction, and discrimination against daughters. If society's collective strength is more active in addressing these problems, their positive impact will be far greater. It's also true that not every love marriage is successful. Sometimes, haste, immature decisions, or a lack of family communication can lead to strained relationships. Parents' concerns are often genuine. Therefore, it's the responsibility of young people to make their decisions with maturity, transparency, and family respect in mind. Communication is always a better option than confrontation.

Meanwhile, social institutions must recognize that changing times have brought about a new understanding of rights and freedoms. Respect for traditions is essential, but they are sustainable only when they are consistent with justice, equality, and human dignity. Society's role should be to build trust, not to instill fear. Another important aspect is representation. How much participation do women have in decisions that most impact them? Is adequate participation of all sections of society ensured in social decision-making? In a democratic society, this question is as important as questions of tradition and authority. Today's India is rapidly changing. Education, employment, technology, and communication have given new dimensions to the thinking of the new generation. At this time, the challenge facing social institutions is to maintain their historical role while remaining consistent with constitutional values. Only the path of dialogue, understanding, and consensus can move society forward. In reality, this debate isn't about love marriage versus tradition, but about societal priorities. If we unite around issues like female foeticide, dowry, women's safety, education, and social justice with the same seriousness we show about personal decisions, society can become healthier and more balanced. The strength of democracy lies in its ability to respect traditions while also protecting individual dignity and freedom. Therefore, the need is not for complete victory for any party, but for a social dialogue that respects tradition and maintains supreme constitutional authority. This balance is the greatest need for India's future.



Hyderabad welcomes South India’s first Starbucks Reserve

Hyderabad: TATA Starbucks on Thursday, July 30, unveiled its Starbucks Reserve store at a restored bungalow turned coffee house in Hyderabad’s Jubilee Hills. The store is the first Starbucks Reserve in South India and sixth in India. It will be open for customers from August 1, from 7 am till 12 am offering small lot coffees from around the world, artisanal beverages and immersive coffee experiences. The store is also pet-friendly. On the menu are Danish pastries such as mushroom feta, key lime pie and apple pie, croissant sandwiches and sourdough toasts. The store also offers exclusive creations, like the Jamaican stardust, espresso martini, ube cold brew and ube martini. As for ambience, the coffee house is decked up with an elegant white facade, expansive verandas, windows, and lush greenery



with natural light. Commenting on the upcoming launch, TATA Starbucks CEO Sushant Dash said, “Jubilee Hills has been an integral part of our journey in Hyderabad, and returning to this neighborhood with our first Starbucks Reserve store in South India is especially meaningful. As one of our strongest markets with over 30 stores, Hyderabad continues to embrace new coffee experiences, making it a natural home for

Starbucks Reserve. We look forward to welcoming customers into a space where coffee, craftsmanship, and community come together in new and meaningful ways.” Starbucks entered the Indian market in October 2012 through a 50/50 Joint Venture with Tata Consumer Products Limited and currently operates more than 500 stores in India across 80 cities. It will be open for customers from August 1, from 7 am till 12 am.

Govt's Big Clarification On UPI Charges, Payments To Remain Free For Consumers

Amid growing speculation over UPI transaction fees, the government clarified that consumers will not have to pay any charges for making payments through the platform. In a statement issued on Saturday, August 8, Ministry of Finance said, all person-to-person transactions will continue to be free of charge. The merchant discount rate (MDR) will apply only to a limited set of merchant transactions, above a certain threshold, at a nominal rate, much lower than debit or credit card MDRs. Notably, most transactions will remain free of charge for merchants on UPI. “MDR, if introduced, will only be threshold based and not blanketly levied to all,” the ministry said. After the Parliament passes the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which proposes to amend Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, the “UPI and Services Steering



Committee” headed by NPCI will decide on MDR, it added. The government further flagged media reports that indicated external influences driving policy changes. Calling these reports unfounded, completely false and misleading, the ministry said, “If external pressure had been a factor, the government would not have introduced UPI in 2016 or made it free of charge for both merchants as well as citizens since January 2020 and ensured that it became the world’s largest real time interoperable pay-

ment system.” Amid growing debate over charges for UPI transactions, the Payments Council of India (PCI) has sought to clear the air, saying consumers and small merchants will continue to use the digital payments platform without transaction charges. In a post on X, the industry body said UPI has remained free for consumers since its launch in 2016 and that there is currently no charge for small merchants, including kirana stores, to accept UPI payments. There has been considerable discussion

Highlights
■ Amid growing speculation over UPI transaction fees, the government clarified that consumers will not have to pay any charges for making payments through the platform.

charges now? PCI said UPI has evolved from a new payment platform into the world’s largest real-time payment system. With transaction volumes surging, the focus is now on how to sustainably fund the infrastructure supporting billions of secure transactions while protecting consumers and small merchants. Who built and continues to invest in UPI? Banks, payment companies, fintech firms, NPCI and the Reserve Bank of India have collectively invested in UPI’s technology, cybersecurity, fraud prevention, innovation and customer support for nearly a decade, PCI said. If UPI is free, who pays for its operation? The costs of running the payment infrastructure—including cybersecurity, fraud prevention, compliance, technology and customer support, are currently borne by ecosystem participants such as banks and payment service providers.

Why Indians Are Buying Refurbished iPhone 16s Over New Handsets



A new iPhone increasingly feels out of reach for India’s middle class, and the numbers show buyers responding by switching lanes rather than giving up on the phone altogether. Counterpoint Research pegs India’s refurbished smartphone market to expand 12% this year, even as sales of brand-new handsets are projected to fall 11%. Refurbished and pre-owned devices already made up 26% of all smartphone units sold between January and May, climbing from about 23% a year earlier, a shift industry executives trace back to a memory chip crunch that’s driven handset prices up by roughly 30-35% on average, and by as much as 70% in some cases, since AI data centre demand began squeezing supply late last year. The Twist: Buyers Aren’t Trading Down What stands out is that shoppers aren’t settling for cheaper, basic phones. Shrey Sardana, co-founder and CEO

of refurbished platform Grest, said the price surge from tighter supply chains and costlier components has pushed people toward a different route entirely, one where they still land the exact device they wanted, just through a certified refurbished channel that promises verified quality, honest condition grading and warranty backing. iPhones lead the pack on his platform, he said, with the 15 and 16, both priced above Rs 40,000, seeing the strongest pull. His buyer base spans widely too, from those spending as little as Rs 15,000 to others dropping over Rs 1 lakh. Financing And A Small But Growing Organised Market Growth is sharpest at the top: phones priced above Rs 45,000 are seeing nearly 40% year-on-year growth in the refurbished space, per Sardana, against roughly 11% for the wider premium segment, even as total smartphone shipments barely move.

ASCI Report, ‘The Heat is On’, Finds ~98% of Summer Ad Claims Examined Needed Correction

Of the 40 ads reviewed, 21 advertisements were modified or withdrawn by advertisers without being contested; 18 others were found in violation Advertising of skin-brightening and tan-removal products for babies and children emerged as an area of serious concern, as did instant beauty transformation claims Mumbai, August 2026: Every summer, brands compete for consumer attention with claims promising relief from the heat, protection from the sun, and quick beauty fixes. To assess whether these seasonal claims were backed by evidence, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) assessed 40 advertisements across categories, including personal care, cooling appliances, air purifiers, sunscreens, wearables and travel-related products between April and June 2026. The findings were published in “The Heat Is On: ASCI Review of Summer Advertising Claims” report. This report reflects ASCI’s ongoing commitment to closely examine emerging claims within specific sectors of interest. The review found that 39 of the 40 advertisements examined needed modification following ASCI’s intervention. Of these, 21 advertisements were modified or withdrawn without contest, while 18



were ultimately found to be in violation of the code by the ASCI Consumer Complaints Council. Only one advertisement successfully substantiated its claims and was not found in breach. Advertising for sun protection and tan removal products emerged as the largest violative category, followed by home appliances and furnishings positioned around cooling, air purification and indoor comfort. Instant beauty transformation claims remained widespread, with advertisements promising results such as “De-tan and Glow in 30 Seconds”, “Visible Difference in 5 Days” and “Remove Stubborn Tan in 2 Minutes”. Advertisers that failed to substantiate these

claims were required to modify or withdraw their advertisements. One of the greatest areas of concern was the marketing of skin-brightening and tan-removal products for babies and children. Fourteen advertisements in this category reinforced harmful colour-based stereotypes by appealing to parental anxieties around tanning and complexion. The review also found an increasing number of products including sunscreen jackets, cooling apparel, air conditioners and air purifiers being positioned as health and protection solutions, with broad claims relating to UV protection and defence against pollutants, allergens and bacteria. In

many cases, these claims were not supported by adequate scientific evidence. The majority of upheld cases revealed consistent shortcomings across categories: Absence of Substantiation: Claims going live before supporting evidence existed. Failure to Engage: No response to requests to engage, putting consumers at risk of potentially unsubstantiated claims. Weak Support for Technical and Leadership Claims: Leadership and performance claims frequently outpaced the evidence. Insufficient Due Diligence by Endorsers: Influencer and celebrity endorsements often lacked evidence of due diligence, weakening consumer trust. The findings highlight the growing need for robust substantiation as seasonal advertising becomes increasingly competitive and claim-driven. Responsible advertising not only protects consumers from misleading claims but also helps build long-term trust in brands. Manisha Kapoor, CEO and Secretary General, ASCI, said: “Summer advertising often responds to seasonal consumer needs, whether it’s staying cool, protecting against the sun or achieving quick skincare results. While innovation is welcome, the claims made must be supported by credible evidence.

How 76% of SBI's Personal Loan Recoveries Happen Without Active Collection



State Bank of India recovers three-quarters of its personal loan product (Xpress Credit Loan) dues by moving the money from a customer’s savings account into the loan account, Chairman CS Setty confirmed the figure on the bank’s August earnings call. “In a bank like SBI and Xpress Credit, let me tell you, 75% to 76% of the recoveries happen by way of moving funds from savings bank account to loan account,” Setty told analysts. “That is not collection.” Xpress Credit borrowers have their salary account at SBI. Setty said 99% of them are salaried, drawing income from government jobs, defence postings or private employers. When an instalment falls due, the bank moves the required amount from the salary account into the loan account. The transaction happens without any con-

versation between the bank and the borrower. SBI’s annual report puts the Xpress Credit book at Rs 3.76 lakh crore as of March 2026. Twenty-eight lakh customers borrowed under the product this year, taking a combined Rs 2.58 lakh crore. Setty described the limits of this approach in the same call. Self-employed borrowers and professionals rarely hold a single salary account the bank can draw from. SBI has largely stayed out of lending to them through Xpress Credit. Setty said the real difference between banks and non-bank lenders lies in the collection mechanism, and admitted SBI has not built one strong enough to serve these customers, despite having the pricing power to compete for their business. He named parts of the MSME segment as facing the same gap.

How An Auto Ancillary Player Became One Of India's Biggest Railway Safety Suppliers In 12 Months

In June 2025, Sona BLW Precision Forgings closed a Rs 1,642.6 crore deal to buy the railway component division of Escorts Kubota. The company had never made a railway product before. Its factories produced differential gears and starter motors for car and tractor manufacturers across four continents. Ten months later, railway products contributed 14% of Sona BLW’s consolidated revenue. The company now ranks among the leaders in railway braking systems, couplers, dampers and friction products in India, according to an HDFC Securities initiating coverage report. To put that 14% in perspective, traction and suspension motors, the segment most closely tied to India’s electric vehicle growth story, contributed 11% in the same period. Of the Rs 1,642.6 crore paid, Rs 855 crore went toward licenses, as per the FY26 annual report. These are the product approvals and certifications from the Research Designs and Standards Organisation that allow a manufacturer to supply components to Indian Railways. RDSO approval transfers are widely regarded as one of the biggest bottle-



necks in Indian railway component acquisitions, and can reportedly stretch over months. Group CFO Rohit Nanda wrote in the annual report that management had anticipated “operational challenges during the initial transition period, particularly because the transfer was expected to be a time-consuming process.” However, the railway team secured these approvals ahead of internal timelines, Nanda said. That speed helps explain how a business consolidated for only 10 of the 12 months in FY26 could deliver such a large revenue share. The acquisition became effective on June 1, 2025, meaning the

April and May numbers had no railway contribution at all. What Walked Through The Door The product portfolio that came with the Escorts Kubota deal was extensive. Brake systems, axle-mounted and wheel-mounted disc brakes, electro-pneumatic brakes, microprocessor-controlled brakes, bogie-mounted brakes, couplers, suspension systems, friction and rubber products, electrical control panels, air springs, vacuum evacuation systems and automatic plug doors all sit under the railway vertical now, the HDFC Securities report noted. Within its first year under Sona BLW’s ownership, the railway unit also

commercialised three new products: a Hydraulic Motor Controller, a Railway Electric Control Panel and an HVAC System. Development work is also underway on intelligent microprocessor-controlled systems for high-speed train platforms including Amrit Bharat, and Vande Bharat, the HDFC Securities report added. The annual report notes that the HVAC and electric panel approvals were secured within the first year, expanding the offering from safety-critical braking and coupling systems into passenger comfort products. The Acquisition Playbook Sona BLW has made three acquisitions in seven years. The first was Comstar in 2019, which added motor capabilities. The second was Novelic in 2023, which brought radar and sensor technology from Serbia. The railway deal was the third and largest. Managing Director Vivek Vikram Singh put a number on all three during the Q1FY27 post-earnings conference call in July. The company has invested roughly Rs 2,750 crore across the three deals, he said. Together, they contribute approximately 40% of current revenue at the end of Q1FY27.

Indian Pilots Federation Writes To PM, Seeks Autonomous Civil Aviation Authority

The Federation of Indian Pilots has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking the creation of an autonomous Civil Aviation Authority, reviving a proposal that was first taken up by the government more than a decade ago. In its letter dated August 6, the FIP called for replacing the existing Directorate General of Civil Aviation with an independent statutory regulator with greater administrative, financial and technical autonomy. The pilots’ body said India’s rapidly expanding aviation sector requires a modern regulatory framework capable of ensuring safety, security, efficiency and consumer protection. The FIP said the aviation sector has witnessed significant growth in passenger traffic, aircraft fleets, airports, air navigation services, pilot training organisations and maintenance facilities. However, it argued that the complexity of regulatory oversight has grown faster than DGCA’s organisational capacity. As an attached office of the Ministry of Civil

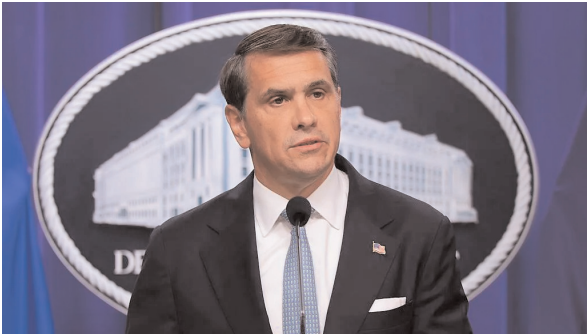


Aviation, the DGCA faces limitations in administrative autonomy, financial flexibility, recruitment of specialists and timely decision-making. What Does FIP Wants? FIP has proposed an autonomous CAA with administrative and financial independence. The authority would regulate areas including aviation safety, airworthiness, licensing, certification, consumer protection and environmental compliance. A key concern is the regulator’s ability to recruit and retain technical specialists. The FIP pointed to the need for airline captains, flight operations inspectors, airworthiness and aircraft

maintenance engineers, air traffic management experts, human factors specialists and fatigue-risk management experts. It said government pay scales and recruitment procedures can make it difficult to attract experienced professionals from the aviation industry. For pilots, an autonomous regulator could also strengthen oversight of flight duty time limitations, fatigue risk management and Safety Management Systems, while improving licensing and enforcement of safety standards. FIP Seeks Revival Of 2013 Civil Aviation Authority Bill The demand seeks to revive the Civil Aviation Authority of

India Bill, 2013, which proposed replacing DGCA with an autonomous statutory authority. The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 20, 2013, but lapsed after the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha in 2014 and was never reintroduced. The FIP has also cited international support for stronger regulatory independence. It said ICAO had identified shortcomings involving inspector strength, technical personnel, financial autonomy and surveillance capability. The FAA endorsed India’s CAA proposal in 2010 as being consistent with ICAO policy, while IATA supported an adequately resourced autonomous regulator. FIP clarified that the FAA did not independently recommend creating a CAA and that IATA’s position was not a formal regulatory recommendation. At its core, FIP’s argument is that India’s aviation industry has expanded dramatically and its regulator needs to become more independent, better funded and better equipped to oversee that growth.

Trump's ex-lawyer
Todd Blanche
narrowly confirmed as
US attorney general



US President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer Todd Blanche has been narrowly confirmed as attorney general - the nation's top law enforcement official. The vote brings to an end a lengthy standoff between Senate Republicans and the Trump administration over Blanche, who has served as acting attorney general since April. Blanche won confirmation in a 50-49 vote overnight, with two Republican senators, Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski, joining all Democrats to oppose his nomination. Senator Bill Cassidy cast the deciding vote, a decision closely watched in Washington given the years of acrimony between the Louisiana Republican and Trump. Some Republican senators had raised concerns about Blanche's handling of the release of Jeffrey Epstein-related documents and his role in establishing Trump's \$1.8bn (£1.3bn) "anti-weaponisation" fund. The fund was planned to provide compensation to individuals who alleged

government persecution but critics including Murkowski feared it would go to individuals who were prosecuted for participating in the 6 January attack on Congress in 2021. Blanche eventually pledged to walk back the fund after blowback from Republican senators during his confirmation hearings. It remains unclear whether the commitment is legally binding or whether Trump could later persuade Blanche, his former personal attorney, to revive a similar scheme under another name. These issues meant Collins and Murkowski held off from backing Blanche, with the latter citing her lack of confidence in Blanche to "check the worst impulses of this administration". Murkowski announced on Friday she would oppose Blanche, citing concerns over the "politicisation" of the justice department. After the vote, Blanche said he was "deeply honoured by the trust and confidence President Trump has placed in me".



■ Spain imposes border controls against Italy as row over Ceuta migrant influx intensifies

SAUDI ARABIA, TURKEY AND
PAKISTAN SIGN DEFENCE PACT

Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan have signed a joint defence agreement, saying an attack on one of them would be seen as an attack on all three. The pact was announced at a meeting between Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the Saudi city of Mecca. After the US and Israel attacked Iran on 28 February, Tehran and its allies struck targets in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states and disrupted traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a major oil shipping channel, and the Red Sea. The Mecca agreement has drawn a sharp reaction from Tehran, where an senior member of parliament said it would not help Saudi Arabia. "The Saudis should



know that a paper agreement with Turkey and Pakistan does not bring them security, just as years of unilateral milking of the Americans did not bring them security," Ebrahim Rezaei, a member of National Security commission, wrote on his X. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had already announced a joint defence pact last year. The new Mecca Joint Defence

Agreement sees three of the world's most powerful Muslim nations come together to offer mutual defence guarantees. It aims "to strengthen collective deterrence against any act of aggression, and stipulates that any armed attack against any one of the three States shall be regarded as an attack against them all", a joint statement reads. "It further provides for the enhancement of all aspects

of defence co-operation among the three States." Although the pact pledges mutual support, it provides no specifics on the obligations of each party. A Turkish official quoted by Reuters news agency said the pact was "purely defensive in nature". Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey each bring different qualities to the table, with each wanting something different out of it. For the Saudis, this gives an extra level of security in a region whose security architecture has been upended by the US and Israel's war with Iran. Last month, Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels - who control much of the north-west of the country - announced a "maritime embargo" against Saudi Arabia and targeted Saudi airports, oil facilities and tankers in the Red Sea.

Scale of devastation
shocks US city's fire-sea-
soned residents



Last year, Chris Matthews was forced to flee with his family of five after a brushfire threatened their home in Spokane, Washington. That evacuation lasted only a few hours. So when an ominous column of dark smoke raced towards him last Saturday, and he and his family were evacuated again, he expected he'd be back home soon. Instead, he returned to find nothing but smouldering ruins. "All of us thought we were going to be able to get back to our houses," he recalls. "And we didn't think it'd be a situation where we were going to lose our homes or anything like that." Smoke and fires are a normal occurrence here in the US Pacific Northwest every summer, as residents wait for the autumn rains to arrive. Small evacuations are not unexpected. But the scale of this year's fires in Spokane is unprecedented. Kira Townsend, 39, says she realised the immense danger when word came that the fire had jumped over the river, which normally acts as a barrier protecting the city from fires. "It's never jumped the river like that, and just roared up the hill that fast," she says. Nearly a quarter of the city population - 65,000 people - were forced to evacuate since the fires began. For those whose homes did not burn down, officials say it may be weeks before it is safe to return to their neigh-

bourhoods. Miraculously, there have been no deaths or major injuries reported from the fires. Matthew Kincanon, 31, fled for his life as the fire entered his neighbourhood of Prosperity Lane on Saturday night. He returned 12 hours later to discover that there was nothing left. "As soon as I stepped out of the car I threw up," he says. "I felt sick. I couldn't control it. I just lost it. It hit me all at once," he says. While firefighters battle three large fires around the city that remain less than 40% contained, the recovery effort is beginning for people who have lost everything. "We have two fronts going at the same time. We're actively fighting the fire and trying to put that out. But we're also starting recovering for folks that have lost their homes," City Councilman Zack Zappone, who grew up in the devastated Indian Trails neighbourhood, tells the BBC. "There just a lot of uncertainty and frustrations and difficult-ness," he says at a city shelter, describing the tensions in the city. Chrissy Goodrich's voice cracks in anger as she calls on people to do everything they can to prevent more wildfires. She echoes warnings from officials, who say that innocent activities like mowing your lawn could ignite a fire. "People have got to use their brains," she says. "Stop doing things that are gonna cause sparks.

Thai PM vows to introduce stricter gun
laws after eight killed in shooting

Thailand's prime minister has vowed to introduce new gun control laws following a shooting by a teenager on the outskirts of Bangkok that left eight people dead and 22 injured. Fourteen people remain in hospital, seven of whom are in a critical condition. The 14-year-old killed his grandparents at the home they shared before travelling to Debsirin School in Nonthaburi, where he had been a student. There, he killed five teachers before taking his own life. Later, Thai media reported that a student had also died from their injuries. Speaking after the attack, Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said he planned to introduce laws that restrict the carrying of firearms in public. The new legislation will only allow government officials on duty to carry guns. Police Col Thadsakorn Konthong said that the gun and bullets used in the attack belonged to the teen's grandfather, with an initial inspection finding signs that the firearm had been searched for inside the



grandfather's bedroom. International and local media have reported that the gun was legally registered and had a permit. Thailand has one of the highest rates of civilian gun ownership in South East Asia, with around 10.3 million firearms in civilian possession, around four million of which are believed to be owned illegally. The country has strict gun laws, which punish the illegal possession of arms with up to 10 years in jail, but enforcement of these laws has been an issue. During his time as interior minister, Anutin introduced a number of gun con-

trol laws, including a short-term ban on new gun licenses and import restrictions. Speaking on Friday, the prime minister said the tragedy "shouldn't have happened". "I don't just feel sorry for the victims but I feel sorry that this happened. How can this happen in our country," Anutin added. The teenager is believed to have shot his 73-year-old grandfather and 74-year-old grandmother at their two-storey flat at around 05:00 local time on Friday (22:00 GMT on Thursday). Each was killed by a single shot to the head, a Thai police official said. After killing his grand-

parents, the teenager boarded a school bus carrying the firearm and dozens of bullets, Reuters news agency reported. He then attended his first class at 08:30 and his second at 09:20. Around half an hour into his second class of the day, he drew the gun and began shooting. The teenager is believed to have first shot teachers on the school's sixth floor, killing three of them. "He then walked down the stairs and encountered the school's deputy director and the director's secretary, who were going up the stairs to check on the situation," Police Major General Dejrapee Kongdee told Reuters. "The attacker shot and killed both of them on the staircase." Police were deployed to the scene while the shooting was ongoing. They found the attacker, who by then had shot himself, around 10:40, Dejrapee said. Five people were immediately killed and at least 23 were wounded. Later, Thailand's public broadcaster and the Bangkok Post reported that an eighth victim had died.

Typhoon Dolphin batters
Japan's Okinawa before
bearing down on China



Typhoon Dolphin has cut power to at least 44,000 buildings and injured at least five people after hitting Japan's Okinawa island on Saturday. Flights to and from Okinawa's main airport - Naha International Airport - were cancelled as it closed on Friday as the storm arrived. The storm had maximum wind speeds of 162km/h (101mph) on Saturday and has been categorised as a "very strong" typhoon by the Japan Meteorological Agency, which warned of high waves, storm surges and lightning strikes. Dolphin is expected to make landfall on China's eastern coast

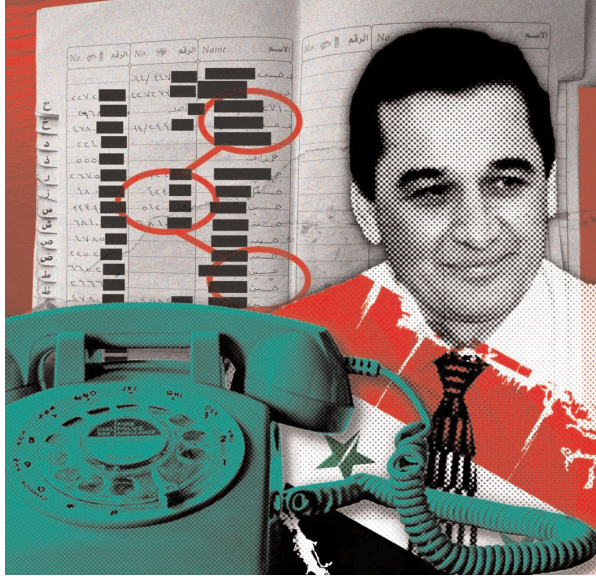
late on Sunday or early on Monday. Authorities there have shut ports and schools ahead of its arrival. The main areas in Japan affected by the typhoon are the islands of Okinawa and Amami in the far south-west of the country. Five elderly people suffered non-life-threatening injuries, according to the Okinawan prefectural government. Three of them fell because of the strong winds, it said. Japan's national broadcaster NHK reports numerous accounts of trees being toppled by strong winds throughout Nago city in Okinawa, while a car was found overturned and leaking oil in a parking lot.



Child among three killed in Russian missile attacks near Kyiv

THE PHONE BOOK THAT LED US TO
ASSAD'S SPY CHIEF IN HIDING

In an abandoned luxury apartment in the Syrian capital Damascus, armed men dressed in military fatigues sifted through designer clothes and documents. Scattered across the living room floor, under a sparkling crystal chandelier, were dozens of photos of the same slender man in different settings - sitting at his desk, even playing in the snow. And multiple prints of the same image, showing him smiling warmly as he shook the hand of ousted dictator Bashar al-Assad. The man was not instantly recognisable, but gold medals and gilded certificates piled nearby were inscribed with the name Hussam Luka. Known as "The Spider", Luka was one of Assad's top henchmen, accused of orchestrating atrocities and systematic torture, and sanctioned by the



UK, US and European Union. As head of Syria's most powerful civilian intelligence agency, Luka was among the most feared men in the coun-

try. But much of his work was conducted from the shadows. Like others in the regime, Luka seemingly vanished overnight in December 2024

when Assad was toppled, leaving a trail of unanswered questions and demands for justice that many fear will never be realised. In his apartment, days after Assad's fall, we watched the rebels looking for clues as to where he might have gone. In the corner of the living room, on a console table, was an unremarkable-looking notebook. Inside, in scribbled blue handwriting, we found dozens of names - from shopkeepers and doctors, to military officials and people with the Luka family name. Could these contacts help us learn more about The Spider and his crimes, or even help us to track him down? At one time, Luka's own phone number was hard to avoid - in the early days of the Syrian civil war, it had been spray-painted on walls around the central city of Homs.

JORGE MESSI, LIONEL MESSI'S FATHER, DIES AT 68

Jorge Messi, the father of Argentina and Inter Miami star Lionel Messi, has died at the age of 68, according to multiple Argentine media outlets. Jorge had been struggling with health issues for some time. Lionel Messi had mentioned that his family was going through a difficult period, but he did not share specific details about his father's condition. After scoring against Algeria in June, Messi became visibly emotional and was asked about his tears. He replied, "Why was I crying? It had absolutely nothing to do with football. I have had a few difficult days." These comments sparked intense speculation about the reason for his emotions, with many media outlets linking them to Jorge's health. Conflicting reports soon surfaced regarding his condition, prompting the Messi family to release a statement requesting privacy. "The Messi family wishes



to inform you that Jorge Messi is currently dealing with health problems. He is under medical supervision and is recovering well," the statement said. The family expressed concern about the rumours surrounding Jorge's condition. They criticised the way some reports handled what they described as a private family matter. "Given the reports, rumours, and speculation that have been circulating in recent hours, the family wishes to express its deep concern about the lack of sensitivity, respect, and discretion with

which some people have treated a strictly private family matter." The statement concluded with a plea for privacy and thanked those who had supported the family during this challenging time. "We sincerely appreciate the expressions of affection, respect, and concern we have received. We ask that the privacy, confidentiality, and personal space of Jorge, and that of his entire family, be respected throughout this process," it read. Jorge's health issues also appeared to impact Lionel Messi's schedule.

Massive Blow Before Sri Lanka Series, BCCI Shortlists Two Replacements?



Sarfraz Khan or Shaik Rasheed could be picked as replacement for Sai Sudharsan ahead of the upcoming Test series against Sri Lanka, according to a report by Times Of India. Sudharsan was reportedly ruled out of the series, starting August 15, after he failed to recover from a foot injury. While he was included in the squad for the two-Test series, his availability was subject to fitness clearances. The report claimed that Sarfraz has already been at the BCCI Centre of

Excellence (CoE) for his fitness assessment and Rasheed has been asked to report to the facility. The 21-year-old performed well for India A in the two red-ball matches in Sri Lanka last month and that can be one of the reasons behind the selectors picking him for this series. Sudharsan, who scored two tons in two 'A' Test matches, was hit during the second game against Sri Lanka 'A' and since then has been in rehabilitation at the Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

Ashmita Chaliha Storms Into Final Of Korea Masters Super 300

India's Ashmita Chaliha showcased brilliant resilience to book her spot in the women's singles final of the Korea Masters Super 300, beating compatriot Rakshmitha Ramraj in the semifinal played at the Asan Yi Sun-sin Gymnasium in Asan, Korea, on Saturday. In a thrilling all-Indian semifinal, Ashmita overcame compatriot Rakshitha 21-13, 16-21, 21-13. After dropping a tight second game, Chaliha bounced back aggressively to dictate the decider, continuing the Indian contingent's stellar run at the tournament. She will now battle China's Han Qianxi for the title in the summit clash. The experienced Ashmita had on Friday packed off top seed Hina Akechi of Japan 20-22, 21-15, 21-19. In the other quarterfinal match, Rakshitha got the better of Chinese Taipei Open champion Tanvi Sharma 18-21, 21-19, 21-18 in another gruelling quarterfinal clash. Ashmita, the 26-year-old from Guwahati, Assam, and Rakshitha, who both ended up playing



for over an hour in the quarterfinals, were the only Indian players still in the fray at the end of the quarterfinals. Ashmita will now face the winner of the clash between fourth seed Han Qian Xi of China and the unseeded Kim Ga Ram of South Korea. The men's doubles combination of Pruthvi K Roy and Krishna Prasad G went down 21-7, 21-8 against Malaysia's Man Wei Chong and Soh Wool Yik in the quarterfinals. The BWF World Tour Super 300

Series event, which ends on Sunday, has a total prize fund of USD 250,000. The tournament was founded in 2007 and was held as an International Challenge-level tournament, the fourth level of international badminton tournaments, till 2010 before being converted into a BWF Grand Prix Gold event in 2011. The Grand Prix Gold event ceased in 2017, and the Korea Masters became a part of the BWF World Tour Super 300.

BCCI Top Official Rushes To Bengaluru For Urgent Review After Injuries Deal Hard Blow To Indian Cricket Team

Concerned with the spate of injuries that has rocked the Indian team of late, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia will meet Head of Cricket VVS Laxman on Sunday to take stock of the rehabilitation management programme at the Centre of Excellence (CoE). India will be missing the services of Jasprit Bumrah (knee swelling), B Sai Sudharsan (left big toe injury), Harshit Rana (hamstring), Nitish Kumar Reddy (hamstring) and Washington Sundar (quadriceps) due to various injuries. Akash Deep (lower back stress fracture) has been out for the longest time since Bengal's Ranji Trophy semifinal defeat. Adding to that, white-ball specialists Hardik Pandya (quadriceps), Varun Chakravathy (hamstring) and Prince Yadav (hamstring) are also at the Centre of Excellence, where the Sports Science team has been overworked without a figurehead since the resignation of Nitin Patel in early



2025. Right now, the challenge is to get all these players back on the park. Sudharsan and Bumrah were included in the squad subject to fitness, but the CoE's team of experts decided to exercise caution, looking at the bigger picture. "Yes, secretary Saikia will be in Bengaluru to take stock of the situation along with VVS Laxman. There is a meet-

ing scheduled between the two. It is not known whether national team head coach Gautam Gambhir or chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar will join online. It will be interesting if both Saikia and Laxman front up and answer a few media queries amid so many conjectures," a BCCI source in the know told PTI on condition of anonymity. There

are also rumours that the CoE and the current selection committee have not always been in sync with regard to injury management timelines and the release of some players before they had ticked all the boxes. The issue of Harshit Rana reaching England distinctly overweight has not gone down well with the selection committee. Similarly, the selection committee was initially made to believe that Bumrah and Sudharsan would be available for at least one of the two Test matches. However, once the dust settled, it was found that Bumrah, following the impact injury, is dealing with water retention in his knee, which requires more time to heal. In Sudharsan's case, he had been batting for 75 minutes a day for some time, but the pain in his big toe still persists. Nitish Reddy tried to increase his pace by 7 to 8 kmph, and that put a strain on his hamstring and quadriceps.

Jemimah Rodrigues' Injury Sends Shockwaves Through India's Asia Cup Plans

India batter Jemimah Rodrigues has been ruled out of The Hundred after sustaining a hamstring injury. Rodrigues, who joined Southern Brave as a direct signing for £60,000 (approximately US\$80,000), has been one of the franchise's most consistent performers this season. She scored 143 runs in six innings, playing a key role in the Brave's strong campaign as they sit joint-top of the women's competition on 20 points alongside Trent Rockets, who lead on net run rate. The 25-year-old has also claimed two Player of the Match awards for her performances, making her absence a significant blow to Southern Brave as the competition enters its decisive phase. It is a significant blow for the Brave, as well as the competition, given Rodrigues' profile. They have two games remaining to secure automatic qualification for the final by finishing top of the table, with Manchester Super Giants and Trent Rockets their remaining opponents. Her absence could also be a concern for India, with the Women's Asia Cup set to begin in the UAE later this month.



Davis Cup: Korea To Host India On Hard Courts In Qualifier Round 2

South Korea have opted to host India on hard courts at the Olympic Tennis Centre in Seoul on September 18-19 in the Davis Cup Qualifiers Round 2, setting up a potentially intriguing tie between two closely matched teams. India are currently ranked 19th and Korea 16th in the Davis Cup standings, while the Koreans hold a slender 6-5 advantage in their head-to-head record. India will pick their squad on August 10 for the crucial tie. The last meeting between the two sides came a decade ago, when India prevailed 4-1 in Chandigarh in 2016 in an Asia/Oceania Group I tie played on grass. Korea players are traditionally more comfortable on hard courts and that's why India had deliberately opted for grass when the teams last met. India earned their place in



the second round with a dramatic 3-2 victory over the Netherlands in Bengaluru in February. Dhakshinewar Suresh was the hero, winning both his singles rubbers and partnering Yuki Bhambri to victory in the doubles. He sealed the tie by beating Guyden Ouden 6-4, 7-6(4) in the deciding fifth rubber. The victory was particularly significant as it took India into the second round of the qualifiers for the first time since the cur-

rent format was introduced in 2019. Korea, meanwhile, produced an equally impressive upset, defeating 2016 champions Argentina 3-2 in Busan. The Koreans were inspired by Kwon Soonwoo, who was still completing his military service, as they fought back to knock out the fancied South Americans. The second round will therefore be a winner-takes-all contest for a place in the Davis Cup Final 8.

Elena Rybakina Advances While Mirra Andreeva Exits At Toronto

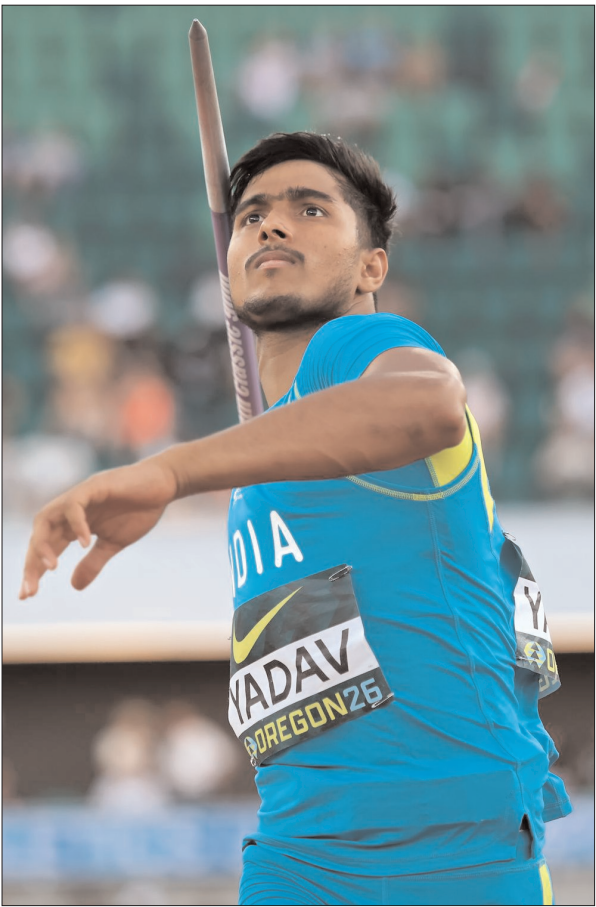


Reigning Australian Open champion Elena Rybakina advanced to the fourth round of the WTA Toronto Masters on Friday while French Open winner Mirra Andreeva was eliminated by Canada's Leylah Fernandez. World number two Rybakina from Kazakhstan defeated American 28th seed Ann Li 6-2, 7-5 in 90 minutes, winning five of six break chances while saving two of

four against her. Rybakina, who also won the 2022 Wimbledon title, advanced to a last-16 meeting with Russia's Liudmila Samsonova, who outlasted Australian Maya Joint 7-5, 6-7 (3/7), 6-2. Samsonova leads the career rivalry with Rybakina 4-2 but Rybakina has won their past two WTA meetings, most recently in last year's Strasbourg final. Fernandez, the 30th seed,

dispatched 19-year-old fifth-ranked Russian Andreeva 6-1, 6-4 in 80 minutes, snapping a seven-match losing streak against top-10 opponents. Fernandez last beat a player ranked so high when she downed fourth-rated Jessica Pegula on her way to last year's WTA Washington title. "The key for me was to stay positive, stay strong, and to keep being patient," Fernandez said. "She wasn't going to give away some easy balls. "In the beginning there were a lot of long rallies and that was a key for me to stick with it, trusting in my abilities, and to continue on playing my game throughout the match." The Canadian won 24 of 27 points on her first serve and captured 17 of 23 points on Andreeva's second serves to advance.

Ashish Yadav Wins Silver In Men's Javelin Event In World Athletics U20 Championships



Ashish Yadav won a silver in the men's javelin throw event to open India's medal account on the third day of the World Athletics U20 Championships in Eugene. Yadav's third round throw of 74.09m fetched him the silver medal while T Dharanidharan, the other Indian in the fray in the men's javelin throw finals, finished sixth with 72.35m. The 19-year-old Yadav

became the second Indian, after two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra, to win a silver in the event. Chopra had won gold and set the still-standing world junior record of 86.48m in the 2016 edition in Poland. The gold medal went to South Africa's Jan-Hendrik Heymans who sent his spear to 80.50m, the season's U20 world lead, in his sixth and final attempt.



CHAPMAN COULD RETURN TO UK NEXT WEEK AFTER BRAIN BLEED

Britain's Raven Chapman could travel back to the UK next week after undergoing a second successful surgery on a brain bleed she suffered following a sparring session in Denmark. The 32-year-old former world title challenger collapsed after training on 24 July and was taken by helicopter to hospital, where she was diagnosed with a brain haematoma and cerebral oedema. After undergoing emergency surgery and being placed in a medically induced coma, Chapman's

management company, Vote Boxing, said she has had another successful procedure. "This marks another important step in her recovery while also making it safer for her to travel back to the UK," a statement said. "If everything continues to progress as hoped, we are aiming for Raven to fly home sometime next week, where she can continue her recovery surrounded by her family and loved ones." Although there is still a long road ahead, this is a significant milestone,

and we remain hopeful as Raven continues to make progress each day." Chapman has won 10 professional fights with two losses. The Norwich-born fighter lost to Skye Nicolson for the WBC featherweight title in October 2024 in the only women's world-title fight ever held in Saudi Arabia. A GoFundMe page has been launched to help raise funds for Chapman's rehabilitation and after-care has raised over £88,000. "We would also like to take this opportuni-

ty to sincerely thank everyone who has supported Raven through her GoFundMe, as well as everyone who has sent messages, shared their prayers, and shown kindness throughout this incredibly difficult time," the statement added. "Your generosity and support have meant more than words can express and have provided tremendous strength to Raven and her loved ones. "Thank you for continuing to keep Raven in your thoughts as she continues her recovery."

ACTRESS-PRODUCER NIHARIKA KONIDELA OFFERS BANGARU BONAM AT SRI MAHANKALESHWARA TEMPLE IN MIR ALAM MANDI, OLD CITY, HYDERABAD

As the Bonalu festivities continue with great devotion across Hyderabad, actress and producer Niharika Konidela visited Sri Mahankaleshwara Temple at Mir Alam Mandi in the Old City, where she offered the traditional Bangaru Bonam to Goddess Mahankali and performed special prayers. She was accorded a grand welcome by the temple priests with Purna Kumbham. After seeking the blessings of the Goddess amidst Vedic chants, the temple authorities felicitated her. On the occasion, Temple Chairman Gajula Anjaiah briefed Niharika about the history of the

temple, as well as the significance and traditions of the Bonalu celebrations conducted under the temple's auspices. Speaking to the media, Niharika said that she could not visit the temple on the main Bonalu day due to a shooting schedule, which is why she came now to seek the blessings of the Goddess. She shared that although she was born and brought up in Hyderabad, she had always been fascinated by the sight of women dressed in traditional attire carrying Bonams during the Bonalu festival. "A few days ago, I said that I wished someone would take me to

Bonalu. I never imagined that my wish would be fulfilled so soon. I believe this is the Goddess's blessing," she said. Describing the experience, Niharika added, "The Goddess is immensely powerful. Today's darshan was very peaceful and spiritually fulfilling. The divine radiance of the idol was truly mesmerizing. I pray that I get another opportunity to visit and seek the blessings of Amma once again." As news of Niharika's visit spread, devotees gathered around the temple to take photographs and selfies with her, creating a festive and lively atmosphere in the temple premises.



Manasa Choudhary Is Serving Garden Goddess Vibes



Manasa Choudhary is getting into the festive spirit ahead of Bonalu, and her latest traditional look has fans swooning. The actress was seen in a stunning navy blue saree-style outfit with intricate gold zari borders, paired with a matching gold-detailed blouse. Styled with soft curls, minimal gold jewellery, and a bindi, the look gave off effortless South Indian elegance. The lush green backdrop added a fresh, earthy

touch to the overall picture, making it perfect for the festive season ahead. Manasa's simple yet graceful styling has once again proved that traditional wear suits her effortlessly. On the work front, Manasa's last release Vanaveera failed to make a mark at the box office this year. However, she continues to stay active with her fashion moments, keeping fans engaged as they await her next project announcement.

‘BHARAT BHHAGYA VIDHAATA’: A TRIBUTE TO 26/11’S UNSUNG HEROES

This Independence Day, Hindi Zee 5 invites audiences to celebrate the spirit of courage, resilience and selfless service with the exclusive digital premiere of Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata on 14th August. Continuing its commitment to bringing bold, inspiring and culturally resonant stories to viewers across India, the homegrown OTT platform shines a light on the unsung heroes whose extraordinary acts of bravery reflect the values that define the nation. Written and directed by Manoj Tapadia and produced by PEN Studios, Manikarnika Films and Paramhans Creations in association with Eunoia Films LLP and Floating Rocks Entertainment Pvt Ltd, Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata stars Kangana Ranaut



alongside Girija Oak and Smita Tambe among others.

What is Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata about?

Set against the backdrop of the devastating 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata revisits one of the darkest chapters in India's history to spotlight a group of

unsung heroes whose courage and selflessness saved countless lives. Set within Mumbai's Cama and Albless Hospital, the film follows the extraordinary actions of nurses, ward boys, cleaners, security personnel, and other hospital staff who became the first line of defence for the patients in their care.

When the attackers breached the hospital premises, these ordinary individuals rose to extraordinary circumstances. With little means of protection but an unwavering sense of duty, they put their patients' lives before their own. Through their remarkable acts of courage and selflessness, the film explores themes of sacrifice, compassion, and resilience, celebrating the strength of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable adversity.

Why Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata deserves to be on your watchlist?

Inspired by true events: A gripping retelling of one of India's most defining moments through the eyes of healthcare workers who displayed exceptional courage.

“‘Agadha’ Will Be a Brilliant Divine Mystic Thriller” – Shravan Reddy

Directed by MS Raju and produced by Kashi Visalakshi Balusu under the Sri Adi Varaha Productions banner, with Ajay KR as the presenter, 'Agadha' features Kamakshi Bhaskarla, Shravan Reddy, Ulka Gupta, Jovika Vijayakumar, Bhanu Chander, Shiju, Vanitha Vijayakumar, Roshan Basheer, Shreya Rani Reddy, Viva Raghava, Robert Master, Arna Muller and Kanakava in key roles.

The film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on August 14. Ahead of the release, hero Shravan Reddy interacted with the media on Saturday and shared several interesting details about the film.

Why was there such a long gap after 'Dirty Hari'?

'Dirty Hari' was released during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although it had a direct OTT release, we received an excellent response from the audience. I got several offers around that time as well. However, the pandemic and lockdowns caused delays. I spent almost a year working on 'Mangalavaaram'. Finally, MS Raju Garu gave me the opportunity to be part of 'Agadha'.

Tell us about your character in 'Agadha'.



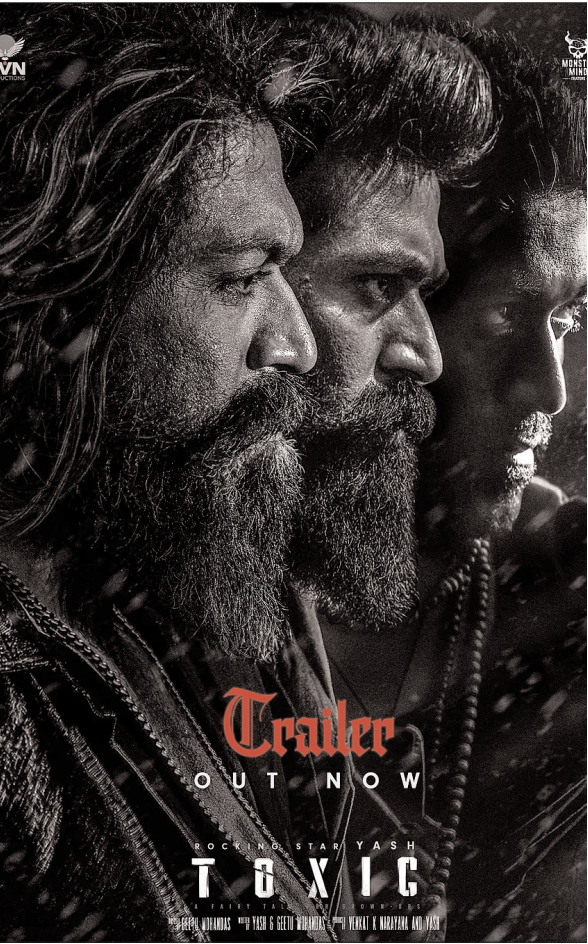
'My character in 'Agadha' is completely different from the one I played in 'Dirty Hari'. The character has been designed with multiple dimensions and several shades. I really enjoyed playing such a layered role. I feel very lucky that a visionary filmmaker like MS Raju Garu has given me another opportunity. 'Agadha' was a very challenging and completely different experience for me.

Vishal’s Makutam Trailer Promises A Mass Actioner With An Intriguing Story

Vishal's Makutam is a special film as he takes on the dual responsibility of playing the lead role and directing the movie. The film marks the 99th production from the prestigious Super Good Films banner and is produced by the late RB Choudary. It features a strong cast, including Anjali, Dushara Vijayan and several other notable actors. The trailer presents Makutam as a grand commercial entertainer packed with action, emotion and mystery, with Vishal appearing in a rugged and intense role. The trailer does not reveal much about the actual story but gives a glimpse of the conflict surrounding Vishal's character. His different looks and shades suggest that the film has several layers. The story seems to combine personal emotions with high-intensity action. Instead of revealing the main twist, the trailer raises questions about the characters, their relationships and the bigger conflict, creating curiosity among viewers. Vishal looks powerful and commanding throughout the trailer. His action scenes have plenty of mass appeal, while the emotional portions show another side of his character. Anjali and Dushara Vijayan also make a strong impression, with both appearing to have important roles in the story.



Toxic Trailer: Bloody Battle Between Father And Son!



After months of anticipation, the makers of Yash's Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups have finally unveiled the film's much-awaited trailer. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, the ambitious action drama marks Yash's first release since the blockbuster KGF: Chapter 2 and offers the most detailed look yet at the world of the mysterious gangster at the heart of the story. The film, which also stars Kiara Advani, Nayanthara, Huma Qureshi, Tara Sutaria and Rukmini Vasanth, is slated to hit theatres on August 26.

Trailer promises an intense gangster saga

The trailer introduces audiences to Yash's character while expanding on the film's dark, stylised world. Yash, who plays a fearless gangster with no loyalty to anyone and a reputation for being both charming and dangerous. The trailer hints at betrayals, revenge and a bloody turf war as multiple crime bosses fight to dominate a lucrative criminal empire. Apart from the high-octane action, the trailer also suggests that Yash's character is a womaniser, with several romantic relationships playing a role in the story.

SHIVA GADI ZINDAGI’ MOVIE TITLE AND SONG LAUNCHED GRANDLY

The title and song of the upcoming Telugu film 'Shiva Gadi Zindagi', produced by Sindhu Surya under the banner of Aishwarya Cine Creations, were launched in a grand manner. Sachin Ram Pratap and Hasini Devarakonda are playing the lead roles, while Vinay Reddy Chandupatla is directing the film. The movie's title was launched by producer Suresh Babu, while the song was released by ReelOn CEO Dasaratham Bitla, Royal Enfield Dealer Principal Poola Sandeep Kumar Naidu, and senior journalist Shiva Mallala, who attended the event as chief guests. The guests congratulated the entire team and wished the



film great success.

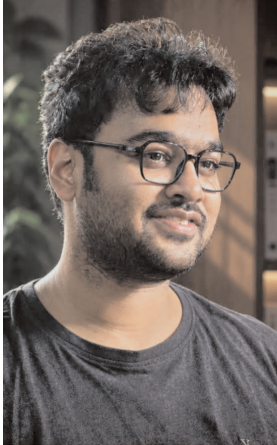
A Reflection of Every Common Man's Life

'Shiva Gadi Zindagi' is being made as a blend of comedy, emotion, drama, friendship and love, offering a complete package of entertainment. The story revolves around

the different situations, incidents and emotions that an ordinary person encounters in life. The director has crafted the narrative in such a way that every scene has a strong reason, every character has significance, and every emotion has a meaningful connection.

Dr. Ravikiran Gadalay to Make His Directorial Debut with Sriram (Srikanth) Starrer The Maze

While it is common to see doctors turning actors, Dr. Ravikiran Gadalay is taking a different path. An MD and pathologist by profession, he has earned recognition in the medical field and is now entering the film industry as a director. He is making his feature-film debut with The Maze, a psychological thriller starring Sriram (Srikanth) in the lead role. Earlier, Ravikiran made a short film titled The Wrong Swipe entirely on his phone, which helped him gain practical knowledge of storytelling, cinematography, performances, scene construction and editing. On the occasion of his birthday, Dr.



Ravikiran Gadalay interacted with the media and spoke about his journey into filmmaking. Dr. Ravikiran Gadalay said, "I have never worked as an assistant director, and before becoming a feature-

film director, my experience in the industry was very limited. However, I have had a dream of making a film since childhood. I watched several films, analysed them and practised filmmaking using my mobile phone, which helped me understand the language of cinema. My knowledge of editing allowed me to visualise every scene beforehand, and that made the process of direction much easier for me. Filmmakers such as Akira Kurosawa, Selvaraghavan and Sandeep Reddy Vanga have been major inspirations for me. I am now making my directorial debut with The Maze, and I hope to receive everyone's support."

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