

Hyderabad pilgrim killed, family members injured in Riyadh airport attack

Hyderabad: A man from Hyderabad died and three of his family members suffered injuries during an attack on Riyadh airport in Saudi Arabia, where they were waiting for transit after performing Umrah as part of a 13-member group.

Mohammed Yusuf Ali, a resident of Mehdiapatnam, was reportedly killed when a portion of the airport roof fell on him during the attack, allegedly carried out by the Houthis.

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi confirmed Yusuf Ali's death and appealed to the Centre to extend all possible assistance to the bereaved family.

Land acquisition for bullet train hub at Bahadurguda triggers row

Hyderabad: The Telangana government's move to acquire land for proposed high-speed rail corridors has come into sharp focus after the Centre has clarified that it had not asked the State Government to acquire land for the project.

The land acquisition move, undertaken without a formal requisition from the Central government, threatens to snowball into a major controversy, with the farmers and landowners stoutly opposing the move.

Three high-speed rail corridors, connecting Hyderabad with Chennai, Bengaluru and Pune, have been proposed. However, the State government has reportedly begun the land acquisition exercise despite the absence of a formal requisition from the Centre.

Two Indian seafarers missing after drone attack on tanker off Oman coast

Muscat: Two Indian seafarers are missing after the tanker MT Petro Dolphin, carrying 11 Indian crew members, came under a drone attack at Sohar Anchorage in Oman on Sunday, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said, adding that nine of the Indians have been rescued.

"On October 11, tanker MT Petro Dolphin, carrying 11 Indian seafarers, was subjected to a drone attack at Sohar Anchorage. While nine of our Indian crew members have been successfully rescued and are safe, two Indian nationals currently remain missing," Sonowal said on social media platform X.

Vijay Joins PM Modi To Open Metro, Major Infra Projects

Chennai: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Sunday jointly inaugurated, laid the foundation stone for and dedicated development projects worth over ₹13,000 crore in Tamil Nadu, spanning metro rail, highways, railways, ports, petroleum and education. The Prime Minister held Vijay's hand while digitally inaugurating the projects in the IIT-Madras campus and switched on the schemes.

Modi inaugurated the Poonamallee-Vadapalani stretch of Phase II of the Chennai Metro Rail project, built at a cost of around ₹4,900 crore. The corridor features a 3.7-km double-decker structure and advanced signalling systems designed to support driverless operations.

He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for national highway projects worth around ₹3,700 crore, including road sections near Madurai and the proposed Thiruvavur bypass. Railway projects worth over ₹750 crore included the Karaikal-Peralam railway line, three rail flyovers

and five redeveloped Amrit Stations at Palani, Vellore Cantonment, Ambasamudram, Paramakkudi and Namakkal.

At Chennai Port, Kamarajar Port and V.O. Chidambaram Port, he inaugurated and launched projects to improve cargo handling, logistics and maritime infrastructure.



IndiGo Delhi-Chennai flight diverted to Hyderabad after power bank fire

Hyderabad, Oct 11 (IANS) An IndiGo flight from Delhi to Chennai was diverted to Hyderabad on Sunday after a power bank reportedly caught fire onboard. "The crew reportedly used a fire extinguisher to contain the fire, following which the flight was diverted to Hyderabad. "The flight landed safely at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. All passengers and crew members are safe."IndiGo flight 6E 6115, operating from Delhi to Chennai on October 11, was diverted to Hyderabad after smoke was detected from a customer's personal electronic device, the airline said. "The cabin crew responded promptly and the situation was brought under control. In line with established protocols, the pilots diverted the flight and landed safely at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Hyderabad, it saidAn airline spokesman said an alternate aircraft has been arranged to continue the journey to Chennai. "We regret the inconvenience caused to our customers due to this unforeseen situation and are making all efforts to minimise it, including offering refreshments and sharing timely updates," IndiGo said in a statement. "At IndiGo, the safety of our customers and crew remains our top priority," he added."The Airbus A321-251N aircraft departed from Delhi at 1.30 p.m. against the scheduled departure of 1.10 p.m. It was scheduled to land in Chennai at 4 p.m."The fire broke out in the overhead luggage compartment due to a malfunctioning power bank. The incident triggered panic among passengers."

BJP is 'Ravan', Congress is 'Ram', says Telangana CM Revanth Reddy

Hyderabad/Panjim, Oct 11 (IANS) Terming BJP as 'Ravan' and Congress as 'Ram', Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Sunday appealed to people to help Ram defeat Ravan.

He said that he was confident of Congress coming to power in Goa in 2027, and that he could sense the same energy in the state as he experienced in Telangana in 2023 ahead of the Assembly elections.

Revanth Reddy was speaking in Goa on Sunday as part of the Congress party's Goy Rakhonn Yatra.

"The story in Indian politics has a Ram and a Ravan. Ravan is BJP, which is dividing the people, and Ram is Congress. If the people want Ravan to lose, they have to support Ram in this fight," a release from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) here quoted him as saying.

He urged the people of Goa not to vote for smaller parties propped

up by the BJP. "They are here to divide the people. Any vote for them is a vote for BJP. This time, I urge the people of Goa to vote only for the Hand symbol," he said.

He stated that Rahul Gandhi is trying to unite the people while the BJP was trying to divide them.

Revanth Reddy was there to represent Rahul Gandhi, who was scheduled to participate in the meeting.

"Yesterday, I got a call from Shri Mallikarjun Kharge ji. He said Rahul ji is needed in Delhi, where he is leading the fight for our country. Kharge ji told me to represent Rahul ji here. Rahul ji told him that Congress party workers in Goa are waiting. I am here as a messenger and representative of Rahul ji," he said.

Revanth Reddy stated that Rahul Gandhi is leading the youth, the opposition and the entire country in the fight against the corrupt dictatorship of the Modi government.



Anti-national, international powers trying to disrupt nation's harmony: G. Kishan Reddy

Hyderabad, Oct 11 (IANS) On Opposition drawing a parallel between the Emergency imposed by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975 and the current bans on protests, Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy said that it is not the Emergency but a precaution. He added that various anti-national and international powers are trying to cause disturbance in the nation. "Speaking to IANS, Reddy said, "They (Opposition) are calling out issues which are not the real issues at all. They are creating false issues to disrupt the system."The Union Minister also noted, "The Congress does not need to teach a lesson in the name of democracy and Emergency. In 1975, Congress took away the rights of the common citizens; put thousands of people in jail, banned the media, put bans on all political, societal activities."Rahul Gandhi should learn first what was at stake when the real Emergency happened. What did the people go through during the Emergency, what they bore...," he added."Reddy also said, "I would like to invite Rahul Gandhi to Telangana and show him how the Congress govt, Revanth Reddy-led Telangana government doesn't allow for a single program to happen. In Telangana, whenever we (Bharatiya Janata Party) try to do a public program, the state government prohibits it," Reddy said."Even for simple, peaceful programs we have to seek permission from the High Court first.



Rahul Gandhi should come to Telangana and see how the Congress here (in Telangana) treats the Opposition, especially the BJP. What prohibitions are put forth, he should check," the Union Minister added."Reddy also commented on the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyaan' and said, "On the birth anniversary of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Bharatiya Janata Party is conducting a one-month 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' with various programs across the country."Specifically in this context, we are serving the public, organising medical camps, going before the people, creating awareness on different topics, bringing awareness, and informing people about the developmental activities that PM Modi has continuously carried out over 25 years of service to the nation," he added."--IANS

DRI seizes gold worth Rs 8.98 crore after high-speed chase near Visakhapatnam

Visakhapatnam, Oct 11 (IANS) The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized foreign-origin gold worth Rs 8.98 crore near Visakhapatnam and arrested two persons. "The gold weighing over 5.8 kg was seized from a car after a high-speed chase near Visakhapatnam, the agency said on Sunday. "The gold hidden under the car seat was being transported from Kolkata to Hyderabad. "According to the DRI, it seized 5,832.90 grams of gold worth Rs 8.98 crore in the market from a car travelling from Kolkata to Hyderabad, following a chase and search on the night of October 8-9. "Acting on specific intelligence, DRI officials maintained heightened vigilance along the National Highway. They intercepted the car carrying two passengers after a prolonged chase. "After sustained questioning and a systematic search of the vehicle, officials detected a specially fabricated cavity beneath the leg space of the front co-passenger seat. They recovered three packets containing 5,832.90 grams of 24-carat gold of 999 purity from the concealed compartment. "According to the officials, the gold had been smuggled into India through the India-Bangladesh border and was being transported to Hyderabad. "Officials seized the recovered gold under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962. They arrested and produced both passengers before the jurisdictional magistrate, who remanded them to



judicial custody. "The DRI said in another press release on Sunday that it intensified its crackdown on cross-border gold smuggling from Bangladesh, seizing around 7.8 kg of foreign-origin gold valued at more than Rs 11.50 crore in intelligence-led operations conducted on October 8-9 in the eastern region. "The operations exposed the use of road and railway networks to transport smuggled gold from border areas towards Kolkata, resulting in the arrest of six persons, the DRI said."The officials seized 50 gold bars, weighing around 6.8 kg and valued at approximately Rs 10 crore, from a four-wheeler at Dankuni Toll Plaza.

Telangana farmers urged not to cultivate second crop in view of drought-like conditions

Hyderabad, Oct 11 (IANS) In view of the severe impact of El Nino and drought-like conditions in Telangana, state government advisor on agriculture and MLA, P. Sudarshan Reddy, on Sunday appealed to farmers not to cultivate a second crop. "He said that the state is facing a shortage of drinking water, and electricity is also in short supply.

In view of the present situation, he advised farmers not to cultivate the Yasangi (Rabi) crop."Reddy said that the water levels in major reservoirs, lakes and tanks have fallen considerably, and groundwater levels have also declined. "He called for urgent measures to address the situation. He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with the Chief Secretary and officials from various departments, is reviewing critical issues such as irrigation water and electricity supply. Special attention is being given to the prevailing conditions across the state. "In Nizamabad district, particularly in the Singur project area, the available water is primarily being reserved for

drinking purposes.

Due to insufficient electricity generation in the Nizamsagar and Sri Ram Sagar projects, farmers and the public have been urged to use electricity carefully and conserve water. "

"The government advisor instructed officials to take appropriate measures to ensure uninterrupted drinking water supplies and prevent wastage. The Singur project is expected to have water available until December 2026, and officials have been directed to prepare plans to manage water resources effectively beyond that period. "Sudarshan Reddy appealed to farmers and the public not to waste water under any circumstances. He emphasised that officials must take strict measures to prevent the unnecessary use of water and ensure that available resources are used responsibly.

"He expressed concern that the severe El Nino conditions could worsen the situation if farmers proceed with

another crop without adequate water availability. He therefore appealed to farmers not to cultivate the Yasangi crop this season, considering the shortage of irrigation water and electricity.

"The government advisor directed officials from the irrigation, agriculture and electricity departments, along with MPDOs and other concerned authorities, to form special committees through gram panchayats in every village. These committees should create awareness among farmers and the public about conserving water and electricity.



"Sudarshan Reddy stressed that electricity generation has declined due to inadequate water in the projects and that the state is currently relying heavily on solar power. He urged farmers and the public to cooperate with the government and the concerned departments to overcome the crisis. "

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Break the unethical nexus

The unethical nexus between profit-driven pharmaceutical companies and doctors often works to the detriment of patients in India. Prescribing costly branded drugs, instead of generic ones, and unnecessary diagnostic tests are some of the practices that undermine the right of patients to exercise their options. When inducements influence prescriptions, the consequences affect patients and the cost of healthcare. Though the Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) has been in force since 2014 and revised in 2024, its implementation has been weak and continues to face significant logistical, structural, and legal challenges. Against this backdrop, the Supreme Court's latest directive to the government to constitute an expert committee to curb unethical pharmaceutical marketing is a welcome development. Hopefully, the judicial intervention would go a long way in plugging a regulatory gap. The main criticism against the UCPMP is that this enforcement body was set up at the pharma association level. Since the industry peers were tasked with investigating complaints against their own members, there was an inherent conflict of interest that weakened impartial enforcement. The petition before the apex court sought to highlight the allegation that pharma companies offer doctors expensive gifts, foreign trips and other benefits to promote particular medicines. Such practices can distort clinical judgment and encourage over-prescription. Moreover, the patient is usually unable to assess whether a medicine is necessary or whether a cheaper alternative exists. The UCPMP guidelines prohibit gifts, travel facilities, hospitality and monetary grants to doctors and spell out mechanisms such as an ethics committee, expenditure disclosures and an apex panel to address complaints. The track record suggests that voluntary compliance may not be enough. The apex panel has received only a handful of complaints. This does not by itself prove that unethical practices are rare. Other factors could also be at play, such as under-reporting, weak enforcement or reluctance to confront powerful commercial lobbies. Previous attempts to provide statutory backing through the Essential Commodities Act or the Drugs and Cosmetics Act raised questions of jurisdiction and legal validity. The proposed committee must avoid another exercise in bureaucratic delay. It should examine international models, conflict of interest, disclosure requirements, penalties, independent investigation and the role of medical regulators. The government must come up with a clear legislative roadmap, including whether a new law is necessary. Patients should not have to bear the hidden cost of marketing campaigns disguised as professional persuasion. While UCPMP 2024 claims to be mandatory, it operates under administrative directives rather than an independent act of Parliament. Without formal backing from a criminal statute, the penalties are largely restricted to peer-level actions rather than enforceable ones. This lack of legal teeth is precisely why the Supreme Court has intervened now, directing the government to draft distinct statutory recommendations.

Rs 90 lakh cheque, fake threat and plot to kill Adani Realty manager

GNS News Agency, Oct 11 On September 2, Yuvraj Manchanda, a manager at Adani Realty, was sitting at Roots Cafe in Gurugram's Sector 29 with Anya Vats, a former colleague who now worked as a freelance real estate agent.

"Anya had told him about some flats in Gurugram's Pyramid Society in Sector 70 that were available at throw-away prices. They met to discuss finances," said a Delhi Police officer. A source with the Delhi Police said Anya was also finding out exactly how much money Yuvraj could put together: how much he had in his accounts, how much he planned to borrow from banks, and how much he was taking from friends and family. She then asked for his phone to check something. "She wanted to see his password. She had already accessed his bank account statements and bank balance in the name of formalities for the sale of the plot," said a police officer. Four days later, Yuvraj was dead.

Police alleged that Anya and her live-in partner, Sanyam, shot him dead on September 6 inside their white Creta in Gurugram's Sector 70. His body was later dumped in a drain. A police officer said the murder was linked to a post-dated cheque of Rs 90 lakh that Anya had issued to settle a cheating case involving a senior Punjab National Bank (PNB) official. With the money unavailable, investigators alleged, she targeted Yuvraj and fabricated a threat to draw her partner into the plan. Yuvraj, Anya and Sanyam had all worked at real estate developer Emaar, said police. Anya was allegedly fired in 2022 over financial mismanagement, while Yuvraj later left the company. "She had been bringing clients to Emaar, but was also making side-deals, along with Sanyam, for extra money. When the company learnt of it, she and Sanyam were fired," said a police officer. Anya and Sanyam's relationship had also begun at Emaar, said police. When she first met Sanyam in 2022, he had been married for six years and had a daughter.

A police officer said she allegedly "texted his wife, claiming that Sanyam was making romantic advances towards her. She also allegedly created a fake profile of his wife and showed it to Sanyam, trying to prove that she was also keeping secrets from him. Ultimately, Sanyam left his wife and daughter and started living with Anya." After being let go from Emaar, the couple went to Dehradun for over one and a half years before returning to Gurugram. Anya and Sanyam had a son. By September, Anya was facing another problem. She needed money. According to a police officer, Anya had two cases of cheating registered against her.

One of them involved the high-level PNB official, whom Anya and Sanyam had allegedly cheated of Rs 1.25 crore between 2025 and 2026. A case was registered against them at Parliament Street police station in August this year.

'It feels like home': How a small village in Himachal became 'Mini Israel'



GNS News Agency, Oct 11

"Mini Israel kithe hai? (Which way to the Mini Israel?)" they ask in Punjabi. A local villager looks towards them and raises his finger. "Just park your bikes here and trek upwards. Dharamkot is little ahead." Separated by two kilometres and joined by the Dhauladhar range, Mcleodganj and Dharamkot are a world apart in many ways. Walking up, the Buddhist prayer flags, the swanky cafes, and the aroma of momo and Laphing in Mcleodganj give way to signboards in Hebrew, home-style bakeries, and the whiff of freshly baked challah bread signalling the arrival of Dharamkot.

These days, the administration has intensified vigil in and around Dharamkot. "Although so far, we have not received any request from any Israeli national staying at Dharamkot about their security, we are ensuring a strict vigil in and around Dharamkot," Superintendent of Police of Kangra district, Kulbhushan Verma says. "A patrolling team has been assigned the task to patrol the village streets twice a day. We also have details of every foreign national including Israelis staying there." SSP Verma says that there was an isolated incident earlier when unknown people made some graffiti on walls nearby Dharamkot to hurt the sentiments of Israeli visitors. "We had lodged an FIR immediately and our investigation concluded that some mischievous elements did this. There was nothing more to it," he says. Dharamkot is around 240 kms from Himachal's capital Shimla. Its closest city is, however, Dharmshala and the nearest airport — around 20 kms — is in Gaggal, Kangra. No one — neither locals nor the Israelis — can quite put a finger on why this small village in Kangra district became a favourite of the Israeli travellers. One such Israeli is Mayya from Yavne. Now 39, Mayya was just 18 when she first visited India in 2008. "I don't exactly remember where I got the idea to visit Dharamkot during my first trip. I think I had just heard a lot about this place from many people..." she says. "What followed was an inseparable bond that continues even today," she says as she fondly looks at her husband Gopal Subramaniam.

Born and raised in Chennai, Gopal too has a Dharamkot story of his own but one he is not willing to part with. "I left my home at the age of 18. I don't want to get into details of the circumstances in which I left. I came to Dharamkot in the early 2000s," says the 50-year-old. "Mayya met me in 2008, and later, we decided to get married," he says matter-of-factly. "I think it was my destiny. To come here and meet him," Mayya chips in. She is clearly the more romantic one. The couple runs a small guest house in Bhagsu Nag, right next to Dharamkot. "We used to run a guest house in Dharamkot too but left it after the lease expired," explains Gopal. The couple are parents to two children: A daughter, Sansa (8), who was born in Israel and a son, Agam (5), born in Kangra. "I do keep visiting Israel and have Israeli citizenship. But now I am no less an Indian," says Mayya, seated in the verandah of their guesthouse, which doubles as a small bistro, as clouds hang low, signalling an impending spell of rain. To an outsider, Mayya and her family may seem an anomaly but for the locals in Dharamkot, she barely raises an eyebrow. Mayya is not the only one from Israel who established herself here. There are a number of Israelis, who have made Dharamkot their second home over the years," Gopal says. "They come to India on tourist visas again and again after short intervals. Many have started their own ventures to earn a livelihood".

Local residents of Dharamkot say they have a special fondness for these Israeli guests and make sure that they feel at home. "They keep to themselves, don't haggle or create a fuss, and are generally well-behaved," a local shopkeeper says. "Besides, our livelihood is dependent on the tourists. We get along well". Hence, the dip in the number of Israeli tourists this season, in the wake of the war with Iran, has left them wistful. The emptiness hangs heavy in a jewellery shop in a congested, narrow lane deep inside Dharamkot. Artist Vrindavan Dass, popularly known as Raju Dadda, who traces his roots to Kolkata, is sitting on a chair, the wall next to him covered with pages carrying instructions written in Hebrew. "Israelis dominate this place. They come here frequently. They want to keep themselves busy and jewellery-designing workshops are one component of this goal," Raju says. "Besides jewellery workshops, you will find music lessons, classes to make musical instruments, and yoga workshops here". Another shop owner Aditya Singh is from Rajasthan. "My jewellery shop is more of a workshop than a shop, where we train people, especially foreigners, to make different jewellery designs," he says. Today, though, there is not a single student inside the workshop. Raju attributes this to several factors, including the ongoing Middle East crisis, heavy monsoon and, foremost, the increasing arrival of domestic tourists. "It is common knowledge among locals that Israelis like to keep to themselves. One reason behind their preference for Dharamkot is its secluded nature, which could afford them their own space," a local resident explains. "Hence, the arrival of domestic tourists, many of whom come looking for content for their social media reels, seems to be a downer for many of them". Mayya is not sure if the war is the major reason for the dwindling number of Israelis visiting Dharamkot. "This situation is quite normal back in Israel now. Indeed, some problems exist. There are no direct flights and tourists have to come through connecting flights. That makes the journey more expensive," she says. Gopal, however, gives another reason. "A lot of youngsters, who would have otherwise travelled to India, may be busy... the military service is mandatory there," he says.

"Some problems are being faced by people who are still serving in the defence services. Otherwise, I don't believe there is much of a hurdle despite the ongoing Middle East crisis," says Stroul, who is a tech professional back home. Asked about his own military experience, he says, "I was not found fit for the defence service during my medical examination." While Aditya's jewellery store was bereft of Israeli visitors, a few steps ahead, a musical-instrument shop is echoing with the sound of a lone flute. In one corner of Madan B N Music Workshop, 23-year-old Yoni, a first-time visitor to India, is practising his fingerwork on the instrument.

Lone student on the flute" came here in July. I have been learning the flute for the last fortnight. I would like to

learn and practise here for the next three months," says Yoni, who declines to share his full name and profession in Israel. "I am a native of Nepal, but two generations of my family have settled in Dharamshala. My grandfather and father were also musicians. Our relationship with Israelis goes back a long way..." Music instructor Madan says. "Today, you see only one person sitting in my workshop. But there have been days when it remained crowded with foreign students round-the-clock." Like Raju, Madan also attributes the dip in the expected rush to the glut of domestic tourists. It has led to a few unsavoury incidents, he whispers. "War, too, could be a reason," he shrugs. "You can't attribute it only to the Middle East conflict, though. I personally believe that when the rush of domestic tourists increases here, the number of Israeli tourists reduces. Apart from this, during the monsoon, Israelis move towards destinations like Leh, Ladakh," he adds. As the congested trail continues alongside a natural drain (nullah) running through the middle of Dharamkot, a striking red-coloured, three-storey building comes into view. While you can walk into the neighbouring cafes and shops without a hitch, entry here is strictly guarded. It is Dharamkot's "Chabad House" and a sign announces it in Hebrew and English.

"The Chabad House is situated on land that was once taken on a long lease by a group of Israelis. We are not allowed to enter this building. But this place is revered by people from Israel," says Deepu, who runs a cafe, The Bamboo Chick, next door. "They assemble here once or twice a week and pray. This building also serves as a transit point for visiting Israelis. There is a group that arranges everything for anyone, who comes from Israel until the person is able to make their own arrangements," Deepu explains.

Once a remote shepherd village Raju Raj, 69, a local resident, attempts to explain how Dharamkot transformed from a remote shepherd village into this "Mini Israel". Initially, Dharamkot was a village dominated by the shepherd (Gaddi) community. Their main sources of livelihood were rearing livestock, small-scale farming and daily wage jobs. I am also not clear how and when Israelis started reaching this village, but one thing is for sure — it is all due to the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Dharamshala (near Mcleodganj) in the 1960s. His presence changed this entire landscape," says Raj. "Although Jewish people from Israel have no connection with him, the Dalai Lama matters," he says. "As foreigners started arriving here, they began establishing their own avenues. They can't purchase land here, so they started taking it on lease. People from other states in India, such as Rajasthan, West Bengal and Goa, have also taken land on lease and are running businesses, especially in the hospitality sector," he says.

The village, too, caught up and made sure to create a hospitable environment for its Israeli guests. A number of locals speak Hebrew, shops have "no photography, videography allowed" signage because Israeli visitors seek complete privacy. A number of outlets double up as money exchange centres too. Kaka Ram, 59, another native of Dharamkot, says the transformation of the village has been such that it would now be difficult to locate a house that depends entirely on agriculture and cattle rearing — their ancestral trade. "Every house in this village has a homestay, guest house, cafe or eating joint, rustling up all kinds of food, especially dishes such as falafel, pita and shakshuka," he adds. Earlier a gram panchayat, Dharamkot now comes under the Municipal Corporation of Dharamshala. Kangra District Tourism Development Officer Vinay Dhiman says, "Foreigners want to explore more and more. The area around Dharamkot is full of adventure activities. There is the Triund hiking trail, the Laka Glacier... Experienced mountaineers can scale Moon Peak. Even Bir-Billing, a paradise for paragliders, is in Kangra district. All these things attract foreign tourists." According to information available with the State Tourism Department, approximately 8.26 lakh tourists visited Kangra district in 2025-2026. Nowhere is the quest for calm of these Israeli residents and tourists more evident than it is at Tushita Meditation Centre. "Most of the disciples who come here to undergo short-and long-term courses of 15 to 30 days are from Israel," Alejandro, 34, a teacher of philosophy from Columbia, tells The Indian Express. "At present, there are 22 students, including me, undertaking a course at Tushita. Around 16 out of 22 are Israelis." A dream of a simple life

Like Mayya, Daniela, 29, from Tel Aviv, and her partner Yonatan, 34, are nurturing a dream of making Dharamkot their second home. At a restaurant in the heart of the village, they order Tibetan food while sitting at a low bajot-style table and begin narrating their story. While Daniela is visiting for the second time, it is Yonatan's first time in both India and Dharamkot. "We first met in Chile in South America in 2018. Since then, we have been friends. I visited Dharamkot in 2021. This place was so beautiful and appealing that I wanted to visit it again and again. This visit is also special because this time, Yonatan is accompanying me," says Daniela. Yonatan, who works in the technology sector, says, "I had heard a lot about Dharamkot...". The couple says though they have visited many countries — Thailand, Malaysia, Nepal, to name a few — it is in this small Himachal village where their heart seems to have found its destination. "We would never miss an opportunity to settle in Dharamkot," they say, almost in unison. "It feels like home."

Ishnidh Singh Virdi takes lead with five-under 67 at KGA

Hyderabad: Homeboy Ishnidh Singh Virdi capitalised on his knowledge of the course and near-benign morning conditions to take the lead on the opening day of the IGU Rotary Southern India Bio-Gen Sansera Amateur Golf Championships at the KGA course in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The 17-year-old shot a sizzling five-under 67 to take a one-shot lead over Aarya Sharma and Harjai Milkha Singh, who both returned identical 68s. The duo of Anas Khan and Krish Chawla sat another stroke back, just one ahead of local lad Tanish R Gowda (70). The fancied Ribhav Verma and Prince Bainsla shot one-under 71 each, holding a one-stroke advantage over Ranveer Mitroo and Milind MG.

Although not as solid as he would have liked off the tee, Virdi more than made up for it with his iron play and a red-hot putter. The teenager, who is chasing his maiden amateur victory, needed a mere 23 putts for the round, holing some amazing long attempts. If not for a dropped shot on the closing hole, he would otherwise have been sitting on a two-shot cushion. Virdi found the left rough with his drive on the 18th hole and was short of the green on the left following a 3-iron second shot from about 230 yards. He chipped 13 feet past the pin, and the lone blemish was the result of an unfortunate lip-out. Virdi holed a 19-footer for birdie on the first, a 16-foot birdie putt on the fifth and took the turn at three-under with another birdie on the ninth hole. He picked up shots on the 11th, 12th — where he holed a 17-footer from the fringe — and the 16th hole to finish with a 67.

IIT Bombay puts ceiling fans to a vote after student's suicide



GNS News Agency, Oct 11

"As part of ongoing efforts to improve student safety, comfort and hostel living conditions, feedback is being collected regarding possible alternatives of ceiling-mounted fans in hostel rooms," the form states. Its purpose, it adds, is "to understand students' preferences regarding fan type, quantity and placement, so that practical and effective configurations can be evaluated."

Wakode died by suicide on September 18, hours after he was allegedly found using a mobile phone during a mid-semester examination. His death triggered massive student protests, after which Director Prof Shireesh Kedare held an open house to hear students' concerns. The survey offers four alternatives to the ceiling fan: wall-mounted, pedestal, table or desk, and tower fans. Students can also choose "no alternative" if they prefer to keep the existing ceiling fan.

They are asked to pick from configurations such as two wall-mounted fans, one wall-mounted and one table fan, or two table fans, and to give the main reason for their choice. The options include better air circulation, cooling while studying or sleeping, space efficiency, convenience and safety. Students can also raise concerns about their safety, well-being or hostel experience if they wish. The survey is part of a wider overhaul of student wellness at the institute. The new measures, to be rolled out in phases from this week, include wellness secretaries in hostels, more play areas in residential areas, deterrents against exam malpractice and a new associate dean for student wellness. They were communicated to students in an email from the Dean of Students' Affairs on behalf of Prof Kedare. According to the email, the institute drew up the plan after discussions with students and their representatives on academic, career and well-being concerns. It urges students to take part in surveys and consultations, with more to follow. Students protest against alleged institutional murder as Sahil Wakode, a second-year student of IIT Bombay died by suicide on Friday, inside the IIT-B Powai campus in Mumbai on 19 September 2026. (Express photo by Sankhadeep Banerjee) Students protest against alleged institutional murder as Sahil Wakode, a second-year student of IIT Bombay died by suicide on Friday, inside the IIT-B Powai campus in Mumbai on 19 September 2026. (Express photo by Sankhadeep Banerjee) On fans, the email says options have been identified, but a final decision will be taken after student feedback.

Under the plan, the institute is working on a system to appoint wellness secretaries at the hostel level and to identify committees where student participation can be increased. Meetings with heads of departments have also focused on greater student participation at the department level and on strengthening support for students.

For the play areas, general secretaries, sports counsellors and wardens will be consulted to identify suitable spaces, understand residents' concerns and assess access. Wakode's parents, Ravindra and Sonali Wakode, have alleged that their son was a victim of caste-based discrimination on the IIT Bombay campus. They are continuing their hunger strike at Mumbai's Azad Maidan, demanding the arrest of those they hold responsible for his death.

Meet Chandigarh residents missing after SIR

A mother lost her only son following an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir. Another family has spent three decades serving chai and paranthas to generations of Chandigarh students and voted for decades here. Yet, after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), all of these and more have found their names absent in the electoral roles of a city they have called home for decades. Chandigarh's final electoral roll has 4,60,209 electors, against 6,59,805 in the 2024 General Election roll — a net reduction of 1,99,596 electors, or 30.25 per cent. Notices have been sent to people with a call for personal hearing.

Veena Sharma, 86, lost her only son, Captain Rohit Kaushal, who was killed while fighting militants in an encounter in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir on November 11, 1995. Captain Kaushal was awarded the Shaurya Chakra for gallantry. The 86-year-old was flagged for deletion during the SIR after a discrepancy was found in her surname in older electoral records. A notice was served by the jurisdictional Booth Level Officer (BLO), asking her to appear for a personal hearing. tea seller For a family that has run the stall since 1997, that three-decade connection with Chandigarh has not translated into their names remaining on the electoral rolls. Sharma has been staying in Vrindavan for the past several months following the death of her husband and was not in Chandigarh when the notice was issued. Her son-in-law, Vinod Vashisht, then stepped in. "In the 2002 electoral rolls, she had Sharma as her surname. At that time, they were staying in Sector 22 and after having moved to Sector 43, her vote showed the surname Kaushal. But the change had not been made in her older electoral record. And she was served a notice with calls that she has to personally attend the hearing."

What troubled the family was that Sharma was being asked to travel to Chandigarh despite being 86 and having several government documents establishing her identity. "She is 86 years old and has been a voter in Chandigarh for more than 40 years. She is currently staying in Vrindavan and could not simply be asked to travel to Chandigarh again and again just to establish something that is already supported by her documents," Vashisht, who is also patron of the Shaheed Capt Rohit Kaushal Charitable Trust, said. He said Sharma's Aadhaar, PAN, pensioner card and passport all carry her present surname and are linked to her registered mobile number. "I had to repeatedly approach the election authorities and explain that this was an elderly woman and the issue was only a surname mismatch. She was being asked to appear in person in Chandigarh, but why should an 86-year-old woman have to undertake such a journey when her Aadhaar, PAN, pensioner card and passport were already there," he said. Vashisht eventually appeared before the BLO and local election officials are now examining the case. But the episode, he said, raises a larger question about elderly voters who may not have family members to pursue such cases.

Harmanpreet Kaur steps down as India women's cricket captain



GNS News Agency, Oct 11

Hyderabad: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) acknowledges Harmanpreet Kaur's contribution as captain of the Indian women's cricket team across all formats. Harmanpreet has stepped down from the captaincy, bringing to a close a significant chapter of her leadership journey. Over the years, she has been a central figure in the growth of Indian women's cricket, leading the team through some of the most significant moments in its journey.

Harmanpreet's leadership journey began unexpectedly in 2012. With Mithali Raj and Jhulan Goswami ruled out of the Women's T20 Asia Cup final through injury, the responsibility of leading India fell on a young Harmanpreet. She embraced the opportunity and led India to an 18-run victory over Pakistan, helping the team win the inaugural Women's T20 Asia Cup. It was her first experience of leading India and the beginning of a leadership journey that would span more than a decade.

In 2016, Harmanpreet became India's regular T20I captain and, following Mithali Raj's retirement from international cricket, took over the ODI and Test captaincy in 2022. Her tenure as captain coincided with a period of significant growth for Indian women's cricket, with the team gaining depth and experience and becoming increasingly competitive across formats. India reached major finals, competed consistently against the strongest teams in the world and developed the belief to take on the biggest challenges. There were setbacks along the way, but each campaign added to a team that was becoming more accustomed to playing under pressure and expecting to compete for the biggest prizes in the game. Harmanpreet was one of the central figures in that progress.

Harmanpreet's own performances were often a reflection of that ambition. Long before she became India's all-format captain, her unbeaten 171 against Australia in the 2017 Women's Cricket World Cup semi-final produced one of the most memorable individual performances in women's cricket. With India in a difficult position, Harmanpreet took the game away from Australia with an innings of extraordinary power and authority, taking India into the World Cup final. The impact of that innings went far beyond the result. It was a performance that captured the imagination of the country, showed that Indian women could produce match-winning performances of the highest order on the biggest stage and inspired a generation of young women cricketers to dream of producing such moments for India.

As captain, she experienced the full range of international cricket. India reached the final of the 2020 Women's T20 World Cup, won silver at the 2022 Commonwealth Games and claimed its first Asian Games gold. In 2025, Harmanpreet became the first Indian women's captain to lift the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, guiding India to its historic maiden title. She played a crucial role in the semi-final against Australia, scoring 89 and sharing a match-changing 167-run partnership with Jemimah Rodrigues as India chased down a record 339. India then defeated South Africa by 52 runs in the final in Navi Mumbai to create history. The World Cup triumph was the defining achievement of Harmanpreet's captaincy and one of the most significant moments in the history of Indian women's cricket.

Rs 90 lakh cheque, fake threat and plot to kill Adani Realty manager

GNS News Agency, Oct 11

On September 2, Yuvraj Manchanda, a manager at Adani Realty, was sitting at Roots Cafe in Gurugram's Sector 29 with Anya Vats, a former colleague who now worked as a freelance real estate agent. "Anya had told him about some flats in Gurugram's Pyramid Society in Sector 70 that were available at throwaway prices. They met to discuss finances," said a Delhi Police officer. A source with the Delhi Police said Anya was also finding out exactly how much money Yuvraj could put together: how much he had in his accounts, how much he planned to borrow from banks, and how much he was taking from friends and family. She then asked for his phone to check something.

"She wanted to see his password. She had already accessed his bank account statements and bank balance in the name of formalities for the sale of the plot," said a police officer. Four days later, Yuvraj was dead. Police alleged that Anya and her live-in partner, Sanyam, shot him dead on September 6 inside their white Creta in Gurugram's Sector 70. His body was later dumped in a drain. A police officer said the murder was linked to a post-dated cheque of Rs 90 lakh that Anya had issued to settle a cheating case involving a senior Punjab National Bank (PNB) official. With the money unavailable, investigators alleged, she targeted Yuvraj and fabricated a threat to draw her partner into the plan. Yuvraj, Anya and Sanyam had all worked at real estate developer Emaar, said police. Anya was allegedly fired in 2022 over financial mismanagement, while Yuvraj later left the company. "She had been bringing clients to Emaar, but was also making side-deals, along with Sanyam, for extra money. When the company learnt of it, she and Sanyam were fired," said a police officer. Anya and Sanyam's relationship had also begun at Emaar, said police. When she first met Sanyam in 2022, he had been married for six years and had a daughter. A police officer said she allegedly "texted his wife, claiming that Sanyam was making romantic advances towards her. She also allegedly created a fake profile of his wife and showed it to Sanyam, trying to prove that she was also keeping secrets from him. Ultimately, Sanyam left his wife and daughter and started living with Anya." After being let go from Emaar, the couple went to Dehradun for over one and a half years before returning to Gurugram. Anya and Sanyam had a son.

According to a police officer, Anya had two cases of cheating registered against her. One of them involved the high-level PNB official, whom Anya and Sanyam had allegedly cheated of Rs 1.25 crore between 2025 and 2026. A case was registered against them at Parliament Street police station in August this year. In the FIR lodged on August 16, the PNB official said he had been served fake ED no-

nificant moments in the history of Indian women's cricket. Her final assignment as captain provided another major milestone. In Nagoya, Harmanpreet led India to a second consecutive Asian Games gold medal, defeating Sri Lanka by 147 runs in the final. Her tenure also coincided with remarkable longevity. This year, she became the most-capped international player in women's cricket, the first player to appear in 200 T20Is and the first to captain in 150 T20Is.

In her communication to the BCCI, Harmanpreet said: "Leading India has been one of the greatest honours and privileges of my life. The responsibility of wearing the India jersey and, above all, having the opportunity to lead my country has given me some of the most cherished moments of my cricketing journey. 'I would like to sincerely thank the BCCI, the selectors, the coaching staff, support staff, my teammates and everyone who has stood by me throughout my tenure as captain. I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence that was placed in me and for the opportunities I have received to serve Indian cricket in this role.' After careful consideration, I believe that this is the right time for me to hand over the responsibility of captaincy and allow the team to move forward under new leadership. "However, my commitment to Indian cricket remains as strong as ever. I would like to continue representing the Indian Women's Cricket Team as a player and contribute to the team's success in every way I can. I remain fully committed to giving my best on the field and supporting the team, the new leadership and the younger players with the same passion and dedication. "I look forward to continuing this journey in the India jersey and contributing to Indian cricket with the same pride, humility and commitment that I have always carried." The BCCI thanked Harmanpreet Kaur for the responsibility with which she led India, the belief she brought to the team and the contribution she has made to Indian cricket.

"Harmanpreet Kaur's contribution as captain will always hold a special place in the history of Indian cricket. She took on the responsibility at an important stage in the growth of women's cricket and helped the Indian team build on the strong foundation laid by those who came before her. Over the years, she led India through some very important moments and helped the team compete with confidence against the best in the world. "The World Cup victory in 2025 will undoubtedly be the defining achievement of her captaincy. It was the culmination of years of progress, hard work and belief. Her Asian Games gold medals and the many important victories during her tenure further underline the contribution she has made." On behalf of the BCCI, I thank Harmanpreet for her leadership and the responsibility she has shown throughout her tenure as captain. I am pleased that she will continue to represent India as a player. Her experience, understanding of the game and presence in the dressing room will remain valuable to the Indian team. "Harmanpreet, you can be immensely proud of what you have achieved as captain of India. You embraced the responsibility from the very beginning and went on to lead India through some of the most important moments in its journey, while playing an important role in the growth of Indian women's cricket. "You experienced the disappointment of falling short, but continued to believe in the team and its ability to achieve more.

That is what made the World Cup victory in 2025 so special. You had been part of the journey for many years and eventually had the opportunity to lead India to its first Women's Cricket World Cup title. That will always remain one of the great moments in Indian cricket. "I also appreciate the thought and consideration with which you have taken this decision. You have chosen to hand over the responsibility at a time when you believe the team is ready for a new chapter, while continuing to contribute as a player. Your experience and the example you set for the younger players will remain important to this team. Thank you for everything you have given Indian cricket as captain, and I look forward to seeing you continue your journey in the India jersey."

tices by Anya and Sanyam. Police said Anya then claimed strong connections in the government, and allegedly took more than Rs 1.25 crore from him, saying the money was being paid to get his name cleared. But when they demanded more money, the official examined the notices and allegedly found them forged. "Anya feared further action, so she proposed an out-of-court settlement to the complainant. He demanded that she start by paying him a post-dated cheque of Rs 90 lakh," said a police officer. But Anya didn't have Rs 90 lakh in her account. That's when Yuvraj got in touch with her, she told the police during questioning. "She claimed Yuvraj had texted her about some work earlier. She knew he was doing well from his social media," said a police officer. Her plan, a police officer claimed, was to take Yuvraj's money and clear her dues with the PNB officer. Police said Anya needed help to put her plan into motion. Police said she allegedly showed Sanyam some messages from a 'senior officer', threatening her to return his money. The only way to pay him back, she allegedly told Sanyam, was to kill their former colleague Yuvraj and take his money. "But there was no senior officer. It was Anya posing as one; she had allegedly been sending messages to herself since April from a different number to make Sanyam believe she had influential connections," said a police officer. She asked Sanyam to get a gun and two bedsheets and keep them inside their SUV. He was having a late lunch with his sister, Karishma, at the Golden Dragon restaurant in Lajpat Nagar, K Block. According to a police officer, Anya told Yuvraj that there was a client who was willing to invest with Adani Realty. But the deal could only be sealed if Yuvraj came then and there. Yuvraj drove his MG Astor to the location and then got into Anya's car, police said. Inside, Anya and Sanyam allegedly shot Yuvraj dead, covered his body with bedsheets and kept it in the vehicle for two days.

"We were shopping for his wedding. Then he got a call and left abruptly, saying he had a meeting in Gurugram and would return by 10 pm." But Yuvraj did not return home that night. Karishma received a text from him saying he was fine and in an important meeting. "The next day, I got another text... he repeated that he was fine and that he might have to go to Bengaluru," she said. Police alleged that Anya was sending the messages from Yuvraj's phone, using the password she had seen him enter during their September 2 meeting. She even sent Karishma a ticket to Bengaluru, said Sahil, Yuvraj's childhood friend. "But after September 8, his phone was switched off." By then, police alleged, Anya and Sanyam dumped the body in a drain in Badshahpur. The couple then travelled to Vrindavan and several other places before reaching Kainchi Dham in Uttarakhand, where they stayed in a paying guest accommodation.

Nearly 2 lakh fewer voters: Meet Chandigarh residents missing after SIR



GNS News Agency, Oct 11A mother lost her only son following an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir. Another family has spent three decades serving chai and paranthas to generations of Chandigarh students and voted for decades here. Yet, after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), all of these and more have found their names absent in the electoral roles of a city they have called home for decades.

Chandigarh's final electoral roll has 4,60,209 electors, against 6,59,805 in the 2024 General Election roll — a net reduction of 1,99,596 electors, or 30.25 per cent. Notices have been sent to people with a call for personal hearing. Veena Sharma, 86, lost her only son, Captain Rohit Kaushal, who was killed while fighting militants in an encounter in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir on November 11, 1995. Captain Kaushal was awarded the Shaurya Chakra for gallantry. The 86-year-old was flagged for deletion during the SIR after a discrepancy was found in her surname in older electoral records. A notice was served by the jurisdictional Booth Level Officer (BLO), asking her to appear for a personal hearing. tea seller For a family that has run the stall since 1997, that three-decade connection with Chandigarh has not translated into their names remaining on the electoral rolls. (Express Photo) Sharma has been staying in Vrindavan for the past several months following the death of her husband and was not in Chandigarh when the notice was issued. Her son-in-law, Vinod Vashisht, then stepped in. "In the 2002 electoral rolls, she had Sharma as her surname. At that time, they were staying in Sector 22 and after having moved to Sector 43, her vote showed the surname Kaushal. But the change had not been made in her older electoral record. And she was served a notice with calls that she has to personally attend the hearing," Vashisht told. What troubled the family was that Sharma was being asked to travel to Chandigarh despite being 86 and having several government documents establishing her identity.

She is 86 years old and has been a voter in Chandigarh for more than 40 years. She is currently staying in Vrindavan and could not simply be asked to travel to Chandigarh again and again just to establish something that is already supported by her documents," Vashisht, who is also patron of the Shaheed Capt Rohit Kaushal Charitable Trust, said. He said Sharma's Aadhaar, PAN, pensioner card and passport all carry her present surname and are linked to her registered mobile number. "I had to repeatedly approach the election authorities and explain that this was an elderly woman and the issue was only a surname mismatch. She was being asked to appear in person in Chandigarh, but why should an 86-year-old woman have to undertake such a journey when her Aadhaar, PAN, pensioner card and passport were already there," he said. Vashisht eventually

Preachers, divorce, eviction: What pushed Mumbai 'lone wolf' who stabbed guards



GNS News Agency, Oct 11

Mira Road stabbing case, lone wolf attack Mumbai, Mira Road stabbing case, Devendra Fadnavis self-radicalisation, Zaib Zubair Ansari arrest, self-radicalisation India, Maharashtra ATS probe, Devendra Fadnavis statement, religious hate crime Mumbai, Zaib Zubair Ansari arrest, Thane security guards attack, ISIS radicalisation suspicion, online extremism India, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita charges, Mumbai crime news, Indian express Investigators first examined whether anyone had guided Ansari but found no such evidence, an official said. "Based on his interrogation and other evidence, we have ruled out any outsider being involved in this."

A recent divorce, being asked by his landlord to leave his rented home, and his 'obsessive food habits', including a distrust of food cooked by strangers, drove a US-returned man to further despair before he carried out a 'lone wolf' attack in Mira Road, stabbing two security guards near his residence on April 27 after asking their religion, says the nearly 2,500-page chargesheet filed by the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) last week. Zaib Ansari (31) had been 'self-radicalised' by watching online videos of extremist preachers, the chargesheet says. The two guards were injured and later discharged from hospital. The ATS has invoked the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) against Ansari, who is in jail, and claimed that a note found at his home said: "lone wolves will pounce on you".

Investigators first examined whether anyone had guided Ansari but found no such evidence, an official said. "Based on his interrogation and other evidence, we have ruled out any outsider being involved in this." Ansari "was mentally disturbed", the official said, and watching videos of preachers such as Anwar al-Awlaki on social media radicalised him. Al-Awlaki was a radical American Muslim cleric of Yemeni descent linked to a series of terror attacks globally. "He was further disturbed by reports of killings of children in Palestine," the official said. Ansari moved from the US in 2019. In the US, he made money coaching students in tennis, but he had no regular source of income in India, the agency found. After his divorce, he was living alone, and his landlord asked him to leave because she did not want to rent to bachelors. These factors, along with the attacks on Palestine, drove him to extreme content online, which radicalised him over six to eight months, an officer said. "While his family members are based in the US, we have recorded the statement of his mother who had come

appeared before the BLO and local election officials are now examining the case. But the episode, he said, raises a larger question about elderly voters who may not have family members to pursue such cases. "She had already given her only son to the nation. It was painful to see that today she was being made to struggle to establish her right to vote. The process makes us wonder about elderly voters who may not have someone to take up their case," he said. 30 years of serving chai, paranthas, now an entire family missing from the rolls For more than three decades, the chai-parantha stall in Sector 35-D has been part of Chandigarh's student life. Generations of students, PG residents and college-goers have spent time there over steaming cups of tea and plates of parathas. But for the family that has run the stall since 1997, that three-decade connection with Chandigarh has not translated into their names remaining on the electoral rolls.

Manoj, 35, who lives with his family in Sector 42-B, Attawa, said his wife, brothers Anil and Krishna, and mother have all been left out of the rolls. His father, too, had been a Chandigarh voter. "We came here for work and the BLO told us that our house was locked and they could not find us. They have struck off the names of our entire family — my wife, my brothers Anil and Krishna and my mother. My father also voted here only. This stall was started by him in 1997," Manoj said. For him, the deletion is difficult to understand because voting in Chandigarh has been part of the family's life for decades. "I am born here... my brothers are born here.. we have been voting since we were 18. My father also voted here," he said. Manoj, who currently lives on rent, questioned why being a tenant should become a reason for exclusion from the electoral rolls. "Just because we stay on rent does not mean we should be excluded from the rolls. We have been living and working here for years. I have asked the BLO to come and verify us at our home, but he does not come," he said. He said he also has documents to establish his address. "My government license that is given to me for this stall, my Aadhaar Card and all my documents have my address. Still, our name has been struck off. Why were all the names removed? They should come and verify us," he said.

For Karanbir Singh — a lawyer — the demand to establish an electoral link to a 2002 roll when he was just six, has turned into a family ordeal. Karanbir, 30, his wife Rupal Trivedi, sister Harkriti Singh, domestic help Neema Rawat and her son Pankaj Rawat were all asked to undergo verification. He said all five members had submitted the required documents before the BLO and filed their SIR forms within the stipulated time. He said he submitted his own form on June 24. Yet, he later received a notice stating that his vote had been cancelled and was called for a hearing on August 4, where he had to submit documents again to get his name restored. What particularly puzzled him was the demand to establish the family's electoral link with the 2002 roll. "I was six. My sister wasn't even born. How can they ask us for the 2002 roll," he asked. The family was later called to Sector 17 for cross-verification of their documents. For Karanbir, the process meant taking time off work, travelling to the designated centre and waiting in long queues — despite having already submitted the required paperwork. "There was hardly any clear information about where to go or what exactly had to be done. The place was severely understaffed and people were standing in queues for hours," he said. Describing the scene at Sector 17, Karanbir said, "It honestly looked like a complete fish market".

down to visit him and his Kurla-based uncle with whom he was initially staying," the official said. During earlier court proceedings, Ansari's lawyer told the court that he has schizophrenia and was previously on medication. The lawyer also said Ansari eats only vegetarian food that he prepares himself, and never eats food cooked by others, not even at a relative's home or a family gathering. Police officials too initially faced trouble over his food while he was in custody.

Mukarram Jah Trust to restore Sixth Palace at Hyderabad's Purani Haveli



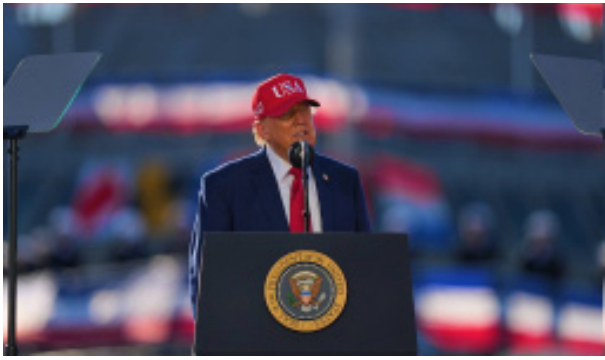
The Mukarram Jah Trust for Education and Learning will restore the Sixth Palace at Purani Haveli, Hyderabad, with completion targeted next year. The project is expected to expand Mukarram Jah School's intake capacity and support educational activities on campus.

Hyderabad: The Mukarram Jah Trust for Education and Learning (MJTEL) will soon take up the restoration of the Sixth Palace at Purani Haveli, with the project expected to expand the intake capacity of Mukarram Jah School and support educational activities on its historic campus.

Nawab M.A. Faiz Khan, Trustee of MJTEL, announced this at the school's 39th Founder's Day celebrations. He said restoration of the Asaf Jahi wing had been completed, except for minor finishing works, and added, "Restoration of the Sixth Mahal is being initiated soon and is scheduled for completion by next year, which will enable the institution to increase its intake capacity."

The Purani Haveli campus also houses the Nizam Museum, which has the famed longest wooden wardrobe in the world. The palace was the official residence of the Sixth Nizam, Nawab Mir Mehboob Ali Khan. Faiz Khan said the heritage campus provided a unique opportunity to combine conservation with education. He said Nawab Mukarram Jah Bahadur had donated the palace complex to educational trusts, continuing the tradition of philanthropic patronage.

US plans ‘Golden Fleet’ for maritime supremacy



GNS News Agency, Oct 11

Washington: The Trump administration is pursuing a new “Golden Fleet” designed to restore American maritime dominance for the next century, linking an expansion of naval power with a broader effort to rebuild the country’s diminished shipbuilding industrial base. The strategy was outlined Tuesday as President Donald Trump visited Sparrows Point, Maryland, where his administration announced a new high-tech shipyard to expand production for the US Navy. “This facility will be a vital linchpin in our overarching naval strategy,” an administration official said during the event, according to a transcript of the proceedings. “Under President Trump’s visionary leadership, our mandate is clear. We are building the Golden Fleet.”

The official described the planned fleet in sweeping terms. “The Golden Fleet is a maritime force designed to dominate the seas, project overwhelming power, and guarantee American maritime supremacy for the next century, just as the Great White Fleet did 100 years ago.” Trump said his administration had already secured more than \$76 billion in funding for shipbuilding, with plans to produce more than 80 new vessels for the Navy. The push comes amid concern in Washington over the erosion of America’s shipbuilding capacity and the ability of the defence industrial base to produce ships and submarines quickly enough to meet military requirements. The administration has made rebuild-

ing domestic shipbuilding a central part of its defence and industrial policy, combining federal investment with private capital and seeking to bring new companies into a sector traditionally dominated by a small number of established contractors. Trump used his Maryland appearance to argue that the United States had allowed a once-formidable shipbuilding industry to decline. He said the new investment at Sparrows Point was part of what he described as a “golden age of shipbuilding” in the United States. The Maryland project is intended to add production capacity for Virginia-class nuclear-powered attack submarines, torpedo tubes and other submarine components, as well as autonomous underwater vessels. It also represents an effort to bring newer defence technology companies into large-scale naval manufacturing. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said the administration was demanding greater speed and production capacity from both the Pentagon and industry. “In order to make America great again, you need to make your Navy great again,” Hegseth said. “You need to make shipbuilding great again, our manufacturing great again, our defense industrial base strong and robust again.” “From day one, President Trump has demanded from the War Department speed, scale and urgency to build an arsenal of freedom befitting our warriors and considering the threats of the 21st century,” he said. The administration’s naval expansion goes beyond the Maryland facility. Trump has directed the Pentagon to address persistent delays and cost overruns across major Navy programmes, increase competition among shipbuilders and expand the industrial base supporting nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers. A presidential memorandum issued in August ordered the Pentagon to prepare plans for establishing a fifth public Navy shipyard, which would be the first such facility in more than 80 years. It also directed greater use of private-sector capacity and investment to improve submarine and aircraft carrier readiness. The administration has acknowledged that US naval shipbuilding faces significant structural problems. It has cited complex designs, repeated design changes, insufficient competition and an atrophied supplier base as factors contributing to delays and rising costs.

Washington resident conspired with Canadian school shooter before attack

Seattle: Federal authorities said Tuesday that they have arrested and charged a 30-year-old from Washington state with encouraging an 18-year-old to commit one of the worst school shootings in Canada’s history by offering to livestream the February attack, providing money and sharing advice on how to delete online messages to keep the plot a secret.

The US attorney’s office in Seattle said James Cody Bryant of Bellingham, Washington, communicated with Jesse Van Rootselaar in British Columbia for at least six months ahead of the shooting. Bryant, who identifies as female, did not report Van Rootselaar’s plans to authorities, authorities allege. W Mike Herrington, the special agent in charge of the FBI’s Seattle office, said without Bryant’s “misplaced loyalty” and willingness to livestream the killings, officials didn’t know if Van Rootselaar would have gone through with the attack.

“We certainly know the shooter was concerned that not enough people would see the livestream without Bryant broadcasting it and was depending on Bryant to amplify the livestream because the shooter did not have many followers on social media,” Herrington added. Authorities say Van Rootselaar first killed her mother and stepbrother at home before attacking a nearby school in the mountain community of Tumbler Ridge, killing five children ages 12 and 13 at the school as well as an educational assistant. Twenty-five others were wounded. Van Rootselaar was later found dead from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. Investigators accessed Van Rootselaar’s Twitch account and found that she had initiated a video livestream while sitting in her vehicle with a rifle and long gun in her lap. The livestream lasted about 20 seconds before it was disconnected, and was only viewed by one other account. Bryant is accused of helping to plan the attack.

Bryant was charged with one count of conspiracy to commit murder in a foreign country — a “novel” charge for a case like this, said Acting US Attorney Neil Floyd during a press conference. Bryant made a first appearance in court on Tuesday afternoon and is being detained ahead of a preliminary hearing set for October 20. The federal public defender’s office, which represents Bryant, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Communicating over Discord with Van Rootselaar, Bryant gave tactical advice on how to carry out the killings to have the strongest impact, according to the complaint. “Hallways also mean a lot of ways people can escape,” Bryant wrote, the complaint said. “Corners to turn. Wide open spaces means numbers.” Bryant also sent Van Rootselaar money to purchase a lighter that would be used to construct an explosive device and advised Van Rootselaar about how to keep the plot a secret by deleting online messages and using virtual private networks, officials said. According to the criminal complaint, Bryant and Van Rootselaar met online about three years ago on Omegle, a since-shuttered video chat site that connected users with strangers at random. Their communications were sporadic during the first year because she was “institutionalised” after being deemed a danger to herself, the complaint said. She was locked up again after setting her room on fire. But they spoke daily during the six months leading up to the attack, officials said. “Van Rootselaar often spoke about planning to use guns to murder her family members and others because she felt she had been mistreated,” the complaint said. Both Van Rootselaar and Bryant identified as trans, Herrington said. But authorities do not have any indication that’s why they stayed connected online, he said. Bryant sometimes urged Van Rootselaar to reconsider. Bryant tried to talk Van Rootselaar out of committing the attack at various points, authorities said.

“I truly hope you reconsider today,” Bryant told her in January, according to the complaint. “I wish there were any other path for you, you shouldn’t have to do something like this.” But ultimately, Bryant did not alert law enforcement and instead provided support for carrying out the shooting, authorities said. When Van Rootselaar expressed concern that Bryant would “snitch” and alert authorities, Bryant repeatedly assured her that would not happen, officials said. “I could,” Bryant wrote, according to the filing. “I don’t want to honestly. I know I can like, save lives I guess but idk,” using the abbreviation for “I don’t know.” Canadian Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree said in Ottawa that the allegations were devastating. “Nothing will bring back the eight lives that were devastated back in February, but it is

important that those who are responsible are held to account,” he told reporters. Anandasangaree said it was too soon to say whether Bryant could also face charges in Canada, but added that Canadian prosecution would be possible if investigators determine Canadian laws were broken. Bob Zimmer, the federal lawmaker who represents Tumbler Ridge, said the victims deserve answers. “It is deeply troubling, the allegations that this individual coached the shooter all throughout the process in an effort to livestream the event,” Zimmer said. Tumbler Ridge in the Canadian Rockies is more than 1,000 kilometres northeast of Vancouver, British Columbia, near the provincial border with Alberta. The provincial government website lists Tumbler Ridge Secondary School as having 175 students from Grades 7 to 12. The families of victims are suing artificial intelligence company OpenAI in US federal court, seeking to hold the ChatGPT maker responsible for failing to alert police to the shooter’s alarming interactions with the chatbot.

University of Arizona puts all 21 Interfraternity Council chapters on ‘activities suspension’ amid investigation, misconduct reports

Dean of Students Chrissy Lieberman wrote in a letter that IFC chapters that were in good standing before the suspension will be back to good standing after a chapter advisor has attended one of three initial mandatory meetings. The chapters under suspension are not allowed to host, attend or participate in or sponsor organizational activities. Only club business meetings are allowed. What we know about the suspension The suspension was announced after one UofA fraternity allegedly forced new members to consume live goldfish and drink large amounts of alcohol, per KTAR.

“Mandatory advisor meetings will continue quarterly, and advisors must attend each meeting,” Lieberman said. “If an advisor fails to attend, the chapter will be removed from good standing with Fraternity & Sorority Programs, which will jeopardize the continuation of the chapter on the U of A campus.” Lieberman said that there are several chapters already on suspension. Some are prohibited from engaging with their new member classes because they allegedly voted the Code of Conduct in spring 2026 or are currently under investigation. She added that some of them are also under criminal investigation. “The alleged behaviors range from physical assault, drugs and alcohol, hazing and creating unsafe environments for our students,” Lieberman said. The dean of students said that her office is at capacity for the number of organization cases it can investigate at one time. She added that every one involves an IFC chapter. “We will take swift remedial and interim actions, and we will continue to partner with UAPD on these investigations,” Lieberman said. “You can also expect that, with this number of cases, these investigations will take time, and they will affect your ability to host events, participate in philanthropy and educate your new members.” The university notably expanded its hazing prevention initiatives in July.

US monitoring suspected plague case in Russia ‘hour by hour’, urges transparency



Washington: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the United States and international agencies are monitoring a suspected plague case in Russia “hour by hour”, while urging Moscow to provide more information to the world. Rubio declined to speculate on whether the case could be linked to an accidental release of an intentionally modified strain, saying available information remained limited. “Any time you hear that there’s some disease that infected someone in a lab anywhere in the world, you’re going to be concerned about it,” Rubio said during a joint media availability with Icelandic Foreign Minister Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir in Reykjavik. Asked about reports of a fatal suspected plague case in Siberia and whether it could involve an altered strain, Rubio said it would be premature to draw conclusions.

“It would be irresponsible for me here to sit and specu-

late because we just don’t have all the information yet,” he said. Rubio called on Russia to provide greater transparency about the case. “I think it’s incumbent upon Russia to obviously share more information with the world. That’s what they should do. That’s what we hope they will do,” he said. The Secretary of State stressed that Washington had not reached any conclusion about the nature or seriousness of the incident. “Maybe, you know, there’s nothing there. Maybe it’s bigger than we thought. We don’t know,” Rubio said. He said the United States was nevertheless closely following developments because more information could determine what response might be necessary. “We’re watching it very closely, and I think the whole world is watching it very closely because depending on what we learn about it, we would know how to respond,” he said. Rubio said measures were already available if authorities determine the situation is more serious than currently acknowledged. “We already, you know, have measures in place to be able to address it if it’s — if it’s something more serious than what so far has been acknowledged,” he said. He added that several US and international agencies were involved in monitoring the situation. “We’re watching it very closely, hour by hour. We have multiple agencies, not just in the United States but internationally, that are watching it,” Rubio said. “We encourage Russia to be transparent and share more information with the world, so that all of us could react accordingly and appropriately.” Rubio said decisions would depend on information received in the coming period. “So far, that’s still quite limited, but hopefully that will change in the next few hours and days,” he said.

Jaishankar, Ghana foreign minister discuss strengthening bilateral partnership

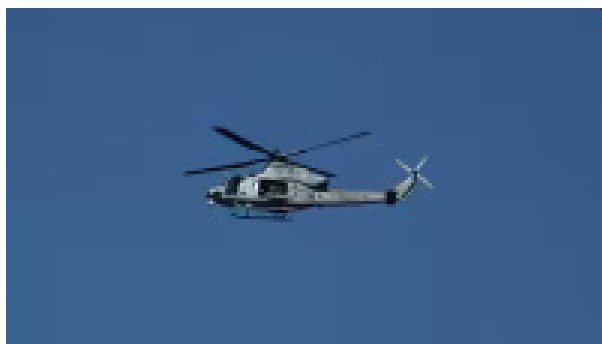
Accra: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar met with Ghana’s Foreign Minister, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, to discuss key strategies for advancing the comprehensive partnership between the two nations. Highlighting their historic solidarity and shared development aspirations as Global South partners, the two leaders focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation across trade, investments, development assistance, pharmaceuticals, capacity building, defence, and technology. “Held wide ranging discussions with Foreign Minister @S_OkudzetoAblak of Ghana. As Global South partners, both India and Ghana share common development aspirations and historic solidarity. Discussed advancing our Comprehensive Partnership in trade, investments, development, pharmaceuticals, capacity building, defence, technology and people to people domains. Also spoke about advancing our multilateral co-operation and deepening India’s engagement with the African Union and ECOWAS,” EAM Jaishankar posted on X.

EAM Jaishankar arrived in Ghana earlier on Tuesday as India looks forward to productive engagements to advance partnership between New Delhi and Accra. “Delighted to arrive in Accra, Ghana today. Appreciate the warm welcome by FM Sam Okudzeto Ablakwa. Look forward to productive engagements to advance our Comprehensive Partnership,” EAM Jaishankar stated on X. Earlier on Monday, the Foreign Ministry of Ghana stated that EAM Jaishankar’s visit will provide an opportunity for the two countries to renew their bond of solidarity and shared values. “The Minister of External Affairs of India, His Excellency Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, will pay an Official visit to



Ghana from 6th to 7th October 2026 at the invitation of Ghana’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa. Ghana looks forward to hosting His Excellency Dr. S. Jaishankar on this historic visit, which will afford the two countries the opportunity to renew their inseparable bond of solidarity and shared values,” the ministry stated. “During the visit, Ghana and India will hold discussions that will advance their relations in pharmaceutical development within the framework of President (John Dramani) Mahama’s Accra Reset philosophy; deepening agricultural cooperation in mechanisation and value addition; support for President Mahama’s industrialisation and job creation agenda; and expanding scholarships and IT partnerships,” it added. After Ghana, EAM Jaishankar will travel to Cote d’Ivoire and Ethiopia during his five-day official visit aimed at deepening India’s bilateral partnership with the three African nations.

US Navy helicopter didn't crash in Red Sea, says CENTCOM; rejects Iranian media claims



Iranian state media had claimed that a US Navy MH-60R helicopter crashed in the Red Sea after an emergency declaration. However, CENTCOM said that all military aircraft and personnel across the Middle East were safe and accounted for.

What did CENTCOM say about the helicopter?

The social media post stated “CLAIM: Iranian state media has been pushing false reports that a U.S. Navy MH-60R helicopter crashed in the Red Sea after declaring an emergency last night.” It added “FACT: Reports of a downed U.S. Navy helicopter in the Red Sea are not true. All U.S. military aircraft and personnel across the Middle East are

safe and accounted for.” The clarification from CENTCOM comes amid the US-Iran conflict which began when President Donald Trump supported Israel in launching strikes across Iran on February 28, 2026. CENTCOM’s current clarification comes after Iranian state outlets, including Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), claimed an American naval aircraft went down. IRIB had earlier reported that a US Navy aircraft which was operating over the Red Sea transmitted squawk code 7700, the international aviation transponder signal used to broadcast general emergencies. “An MH-60R helicopter belonging to the U.S. Navy crashed in the Red Sea after declaring emergency code 7700,” they had claimed. CENTCOM’s denial of a helicopter crashing comes amid reports of the US having lost 81 planes, drones and helicopters worth \$3.3 billion in the Iran war. A Congressional Research Service report noted that losses included one damaged F-35A Lightning II stealth fighter and 12 F-15E Strike Eagle fighters, which had been damaged or destroyed. While three F-15 jets, worth more than \$30 million each, were shot down in friendly fire over Kuwait on March 2, another was shot down over Iran in the next month. The report noted that eight other F-15Es sustained minor damage as well during Iran’s airstrikes on the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base, in Jordan, which took place on September 9 and 10. At least 45 MQ-9 Reaper drones were also reportedly lost during the Iran war, and they were between \$30 and \$50 million, each.

Driver arrested after car hits crowd in Australia’s Newcastle

Sydney: A driver has been arrested after a car crashed into a crowd in the Australian city of Newcastle, north of Sydney, on Saturday morning, injuring nine people, including children. A police statement said emergency services were called to reports that a vehicle had struck people in a crowd in Newcastle, 110 km north of Sydney, around 9.30 a.m. local time on Saturday, with multiple people injured and a large emergency response underway.

According to local media, the crowd had gathered to farewell the local team, the Newcastle Knights, as they travelled to Sydney to play in the National Rugby League grand final on Sunday night, reports Xinhua news agency. Sydney newspaper The Daily Telegraph reported that nine people were injured, including two who were in critical condition, two who were seriously injured and five who suffered minor injuries.

The newspaper reported that the critical patients were an infant girl who went into cardiac arrest and a man who suffered multiple leg fractures. Police said the driver of the vehicle was arrested at the scene. Newcastle Mayor Gavin



Morris told Australian Broadcasting Corporation television that the driver was a supporter of the team who had lost control of the vehicle. “It appears that he’s lost control of the car, and he’s gone into the crowd. And I believe about nine were injured, which sadly also included children,” he said. Chris Minns, premier of the state of New South Wales, described the incident as heartbreaking.

Three killed, 15 wounded in shooting ahead of BARMM parliamentary election



Manila: Three people were killed and 15 others wounded during a shooting incident before midnight Sunday at a polling center in Cotabato City, Maguindanao del Norte province in southern Philippines. The shooting occurred ahead of the parliamentary election in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), which started on Monday to choose its first elected parliament, Xinhua news agency reported.

According to local police, rival political factions struggled for position in the queue for polls, leading to shov-

ing, fistfights, and eventually gunfire in the crowded area. According to local media reports, over 2 million voters are eligible to vote for 80 parliamentary seats being contested by 13 parties. Security has been stepped up across the BARMM in recent days, with over 20,000 security personnel deployed to polling areas and rapid response teams set up to deal with potential violence. Monday's historic vote is seen as a crucial step towards self-governance after decades of insurgency and violence in the Muslim-majority region. Nearly 2.4 million voters are registered to cast their ballots in the election, which international partners and peace monitors see as a crucial test of whether the regional autonomy established under a 2014 peace agreement between Manila and Muslim separatists can be sustained through democratic institutions. The autonomy arrangement was designed to bring an end to a conflict that claimed more than 120,000 lives, displaced around 2 million people. "The election marks a milestone in the continuing journey of BARMM towards lasting peace, democratic governance and ?meaningful self-determination," President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said in a video message urging voters to take part in what he also described as a "defining moment" for the ?region ?and the country.

Congo says Ebola outbreak ‘under control’ despite persistent risks

Kinshasa: The government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) said that its ongoing Ebola outbreak is "under control" and has passed its peak, although local flare-ups, continued transmission and the spread of the disease to a seventh province point to persistent risks. "The 17th Ebola outbreak is under control, and the peak was reached at the beginning of the third week of August 2026," government spokesperson Patrick Muyaya said while reading a report from a cabinet meeting on Friday, citing Health Minister Roger Kamba. According to the government, all major indicators point to a decline in cases, with 10 health zones affected before the latest expansion of the outbreak reporting no new cases for at least 21 days, while transmission has slowed in several regions in the eastern province of Ituri, the epicenter of the outbreak, reports Xinhua news agency.

The authorities nevertheless called for continued vigilance and strict contact tracing, saying close surveillance remains necessary in regions where recent flare-ups have been reported. Former Congolese Health Minister Jean-Jacques Mbungani Mbanda, now a member of parliament, urged caution over the assessment, saying on Saturday that the downward trend in some areas should not be taken to mean that transmission has been brought under control everywhere. In an outbreak involving multiple transmission foci, different areas may reach their peaks at different times, he said, adding that the epidemic curve reflects detected cases and could be affected by infections that remain unidentified in communities. In its latest weekly report on Tuesday, the World Health Organization said the outbreak "remains uncontrolled and increasingly heterogeneous," with transmission easing in some areas while intensifying or spreading geographically elsewhere.



"The outbreak is increasingly geographically heterogeneous rather than showing a uniform decline," it said. The DRC government has also confirmed Thursday the first Ebola case in the northwestern province of Sud-Ubangi, making it the seventh province affected. Sud-Ubangi does not border any of the six provinces where confirmed Ebola cases had previously been reported. According to Mbanda, the patient, a 23-year-old man who later died, had traveled extensively before arriving in Sud-Ubangi, with an itinerary spanning several provinces, neighboring Rwanda and Uganda, as well as both road and river routes. As of September 10, the DRC had recorded 7,022 confirmed Ebola cases, including 3,398 deaths, with a case fatality rate of 48.4 percent. The outbreak has now affected 62 health zones across seven provinces. The current outbreak, declared in May, has become the largest and deadliest Ebola epidemic in the DRC's history and the second-largest globally, behind the 2014-2016 epidemic in West Africa.

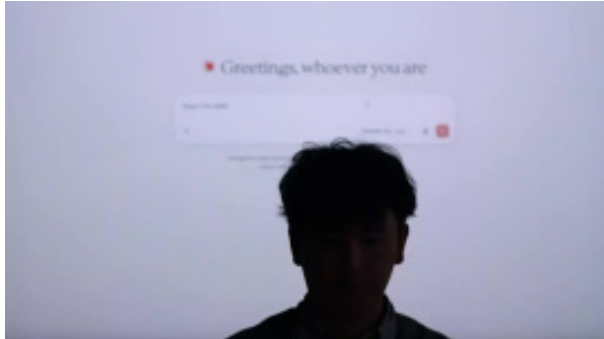
How Anthropic says Claude was used for weapons, spying and cyber operations

CHINA-TAIWAN AIR DEFENSES: Anthropic said a China-based actor used Claude to develop an electronic-warfare and air-defense suppression software suite that ranked targets and modeled radar jamming. During the project, the actor changed a simulation to include 12 targets in Taiwan, including early-warning radar, Patriot and Tien Kung missile batteries, air bases and a command bunker. Anthropic said account information linked the actor to Chinese research institutions including the People's Liberation Army Academy ?of Military Sciences. Anthropic banned accounts linked to the actor. China's foreign ministry said it was not aware of the Anthropic report and that the government maintains that AI should be developed for good and opposes distortion of facts and smears against the country.

China claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory ?and has never renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control. Taiwan rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims. CHINA ANTI-TORPEDO SYSTEM: Anthropic said another China-based actor used Claude to help develop specifications and fire-control software for an anti-torpedo system intended for the Chinese navy. The actor used Claude to produce a technical proposal of more than 200 pages, compare the system with U.S. Navy technology and simulate hostile technical reviews to improve the proposal. "We assess the actor was associated with a Chinese defense industry manufacturer aiming to produce a weapons specification and acquisition proposal for the People's Liberation Army Navy," Anthropic said.

CHINESE RESEARCH INTO MICROWAVE WEAPONS: A China-based defense-intelligence actor used Claude to research foreign high-power microwave weapons, identify components and suppliers and trace supply chains, Anthropic said. The actor sought information that could help reverse-engineer the weapons and develop countermeasures, and drafted restricted briefings for senior Chinese Communist ?Party, military or state-security officials, the company said. YEMEN MISSILE DEVELOPMENT: Anthropic said a cell of threat actors in northern Yemen used Claude to help develop software for a guided rocket, a planned ballistic missile with a range of more than 2,000 km and a missile variant incorporating a hypersonic glide vehicle. The actors used Claude for coding, simulation ?and troubleshooting, including after a guided-rocket test appeared to fail. Anthropic said it had no evidence they successfully fielded an operational weapon. "Our safeguards blocked many of their requests, but not all of them," Anthropic said.

The disclosure comes as the Iran-aligned Houthis, who control most of northern ?Yemen, have intensified attacks on Saudi Arabia and its energy infrastructure. The Anthropic report did not identify whether or not the threat actors were Houthis. RUSSIAN DRONE SWARM: Anthropic said likely freelance Russia-based actors used Claude to develop software for an autonomous swarm of first-person-view attack drones, including terminal guidance, target selection and coordination between multiple aircraft. Small FPV attack drones have become a central ?weapon in the war in Ukraine, where Russia and Ukraine have deployed them



on a vast scale for reconnaissance and strikes. The Russian Embassy in Washington did not respond to questions about specific allegations made by Anthropic or the report overall. RUSSIA DUAL-USE COMPONENT PROCUREMENT: Anthropic said a Russia-based procurement manager used Claude to identify intermediaries in China and Hong Kong to acquire European-made goods with potential ?military uses and work out routes through third countries that could obscure their destination. Items sought included German-made magnetometers, space-grade photovoltaic wafers and aviation oxygen systems, Anthropic said. Russia has increasingly relied on intermediaries and alternative trade routes to obtain foreign technology since Western countries imposed sweeping sanctions and export restrictions following its invasion of Ukraine. Anthropic detailed five case studies of people attempting to use "our models in ways that could support biological weapons development."

The attempts included efforts to get Claude assistance on drafting a grant application for funding research on modifying the chikungunya virus in a location where Anthropic does not offer its services. In another case, also in a location where the company does not operate — requiring users to obfuscate their location to utilize the services — Anthropic said it detected efforts to research highly pathogenic avian influenza. Other examples included research related to orthopoxvirus and ?non-transmissible novel venoms and toxins, Anthropic said.

CYBER OPERATIONS CHINA CYBER OPERATIONS: Anthropic said Chinese-speaking operators likely based in Changsha, the capital of central China's Hunan province, used Claude in cyber operations against about 50 organizations, including foreign government networks. The group, which Anthropic said included two university students in Hunan, used AI-driven workflows to search for previously unknown software vulnerabilities, develop exploits and conduct parts ?of intrusions with limited human supervision. RUSSIA INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION SUPPORT: One hacking group allegedly ran phishing, hotel Wi-Fi hijacking and WhatsApp-takeover operations against targets in the Ukrainian government, military and diplomatic sectors, using AI at nearly every stage, Anthropic said. The group's tradecraft was consistent with Russia-based threat actor Midnight Blizzard, which the U.S. government has

Iraq says Saudi pipeline attack originated from its territory



Baghdad: Iraq said attacks on a key Saudi oil pipeline were launched from its territory, as US President Donald Trump appeared to blame Iran. Meanwhile, the number of displaced people in Yemen is rising quickly after a swift advance by Iran-backed Houthi rebels threatens a key alternative to the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb. And Lebanon and Israel will hold new direct talks next month.

Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi ordered an investigation into the operations command in Maysan province, which borders Iran, and dismissed its commander after authorities determined that the attacks on the Saudi pipeline were launched from the province, the government said. Geographic Reference The Saudi Foreign Ministry blamed the attacks on drones that came from Iraq and said the kingdom would not retaliate to give the Iraqi government "an opportunity to take the necessary measures."

The East-West pipeline has been vital to Saudi Arabia's oil exports since the Iran war disrupted shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. According to the International Energy Agency, Saudi oil exports through the Red Sea port at the pipeline's end have more than doubled. Regional officials have told The AP that the Houthis and the Iraqi militias recently coordinated attacks on Saudi oil facilities.

Trump says Iran is 'probably' behind Saudi pipeline attack Asked if he thought Iran was behind the attack that closed the East-West pipeline, Trump told reporters: "Well, I think they are. Probably they are." Trump said his administration has "had discussions" with the Houthis, though he did not say when. "The Houthis called us, and they don't want to fight with us," he said. "They would much prefer not having us involved, and they're letting most ships go through." Executive Branch The Houthis have said they are only targeting neighbouring Saudi Arabia's shipping.

Asked about a recent call with Saudi's crown prince, Trump said: "He's a good friend of mine, and I can just say everything's going to work out fine and dandy. It's going to be very good." People fleeing in Yemen describe a hysterical panic

Thousands of people have fled the Houthis' advance. In Aden, held by Yemen's Saudi-backed internationally recognised government, residents have opened their homes. In one, dozens of men lay on a floor carpeted with thin mattresses and sheets. "We set out in hysterical panic on a motorcycle, not knowing where we were heading," said Alaa Ali Salem, who fled from al-Khawkhah district. "The roads suddenly became extremely congested, and while I was driving, the motorcycle overturned. My wife, my children and I were all injured." The International Organisation for Migration said at least 76,000 people have fled since July as fighting escalates between the Houthis and government forces, up from 46,000 just days earlier. Some fear a return to the civil war that killed 1,50,000 before a 2022 ceasefire. "I saw the soldiers as they were withdrawing. They told us we must escape," said a tearful Durrah Ali Hassan, who took shelter in a relative's house. She said

Global AI stocks fall as industry chiefs call for slowing development

AI-linked ?stocks across the globe plunged on Monday after leaders of the biggest AI companies warned of risks from rapid development, the starkest threat yet to the billions of dollars ?being poured into the industry that have pushed world markets to record highs. Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei, in a lengthy essay shared on X on Saturday, called on AI companies to slow the rate at which they advance model capabilities amid mounting fears of misuse of artificial intelligence. Both Elon Musk, who runs xAI, and Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, said they agree with Amodei. Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here. Altman also said the company would not proceed with an IPO this year, citing safety concerns. The CEOs' comments deepened ?the scrutiny on AI-related sectors, triggered by companies increasingly relying on debt and circular financing to fund their AI ambitions, while also raising spending forecasts at a time when global yields, ?an indication of borrowing costs, have soared to multi-year highs.

"If the AI race slows materially, the key question becomes: who pays for all that infrastructure? The ?leases, debt and power commitments remain even if expected compute demand and revenue growth slow. And that could bring credit risk increasingly into the AI story," said Ipek Ozkardeskaya, senior analyst at Swissquote. Futures tracking ?Wall Street's Nasdaq e-mini futures fell 1.9%, with chip stocks, which have led the AI sugar rush, down the most.

Amodei wrote that in six to 12 months, AI agents "could be capable of taking over the entire internet potentially causing hundreds of billions of dollars in damage." San Francisco-based Anthropic released a threat intelligence report on Thursday detailing how several actors had used its Claude AI models for activities ranging from weapons development and cyber operations to surveillance and fraud. Alarm about ?the potential harm from AI grew when Anthropic researcher Jacob Coxon resigned, opens new tab

, stating that the "people building AI earnestly believe that it could kill us all by the end of the decade." OpenAI's Altman said in an interview that risks of human extinction posed by AI were "unacceptable." And while several U.S. lawmakers have raised concern about AI's rapid progress and called for new rules, U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday likened AI critics to "very negative forces" bringing up scenarios that will not happen, and said he wanted to make sure that the U.S. remains the industry leader. AI-related trades have powered much of the gains in global equities since OpenAI released ChatGPT in 2022, but more recently cyberattacks by rogue AI agents and public discontent with data centre construction have raised opposition to the development of the industry. The U.S. and Chinese governments are expected to hold AI safety talks as part of bilateral discussions taking ?place this month, according to two people briefed ?on the plans. But China's state-backed Global Times blasted ?the Anthropic essay in an editorial, calling it a "Cold War playbook" intended to

she was worried about the toll of the chaos on her pregnant daughter, who had been bleeding and was now in a coma at a hospital. Lebanon, Israel to hold new talks next month

Geographic Reference Lebanese and Israeli negotiators are scheduled to meet in Rome in October for US-brokered talks. A planned round this month was postponed without explanation. The US State Department said Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors to the US will meet at its headquarters in Washington next week to discuss ongoing developments and the continued implementation of the framework agreement reached in June. Lebanon and Israel have held seven rounds of talks in Washington and Rome over the past months in search of a way to calm the latest fighting between Israeli forces and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah militant group. Lebanon's president made a rare visit to a southern city Saturday, close to where Israel captured a strategic hill.

Iran's president meets with Abu Dhabi crown prince Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan held talks on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in New Delhi, according to a UAE government statement, signalling efforts to maintain engagement despite growing instability across the region. Iran has sharply criticised the security partnerships some Gulf states maintain with Western powers, while the UAE has backed efforts aimed at containing Iran's military influence. Oil spill in Gulf of Oman doubled: environmental group A large-scale oil spill, believed to be from a tanker struck by the US military, doubled in size between Wednesday and Thursday, endangering two protected areas off Oman and Iran, said Nina Noelle of Greenpeace Germany.

The tanker RIESCO was one of four attacked Tuesday in the Gulf of Oman. A fifth was destroyed in the Strait of Hormuz off Iran's Kharg island. The visible area of pollution measured about 400 square kilometres on Thursday, Noelle said. Satellite images reviewed by The AP showed the spill stretching almost 70 kilometres.

The spill is located between the Musandam protected area on the Omani side, which includes one of the region's most important seabird breeding islands. On the Iranian side is the Hara-e Roud-e Gaz Protected Area in Hormozgan province that includes mangrove forests. Video shows Israeli troops firing on Palestinians in West Bank

Israeli troops opened fire at a group of Palestinians who did not appear to be posing a threat in the occupied West Bank, wounding one man, according to video obtained by The AP. The video, shot by a witness, showed the man falling near the Palestinian village of Faqqua. At least 14 shots were fired and continued as men rushed to move the man to safety before tying a tourniquet around his leg. Mahmoud Shahin, a resident, said the Palestinians had rushed to the area after receiving reports that Israeli settlers had arrived with sheep. He said Israeli soldiers then came and began firing in the air and toward the Palestinians. He said the man was undergoing surgery in Jenin. Israel's military said the video was authentic and confirmed its forces had fired toward the Palestinians, wounding one man, and said commanders would review the incident. Settler violence in the West Bank has surged under the ultranationalist government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The international community largely considers Israeli settlements to be illegal. Syrian Energy Minister Mohammed al-Bashir told journalists in Damascus Saturday that the country is facing a crisis in oil derivatives due to the ongoing war in the region, exacerbating existing energy issues in the country that is trying to rebuild its infrastructure after 14 years of civil war.



, stating that the "people building AI earnestly believe that it could kill us all by the end of the decade." OpenAI's Altman said in an interview that risks of human extinction posed by AI were "unacceptable".

curb the country's technological development. Some investors dismissed the warnings from Anthropic and OpenAI. Michael Burry, whose prescient bets against the U.S. housing market before the 2008 financial crisis were chronicled in the movie "The Big Short", said in a message on ?X the warnings were "hype and puffery" and "cover for real uncontrollable slowing growth".

Others argued that record capital spending commitments suggest AI development is unlikely to slow, ?such as Morgan Stanley's Brian ?Nowak who forecast AI spending will surpass \$1.2 trillion by 2027. "The key question is whether this is the first sign that the extraordinary AI investment cycle might eventually moderate. For now, that seems unlikely. The competitive race between companies and countries remains intense, and it's difficult to imagine firms voluntarily stepping back while rivals continue to push ahead," Deutsche Bank said in a note.

Almost echoing that stiff competition, Amodei's Anthropic pushed ahead with its public debut, ?expected next month ?as sources told Reuters that the company is in talks to bring Nvidia as an anchor investor. Still, the warnings are likely ?to remain an overhang. "In the short term, these warnings could still weigh on AI and chip stocks," said Charu Chanana, chief investment strategist at Saxo Bank in Singapore. "Their valuations assume both strong demand and a relentless pace of technological progress," she said. "When expectations ?are this high, even a possible delay can trigger profit-taking."

Revival on the cards for Indian economy



Even as India's economy continues to grow at a healthy pace — an above 7 per cent score is on the cards — of late, there has been some debate on the underlying momentum. This is on account of the report cards of some companies in the consumer goods space. Their performance is being said to reflect "urban stress". Even if that is taken into account, several economic indicators appear positive. The GDP data will be released later this week. The purchasing managers index for both services and manufacturing has been in the region of 57-60 for the last three months. Any number above 50 is positive, and the average so far this year is above 60 for the composite index — the highest in the last five years. Alongside, GST collections in the first seven months of the year have topped at Rs 12.74 lakh crore. This is higher than last year's tally of Rs 11.64 lakh crore. Two-wheeler sales have risen by 16 per cent for the first seven months of the year. Passenger car sales had slowed down in September over August but rose by 9 per cent in October when the festival season began. The lament of some companies on subdued consumption could be attributed to the "shraddh" period when believers desist from buying consumer goods as part of their practice of abstinence. This manifested in low sales of automobiles in particular leading to a build-up of inventories. This, however, changed in October with this segment showing an upward movement.

So while second-quarter growth would be less than 7 per cent at around 6.8-6.9 per cent, there is likely to be a substantial pick up in the second half of the year. A critical factor is the rural economy. Rural demand has been muted in the last couple of years due to a combination of lower farm output and higher inflation. A good kharif crop could address the first part of the problem. The area under cultivation this year is much higher compared to last year, pointing to good harvests for cereals, pulses and oilseeds. The res-

ervoir levels are at around 87 per cent, auguring well for both the rabi crop as well as allied activities. Therefore, farm output growth this year should be at a robust 3.5-4 per cent, and this could support demand. Inflation, however, remains a worrying proposition. At 6.2 per cent, it is being driven by food prices. The positive sign here is that the next crop of onions and tomatoes should be arriving by December. The kharif harvest should lead to an improvement in supplies of pulses, a major pain point in the past. Therefore, food inflation should moderate by the end of this calendar year with the base effect also kicking in December. While one has to be mindful of the course of inflation, given the October surprise, a moderation should help revive demand. This year, the investment momentum has been healthy even though the start was slow. The general election caused a slowdown in the central government's capex. States too were affected. While private investment tends to align with government capex, sources of funding, namely, bank credit, debt issuances as well as ECBs, point to a "K" shaped pattern in investment activity. The demand for funds has come from sectors related to infrastructure activity, including metals, cement, machinery, chemicals and power. The housing sector has been doing well at the premium and middle levels and the momentum has spread to tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Power sector investment is revolving around renewables, which have seen large capacity increases. A backward link has been witnessed between government capex on roads and railways as well as urban development and industries such as steel, cement and machinery which have gone in for fresh investment. However, when it comes to consumer goods industries, it does appear that the existing capacity is not being used, which has come in the way of new investments.

With the two main engines of consumption and investment looking positive, there is reason to believe that overall growth will remain above 7 per cent this year — the Bank of Baroda's forecast is 7.3-7.4 per cent. This, however, should not lead to complacency given that growth last year was 8.2 per cent. most read So far, the RBI has maintained its growth forecast at 7.2 per cent. This has given it comfort for continuing with its anti-inflation policy stance. The inflation rate virtually rules out any rate cut in the December policy. While a decision on the rate cut could come in February, depending on how the inflation number turns, global factors cannot be ignored. The victory of Donald Trump does suggest some action on immigration, import tariffs and corporate taxes, all of which can be inflationary.

What is the controversy around the Sambhal mosque?

A petition was filed by Hari Shanker Jain and others in the court of the civil judge of the district and sessions court, Sambhal on November 19. The petitioners alleged that the 16th Century Jama Masjid in Sambhal was built at the site of an ancient Hari Har Mandir. The claim was similar to those made in the case of Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi and Eidgah Masjid Mathura in Uttar Pradesh and Kamal-Maula Masjid in Dhar in Madhya Pradesh. Mr. Jain is the petitioner in the Varanasi, Mathura and Dhar cases too. The Sambhal mosque is a protected national monument.

How were the surveys carried out?

After a hearing on the same day, the civil judge ordered a photographic and videographic survey of the mosque and asked for its report to be presented before it on November 29. The mosque's intezamia committee was not consulted by the court. Following the order, a survey team including the court-appointed advocate commissioner, Ramesh Raghav, arrived at the mosque post-Maghrib or sunset prayers. The survey was carried out peacefully in the presence of the Superintendent of Police, members of the mosque committee and Sambhal's district magistrate. However, a second survey carried out on November 24 led to large scale violence. Conducted in the morning, the survey team was preceded by a local mahant (priest), one of the petitioners, and followed by some members chanting Jai Shri Ram slogans. A police party accompanied the surveyors. A large number of protestors gathered near the mosque. It soon resulted in stone pelting from the crowd. The police allegedly resorted to opening fire in which five men, including two teenagers, died. The police denied the allegation, arguing it used lathi-charge and tear gas to control the crowd. The local MLA, Ziaur Rehman Barq in turn rubbished the police claims, arguing the dead included unarmed persons who had gone out for their daily chores. The residents also alleged the police had ransacked their homes.

What is the mosque's history?

Unlike Ayodhya or Varanasi, the Sambhal dispute cropped up only this year. For centuries, people of different communities have lived peacefully here. The Jama Masjid in Sambhal is one of the three mosques built by Mughal Emperor Babur during his reign between 1526 and 1530; the other two being the mosque in Panipat and the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya which was demolished in 1992. The Sambhal mosque was built by Babur's general Mir Hindu Beg around 1528. The mosque, as noted historian Howard Crane wrote in an essay titled, 'The Patronage of Babur and the Origins of Mughal Architecture' is "located on a hill at the center of Sambhal. It consists of a sanctuary formed of a large, square mihrab hall with battered walls, covered by a dome on squinches, and flanked by arches on north and south." The mosque is built with stone masonry covered with plaster. Its façade is similar to the mosque in Budaun



and quite removed from the latter Mughal monuments which were built largely of red sandstone. The mosque was repaired twice during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan in the 17th Century. While most historians attribute this mosque to Babur's general Hindu Beg, some believe the mosque is actually a Tughlaq-era monument and the Mughal founder merely added certain features to its architecture. The Hindu tradition, however, holds that the mosque incorporates parts of an ancient Vishnu temple. They believe the tenth avatar of Vishnu, Kalki, will descend here in Sambhal.

What is the Places of Worship Act?

The Sambhal dispute has once again cast fresh spotlight on the Places of Worship Act 1991 under which the religious character of all places of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947, has to be maintained. The only exception was the then ongoing dispute around the Babri Masjid-Ramjanambhoomi. The Act was aimed at shutting out the possibilities of any further contestations around places of worship. It states, "An Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on the 15th day of August, 1947, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto." The Act's Section 3 leaves no room for debate by clearly barring the conversion in full or part of a place of any religious denomination into a place of worship of a different religious denomination.

What are the challenges to the Act?

The petition filed in Sambhal seeks to change the basic character of the place of worship, in contravention of the 1991 Act. The petitioners quote the oral observation of Justice D.Y. Chandrachud who is reported to have said in 2022 that the "ascertainment of a religious character of a place, as a procedural instrument, may not necessarily fall foul of the provisions" of the Act. Incidentally, four petitions have challenged the Places of Worship Act in the Supreme Court. The courts have admitted petitions seeking to alter the religious character of the places of worship in Varanasi, Mathura, Dhar, and now Sambhal even as the Supreme Court is yet to decide on the challenges to the Places of Worship Act itself.

of integrative biology and physiology at the University of California-Los Angeles. Villanueva explained that people with obesity carry "too much fat tissue which is also not functioning optimally". Fat tissue stores energy from food. However, when not functioning properly, the excess energy gets rerouted to be stored elsewhere in the body like in the liver — leading to fatty liver disease; or in the heart — leading to atherosclerosis or stroke. The study included obese and diabetic mice. The fat cells of these mice were four to five times larger than those found in lean mice. The team administered them with rosiglitazone. The results showed that their ribosomal factors increased to normal levels, which triggered their fat stem cells to differentiate to produce new, smaller fat cells. Further, this enabled the mice's fat tissue to function properly in storing energy. These also generate key hormones that regulate metabolism.

Scientists uncover game-changing link between obesity and type 2 diabetes

New Delhi: The US scientists have decoded why obesity increases the risk of type 2 diabetes by targeting the fat cells. The study, published in Cell Reports, may advance new treatments for type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases that work by helping fat stem cells differentiate and make new, smaller fat cells. In a first, the team from the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) showed that obesity can make it difficult for the body to produce key cellular building blocks called ribosomal factors.

Without sufficient ribosomal factors, fat stem cells cannot produce functioning fat cells. Their energy gets trapped and they become enlarged and play a crucial role in diabetes development. While fat tissue has been blamed for long, it's "actually essential for maintaining normal glucose metabolism," said Dr. Claudio Villanueva, Associate Professor

Cocktail scene in India is getting bolder (think ingredients like Maggi masala, wasabi)



MSG, sweetened fish sauce, ramen soup, wasabi, and kimchi - mixologists in India are shaking up the cocktail scene with these unconventional ingredients. But what's behind this rising trend of experimental cocktails?

MSG, sweetened fish sauce, ramen soup, wasabi, and kimchi - mixologists in India are shaking up the cocktail scene with these unconventional ingredients. But what's behind this rising trend of experimental cocktails? cocktail Chyawanprash - the Ayurvedic herbal jam your mom used to force-feed you every winter - isn't something you'd expect to see in a cocktail on a Saturday night outing. Yet, some of the trendiest spots in the country are incorporating it into their drink menus. Take, for instance, PCO in Delhi's Vasant Kunj and Ekaa in Mumbai, where chyawanprash features as an intriguing ingredient in creative cocktails. While the former serves Ignorance Is Bliss—a cocktail made using bourbon, sweet vermouth, coffee, aromatic bitters, and, of course, chyawanprash—the latter offers an elaborate special menu featuring cocktails crafted with Ayurveda-inspired ingredients. Apart from chyawanprash, head mixologist Jishnu uses unexpected elements like camphor, brahmi, and triphala to create a unique drinking experience.

Wasabi, Maggi masala, kimchi, ghee, walnuts, ramen soup—would you ever imagine these ingredients making their way into your cocktail glasses?

Fat Fashioned - A whisky-based cocktail prepared with besan laddoo butter served at Khi Khi. India's cocktail culture is undergoing a dazzling transformation, with mixologists and bartenders embracing bold flavours, unconventional ingredients, and cutting-edge techniques to elevate the drinking experience. "Cocktail culture is evolving along with food culture in India. People want to try something bold as they are now aware of classic cocktails and want something new for their palate," Abhishhek Rana, Head of Bar at Dos, Delhi, tells India Today. Mixologists and bar owners agree with this shift in consumer preference. A rising number of cocktail bars and an increased focus on having an innovative cocktail menu suggest this shift too. The good old Bloody Mary, Cosmopolitan, Negroni, Picante, Martini, and Margarita are no longer enough. The result? Professionals are shaking things up—quite literally—by heavily experimenting with cocktail ingredients. Though not an entirely new concept, industry insiders note that the trend of innovative cocktails has gained momentum and huge popularity in the last 4-5 years in the country.

Mixologists are now drawing inspiration from global trends while incorporating local and indigenous ingredients that are mostly unimagined pairings with alcoholic spirits. For instance, Rana's bar serves Dos Me Up Spicy, a cocktail that incorporates wasabi, and Whispering Caffeine, a blend of house-made walnut rosemary syrup with coffee. At The Brook in Gurugram (run by the owners of artisanal cocktail bar Sidecar), tequila, Himalayan honey, fresh tomatoes, pea water, and Maggi masala come together to create a unique cocktail called Maggi Point.

At Khi Khi, a chic bar co-founded by Navdeep Sethi, bold creations—like the Whisky Soda, featuring homemade pineapple ice cream soda and pineapple foam—reimagine classic combinations. Adding a nostalgic twist, some bars are infusing drinks with flavours reminiscent of childhood treats. Vikas Srivastava, VP of operations at TreeHouse Hotels, which also runs the 24x7 eatery and bar Poe&Co in Goa, reveals jello shots with vodka and alcohol-infused chuskis flavoured with kokum or aam ras as their standout creations. Srivastava recalls having chaat martini—a vodka-based cocktail infused with tangy tamarind, spices, and a rim coated with crushed papdi and sev. Although Delhi-NCR is often credited as the epicenter of this trend, experimental

cocktails are now making waves in cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Goa. "It's a nationwide trend. All over India, bars are changing their setups, creating experimental cocktail menus, and using new techniques and ingredients," says Rana.

What's bringing the change? A confluence of factors is behind the rise of experimental cocktails in India. Post Covid, the surge in international travel and subsequent exposure to global trends is certainly a key influence. Atul Tiwari, EAM - Food and Beverages at The Leela Palace, New Delhi, highlights a burgeoning craft bar culture and the growing influence of younger demographics as key factors driving the experimental cocktail revolution in India. "Millennials and Gen Z, in particular, are seeking unique and experiential beverages that go beyond the traditional. Social media has played a significant role in amplifying these trends, with stunning cocktail presentations and innovative recipes captivating audiences," Tiwari tells India Today. Some bars are infusing drinks with flavours reminiscent of childhood treats like jamun popsicles. "People are no longer willing to limit themselves to enjoying a traditional drink, especially the younger generation, which has just started on alcohol and has taken a fancy to cocktails. This has further fuelled passion for creating newer and edgier cocktails," adds Srivastava. Sandeep Arora, whisky connoisseur and director of Spiritual Luxury Living, also highlights the role of the young generation of bartenders and mixologists in redefining the craft of cocktails by creating concoctions with homegrown mixtures and ingredients. "Driven by the desire to stand out, they are pushing the boundaries of India's cocktail culture," says Arora. The growing popularity of Indian-made spirits, particularly craft gins, has further fuelled this trend. Goa, now hailed as India's gin capital, has inspired a wave of local innovations too.

Artists...errrr...mixologists Today, bartenders are celebrated as artists, with their creations reflecting a delicate balance of craftsmanship and creativity. "Bartenders are much like chefs in the kitchen. Just as chefs start with a basic sauce and layer in flavours to craft exciting dishes, bartenders begin with classic cocktails as their canvas, experimenting with new combinations and flavour profiles to create something extraordinary," says Sethi. "Indian bartenders are using a lot of science in their cocktails, and this chemistry is surely going to lead to an even bigger bar culture in the future," adds Rana. Apart from incorporating intriguing ingredients, professionals are employing innovative techniques such as fat-washing, molecular mixology, and crafting house-made syrups to elevate their cocktails. The rising trend of bar takeovers with international mixologists is also proving to be invaluable learning experiences for Indian bartenders as well as consumers. Cream - A mastiha-based drink with white chocolate in it - presented by Greek mixologists at The Leela Palace, Delhi. For example, The Leela Palace in New Delhi hosted Alexandros Tselepis and Konstantinos Theodorakopoulos, the founders of The Bar In Front Of The Bar in Athens, for a weekend bar takeover of The Library. The duo stirred a storm with their inventive cocktails, featuring Greek Mastiha as the base and unique flavors like white chocolate and kimchi that added an intriguing twist to the various cocktails. "Such bar takeovers help a lot of Indian bartenders understand what's going on around the world," says Jishnu. India's future is bright, as many programs are being run in India now, creating a new and interesting platform for bartenders to learn from. There are many bar takeovers happening, and bartenders from abroad are coming here to share their knowledge and experience. Many Indian bartenders and mixologists are also traveling all over the world, learning, and incorporating new techniques on their return to India. India has lots of ingredients, and people are experimenting with these unique ingredients all over the country. The farm-to-bar concept is also developing.

The cocktail scene is set to get bolder in the coming years—that's what industry insiders predict. According to Sethi of Khi Khi, food-inspired cocktails are going to be the next raging trend. Farm-to-bar is also predicted to gain popularity. Bars are also embracing local produce and sustainable practices, crafting zero-waste cocktails and using house-made mixers. "India has great potential to be the cocktail hub globally with so many great bars and bartenders. But we just don't give them enough attention," Jishnu believes. "The rise of molecular mixology, sustainable practices, and immersive drinking experiences will further elevate the scene. As smaller cities join the trend and the industry invests in skilled mixologists, India is well on its way to becoming a global cocktail destination," says Tiwari. Well, cheers to that!

Silicone patches for acne and anti-ageing are viral. But do they work?

Silicone patches work by locking in moisture retention which can help address various skincare concerns. Photo: Generative AI by Neha Gupta/India Today Who doesn't want clear and glowing skin? In fact, the entire \$74-billion-dollar makeup and skincare industry often centres its marketing efforts around one primary goal: helping consumers achieve clear skin. However, this goal is often obstructed by hurdles like acne, pores and wrinkles. To tackle these issues, social media is brimming with tips, tricks, hacks and products promising to help you achieve your skincare goals (though keeping track of them all is no easy feat). The latest trend making waves on social media is silicone patches - an old dermatologist-recommended product now being hailed for its 'potential benefits'. Silicone patches: the viral product According to social media, the benefits of silicone patches include: Reducing the appearance of scars Hydrating the skin Minimising wrinkles Improving skin texture Promoting collagen production These benefits have made silicone patches or tapes a viral sensation and the 'IT product' due to their ease of availability, affordability and, of course, their one-product-fixes-all approach to skincare woes. Moreover, as the trend grows, it's not just skinfluencers endorsing the product - dermatologists online are also lending their approval. Today, thanks to this trend, silicone patches have reached India as well, with many people trying these age-old tapes to resolve their skin issues. You can find them on any e-commerce website, like Amazon, Nykaa etc.

Silicone patches help in collagen production, which helps in achieving a glowing skin. Now, if you're thinking of adding to your nighttime skincare routine, hold up. We spoke to various experts and scrolled down to read what we found.

What exactly are these patches?

Initially developed for healing surgical scars and wounds, Dr Shristi, an aesthetic physician and founder of Aviv Aesthetics, Delhi, tells India Today that silicone tapes act as occlusive dressings on the skin. These tapes work by locking in moisture retention that, in turn, promotes collagen production, which can help address various skincare concerns. Dr Aparna Santhanam, a dermatologist from



Mumbai, agrees and adds that these tapes are medical-grade adhesive strips made primarily of silicone. "These are thin, flexible and designed to be applied directly to the skin. Originally developed for scar management in post-surgical and trauma cases, they improve the appearance of scars by hydrating the area, protecting it from environmental factors and supporting collagen remodelling," she explains. Experts also agree that nowadays, these patches are trending as a treatment for acne scars, hyperpigmentation and even wrinkles, thanks to social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram. Can it actually help? Experts say these tapes can potentially help you achieve that clear skin if used correctly. If not, they can cause side effects. Potential benefits For acne Silicone tapes can help reduce the appearance of acne scars by providing hydration and improving collagen production in the skin. Dr Sonali Kohli, a consultant dermatologist at Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital, Mumbai, says that silicone patches are very similar to pimple patches. She advises that both should only be used for specific indications and under a dermatologist's guidance, as improper use of active acne can worsen the condition. For anti-ageing Dr Rinky Kapoor, a consultant dermatologist, cosmetic dermatologist, and dermatologist, at the Esthetic Clinics, Mumbai, explains that silicone tapes can work by improving the texture and smoothness of your skin while reducing fine lines and wrinkles.

Can it really reduce puffiness and bloating?



Lymphatic walking is a wellness term for gentle, rhythmic walking that may support normal lymph flow through muscle movement, breathing and changes in tissue pressure. Lymphatic walking is a wellness term for gentle, rhythmic walking that may support normal lymph flow through muscle movement, breathing and changes in tissue pressure. In an age where almost every aspect of fitness is being reinvented, renamed and repackaged, it is refreshing to return to something humanity has always known: walking.

Before gyms, fitness trackers and structured exercise programmes, movement was woven into the fabric of living. Today, that familiar act has acquired a new name — “lymphatic walking” — and gained traction largely because of claims that gentle, rhythmic movement can help reduce the puffiness and bloating associated with fluid retention, prolonged sitting, travel or simply waking up feeling swollen.

“Lymphatic walking” is not a formally defined medical exercise protocol. It is a wellness term generally used to describe gentle, rhythmic walking in which muscular activity, joint movement and breathing may support the normal transport of lymph. The lymphatic system does help return excess fluid from tissues to the bloodstream, and movement can contribute to this process. That provides a physiological basis for the trend.

What the lymphatic system actually does The lymphatic system is an intricate network of vessels, lymph nodes and lymphoid tissues that works alongside the cardiovascular and immune systems. One of its fundamental tasks is maintaining fluid balance. Blood continuously filters fluid into the tissues surrounding cells; much of that fluid returns directly to the bloodstream, while the lymphatic system collects the remainder, including proteins and other larger molecules that cannot readily re-enter blood capillaries. This fluid becomes lymph and is eventually returned to the venous circulation.

The system also has an important immunological role. Lymph carries antigens, immune cells and other material from tissues towards lymph nodes, where immune cells can detect and respond to potential threats. In this sense, the lymphatic system is not simply a drainage network. It is also part of the body's surveillance system.

Why walking helps in lymphatic function Lymphatic collecting vessels contain smooth muscle and can contract rhythmically on their own. Their valves help prevent back-

ward flow and allow lymph to move progressively towards the larger lymphatic ducts and, ultimately, back into the bloodstream. Respiration, arterial pulsations, changes in tissue pressure and skeletal-muscle contractions provide additional forces that influence lymph movement. Walking matters because it brings several of these mechanisms together. With every step, muscles contract and relax around tissues containing blood and lymphatic vessels. This produces changing pressure that can assist the movement of fluid. The repeated movement of the ankles and legs is particularly relevant because skeletal-muscle activity can contribute to lymph transport as well as venous return. Research shows that lymph flow can increase with skeletal-muscle activity, although the relationship is more complex than the simple idea of a “lymph pump” suggests. The lymphatic vessels themselves remain active participants in the process. Walking provides repeated muscular activity, rhythmic breathing and changes in tissue pressure that support normal circulation and fluid movement. It also offers the much broader physiological benefits of regular physical activity.

What about puffiness?

Perhaps the most visible appeal of lymphatic walking is its promise of looking — and feeling — less puffy. The trend has gained traction partly because people associate gentle movement with a fresher face, lighter limbs and a reduction in swelling that can follow sleep, long periods of sitting, travel or a salty meal. There is a physiological basis for some of this: lymphatic circulation helps return excess fluid from tissues to the bloodstream, and movement can assist that process. But the leap from this basic physiology to the claim that a particular walking technique can “drain” the body or rapidly debloat it is not supported by clinical evidence. Any reduction in ordinary, temporary puffiness is more appropriately understood as a change in fluid distribution than as a detoxification effect.

Where breathing comes in

Breathing contributes another layer. The diaphragm is a major muscle of respiration, and each breath changes pressure within the chest and abdomen. These pressure fluctuations interact with the large veins and lymphatic channels passing through the thoracic and abdominal regions and can influence the return of fluid towards the central circulation. This is one reason relaxed, diaphragmatic breathing naturally complements gentle movement. Exercise is often framed in the language of intensity: push harder, go faster, burn more, achieve more. Yet physiology does not operate according to motivational slogans. The body is constantly adjusting blood flow, pressure, fluid distribution, temperature, breathing and energy expenditure in response to movement and rest. A comfortable walk respects that complexity.

How much is enough?

Ten to twenty minutes can be a simple starting point, particularly for someone who spends long periods sitting. A few minutes of walking between sedentary periods may be useful; a longer morning walk may provide a more substantial cardiovascular stimulus. The appropriate pace depends on the purpose. A gentle walk is not equivalent to brisk aerobic exercise, and it should not be marketed as such. But gentle movement still has value. The lymphatic system is quietly working all the time. Walking simply gives the body another opportunity to move, breathe and regulate itself.



preconception assessment became an important part of fertility treatment. Her diabetes, thyroid function, medications and weight-related risks were reviewed, and glucose-lowering treatment was individualised under endocrinology supervision. The couple's fertility journey also illustrates an important misconception: IVF does not cure diabetes. Its role is to provide a structured pathway to conception while allowing fertility and medical teams to coordinate treatment around the patient's overall health. The first attempt to stimulate her ovaries did not produce enough eggs, so the treatment was stopped. Because she had a low ovarian reserve, the couple was then counselled about using donor eggs for IVF. Her husband's low sperm count and abnormal sperm shape also meant that ICSI (Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection), a technique in which a single sperm is directly injected into an egg to help fertilisation, was used. The treatment resulted in three good-quality embryos. Two were later placed in her uterus after her body was medically prepared for pregnancy. The couple was counselled beforehand about the additional risks associated with a twin pregnancy. But the embryo transfer was only one part of the plan. Her HbA1c improved from 7.1% at diagnosis to 6.8% around the time pregnancy was confirmed and 6.3% at six weeks. These values reflected improving glucose control, but also underlined why optimisation should ideally begin before conception rather than after pregnancy has started. Diabetes affects more than pregnancy — and may matter for men too. The diabetes-fertility conversation often focuses on women because of the well-established risks associated with diabetes during pregnancy. But male reproductive health deserves attention as well. Research suggests that diabetes and chronic hyperglycaemia may affect sperm quality and reproductive function through mechanisms including oxidative stress, hormonal disturbances and impaired sperm function. That is why fertility assessment should be couple-centred. The woman's pregnancy required continued vigilance. The focus shifted from preconception optimisation to protecting both mother and babies. The twin pregnancy was managed through multidisciplinary antenatal care, including intensive glycaemic monitoring, a procedure to help prevent early delivery, along with regular scans to monitor the babies' growth and health. The pregnancy reached 37 weeks, when an elective caesarean delivery resulted in two healthy babies.

Why does blood sugar rise during the flu even when you're eating less?



A patient arrived at my clinic with classic flu symptoms — fever, cough, body aches and overwhelming tiredness. But there was one thing that worried him more than the flu itself: his blood sugar had suddenly gone much higher than usual, even though he had barely eaten. For people living with diabetes, this is an important concern. Influenza can be more serious because infections can make blood sugar harder to control and increase the risk of complications. The good news is that being prepared, monitoring your health closely and seeking help early can make a big difference.

When the Flu Sends Blood Sugar Soaring It may seem surprising that blood sugar can rise when you are eating less. But during an infection, the body releases stress hormones to help fight the illness. These hormones can raise blood glucose levels. That is why it is important to check your blood sugar more often than usual when you have the flu, following your doctor's sick-day plan. Keep a record of your readings and contact your doctor if your levels remain much higher or lower than normal. A poor appetite can make people wonder whether they should stop their diabetes medicines. The answer is: not without speaking to your doctor. What happens to your medication during an illness depends on the medicines you take, your blood sugar readings, and how well you are eating and drinking. Some medicines may need to be adjusted while you are unwell, but these changes should be made with medical guidance.

No Appetite? Focus on Fluids First When the flu takes away your appetite, you do not need to force yourself to eat large meals. Small portions of foods you can tolerate may

be easier. Fluids, however, are especially important. Take frequent sips of water or other suitable drinks to stay hydrated. Dehydration can make blood sugar management more difficult and may add to the strain caused by the infection. That Cold Medicine Isn't Always as Harmless as It Looks A quick trip to the pharmacy for an over-the-counter cold or flu medicine may seem harmless, but not every product is suitable for someone with diabetes. Some cold and flu medicines contain ingredients that can affect blood sugar or interact with other medicines you may already be taking. Check with your doctor before starting an over-the-counter remedy.

Could an Antiviral Help You Recover Sooner?

People with diabetes are considered to be at higher risk of complications from influenza, so antiviral treatment may be recommended in some cases. Timing matters. Antiviral medicines work best when started early, so if flu symptoms have just appeared, speak to your doctor promptly. They can assess your symptoms and decide whether antiviral treatment is appropriate. Most cases of flu can be managed with appropriate care, but certain warning signs should never be ignored. Seek medical attention promptly if you develop difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe weakness, confusion, persistent vomiting, signs of dehydration, or very high or very low blood sugar. If you are unable to keep fluids down, do not wait for the situation to get worse. People with diabetes can become unwell more quickly during infections, making early medical advice especially important.

Why the Flu Shot Deserves a Place on Your Diabetes Checklist One common misconception is that flu vaccination is mainly important in colder countries. That is not the case. Influenza also circulates in India, and people with diabetes can be at greater risk of complications. The flu vaccine also does not provide lifelong protection. Influenza viruses continually change, and vaccines are updated periodically to protect against strains expected to circulate. Seasonal flu vaccination should therefore be taken as recommended rather than assuming that one dose is enough for life.

One More Vaccine to Put on Your Radar There is another vaccine people with diabetes should discuss with their doctor: the pneumococcal vaccine. Diabetes can make people more vulnerable to serious infections such as pneumonia. Unlike the flu vaccine, pneumococcal vaccination is not generally required every year. Depending on the vaccine and your individual health profile, it may be given once and repeated only after several years if recommended. Your doctor can guide you on the schedule that is right for you. The Best Flu Strategy Starts Before You Get Sick Managing flu is not only about knowing what to do after you fall sick. Prevention matters too. Along with vaccination, simple habits can lower your risk: wash your hands regularly, avoid close contact with people who are sick, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and stay home when you are unwell. Most importantly, do not wait until you feel seriously ill before asking for help. Having diabetes does not mean you need to fear the flu. It means you need to be a little more prepared.

Antibiotic-resistant infections kill more patients and cost more, finds major India study

A major study of hospitalised patients across India has found that infections caused by antibiotic-resistant gram-negative bacteria are more likely to be fatal and more expensive to treat than infections caused by drug-susceptible strains. Gram-negative bacteria are a group of bacteria that can cause infections in different parts of the body, including the lungs, urinary tract, wounds and bloodstream. They include common hospital pathogens such as *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Acinetobacter baumannii* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. These bacteria can be particularly difficult to treat when they develop resistance to antibiotics. One important group of antibiotics used for serious infections is carbapenems. When these bacteria become resistant to carbapenems, doctors have fewer effective medicines available to treat patients.

The researchers, part of the Indian Council of Medical Research's antimicrobial resistance surveillance network, looked at four major Gram-negative bacteria: *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Acinetobacter baumannii* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. They compared patients in tertiary hospitals infected with carbapenem-resistant bacteria with those infected by susceptible strains of the same bacteria.

Why is the study significant?

Studying these infections is important because antibiotic resistance can affect both patient survival and the cost of treatment. While many studies monitor how resistant bacteria are in laboratory samples, fewer studies look at what happens to the patients who actually have these infections. This study therefore provides important information on whether resistant infections are linked to higher deaths, longer hospital stays and greater antibiotic costs across different hospitals in India. The study, conducted across 20 tertiary-care hospitals between April 2022 and April 2025, analysed data from 159,336 hospitalised patients. Of these, 26,213 had confirmed gram-negative bacterial infections, and 16,025 — or 61.1% — had infections resistant to carbapenem antibiotics.

Resistant infections were more likely to be fatal. The difference in mortality was seen across all four bacteria. Among patients with *E. coli* infections, 24.4% of those with carbapenem-resistant infections died, compared with 17.3% among those with susceptible infections. For *K. pneumoniae*, mortality was 31.2% in the resistant group versus 23.5% in the susceptible group. The gap was 37.9% versus 32.8% for *A. baumannii*, and 28.9% versus 20.2% for *P. aeruginosa*. In relative terms, patients with carbapenem-resistant *E. coli* had a 41% higher risk of death than those with susceptible *E. coli*. The corresponding increase was 33% for *K. pneumoniae*, 16% for *A. baumannii* and 43% for *P. aeruginosa*. The researchers also calculated population attributable fractions for mortality. These ranged from 11.1% for *A. baumannii* to 18.7% for *P. aeruginosa*. However, the authors caution that these estimates should not be interpreted as the exact number of deaths that could be prevented by eliminating resistance because the analysis could not fully account for factors such as severity of illness, timing of appropriate treatment and other clinical variables.

Bloodstream infections were particularly deadly. The situation was even more serious when the infection had entered the bloodstream. Among bloodstream infections, mortality among patients with carbapenem-resistant bacteria ranged from 39.3% for *E. coli* to 50.8% for *A. baumannii*. For *K. pneumoniae*, mortality was 44.8%, while it was 46.4%



for *P. aeruginosa*. In comparison, mortality among patients with susceptible bloodstream infections was 23.8% for *E. coli*, 36% for *K. pneumoniae*, 42.6% for *A. baumannii* and 32.8% for *P. aeruginosa*. More than 85% of bloodstream infections across the four bacteria were classified as healthcare-associated, highlighting the importance of infection prevention and control in hospitals.

Resistant infections also cost more to treat. The study found that antibiotic treatment was more expensive when the bacteria were resistant to carbapenems. For *E. coli*, the average antibiotic cost was approximately ₹39,846 per patient for resistant infections, compared with ₹20,034 for susceptible infections. For *K. pneumoniae*, the corresponding figures were ₹55,688 and ₹47,918, respectively. For *A. baumannii*, treatment costs were approximately ₹62,150 for resistant infections compared with ₹41,372 for susceptible infections, while treatment for *P. aeruginosa* cost approximately ₹66,599 for resistant infections compared with ₹48,392 for susceptible infections. Overall, the researchers found that antibiotic treatment costs for carbapenem-resistant infections were about 1.1 to two times higher than for susceptible infections. They point out, however, that these figures include only antibiotic costs and do not include hospital beds, diagnostic tests, doctors' fees or supportive care. The costs were calculated using national rates for antibiotics available under the government's JanAushadhi scheme, which are generally lower than market prices. This means the actual financial burden could be higher. Why does resistance make infections harder to treat? Carbapenems are important antibiotics used to treat serious bacterial infections. When bacteria become resistant to them, doctors have fewer effective treatment options. The study found that newer antibiotics such as ceftazidime-avibactam were used more frequently than polymyxin-based treatment for carbapenem-resistant *E. coli* and *K. pneumoniae*. In bloodstream infections caused by these bacteria, ceftazidime-avibactam was associated with lower mortality than polymyxin B. But the researchers caution against interpreting these findings as proof that one drug is universally better than another. The study did not have patient-level information on several factors that can strongly influence outcomes, including how sick the patient was, how quickly appropriate treatment was started, the source of infection and the specific resistance mechanism. A warning about hospital-acquired infections The majority of infections involving the four bacteria were healthcare-associated: 85% of *E. coli*, 91.6% of *K. pneumoniae*, 95.1% of *A. baumannii* and 91.9% of *P. aeruginosa* infections fell into this category. The researchers also found that factors such as the presence of a luminal medical device and recent surgery were more common among patients with resistant infections.

How IVF helped a 30-year-old with high blood sugar become mother

Her blood sugar was 224 mg/dL, HbA1c was 7.1%: How IVF helped a 34-year-old become mom A woman with diabetes may conceive normally, but poorly controlled blood glucose around conception can increase the risk of pregnancy complications.

For eight years, a 34-year-old woman had been trying to become a mother. Married for 11 years, she had already experienced two miscarriages. By the time she reached a fertility care centre, several pieces of a complicated puzzle had emerged: obesity, a low ovarian reserve, meaning fewer eggs were available than expected for her age, and an untreated thyroid condition called hypothyroidism, in which the body does not produce enough thyroid hormone, affecting metabolism. Then another finding changed the conversation. Her random blood sugar was 224 mg/dL and her HbA1c (average blood sugar count of three months) was 7.1%, consistent with previously undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes. Her 38-year-old husband also had a fertility problem, with a low sperm count and a higher proportion of abnormally shaped sperm.

The couple's case therefore involved several factors affecting their chances of having a baby, rather than a single cause of infertility. This is where IVF (in vitro fertilisation) can play an important role. IVF is a fertility treatment in which an egg and sperm are brought together in a laboratory to create an embryo, which is then placed in the uterus. In complex cases, it can give doctors greater control over the timing of treatment and allow different fertility challenges to be addressed together. For this couple, however, IVF was not a treatment for diabetes. The priority was first to assess and improve her overall health, including her blood sugar and thyroid function, while also determining the most appropriate fertility approach.

How diabetes affects fertility Diabetes does not automatically cause infertility. However, insulin resistance and associated hormonal disturbances can affect reproductive function in some women, particularly when conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) or irregular ovulation are also present. Obesity and metabolic dysfunction can add further challenges. A woman with diabetes may conceive normally, but poorly controlled blood glucose around conception can increase the risk of pregnancy complications. This is why diabetes management should ideally begin before pregnancy rather than after a positive test. Diabetes is therefore best understood as one potential piece of the fertility puzzle. Hypothyroidism can affect metabolism, weight and lipid levels, while insulin resistance and obesity are important contributors to type 2 diabetes. Thyroid dysfunction can also affect menstrual and reproductive function, making its diagnosis and treatment important before pregnancy.

How to plan your pregnancy?

Current guidance recommends that women with diabetes planning pregnancy aim for an HbA1c below 6.5%, when this can be achieved safely without problematic hypoglycaemia. Better glucose control before conception helps reduce pregnancy risks. This is particularly important because early foetal development begins before many women know they are pregnant. For the woman in our case,

New climate data set for India unveiled by Azim Premji University



The average annual maximum temperature will experience an increase of 1.5 degree Celsius by 2057 under 'the middle of the road' emission scenario while the more extreme 'fossil-fueled development' emission scenario predicts this temperature rise will occur a decade earlier, by 2047. This is one of the many key findings of the Azim Premji University's new climate data set for India, which was unveiled on November 17.

According to the Climate Change Projections for India (2021-40) report, the projections examine two IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) scenarios: SSP2-4.5 (moderate emissions and adaptation) and SSP5-8.5 (high emissions with heavy fossil fuel reliance). In other words, the 'middle of the road' emission scenario assumes that society will take moderate steps to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change, which will lead to moderate effects in the future. The 'fossil-fueled development' emission scenario presumes that society will continue to rely heavily on fossil fuels for energy, leading to a future with very high emissions and severe impacts.

Another finding is that India's average summer maximum temperature will have a 1.5-degree Celsius increase by 2043, according to the 'middle of the road' emission sce-

nario and by 2041 for the 'fossil-fueled development' emission scenario. Under the low emission scenario, 196 districts in India will experience a summer maximum temperature increase of at least one degree, with 70 districts projected to experience a similar annual maximum temperature change. "The highest change is expected in Leh at 1.6 degree Celsius for both summer and annual maximum temperatures. The winter minimum temperature is projected to change by 1.5 degree Celsius or more for 139 districts, while 611 districts will see a 1 degree Celsius or more temperature change," the report states. Similarly, under the high emission scenario, 249 districts will experience an annual maximum temperature change of one degree Celsius or more, and 16 districts, mostly in the Himalayan States, are projected to experience an annual maximum temp change by 1.5 degree Celsius or more with the highest being at Leh at 1.8 degree Celsius. "517 districts will experience a summer maximum temperature change of one degree Celsius or more, and 17 districts will experience a summer maximum temperature change of 1.5 degree Celsius or more, with the highest being at Leh at 1.7 degree Celsius.

The winter minimum temperature is projected to change by 1.5 degree Celsius or more in 162 districts with the highest being 2.2 degree Celsius in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh," the report added. With regard to change in precipitation patterns (2021-2040), the report said that the western part of India will experience a significant increase in precipitation, compared to most of the eastern and north-eastern parts of the country. "Change in precipitation patterns (2021-40), the arid States such as Gujarat and Rajasthan exhibit a higher annual precipitation ranging from 20% to 40% under SSP2-4.5, and a 20% to 50 % change under SSP5-8.5. Under both the scenarios, 24 to 25 districts spread across the coastal States and eastern Himalayas will experience more than 31 degree Celsius summer wet bulb temperature, posing serious threats to human health," the report said.

Why countries struggle to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies | Explained

Fossil fuels are the leading driver of climate change, yet they are still heavily subsidised by governments around the world. Although many countries have explicitly promised to reduce fossil fuel subsidies to combat climate change, this has proven difficult to accomplish. As a result, fossil fuels remain relatively inexpensive, and their use and greenhouse gas emissions continue to grow. I work in environmental and energy law and have studied the fossil fuel sector for years. Here's how fossil fuel subsidies work and why they're so stubborn.

What is a subsidy?

A subsidy is a financial benefit given by a government to an entity or industry. Some subsidies are relatively obvious, such as publicly funded crop insurance or research grants to help pharmaceutical companies develop new drugs. Others are less visible. A tariff on an imported product, for example, can subsidise domestic manufacturers of that product. More controversially, some would argue that when a government fails to make an industry pay for damage it causes, such as air or water pollution, that also amounts to a subsidy. Subsidies, especially in this broader sense, are widespread throughout the global economy. Many industries receive benefits through public policies that are denied to other industries in the same jurisdiction, such as tax breaks, relaxed regulations or trade supports. Governments employ subsidies for political and practical reasons. Politically, subsidies are useful for striking bargains or shoring up political support. In democracies, they can mollify constituencies otherwise unwilling to agree to a policy change. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, for example, squeaked through Congress by subsidizing both renewable energy and oil and gas production. Practically, subsidies can boost a promising young industry such as electric vehicles, attract business to a community or help a mature sector survive an economic downturn, as the auto industry bailout did in 2008. Of course, policies can outlive their original purpose; some of today's petroleum subsidies can be traced to the Great Depression.

How are fossil fuels subsidised?

Fossil fuel subsidies take many forms around the world. For example: In Saudi Arabia, fuel prices are set by the government rather than the market; price ceilings subsidise the price citizens pay for gasoline. The cost to state-owned oil producers there is offset by oil exports, which dwarf domestic consumption. Indonesia also caps energy prices, then compensates state-owned energy companies for the losses they bear. In the United States, oil companies can take a tax deduction for a large portion of their drilling costs. Other subsidies are less direct, such as when governments under-price permits to mine or drill for fossil fuels or fail to collect all the taxes owed by fossil fuel producers. Estimates of the total value of global fossil fuel subsidies vary considerably depending on whether analysts use a broad or narrow definition. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, calculated the annual total to be about US\$1.5 trillion in 2022. The International Monetary Fund reported a number over four times higher, about \$7 trillion.

Why do estimates of fossil fuel subsidies vary dramatically?

Analysts disagree about whether subsidy tabulations should include environmental damage from the extraction and use of fossil fuels that is not incorporated into the fuel's price. The IMF treats the costs of global warming, local air pollution and even traffic congestion and road damage as implicit subsidies because fossil fuel companies don't pay to remedy these problems. The OECD omits these implicit



benefits. But whichever definition is applied, the combined effect of national policies on fossil fuel prices paid by consumers is dramatic. Oil, for example, is traded on a global market, but the price per gallon of petrol varies enormously around the world, from about 10 cents in Iran, Libya and Venezuela – where it is heavily subsidised – to over \$7 in Hong Kong, the Netherlands and much of Scandinavia, where fuel taxes counteract subsidies.

What is the world doing about fossil fuel subsidies?

Global leaders have acknowledged that subsidies for fossil fuels undermine efforts to address climate change because they make fossil fuels cheaper than they would be otherwise. In 2009, the heads of the G20, which includes many of the world's largest economies, issued a statement resolving to "rationalise and phase out over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption." Later that same year, the governments of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, or APEC, made an identical pledge. In 2010, 10 other countries, including the Netherlands and New Zealand, formed the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform group to "build political consensus on the importance of fossil fuel subsidy reform." Yet these commitments have scarcely moved the needle. A major study of 157 countries between 2003 and 2015 found that governments "collectively made little or no progress" toward reducing subsidies. In fact, the OECD found that total global subsidies nearly doubled in both 2021 and 2022. So why are fossil fuel subsidies hard to eliminate? There are various reasons fossil fuel subsidies are hard to eliminate. Many subsidies directly affect the costs that fossil fuel producers face, so reducing subsidies tends to increase prices for consumers. Because fossil fuels touch nearly every economic sector, rising fuel costs elevate prices for countless goods and services. Subsidy reform tends to be broadly felt and pervasively inflationary. And unless carefully designed, subsidy reductions can be regressive, forcing low-income residents to spend a larger percentage of their income on energy. So, even in countries where there is widespread support for robust climate policies, reducing subsidies can be deeply unpopular and may even cause public unrest. The 2021-22 spike in fossil fuel subsidies is illustrative. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, energy prices surged throughout Europe. Governments were quick to provide aid for their citizens, resulting in their largest fossil fuel subsidies ever. Forced to choose between climate goals and affordable energy, Europe overwhelmingly chose the latter. Of course, economists note that increasing the price of fossil fuels can lower demand, reducing emissions that are driving climate change and harming the environment and human health. Seen in that light, price spikes present an opportunity for reform. As the IMF noted, when prices recede after a surge, it "provide[s] an opportune time to lock in pricing of carbon and local air pollution emissions without necessarily raising energy prices above recently experienced levels."

avoiding all travel. The current advisory reflects growing concerns over the spread of vector-borne diseases in the region. If you are pregnant, reconsider travel to the state of Telangana, India, particularly if you are close to delivering your baby. Mothers infected around the time of delivery can pass the virus to their baby before or during delivery. Newborns infected in this way or by a mosquito bite are at risk for severe illness, including poor long-term outcomes," the travel notice said. Status unclear Telangana's Health Department reported 178 chikungunya cases as of August 31, surpassing figures from previous years. Joint swelling, and rash. While most individuals recover within a week, severe joint pain can persist for months or even years in some cases.

United States reports surge in chikungunya cases among travellers from Telangana, issues advisory

Following a spike in chikungunya cases in Telangana, the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a 'Level 2' travel advisory for U.S. travellers returning from Telangana. "[The] CDC has identified a higher-than-expected number of chikungunya cases among U.S. travellers returning from ... Telangana," the notice said. The advisory, issued earlier this month on November 8, urges travellers to exercise enhanced precautions. This is the second CDC travel advisory for India this year, following a similar alert in August regarding a Zika virus outbreak in Maharashtra. The CDC's travel advisory system categorises risks into four levels. Level 1 advises travellers to practise usual precautions, while Level 2 (as applied to Telangana now) calls for enhanced precautions. Level 3 urges reconsideration of non-essential travel and Level 4 recommends

With 45 years to go, how sustainable is India's road to net-zero? | Explained



Every year, climate action draws significant attention in the months leading up to the United Nations' annual meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COPs). But the outcome of the 2024 U.S. presidential election will likely have a greater impact on the planet's climate future than COP29 itself, illustrating an important challenge in combating climate change: operationalising global cooperation towards a common cause even when national interests don't align with it. For example, an economically developed country with sufficient resources per capita may not find it necessary to change course — whereas a populous and developing country like India will. A few COPs ago, India committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070. Since then, it has implemented several policies while others are in the works to support this transition. It is widely acknowledged that this journey will not be without challenges, especially financial ones. However, other resource constraints such as land or water availability also matter, limiting the choices available for a sustainable long-term pathway for India.

Why net-zero at all? With each passing day, climate change is becoming more evident. The scientific consensus is that to avoid devastating and irreversible consequences, the world must keep the global average annual surface temperature rise to within 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. The current increase is at least 1.1 °C over that in 1880. The Sixth Assessment Report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimated that from 2020, the remaining (cumulative) global carbon budget for a 50-67% chance of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 °C is 400-500 billion tonnes (Gt) of CO₂. Currently, annual global emissions are around 40 GtCO₂. This means net global emissions must drop drastically to stay within the carbon budget. Several countries have announced net-zero targets, but we also really need a sharp decline in total emissions.

Is net-zero equitable?

The developed world, having caused the problem of climate change in the first place, is expected to lead this transition and reach net-zero emissions well before 2050, allowing more time for developing countries to balance their development goals with climate action. These expectations aren't being met, however. Developed countries are also expected to help finance climate action, but this hasn't materialised at the required scale either. Developing countries, especially those that are small islands, are bearing more than their fair share of the brunt of climate change. So overall, neither climate change nor climate action is currently equitable. COP29 is expected to build consensus on the level of financing required. India's per-capita emissions are among the lowest in the world. However, according to the World Inequality Database, the per-capita emissions of the richest 10% are 20-times greater than that of the poorest 10% and in absolute terms almost half of the country's total. Climate change more severely affects the economically weaker sections. India's size and diversity mean it's a country of countries, and some of them are more polluting than

others vis-à-vis the climate. Importantly, India lacks the carrying capacity to support the developed world's lifestyle standards for its entire population. If it should, India will run into significant food shortage due to groundwater depletion by the 2040s, extreme heat stress in urban areas due to the ever-increasing vehicular pollution and AC use, irreversible biodiversity loss due to non-ideal land-use changes encroaching on habitats, etc. India's lifestyle aspirations could easily become unsustainable in the long run, jeopardising our access to basic needs. A new consumption corridor

In a scenario where consumption rises unchecked and India electrifies all end-use applications, the power demand could increase nine- to tenfold by 2070. Meeting it entirely via renewable energy will require more than 5,500 GW of solar and 1,500 GW of wind, up from the current 70 GW and 47 GW, respectively. This target is achievable if India's only priority is to expand renewable energy generation capacity. But if India is to maintain food and nutritional security, increase forest cover, and preserve biodiversity as well, these energy targets will become very challenging. By modelling land-use change dynamics over time, the authors have found going beyond 3,500 GW solar and 900 GW wind will demand considerable land trade-offs. In sum, India has a tough balancing act to pull off: availing good quality of life to a large share of its population (which has significant material and energy implications) while working towards its climate adaptation and mitigation goals. To this end, it is important to recognise the pitfalls of economic models. For example, the environmental Kuznets curve hypothesises that beyond a threshold, economic growth can be decoupled from carbon emissions. In reality, even the richest countries haven't achieved this decoupling (other than by shifting their emissions to poorer countries). This is why it is in our best interest to not aspire to achieve the lifestyle standards of the west. Instead, we need to envisage a long-term strategy incorporating 'sufficiency consumption corridors', with a floor well suited to meeting our developmental goals and a ceiling of excess that will help avoid unsustainable growth. Equally, if not more, important are demand-side measures to help maintain this corridor of consumption that will keep us on a sustainable pathway. Our power consumption here could increase six- or sevenfold by 2070. Demand and supply measures Some of these demand-side measures include the use of better construction materials and passive design elements to provide thermal comfort that doesn't require air-conditioning, energy-efficient appliances, public and/or non-motorised transport within urban areas and railways for intercity travel, local products to reduce the demand for long-haul freight, mindful dietary choices, and alternative fuels in industries in addition to some electrification. On the supply side as well, India needs to further decentralise energy production (including by the use of rooftop solar cells and of solar pumps for agriculture). Finally, it should continue to expand its nuclear power generation capacity to diversify its energy mix and to complement a grid becoming more dependent on intermittent energy sources. Nuclear power could also offer a precious low-carbon baseload energy and help the government effectively phase out the national economy's dependence on fossil fuels. As the world trundles towards its net-zero and other climate-related targets, the leeway for governments to miss some of them or postpone their achievement also shrinks. Of course some things are out of our control — for example who becomes the US President — but the things that we can we must, before we cannot. Ramya Natarajan and Kaveri Ashok work on climate change mitigation at the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), a research-based think tank.

India's race to eliminate dog-mediated rabies by 2030: experts stress the need for a 'One Health' approach

India has made significant strides in reducing human rabies deaths over the past two decades. However, achieving the goal of eliminating dog-mediated rabies by 2030 will require accelerated efforts and a focused, 'One Health' approach, experts say. The One Health strategy highlights integrating human and animal health measures to address rabies at its roots. Key steps identified include strengthening both human and animal surveillance systems, ensuring timely and complete administration of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for those exposed to the virus, and scaling up dog vaccination efforts across the country. While rabies cases have declined, experts warn that without these integrated actions, India may struggle to meet the 2030 target.

A recent study published in The Lancet highlights the public health challenge of rabies in India. Using a nationwide, community-based cross-sectional survey, researchers gathered data from 3.37 lakh individuals residing in 78,807 households across 60 districts in 15 states. The survey results estimated that India experiences approximately 9.1 million animal bites annually, with 76.8% attributed to dogs. The annual dog-bite incidence was calculated at 5.6 per 1,000 people. Significant gaps in post-bite care were noted, as 20.5% of dog-bite victims received no anti-rabies vaccination (ARV), and among those who did receive ARV, nearly half of the 1,253 people who started the vaccination course did not complete it. This lapse in vaccination adherence poses severe health risks, as the study estimates around 5,726 human rabies deaths each year, despite an overall reduction in deaths over recent decades. "To make rabies a disease of the past in India, it is essential to prioritise prevention, awareness, and vaccination efforts," says Ranga Reddy Burri, president of the Infection Control Academy of India. "Although human rabies deaths have declined, achieving the goal of eliminating dog-mediated cases by 2030 requires accelerated action. A robust One Health approach, combining human-animal surveillance, timely post-exposure prophylaxis, and extensive dog vaccination is vital. With the increase in pet ownership, responsible pet care and vaccination are also critical to this mission," Dr. Burri adds.

In answer to a question in the Lok Sabha on July 30, 2024 on the stray dog menace in the country, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh said that in 2023, India reported a total of 30.43 lakh dog bite cases, with 286 fatalities linked to these incidents. This data was gathered under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. "According to the National Centre for Disease Control, 46,54,398 anti-rabies vaccinations were administered to individuals who sustained dog bites throughout the year," the Minister said. The Minister also said that the government had introduced a rabies helpline (15400) in five States, with plans to expand it nationally. Additionally, the Rabies-Free Cities Initiative was launched to create rabies-free zones in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities, with a structured rabies prevention and action plan. Shailaja Tetali, dean of research at the Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH) Hyderabad, however noted that while the National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) has successfully reduced ra-

bies cases, addressing dog bites requires a comprehensive One Health approach. "To tackle dog bites effectively, we need coordinated efforts across surveillance, resources, training, collaboration, and public awareness," she explains. She highlighted the need for enhanced surveillance of dog bites across both public and private facilities, especially in remote areas. "Every case should be recorded, as data is critical to tackle the issue in underserved regions," she said. Dr. Tetali also stressed on stockpiling anti-rabies vaccines (ARV) to avoid shortages, and filling gaps in veterinary resources to support humane dog population control. Specialised training for para-veterinary staff is essential, as many are often shifted into animal care without preparation. Collaboration among animal welfare boards, municipalities, NGOs, and resident associations is also necessary for effective dog population management. Dr. Tetali added that public awareness is also vital. "People need to respect animals' space and understand the importance of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) after contact with potentially rabies-carrying animals," she advised, noting that these measures can reduce rabies and dog bite incidents significantly. Awareness remains low. According to information in India's National Action Plan for Dog-Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE) booklet, in India, rabies is transmitted commonly by dogs and cats (~97%), followed by wild animals (2%) such as mongoose, foxes, jackals, and wild dogs, and occasionally by horses, donkeys, monkeys, cows, goats, sheep, and pigs. Rodents, rats and bandicoots, squirrels, rabbits, birds, and bats are generally not known to transmit rabies. The presence of unvaccinated free-roaming dogs (FRD) or street dogs, amidst human settlements is a major contributor to the high incidence of rabies in India, which is endemic. Apart from humans, rabies also causes significant mortality among livestock animals such as bovine, cattle and small animals. Kiran Madhala, professor of critical care medicine at Gandhi Medical College, Secunderabad, highlighted key findings from the multicentric rabies survey conducted by World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Association for Prevention and Control of Rabies in India (APCRI) in 2017 and 2018. "According to the study, almost 40% of participants had never even heard of rabies, which is alarming for a country aiming to control this disease," Dr. Kiran said. He explained that even among those who knew of rabies, one in four was unaware of its fatal nature. "While nearly everyone recognised bites as a means of transmission, only about half considered scratches, and only a third saw saliva contact as potential sources of infection." Dr. Kiran said the perceived risk varies by animal type. "Three-quarters of respondents viewed dogs as a rabies source, yet only about 20% associated the risk with cats or monkeys." Surprisingly, wild animals like mongooses or bats were rarely considered sources, with only 5-10% mentioning them, whereas some mistakenly believed rodents, birds, and even snakes were rabies risks, he added. The Supreme Court of India has issued several rulings and guidelines related to dog bites, addressing public safety, the responsibilities of dog owners, and animal welfare. In the All Kerala Stray Dogs Eradication Group v. State of Kerala & Ors.

What’s the biggest challenge in DNA analysis? | Explained



The story so far: At least 270 people, most of them passengers, were killed on June 12 when Air India flight 171, a London-bound Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, crashed less than a minute after taking off from Ahmedabad airport. Following the accident, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) analysis is being used to identify the remains of those killed. In the past week, DNA samples from victims' family members have been collected and matched, and most remains have already been identified.

How do DNA samples help?

DNA fingerprinting identifies individuals by analysing unique regions of their DNA. While human DNA is 99.9% identical, the remaining 0.1% includes unique sequences called short tandem repeats (STRs), which are crucial for forensic investigations. DNA profiling focuses on specific regions called genetic markers, with STRs being the preferred markers due to their variability among individuals, except monozygotic twins (identical twins). "Currently, STRs are the most widely used genetic markers for human identity determination and paternity testing. Their use makes it possible to clarify most legal and forensic cases with a generally very high degree of certainty. Identification of human remains is generally performed by comparing the genetic profile of the remains with that of first-degree relatives, usually the parents," explained Dr. Rakesh Mishra, director, Tata Institute for Genetics and Society.

DNA is the molecule that carries the genetic instructions of all living organisms. It's essentially the blueprint that determines an organism's characteristics and how it functions and is passed from parents to offspring. DNA profiling can be used in the identification of skeletonised or highly decomposed human remains. Identification is usually carried out by comparing the genetic profile from the remains with the genotypes of reference samples from relatives, most commonly the parents of the victim, according to an article titled, 'Identification of the Remains of an Adult Using DNA from Their Deciduous Teeth as a Reference Sample'.

What is the process followed to collect, store and match samples during a disaster?

In the case of accident victims, DNA samples may be degraded and contaminated which is the biggest challenge that forensic experts face even though DNA samples can be preserved for a long time. Samples are ideally frozen at minus 20°C, or, in the case of soft tissues (skin, muscles,

etc.), they may be stored in 95% ethanol. "In an accident of this magnitude samples of tissue, nails, bone, body fluid and blood etc. can be used to identify and establish family relation. Technology available today is powerful and sensitive which aids in easy identification," said Dr. Mishra. He added that only trained forensic experts are made to collect samples to ensure that there is no contamination. These samples are then stored in temperature regulated, sterile conditions and matched swiftly. "In this case, establishing family pattern is enough. The STR process is used in this case to establish family relationship. Through this family pattern is established and based on this identity is ascertained," he said.

Experts noted that after sample collection, using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) the extracted DNA is amplified with specific primers targeting the STR regions of interest. The amplified DNA fragments are separated based on size using gel electrophoresis. The size and number of repeats in each band are analysed to generate the distinctive DNA profile with advanced computerised systems. The generated profile is then compared to other DNA profiles in a database to find any matches.

What are the difficulties in the process?

An article titled, 'Challenges and solutions in DNA fingerprinting: Sample quality, data analysis, and interpretation', noted that DNA fingerprinting, which is a pivotal tool in forensic science, paternity testing, and genetic research, faces significant challenges in sample quality, data analysis, and interpretation. It states that the sample quality is the bedrock of DNA fingerprinting. "The integrity of the DNA sample dictates the accuracy of the result. Challenges arise from various sources, such as environmental degradation, contamination, and the complexity of handling mixed or limited DNA samples. These issues can lead to ambiguous or erroneous results, posing significant obstacles in forensic investigations," it states. It adds that continued training and education of those in the field is vital.

Contamination, interpretation challenges, including ethical concerns, privacy issues, and the potential for misinterpretation of results is acknowledged in this paper. It recommends the use of advanced techniques for DNA collection and recovery, developments in software for more precise data analysis, and the implementation of standardised protocols for interpretation. It also highlights the role of automation in enhancing accuracy and the importance of professional training.

When has DNA fingerprinting been crucial?

Several mass fatality events, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks, have forced authorities to use DNA analysis to establish identity. Most recent include the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2009 Victorian Bushfires (Australia) where severely burned or fragmented bodies had to be identified, and the 2014 MH17 crash (Ukraine) which resulted in the loss of all 298 people on board. DNA fingerprinting was also used to identify victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Beside this, it is also a standard tool for identifying individuals in various criminal cases.

Organ transplants hit by fund constraints and infrastructural deficiencies: report

A report released by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has revealed that the organ transplantation programme in the country has been crippled by multiple issues, especially insufficient funding, shortage of specialised doctors, and procedural delays. The report dated June 19, 2025, which followed a high-level meeting of senior health officials to review the status of organ transplantation activities in government hospitals and identify the key challenges, pointed to infrastructural deficiencies, especially shortage of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds and lack of financial support to patients who required lifelong medication that was expensive.

Explaining the bottlenecks and other issues faced by State-owned institutions, the report said only 13,476 kidney transplants were performed, both in government and private hospitals, against the recommended 1 lakh cases last year. The capacity of government hospitals was not adequate to meet the target of organ transplants and creation of new centres were "definitely" required. The report elaborated on the lack of facilities in government healthcare institutions, saying a significant number of government hospitals had reported the absence of dedicated infrastructure for organ retrieval and transplantation, including specialised transplant operation theatres (OTs) and dedicated Transplant Intensive Care Units (TICUs). Existing OTs and ICUs were frequently overburdened with general patient loads. A critical and frequently cited issue was the shortage of ICU beds, which were essential for maintaining potential brain-stem dead (BSD) donors and for post-operative care of recipients. In many trauma centres, beds were unavailable for potential donors due to high patient volume.

Many institutions, including several All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), lacked in-house Human Leucocyte Antigen (HLA) cross-matching laboratory facilities. The dependency on external laboratories was causing significant delays and logistical challenges in the transplantation process. Several government hospitals had stated that their current facilities required substantial logistical and infrastructural upgrades to meet the standards necessary for performing complex transplant procedures. The report compiled by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation, which convened the meeting, said the shortage of specialised faculty coupled with frequent transfer of trained personnel, was disrupting the continuity and establishment of transplant programmes. A major bottleneck was the scarcity of dedicated and trained transplant surgeons, nephrologists, urologists, anaesthetists, neurosurgeons/ neurologists and intensivists within the government hospitals. Experts representing various government institutions in different States flagged issues relating to delays in obtaining formal approval and constitution of the BSD Committees, which was essential to initiate deceased organ donation programme. The handling of medico-legal cases, particularly involving trauma patients who represented the largest pool of potential donors, was often cumbersome and lacked a streamlined process, thereby discouraging organ donation. On the paucity of funds, the report said some hospitals had reported inadequate funds to initiate or restart specialised transplant programs, such as lung transplantation, which necessitated expensive equipment and preservatives. A significant concern was the high cost of immunosuppressant drugs, which patients must take for life. The financial support available under current schemes was often limited to the first year, imposing a substantial burden on patients thereafter. It was highlighted that there were no formal incentives for transplant and organ donation teams (surgeons, nurses, coordinators etc) on a case-by-case basis. Such incentives could motivate them to increase the number of transplants. The non-inclusion of liver and heart



transplantation and the associated lifelong follow-up costs in major Central health schemes like Ayushman Bharat were identified as significant barriers for underprivileged patients. The report "strongly recommended that liver and heart transplantation, including the lifelong cost of immunosuppressants for post-transplant recipients, be comprehensively included under the central Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana [AB-PMJAY] scheme".

India slams OIC for ‘incorrect’ remarks that reflect ‘Pakistan’s influence’

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation called for strict adherence to bilateral pacts between India and Pakistan, including the Indus Waters Treaty, and stressed the need for a broad-based dialogue for the peaceful settlement of all outstanding disputes. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation called for strict adherence to bilateral pacts between India and Pakistan, including the Indus Waters Treaty, and stressed the need for a broad-based dialogue for the peaceful settlement of all outstanding disputes. File | Photo Credit: Wikipedia India slammed the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Monday (June 23, 2025) for "unwarranted" and "factually incorrect" remarks that were made under the influence of Pakistan, a state that has turned terrorism into "statecraft." India's reactions came after a two-day foreign ministerial conclave of the OIC in Türkiye criticised New Delhi on a range of issues, including "social marginalisation" of Indian Muslims. The OIC also called for strict adherence to bilateral pacts between India and Pakistan, including the Indus Waters Treaty, and stressed the need for a broad-based dialogue for peaceful settlement of all outstanding disputes. "India categorically rejects the unwarranted and factually incorrect references at the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement. "These statements, driven by Pakistan, which has turned terrorism into statecraft, reflect the continued misuse of the OIC platform for narrow political ends," it said. The MEA said the OIC's repeated "failure" to acknowledge the real and documented threat of terrorism emanating from Pakistan, most recently evidenced in the heinous Pahalgam attack, reflects a "wilful disregard" for facts. It said, "The OIC has no locus standi to comment on India's internal affairs, including Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral and sovereign part of India — a fact enshrined in the Indian Constitution and irreversibly settled." "The OIC should reflect deeply on the perils of allowing Pakistan's propaganda to hijack and politicise its agenda. Any other course can only undermine the OIC's credibility and relevance," the MEA said.

No increase in radiation off sites that US hit: IAEA



Tel Aviv: The International Atomic Energy Agency said on Sunday that there has been "no increase in off-site radiation levels" after US airstrikes on Iranian nuclear sites. The UN nuclear watchdog sent the message via the social platform X on Sunday. "The IAEA can confirm that no increase in off-site radiation levels has been reported as of this time," it said. The "IAEA will provide further assessments on situation in Iran as more information becomes available."

The United States struck three sites in Iran early on Sunday, inserting itself into Israel's war aimed at destroying the country's nuclear program in a risky gambit to weaken a longtime foe despite fears of a wider regional conflict. Addressing the nation from the White House, President Donald Trump asserted that Iran's key nuclear were "completely and fully obliterated." There was no independent damage assessment. It was not clear whether the US would continue attacking Iran alongside its ally Israel, which has been engaged in a nine-day war with Iran. Trump acted without congressional authorization, and he warned that there would be additional strikes if Tehran retaliated against US forces. "There will either be peace or there will be tragedy for Iran," he said. Iran's top diplomat, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, warned in a post on X that the US attacks "will have everlasting consequences" and that Tehran "reserves all options" to retaliate.

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations called for an emergency Security Council meeting to discuss what he described as the US's "heinous attacks and illegal use of force" against Iran. Ambassador Amir Saeid Iravani said that the UN's most powerful body must "take all necessary measures" to hold the US accountable under international law and the UN charter. Early Sunday morning, Israel alerted the public of an Iranian missile launch and urged people to take shelter. Sirens sounded in Jerusalem a short while later and a series of booms were heard. Iranian has been firing missile barrages at Israel since the war began but they have decreased in size as Israel targets Tehran's missile launchers.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran confirmed that attacks took place on its Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz sites, but it insisted that its work will not be stopped. Iran said there were no signs of radioactive contamination at the three locations and no danger to nearby residents. Iran has maintained that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only, and US intelligence agencies have assessed that Tehran is not actively pursuing a bomb. However, Trump and Israeli leaders have claimed that Iran could quickly assemble a nuclear weapon, making it an imminent threat.

The decision to directly involve the US in the war

Burning at both ends: how smoking hits health, raises term insurance premium

American actress and singer Liza Minnelli once quipped, "Smoking is one of the leading causes of statistics." As witty as it sounds, the grim truth is hard to ignore, tobacco use remains one of the top causes of preventable death globally. According to the World Health Organization, it is responsible for more than eight million deaths worldwide each year, including approximately 1.35 million deaths annually in India. The health consequences of smoking are well documented. From lung cancer and cardiovascular disease to stroke and chronic respiratory issues, tobacco use leads to severe, often irreversible, damage. But what's less discussed is the financial burden it can bring, particularly when it comes to term life insurance. Why smokers pay more

When you apply for a term insurance plan, one of the first things insurers assess is your smoking status. And the difference in premium can be staggering. For instance, a 35-year-old male living in Delhi could pay as much as 80–100% more for the same term plan if he is a smoker compared with a non-smoker. For instance, a 35-year-old non-smoker will pay a monthly premium of ₹1,453 for a ₹1 crore term policy, while a smoker will pay about ₹2,905. That's because smoking significantly reduces life expectancy, increasing the risk for insurers. Life-threatening issues Smokers are more prone to a host of life-threatening conditions, including various cancers, heart disease, and chronic respiratory ailments. This elevated risk translates into higher premiums, as insurers factor in the likelihood of early claims. Smoking habits outweigh job risk in premium assessment. While your profession also plays a role in determining your insurance premium, smoking is often a more critical factor. For example, a smoker working a low-risk job like a software engineer may still end up paying a higher premium than a non-smoker in a high-risk occupation, such as a construction worker or merchant navy officer. Insurers typically categorise applicants into two groups, smokers and non-smokers, regardless of other lifestyle or occupational risks.

There's a common misconception that smokers are ineligible for term insurance. That's simply not true. Smokers are eligible and, in fact, have even more reason to secure financial protection for their families. Given the elevated health risks, buying term insurance ensures that your loved ones are financially safeguarded in your absence. Disclose smoking habits upfront. It's crucial to be transparent about your smoking habits while purchasing a term plan. Non-disclosure or misrepresentation can lead to serious consequences. If an insurer discovers withheld information, often through mandatory medical exams or tests that detect nicotine, the same may lead to claim rejection, cancellation of the policy, or even allegations of insurance fraud. Frequent evaluation

Insurers don't just ask whether you smoke, they also evaluate how frequently and in what form you consume tobacco, whether it's cigarettes, cigars, or chewing tobacco. Definitions of "smoker" also vary across insurance providers. Some classify anyone who has smoked within the last 12 months as a smoker, while others may extend that window to three years. Also, consider quitting for better rates and better health. If you're considering buying term insurance, quitting smoking can help reduce your premium costs significantly. Some insurers even offer revised premiums if you quit smoking after purchasing the policy, sub-

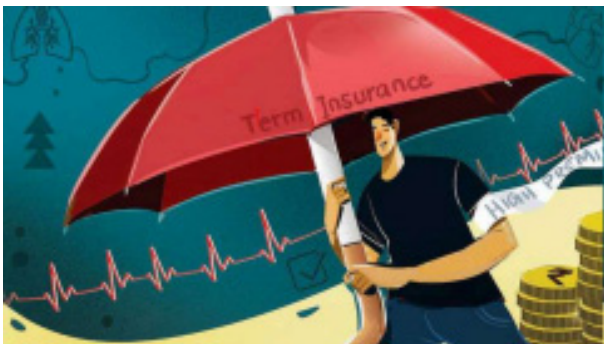
comes after more than a week of strikes by Israel on Iran that aimed to systematically eradicate the country's air defenses and offensive missile capabilities, while damaging its nuclear enrichment facilities. But US and Israeli officials have said American stealth bombers and the 30,000-pound (13,500-kilogram) bunker-buster bomb they alone can carry offered the best chance of destroying heavily fortified sites connected to the Iranian nuclear program buried deep underground.

"We have completed our very successful attack on the three Nuclear sites in Iran, including Fordow, Natanz, and Esfahan," Trump said in a post on social media. "All planes are now outside of Iran air space. A full payload of BOMBS was dropped on the primary site, Fordow. All planes are safely on their way home." Trump added in a later post: "

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised Trump's decision to attack in a video message directed at the American president. "Your bold decision to target Iran's nuclear facilities, with the awesome and righteous might of the United States, will change history," he said. Netanyahu said the US "has done what no other country on earth could do." Israel announced on Sunday that it would close the country's airspace to both inbound and outbound flights in the wake of the US attacks. The war has disrupted air travel throughout the Middle East. The White House and Pentagon did not immediately elaborate on the operation. US military leaders are scheduled to provide a briefing at 8 am Eastern. The attack used bunker-buster bombs on Iran's Fordo nuclear fuel enrichment plant that is built deep into a mountain, a US official said. The weapons are designed to penetrate the ground before exploding.

In addition, US submarines launched about 30 Tomahawk missiles, according to another US official who also spoke on condition of anonymity. The strikes are a perilous decision, as Iran has pledged to retaliate if the US joined the Israeli assault, and for Trump personally. He won the White House on the promise of keeping America out of costly foreign conflicts and scoffed at the value of American interventionism. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was "gravely alarmed" by the "dangerous escalation" of American strikes. "There is a growing risk that this conflict could rapidly get out of control — with catastrophic consequences for civilians, the region, and the world," he said in a statement. Trump told reporters Friday that he was not interested in sending ground forces into Iran, saying it's "the last thing you want to do." He had previously indicated that he would make a final choice over the course of two weeks.

The military showdown with Iran comes seven years after Trump withdrew the US from the Obama-administration brokered agreement in 2018, calling it the "worst deal ever." The 2015 deal, signed by Iran, US and other world powers, created a long-term, comprehensive nuclear agreement that limited Tehran's enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Trump decried the Obama-era deal for giving Iran too much in return for too little, because the agreement did not cover Iran's non-nuclear malign behaviour. Trump has bristled at criticism from some of his MAGA faithful who have suggested that further US involvement would be a betrayal to supporters who were drawn to his promise to end US involvement in expensive and endless wars.



ject to evidence and re-evaluation over time. It's an opportunity moment to reflect on how quitting smoking can improve not just your health, but also your financial well-being. A single decision, like giving up tobacco, can ripple into long-term benefits for both you and your family.

Kittu Park: for a stroll by the pond at Chennai’s West Mambalam

One might think a waterbody at Mambalam in Chennai would be a rare sight, especially considering the area's perennial water shortage issues. Yet, located in this busy neighbourhood is Kittu Park, a greenspace built around a pond. The park, frequented by Mambalam residents, is located on Elliamman Koil Street.

Kittu Park was once the temple tank of Kothandaramar Temple nearby. In the last few years, it has been renovated into a public park. The area around the park was historically a site for poojas associated with the Ayodhya Mandapam and Elliamman temple bhajans. Today, however, it has a play area for children at the entrance, beyond which there is a pond with ducks, surrounded by a walkway. Interestingly, while jogging is prohibited in the park (violators may be handed over to the police, according to the signage), feeding the ducks is allowed. R. Ramesh, a regular walker, shares, "In Mambalam, there isn't much space to walk around since the area is always crowded. Parks like this are one of the few options available for a peaceful walk." He also notes that many visitors feed the ducks various snacks, particularly bread and biscuits, and believes this practice should be better regulated.

Parents with young children appreciate the park's play equipment, but some say it may need maintenance in the coming months to keep it in good condition. They say that proper upkeep is important for the park's continued enjoyment. While Kittu Park may not be as expansive as other greenspaces around West Mambalam and T. Nagar, it still serves its purpose well with its wide, circular walkway and benches for rest. One downside, however, is parking. The area around Elliamman Koil Street tends to be congested, as walkers often park their bikes on the street. "After 6.30 p.m. it is tough to get a spot to park two-wheelers, so we leave them in the neighbouring bylanes.

HDFC Bank recommends two candidates for MD & CEO, proposes two ED appointments



HDFC Bank has submitted the names of two candidates to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for appointment as its next Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO), setting in motion the succession process at the country's largest private sector lender. The recommendations, in order of preference, come ahead of the end of Sashidhar Jagdishan's current term on October 26, 2026.

According to the bank's regulatory filing, it has sought RBI approval for the appointment of its next MD & CEO for a three-year period. Along with the names of the two candidates, HDFC Bank has also submitted the proposed remuneration for the candidates. The appointment will be subject to approval from the central bank. The bank has sought the reappointment of V Srinivasa Rangan as a whole-time director, designated as Executive Director, along with the remuneration payable to him. His proposed tenure will run from November 23, 2026, to November 22, 2027. HDFC Bank has also proposed the appointment of Jimmy Tata as a whole-time director, designated as Executive Director, for three years from the date of RBI approval, or such other date or period as may be specified by the regulator. In addition, the bank has proposed creating one additional whole-time director position. This will increase the number of whole-time directors on the board to four, apart from the MD & CEO. HDFC Bank said the additional position is intended to

ensure sharper synergy and oversight, including over its subsidiaries, while creating a larger leadership pipeline for succession planning. The position will be filled in consultation with the incoming MD & CEO after the successor takes charge.

The proposals will require RBI approval, while necessary shareholder approvals will be sought in due course. The choice of the next MD & CEO will be closely watched as HDFC Bank enters a new phase following Jagdishan's departure, with the incoming leadership expected to steer the post-merger institution while strengthening governance, oversight and succession planning. Jagdishan's exit comes at a time when HDFC Bank has faced scrutiny over governance and internal practices. In March, the bank's then part-time chairman Atanu Chakraborty resigned, citing certain "happenings and practices" that he said were not in line with his personal values and ethics. The bank subsequently appointed external law firms to examine the concerns raised in his resignation. The firms later said Chakraborty's allegations were not substantiated, while the RBI said its periodic assessment had found no material concerns regarding the bank's conduct or governance. The Indian Express subsequently reported that HDFC Bank's Audit Committee had ordered an internal vigilance investigation into payments totalling Rs 45 crore made to the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation during 2023-24 and 2024-25. The payments were allegedly routed through the bank's marketing department and presented as contributions to a road-safety campaign rather than as differential interest on deposits. HDFC Bank had denied the allegations. In July, the bank's board concluded its internal disciplinary process relating to the MSRDC arrangement. It issued warning letters and imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 1 lakh each on Jagdishan, CFO Srinivasan Vaidyanathan and Group Head of Retail Assets Arvind Vohra. The board characterised the conduct as "business overreach" and said there was no mala fide action, personal enrichment or improper motive.

Need 'orderly & inclusive' energy transition, fossil fuels will continue playing key role: BRICS declaration

The declaration came as leaders of the 11 BRICS countries gathered in India for the 18th BRICS summit, with the grouping seeking to strengthen cooperation and boost growth prospects across the Global South. The Delhi summit's emphasis on resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability moves the focus towards supply chains, health, food security, climate adaptation, digital systems, small enterprises and development finance. ndia/ X) Acknowledging that fossil fuels will continue to play an important role in the world's energy mix, particularly in emerging markets and developing economies, BRICS countries have called for "just, orderly, equitable and inclusive" energy transitions while stressing the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with global climate goals.

In its declaration, issued on Saturday in New Delhi, the countries also stressed the principle of "technological neutrality" and "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities" in pursuing energy transitions, while recognising that countries' pathways would need to take into account their respective national circumstances, needs and priorities. The declaration came as leaders of the 11 BRICS countries gathered in India for the 18th BRICS summit, with the grouping seeking to strengthen cooperation and boost growth prospects across the Global South. Beyond the energy transition, the declaration also focuses on the digitalisation of energy systems and greater cooperation on critical minerals, while emphasising the need for resilient energy supply chains. "We recognize that energy security is a crucial foundation for social and economic development, national security and the welfare of all nations. We highlight the need to enhance energy security by ensuring energy market stability and maintaining uninterrupted flows of energy from diverse sources, strengthening value chains, ensuring resilience and protection of critical energy infrastructure, including cross-border infrastructure," the declaration read.

Countries seek greater cooperation in energy sector In its declaration, the countries also underscored the importance of balanced and diversified energy mixes reflecting national circumstances. They recognised that a wide range of energy sources and technologies including but not limited to renewable energy, bioenergy, fossil fuels, nuclear energy, hydropower, hydrogen, low carbon technologies, energy storage technologies, would play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and energy security. "We underscore the role of all available energy sources, resilient energy supply chains and enhanced cooperation among BRICS countries through deliberations in the energy track. In this regard, we encourage BRICS collaboration on interoperable standards and certification frameworks for zero/low-emissions hydrogen and appreciate the ongoing work on the BRICS Joint Re-



port on Hydrogen Value Chains in this regard," the declaration added.

The countries also highlighted the growing role of digitalisation in energy systems including technologies such as artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics. They said it offers significant potential to improve system planning, grid management, renewable integration, operational efficiency and a strengthened cyber-resilient energy infrastructure. "In this regard, we welcome the BRICS Guiding Principles on Smart Grids and Energy Storage. We note the Chairship initiative on establishing the BRICS Digital Centre of Excellence for Smart Grids and Energy Storage under the Smart Grids Workstream of the BRICS ERCP as an enabling voluntary dialogue mechanism to advance cooperation," the declaration said. The countries also reaffirm their commitment to deepen cooperation in the field of competition law and policy among BRICS nations to foster fair, competitive, and resilient market environments across sectors, including critical and emerging areas while respecting each country's national priorities, laws and regulations. "We note the discussion under the theme 'Strengthening Cooperation to Promote Fair Competition, including in Renewable Energy Markets', with a view to support sustainable energy transitions. We further encourage continued cooperation among BRICS competition authorities to identify and effectively address emerging competition challenges, with a view to safeguarding contestable and well-functioning markets that support innovation and promote consumer welfare," it added. On critical minerals, the countries affirm the need to promote "reliable, responsible, diversified, resilient, fair, sustainable, and just" supply chains of critical minerals to guarantee benefit sharing, value addition and economic diversification in resource-rich countries, while fully preserving sovereign rights over their mineral resources, as well as their right to adopt, maintain and enforce measures necessary to pursue legitimate public policy objectives. "We recognize the key role of critical minerals for the development of zero- and low-emission energy technologies, energy security, and resilience of energy supply chains," the declaration added.

No BRICS currency proposal yet, says MEA

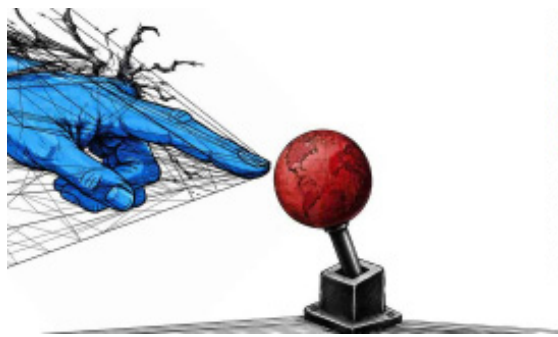
New Delhi: There is no proposal for a BRICS currency "as of now", while discussions on trade in local currencies have been underway for some time, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Saturday. In a press briefing, MEA's Secretary, Economic Relations, Sudhakar Dalela, said: "There is no proposal in the BRICS for a BRICS currency as of now." "Discussions on trade in local currencies have been underway for some time," he said.

"We believe local currency settlement is a practical mechanism to reduce transaction costs in bilateral trade. This has been encouraged as complementary to the global payment and settlement system, improving overall global trade across nations," he said. The mechanism can help reduce transaction costs in bilateral trade and is being encouraged as a complement to the global payment system. Dalela further stated that the 'BRICS MSME' co-operation portal, cooperation on global value chains, and logistics frameworks were among the key highlights during the BRICS Summit. He said that BRICS cooperation on DPI, a science and research repository, and collaboration on startups were also the key highlights. Dalela said it had been a year of robust participation and engagement, with more than 350 meetings held under India's BRICS chair. He described it as a "whole-of-nation effort", with BRICS engagement taking place in more than 30 cities across the

country. He further informed that there were 150 practical outcomes across four pillars from the BRICS Summit: "Strengthening food and health security, and BRICS cooperation on mental health were some of the important highlights," he said.

The BRICS group of emerging economies on Saturday unanimously adopted the New Delhi Declaration, in which it voiced serious concern over the rise of unilateral tariffs and non-tariff measures that distort trade and are inconsistent with the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The BRICS nations reaffirmed their "unwavering support for reform of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and to strengthening a non-discriminatory, open, equitable, transparent, fair, inclusive, predictable and rules-based multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core". Echoing the aspirations of the Global South to fully integrate into the multilateral trading system, the declaration strongly supports Ethiopia and Iran's bid for accession to the WTO. It acknowledges China for expanding its zero-tariff treatment to cover 53 African countries with which it has diplomatic ties. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday called on BRICS member and partner countries to deepen economic cooperation by opening markets, simplifying regulatory procedures, linking payment systems and promoting trade in local currencies.

Who tames the powerful? Power and restraint in an anarchic world



In the latest Hollywood blockbuster Spider-Man: Brand New Day, the idea of a 'universal inhibitor'—a device capable of suppressing extraordinary superhuman abilities—offers an irresistible political metaphor. In a world inhabited by beings whose powers exceed the capacity of ordinary institutions to contain them, the central problem is not merely how power is acquired, but how it is restrained. Who controls the inhibitor? Who decides when to activate it? And what happens when the person who possesses extraordinary powers also possesses the means to disable every restraint placed upon it? Strip away the superhero setting, and the dilemma is immediately recognisable. It has followed international relations through empires, revolutions, world wars and the nuclear age. How can the unrestrained and unchecked exercise of power be tamed? Does restraint arise from within, through institutions, political norms and the judgment of leaders? Or is it imposed principally from without, through the countervailing power of other states and the shifting regional and global balance of power?

There is no universal inhibitor in international politics. Within states, constitutions, legislatures, courts, elections and political norms seek to make power answerable and prevent even legitimate authority from becoming excessive. Yet these restraints become far less certain when power travels beyond national boundaries. In an anarchic international system—defined not by chaos but by the absence of a central authority above sovereign states—rules cannot be enforced consistently and equally across all actors.

International law establishes standards of conduct, institutions facilitate cooperation, and diplomatic norms generate expectations of restraint, but none constitutes a world government. Enforcement remains uneven, often reflecting the very distribution of power that these mechanisms are intended to regulate. Consequently, the most powerful states retain a greater capacity to interpret rules selectively, evade their constraints or apply them differently to themselves and others. Excessive power need not manifest itself through territorial conquest. States can weaponise interdependence, restrict access to technology, employ economic coercion or exploit asymmetric dependencies.

Internal restraints can influence how states behave internationally. Democratic accountability, political culture, national memory, strategic traditions and public opinion can impose limits on the purposes for which national power is deployed. Even highly capable states do not exercise all the power available to them. Capability is filtered through legitimacy, historical experience and domestic consent. But internal restraint remains inherently uncertain because it is ultimately self-administered. Institutions can weaken, public opinion can change, and nationalism or perceptions of external threat can alter political calculations. What one government considers an unacceptable use of power, another may regard as strategically necessary. For other states, therefore, security cannot rest entirely upon the expectation that the powerful will continue to restrain themselves. The inhibitor, in effect, remains in the hands of the actor whose power it is supposed to contain.

This is why the external balance of power remains central to international relations. Power is often checked most effectively by countervailing power. States moderate their conduct not necessarily because they have become more virtuous, but because other actors possess the capacity to resist, retaliate or impose unacceptable costs. Alliances, military capabilities, economic coalitions and regional partnerships create counterweights, while deterrence rests on the assurance that aggression will not remain cost-free. The balance of power is hardly a perfect mechanism because it can generate arms races, proxy conflicts and security dilemmas in which defensive measures are interpreted as threatening. Yet balancing persists because intentions are neither permanently benign nor fully ascertainable. States consequently respond not simply to declared intentions but to capabilities and concentrations of power. The greater the concentration, the stronger the incentive to hedge, align and balance. A global order founded principally on self-restraint would require weaker states to trust that superior capabilities would not eventually be employed coercively. History offers little basis for building na-

tional security upon such confidence alone. Conversely, an order resting entirely upon external balancing risks becoming trapped in permanent competition, where every restraint is imposed through countervailing force and institutions become instruments of rival power centres. The problem is not choosing absolutely between trust and resistance, but finding a framework in which each can discipline the limitations of the other. The balance of power is no longer merely a balance of armies. It is also becoming a balance of networks, standards, markets, technologies and strategic choices.

More durable restraint, therefore, emerges from an interaction between power and rules. External balances raise the costs of excess, while institutions create mechanisms through which competition can be negotiated and moderated. International institutions cannot independently neutralise the power of major states, but they can shape how power is exercised and contested. They provide forums for negotiation, generate information, create reputational costs and enable coalitions to coalesce around shared rules. Their effectiveness, however, ultimately depends upon political support and an underlying distribution of power that prevents any single actor from disregarding them without consequence.

This relationship has acquired greater importance in an era when power itself is becoming increasingly diffuse across multiple domains. Military strength remains central, but geopolitical influence now flows through technology, finance, supply chains, data, energy, infrastructure and control over critical resources. Excessive power need not manifest itself through territorial conquest. States can weaponise interdependence, restrict access to technology, employ economic coercion or exploit asymmetric dependencies. The inhibitors of power must consequently become equally diverse. Resilient supply chains, technological partnerships, economic diversification, regional coalitions and institutional cooperation increasingly perform functions once associated primarily with military balancing. The balance of power is no longer merely a balance of armies. It is also becoming a balance of networks, standards, markets, technologies and strategic choices. These instruments widen the repertoire of restraint by reducing vulnerability and distributing leverage across a broader constellation of actors. For materially less capable states, this transformation is particularly consequential. They can neither presume that norms alone will safeguard their autonomy nor rely exclusively on traditional military balancing. Their room for manoeuvre increasingly lies in strengthening regional institutions, building flexible partnerships and avoiding excessive dependence on any single centre of power. International institutions cannot independently neutralise the power of major states, but they can shape how power is exercised and contested. Contemporary balancing, therefore, rarely resembles the rigid alliance systems of an earlier era. It is increasingly selective, issue-based and spread across multiple domains. States may cooperate with one power on trade, another on technology and a third on security, while simultaneously strengthening domestic resilience. Such diversification is not an abandonment of strategic autonomy but a practical means of preserving it amid an increasingly contested and uncertain global order. The challenge becomes most acute when a dominant power begins to treat restraint as weakness and rules as impediments. At such moments, appeals to responsibility are unlikely to suffice, and other states inevitably begin searching for counterweights. Yet the purpose of balancing should not be to replace one unrestrained concentration of power with another. It should be to restore limits within which competition can be managed, and cooperation sustained.

The central question of international relations is not whether self-restraint or the external balance of power provides the perfect inhibitor. Neither does. Internal restraint without external counterweights may collapse before ambition, while external balancing without political restraint can reproduce the very excess it seeks to contain. Rules require power behind them, but power also requires rules and political judgement if balancing is not to become an endless cycle of confrontation. Unlike the imagined universal inhibitor of the superhero world, geopolitical restraint cannot be activated by a single device or entrusted to a single guardian. It must emerge from a distribution of capabilities that makes domination difficult, institutions that facilitate cooperation, and political judgment that recognises the limits of what power can sustainably achieve. The enduring paradox of international relations is that power remains necessary to restrain power, but power alone cannot cultivate restraint. A stable global order requires both the capacity to confront excess and the wisdom to recognise limits. The most effective inhibitor is, therefore, neither wholly internal nor entirely external. It lies in the uneasy equilibrium between self-restraint and countervailing power; between the discipline a state accepts and the resistance the international system can credibly impose.

RBI rejects Tata Sons' bid to surrender NBFC licence, setting stage for mandatory listing

The Reserve Bank of India has rejected Tata Sons' application to surrender its core investment company registration, effectively forcing the Tata Group's holding company to comply with mandatory listing requirements. Mumbai: The Reserve Bank has rejected Tata Sons' application to surrender its core investment company registration, killing the Tata Group holding company's attempt to avoid a mandatory stock-market listing and setting the stage for it to become publicly traded, sources said on Saturday. The rejection was conveyed in a letter received by Tata Sons' company secretary and chief financial officer on Saturday, the sources said, closing out an application the company filed in March 2024 seeking to deregister as a non-banking financial company. Tata Sons and the RBI did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The decision means Tata Sons will remain classified as an Upper Layer NBFC, a category subject to enhanced regulatory requirements, including mandatory listing. The RBI first classified Tata Sons as an Upper Layer NBFC in September 2022, with such entities required to list within three years. The original deadline for Tata Sons was September 30, 2025. Tata Sons had sought to exit the NBFC framework before that deadline. It repaid more than Rs 21,000 crore of debt in 2024 and applied to surrender its registration, effectively seeking to operate as an unregulated holding company rather than comply with the listing requirement. The RBI kept the application pending and continued to include Tata Sons in its Upper Layer NBFC lists. The central bank's rejection now removes the key regulatory route Tata Sons had been pursuing to remain private. The company has assets well above the Rs 1 lakh crore threshold under the RBI's revised framework for automatically qualifying large NBFCs for the Upper Layer, making an exemption increasingly difficult. A public listing would mark a fundamental

change for the holding company of one of India's oldest and largest business groups. Tata Sons owns significant stakes in listed and unlisted Tata companies spanning information technology, automobiles, steel, consumer products, aviation, hospitality and financial services.

The move could also bring far greater scrutiny of Tata Sons' finances, capital allocation and investments. A listed holding company would face regular disclosure requirements and greater pressure from public shareholders for clarity on the value of its investments and returns on capital. The roots of the current issue trace back to October 2021, when the RBI introduced a scale-based regulatory framework for NBFCs, sorting lenders into base, middle, upper and top layers with progressively stricter oversight. In September 2022, the central bank placed Tata Sons—alongside firms including Bajaj Finance and Shriram Finance in the Upper Layer category, a classification that carries a hard three-year deadline to list on the stock exchanges, originally due to expire on September 30, 2025. Tata Sons pushed back. It repaid more than Rs 21,000 crore of debt in 2024, becoming debt-free, and filed to surrender its Core Investment Company registration altogether—a move that, if approved, would have let it exit the NBFC framework entirely and remain privately held. The RBI left the application pending through 2025, even as it kept including Tata Sons on successive Upper Layer lists, each time noting the listing did not affect the outcome of the deregistration review. That ambiguity narrowed sharply this year. Revised RBI norms effective June 2026 replaced the earlier scoring-based approach with a single bright-line rule: any NBFC with assets of Rs 1 lakh crore or more sits in the Upper Layer. Tata Sons' standalone assets—reported at over Rs 2 lakh crore as of March 2026—put it well clear of that bar. When the RBI reclassified Tata Sons under the new rules in August,

Messi shines in Argentina farewell, ends 21-year career with goal, two assists



GNS News Agency, Oct 11

After donning Albiceleste colours for one final time, Lionel Messi finally hung up his boots with typical flair and finesse. The 39-year-old brought the curtains down on a glittering international football career as Argentina overcame Benin 3-0 in a friendly at the Estadio Mas Monumental in Buenos Aires on Wednesday. The match, dubbed the Last Tango, saw Messi lead out Argentina one last time in front

of a packed house, with members of Argentina's FIFA World Cup 2022-winning squad and their families on hand to mark the occasion. Providing assists for teammates Nicolas Otamendi and Nico Paz in the second half and converting a 71st-minute penalty with a thunderous shot to the top-right corner, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner ensured that his final 90 minutes in the national shirt had some memorable moments. Messi had announced his retirement from international football on August 31, a little over two months after Argentina's FIFA World Cup 2026 final defeat to Spain in New Jersey. The Argentine Football Association tempted him to make one last appearance for "the farewell he deserves", and thousands of fans turned up at the Estadio Monumental to show their appreciation. The AFA said the match would "transcend sports" and be "full of emotion".

Messi leaves the international stage as the most decorated figure in Argentine football history, having made 207 appearances, scored 126 goals and provided 66 assists, all records for Argentina. His roll of honours includes the Beijing 2008 Olympic gold medal, the FIFA World Cup 2022 title, back-to-back Copa America trophies in 2021 and 2024, and the 2022 Finalissima. He appeared in a record-tying six World Cups alongside his great rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

Ronaldo defers Portugal retirement, seeks apology and 'punishment' for walkout

The 41-year-old Ronaldo left Portugal's Nations League camp last week after being an unused substitute against Norway. He would also find out that he would not start against Denmark. Ronaldo had vowed in a social media post that he would reveal the full picture later, a time which arrived on Instagram on Tuesday night with six slides and an elaborate clarification running nearly 2,000 words. The Portuguese captain stated that he was seeking a "punishment" for leaving the national side abruptly, while stating that coach Jesus "had broken his word twice." Ronaldo accused Jesus of an "absolute breach of trust," first for benching him against Norway despite promising he would play, and then for reneging on an agreement to share a unified story with the media. "The Portuguese Football Federation must assess the consequences of my actions and punish me for them. I believe the punishment should not be reduced," Ronaldo said. "I have already apologised, but I know that actions have consequences."

Jesus claimed that there was no rift between him and Ronaldo, whom he had coached in his previous managerial stint at Al-Nassr in Saudi Arabia. Jesus also affirmed that the five-time Ballon d'Or winner is open to return to the team. Ronaldo said that he was open to continue representing the national side, given that he remained "physically fit, playing with my team, and hopefully scoring goal." "After my suspension period ends, I will be available, as I always have been, to compete and win with our national team," he added. Part relenting, part critical. While Ronaldo observed a relenting tone in parts, he remained critical of Jesus' actions. Ronaldo revealed that under an agreement to manage his playing time, Jesus had said that he would be rested for the matches against Norway and Denmark. However, Ronaldo was told that he would be used for 30 minutes during the Norway game.

"Everyone knows the rest. I warmed up from half-time



onwards, watched the minutes tick by and wasn't called on," Ronaldo said. "The manager had broken his word to me." Ronaldo further claimed that in a later discussion with Jesus, it was agreed that the coach would reveal clarify the issues in a press conference. An eight-point was agreed upon, including statements that Ronaldo had never demanded playing time and respected Jesus' decisions. The coach also made a mistake for asking "someone of the stature of Pele or Maradona" to warm up without bringing him on. Ronaldo said the points never reflecting in Jesus' press conference, making it "the second time" that the coach "had broken his word to me." Previously, Ronaldo had endorsed his former Al-Nassr manager as the "right choice" to take over the Portugal reins. Ronaldo also revealed he came close to retiring from international duty following Portugal's round-of-16 exit at this summer's World Cup. He had already drafted a farewell letter to the supporters, but Portuguese Football Federation president Pedro Proença persuaded him to reconsider during the flight home from the United States. Ronaldo remained apologetic, but reiterated his stance on his sudden exit from the camp. "I owe an apology to my national team teammates for having left the camp... I apologise to the Portuguese people once again, but a broken word has, for me, a defining impact," he wrote.

Messi's farewell speech: 'I don't want to leave, not being with Argentina hurts'

GNS News Agency, Oct 11

Messi had one final chapter of gilded magic left in his boots Tuesday night. In his farewell appearance in an Argentina shirt in a packed El Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires, the 39-year-old produced a goal and two assists to lead the hosts to a 3-0 win over Benin. Emotions, expectedly, ran high. The tears of not wearing the sky-blue and white shirt again and the ecstasy of blasting the ball into the net one final time, nearly conjuring up another free-kick pearler, the Rosario-born superstar had it all one final time. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner, Argentina received a raucous applause in the 10th minute, the number that glittered on the back of his shirt, as it did in another era with Diego Maradona. His international debut 21 years ago against Hungary lasted 90 seconds after a red card. After 90 minutes of passionate football on Tuesday night, Messi capped his career as the second-highest international goal scorer (126) and the most assists (67), the last of which came in the 48th minute as he provided for Nicolas Otamendi.

"I have nothing left to do but thank this shirt. For 20 years, even through the worst moments, I never stopped fighting, pushing forward, giving everything I had and wanting to be here," Messi said in an emotional post-match speech. "Not coming here anymore and no longer being with the Argentina National Team is going to hurt a lot. If it were up to me, I would love to be here for my entire life, because playing for Argentina is the most beautiful thing there is. After the World Cup dream eluded him on four occasions in 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018, Messi and Co. produced a month of superlative football en route to the crown in Qatar in 2022. Messi's men nearly secured a dream title defence earlier this year, only to be stopped at the hurdle against a rugged Spanish contingent. Age or the enduring American heat did not deter Messi until then, having recorded eight goals and four assists. "But I think the time has come for me to retire. The last World Cup took a lot out of us after everything we went through. We arrived in the final with just enough left in us, but we fought until the very end, like we always did. We came very close to winning it again, and despite everything that was said about us, nothing strange happened. The match against England took a lot out of us because we gave absolutely everything." Messi's "Last Tango" was played with members of Argentina's FIFA World Cup 2022-winning squad and their families on hand to mark the occasion. "In 2022, we had the dream of fulfilling not only my dream, but the dream of an entire country: becoming world champions again. And we did it. "We won the World Cup, the Copa America, the Finalissima... I'm incredibly grateful for everything I experienced with this National Team," Messi added.

The Argentina captain hailed the warrior-mindset of his teammates that powered back to world football dominance this decade and helped him fulfill his childhood World Cup



dream. Lionel Messi and his family leave the field at the end of the friendly match against Benin, marking his farewell appearance for the national team, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP Photo/Gustavo Garelo) Lionel Messi and his family leave the field at the end of the friendly match against Benin, marking his farewell appearance for the national team, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP Photo/Gustavo Garelo) "But this journey wasn't only about 2022 or this last World Cup. So many teammates fought alongside me for this shirt long before we finally became world champions. Never doubt how much every one of them fought and gave for Argentina. It was a privilege and an honor to share the pitch with all of my teammates and to share so much of our lives together away from football. Every time we stepped onto the pitch, I knew we could compete against anyone because I had warriors beside me who were willing to leave absolutely everything out there. "To achieve the biggest things, you need a strong group. And it's during the most difficult moments that you truly discover what kind of team you have. That's one of the biggest reasons we were able to achieve everything we did.

"And especially to this group: Thank You. They helped me fulfill the dream I had since I was a child. They helped me become a world champion. "I also want to thank the people. I was lucky enough to play in so many cities across Argentina, and everywhere I went, I received an incredible amount of love. "Here, in this stadium, I experienced one of the happiest days of my life: our first match at home after becoming world champions. It was beautiful. And today might be one of the saddest because I'm standing here saying goodbye. "I'm going to miss all of you so much, but I'll always be on your side. I'll be supporting these boys and everyone who comes after them. Messi also remembered his father, Jorge, who passed away last month. "There are so many emotions today, but the first person I think about is my father." "There are so many emotions going through me right now. I'm surely forgetting many things I would like to say because this is a very difficult moment for me. The first person who comes to my mind is my dad. I'm going to miss playing here so much.

Most goals in international football: Messi ends Argentina career as second highest scorer



Lionel Messi brought the curtains down on his sensational 21-year Argentina career on Tuesday night in Buenos Aires during a 3-0 win over Benin. And in customary Messi fashion, the Argentina talisman did not miss the scoresheet, having secured an assist and converted a penalty to lead a breezy win for the 2026 World Cup runners-up. Messi played

his first game on August 17, 2005, an infamous debut that lasted only 90 seconds after he copped a red card against Hungary.

The 39-year-old ended his career with 126 goals in 207 appearances for the Albiceleste, the second-highest among all men, only behind Cristiano Ronaldo (146). Messi leaves the international stage as the most decorated figure in Argentine football history. His 66 assists, increased by one during his final game, is an all-time record in international football. His roll of honours includes the Beijing 2008 Olympic gold medal, the FIFA World Cup 2022 title, back-to-back Copa America trophies in 2021 and 2024, and the 2022 Finalissima. He appeared in a record-tying six World Cups alongside Ronaldo. At the 2026 edition where Argentina finished runners-up, Messi produced one of his best World Cup campaigns, smashing 8 goals and 4 assists. He finished with 21 goals in his career, the second-highest of all time at the showpiece event, behind Kylian Mbappe.

Naman Dhir had barely bowled in IPL. Then came his 3/31 on India debut

For a player who had bowled just 8.4 overs without a wicket in his IPL career, Naman Dhir could hardly have made a stronger case for his bowling. The Impact Player rule may have reduced his opportunities at Mumbai Indians, but the 26-year-old insisted he was ready. "I've been bowling for a long time. It's not like I've just started. In IPL, yes, there's an impact player rule, so you see me bowling less. But it's not like I haven't bowled, I've bowled a lot and I've had a great experience here too. I've got wickets, I hope I'll keep doing well in the future," he said after taking 3/31 on his T20I debut against West Indies in Lucknow.

"IPL prepares you for international cricket. There's a lot of competition there. So I guess if you're playing IPL with a team like Mumbai Indians, then you're prepared for a big level, so you don't feel so much pressure coming here, as I feel right now," he added. His performance also showed that the lack of bowling in the IPL had not left him short of match practice. Dhir said he has continued to bowl regularly in practice and is comfortable handling different workloads.

"There's an impact player rule in IPL. It's not like I don't practise; I practise there too. It's the same here too. So there's nothing new for me; if I get 4 overs, 2 overs, if I get 6 or 7 overs in one day, there's nothing new for me. It's a normal thing for me, I just have to focus on my plans and try to execute them." Dhir's three wickets came after he watched Axar Patel bowl in the powerplay and felt the slower pace was helping him on the turning pitch. "I saw Axar bhai bowling in the powerplay, so he was bowling a little slow. It was turning. And in my mind, I thought if I bowl a little slow with the wicket gripping, I can get them out. So I just stuck to my basic plans and bowled, and I got good results," he said. There was a personal side to the call-up too. Dhir was at the Ranji



Trophy camp in the PCA when he got the news, having just come off a good tournament for himself and his team. "Obviously, it was a great feeling when I got the call. I was in the Ranji Trophy camp, in PCA, our tournament had just ended, a very good tournament had gone for me, for our team, so it was a surreal feeling. I was with my friends, so right away I called my father, he was emotional; I got a little emotional." "Obviously, every kid has a dream to play for the country, so if you represent the country, if your name is mentioned in the team, it's a big deal, especially, I am from a small town, so especially for me, no one has played from there yet, so it's a big deal for me, it's a big deal for the area around us." Dhir also made it clear that while his batting may get more attention, he has continued to work hard on his bowling. Even if you haven't seen me bowl, but I'm bowling as much as I've come here; I've practised as much as I've come here, so it's not like I'm a batting all-rounder or a bowling all-rounder, yes, my batting is a plus point, but at the same time, I'm working as hard as I'm bowling."

Messi shines in Argentina farewell, ends 21-year career with goal, two assists

After donning Albiceleste colours for one final time, Lionel Messi finally hung up his boots with typical flair and finesse. The 39-year-old brought the curtains down on a glittering international football career as Argentina overcame Benin 3-0 in a friendly at the Estadio Mas Monumental in Buenos Aires on Wednesday. The match, dubbed the Last Tango, saw Messi lead out Argentina one last time in front of a packed house, with members of Argentina's FIFA World Cup 2022-winning squad and their families on hand to mark the occasion. The game paused for a moment in minute 10, the digits that magically sparkled on his shirt over the years.

Providing assists for teammates Nicolas Otamendi and Nico Paz in the second half and converting a 71st-minute penalty with a thunderous shot to the top-right corner, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner ensured that his final 90 minutes in the national shirt had some memorable moments. Messi had announced his retirement from international football on August 31, a little over two months after Argentina's FIFA World Cup 2026 final defeat to Spain in New Jersey. The Argentine Football Association tempted him to make one last appearance for "the farewell he deserves", and thousands of fans turned up at the Estadio Monumental to show their appreciation. The AFA said the



match would "transcend sports" and be "full of emotion". Messi leaves the international stage as the most decorated figure in Argentine football history, having made 207 appearances, scored 126 goals and provided 66 assists, all records for Argentina. His roll of honours includes the Beijing 2008 Olympic gold medal, the FIFA World Cup 2022 title, back-to-back Copa America trophies in 2021 and 2024, and the 2022 Finalissima. He appeared in a record-tying six World Cups alongside his great rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

Shreyas Iyer finds perfect timing for his first T20I century

The last time Shreyas Iyer scored a T20I half-century before Tuesday was nearly three months ago — an unbeaten 80 against England at Bristol. Since then, he had not crossed 30 in 10 matches, with India's top three often taking the pressure off him. Chasing 172, Iyer walked in with India 35/2. India had lost both openers inside the first 21 balls. Roston Chase and Akeal Hosein had found early rhythm with the ball. Iyer absorbed the early pressure before turning the game decisively in India's favour.

The opening came in the sixth over. Shamar Joseph needed to build on the spinners' start. Instead, he gave Iyer and India a release. He conceded 12 runs as Iyer went aerial over cover before repeating the treatment against Romario Shepherd. The West Indies kept bowling outside off, but on a pitch offering little movement, Iyer was able to free his arms and find the gaps.

It forced the bowlers to go short. That had been regarded as a weakness in Iyer's game. On Tuesday, he repeatedly brought out the pull against the rising delivery and found success. He reached his fifty in 28 balls, but the acceleration was only beginning. After seeing off the pacers, Iyer turned his attention to spin. Hosein was brought back in the 13th over and Iyer gave himself room before launching him over extra cover. The next over brought an assault on Forde, as Iyer struck two sixes before pulling another delivery over the boundary. He was given a reprieve when Joseph could not hold on to a miscued shot towards long-on. He reached his maiden T20I hundred with a six before India completed the chase in just 14.4 overs.

Kishan's role At the other end, Ishan Kishan found himself playing a different role. Walking in at No.3, he did not try to match Iyer's aggression. Instead, he played the perfect

supporting act, rotating the strike and waiting for opportunities to attack. His first boundary came when he went back to a slightly short delivery from Chase and whipped it through the leg side. Against Joseph, he then found the boundary through cover before taking advantage of another hit-me delivery from the pacer. He pulled Shepherd for a boundary and later cut Hosein through the off side, while his running kept the chase moving. Walking in at No.3, Kishan did not try to match Iyer's aggression. Instead, he played the perfect supporting act, rotating the strike and waiting for opportunities to attack. (Express photo by Vishal Srivastav) Walking in at No.3, Kishan did not try to match Iyer's aggression. Instead, he played the perfect supporting act, rotating the strike and waiting for opportunities to attack. (Express photo by Vishal Srivastav) There was one moment of drama when Kishan miscued a full toss towards deep cover. Forde appeared to have taken the catch, but the TV umpire ruled that the ball had touched the ground. By then, however, the partnership had taken complete control. Kishan stayed unbeaten as he and Iyer added 137 for the third wicket, allowing India to race home with 32 balls to spare. Earlier, India's spin trio did the heavy lifting after the West Indies threatened to set a daunting score in good batting conditions. After Arshdeep Singh and Mayank Yadav failed to hit their straps early, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav and Naman Dhir combined to take seven wickets for 90 runs, recovering from a middle-overs assault by Shai Hope and Sherfane Rutherford to keep the total manageable. After Shimron Hetmyer was run out, Axar dismissed Rovman Powell for ought to leave the West Indies 44/3 after six overs. But Hope and Rutherford then shifted the momentum, taking on Kuldeep and forcing Iyer to look elsewhere.

‘Damaged my cafe, took cash’: Bigg Boss’ Archana Gautam shares CCTV footage



Bigg Boss 16 fame Archana Gautam shared CCTV footage of a man allegedly robbing the cash counter of her Mumbai cafe and urged the Mumbai Police to take action, while asking her fans and followers to remain vigilant. Archana opened the cafe in 2025. Archana Gautam shared a long post on her Instagram page and wrote, “This man comes to my café and takes away the entire cash counter. I just don’t understand what I have ever done to him. Of all the cafés in Mumbai, did he really have to steal from only mine? I have never heard about a theft in Mumbai. And this person has no fear of Mumbai Police. He damaged my café and took away the cash counter. I am uploading this video so that even you guys know that Mumbai has thieves.”

Archana Gautam Archana Gautam shared the CCTV footage on her Instagram and wrote this caption. Archana further stated that she built this cafe with her hard-earned money and wrote, “Sharing with you all this CCTV footage of theft in my cafe @oye_churros Mumbai, so that you too stay alert and take care of the security of your home and business. I have made this cafe with lots of love and hard work, with my deposit. Each thing I have attached to hard work myself. But a thief entered my cafe and picked up the whole cash counter.” The 31-year-old added that she has already filed an FIR. “I have filed an FIR of this case and request Mumbai Police to search for this person as soon as possible and take proper legal action. Mumbai has always felt like a safe city to me, so this incident has made me very sad. All of you are requested to be alert, stay safe and take care of the safety around you,” read her post. She shared an update on her Instagram story, stating that the robbery had taken place between 5 AM – 6 AM on Tuesday, October 6. Archana Gautam Archana Gautam shared that the alleged robbery took place early morning on Tuesday. Riddhima Pandit, Bebika Dhurve, Sara Arfeen Khan were among the few celebrities, who expressed shock over this incident, and also comforted Archana Gautam through their comments on her Instagram post. Riddhima Pandit, Bebika Dhurve Riddhima Pandit and Bebika Dhurve express shock over the alleged robbery. Speaking about Archana Gautam, her claim to fame was the reality show, Bigg Boss 16. Post which, she participated in Rohit Shetty’s adventurous show, Khatron Ke Khiladi 13, and was also a contestant on Celebrity Master Chef. The reality show personality is currently seen in Bharti Singh and Haarsh Limbachiya’s, The Indian Game Show. She also attended the celebration bash of Avinash Mishra’s Khatron Ke Khiladi 15 win, held on October 6.

Kiara Advani, Sidharth Malhotra announce second pregnancy: ‘Blessed once again’

Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra have officially announced that they are expecting their second child. The announcement was made on October 7, 2026, through a joint Instagram post. Kiara shared the happy news on Instagram, writing, “Blessed once again with the greatest gift of all??

Our hearts are so full of love and gratitude ????????.” The announcement was met with an outpouring of love and congratulatory messages from friends and members of the film industry. Kareena Kapoor Khan reacted to the news by saying, “Mommy and Daddy again yayyy?????” Karan Johar reacted to the post with a series of heart emojis and wrote, “Love love you”, while Athiya Shetty also left a heart in the comments. Rhea Kapoor congratulated the couple, and designer Manish Malhotra and actor Bhumi Pednekar were among others who sent their love and best wishes. Sidharth Malhotra recently opened up about fatherhood during his appearance on Bigg Boss 20, calling it “the best role possible” and speaking fondly about his daughter Saraayah, who was around 15 months old at the time. Salman Khan then jokingly told him, “Hopefully you will have another one soon,” prompting Sidharth to turn the conversation around and ask Salman about his thoughts on marriage and having children. Salman replied that he has “very good” thoughts on marriage and kids but chose not to



share more about his personal views. Kiara and Sidharth, who got married in an intimate ceremony in Rajasthan in February 2023, have continued to keep their personal life largely private. Kiara Advani and her husband, Sidharth Malhotra, welcomed their first child, a baby girl named Saraayah Malhotra, on July 15, 2025.

Neem Karoli Baba film earns just Rs 20 lakh less than The Vvaan on 9th Tuesday



Hanuman Ansh box office collection day 61: Neem Karoli Baba biopic earns just Rs 20 lakh less than Sidharth Malhotra’s The Vvaan: Force of the Forrest. Hanuman Ansh box office collection day 61: Neem Karoli Baba biopic earns just Rs 20 lakh less than Sidharth Malhotra’s The Vvaan: Force of the Forrest. Hanuman Ansh box office collection day 61: Vishal Chaturvedi’s devotional film Hanuman Ansh, which features Shobhinaw Satyaa as revered spiritual guru Neem Karoli Baba, continues to hold its own in front of new releases even in its ninth week at the domestic box office. While its daily earnings pale in comparison to Ajay Devgn-starrer crime thriller Drishyam 3, it’s on the verge of surpassing those of the holdover release — Sidharth Malhotra-starrer action adventure fantasy film The Vvaan: Force of the Forrest. After over 60 days, Hanuman Ansh has earned Rs 385.62 crore gross and Rs 326.48 crore net in India, and Rs 425.52 crore worldwide. Hanuman Ansh box office collection — Week 9 On its ninth Tuesday (day 61), Hanuman Ansh took advantage of the discounted ticket prices to get back into the Rs 1 crore range. It garnered exactly Rs 1 crore from 1570 screens, a 33.33% growth from its ninth Monday (day 60) collection of Rs 75 lakh from 1475 screens. That was, in fact, the first time in 41 days of its historic box office run that the film’s daily earnings went below the Rs 1 crore mark. Ever since Day 18, Hanuman Ansh has been consistently earning more than Rs 1 crore every day, all the way till day 59. It finally fell below that threshold on its ninth Monday, owing to massive competition from Abhishek Pathak’s Drishyam 3, which amassed Rs 21 crore from over

16,000 shows on its first Monday, as per Sacnilk. However, despite the competition, Hanuman Ansh has managed to secure around 1500 screens even in its ninth week. Its ninth weekend is testimony to its enduring appeal, since the film collected Rs 3 crore on Sunday (day 59), Rs 2.10 crore on Saturday (day 58), and Rs 2.25 crore on Friday (day 57), which was a holiday on the occasion of October 2, celebrated as Gandhi Jayanti. The impact of Hanuman Ansh is not limited to only the box office, but also the cultural ethos of Indian society. Nainital District Magistrate Lalit Mohan told The Indian Express earlier this week that partly owing to the film, daily visitors have increased by 10,000 over this past long weekend at Kainchi Dham, the spiritual site associated with Neem Karoli Baba in Uttarakhand, prompting the district management to devise an alternate route to avoid congestion. Made on a modest budget of Rs 2 crore, Hanuman Ansh has now earned almost 213 times at the worldwide box office. It initially opened at just Rs 25 lakh on August 7 and collected Rs 1.10 crore in its opening week at the domestic box office. However, following the upsurge in week 3, the weekly collections kept multiplying. After over two months at the domestic box office, with no streaming premiere in sight, Hanuman Ansh is just a couple of crores away from surpassing the domestic box office collection of Sunny Deol and Varun Dhawan-starrer period war drama Border 2 (Rs 329.70 crore) to become the second highest grossing Indian film this year, after Ranveer Singh-starrer spy thriller Dhurandhar 2: The Revenge (Rs 1108.90 crore). Hanuman Ansh was released internationally by Hom bale Films over a month after its domestic release on September 11. Since then, it’s collected Rs 39.90 crore at the overseas box office in less than a month. Its dubbed Telugu version is slated to release in cinemas this Friday on October 9, which may further complement its unprecedented box office run. Vvaan box office collection day 12 Meanwhile, the holdover release from a couple of weeks ago (September 25), Deepak Kumar Mishra’s The Vvaan: Force of the Forrest has also been impacted by the Drishyam 3 wave. It collected Rs 1.20 crore from 1990 screens on its second Tuesday (day 12), benefitting from discounted ticket prices, to register a 26.30% growth from its second Monday (day 11) earnings of Rs 95 lakh. That’s also the first instance when Vvaan went below the daily earnings mark of Rs 1 crore so far. Over its second weekend, it earned Rs 3.25 crore on Sunday (day 10), Rs 2 crore on Saturday (day 9), and Rs 3.25 crore on Friday (day 8) at the domestic box office. Its opening week’s cumulative earnings stand at Rs 53.60 crore in India. Thus, the total box office collection of Vvaan now adds up to Rs 76.30 crore net and Rs 64.25 crore gross in India. It has collected Rs 7.20 crore internationally, which makes its worldwide gross earnings go up to Rs 83.50 crore. Given the current trajectory, Vvaan needs to pick up pace if it aspires to cross the coveted Rs 100 crore mark in India, or even globally.

Qazi Touqeer not exiting Bigg Boss 20, team dismisses eviction rumors: ‘Stay calm, keep faith’



Singer Qazi Touqeer has been the most talked-about contestant on Bigg Boss 20. From the start of the season, the audience has found Qazi entertaining. While Qazi appears to be a strong contender on the show, rumors suggest the singer had to exit Bigg Boss 20 for health reasons. On Monday, several social media pages reported that Qazi was evicted from the Salman Khan-hosted show after being diagnosed with dengue. However, his team has dismissed the rumors and also shared an update on his health. Qazi Touqeer’s team reacts to exit rumors

While a few reports on social media said that Qazi had left the Bigg Boss 20 house for a few days since he was unwell, Qazi’s team issued an official statement saying he was still inside the house. His team said in the statement, “A heartfelt update for the Qazi family. Our rockstar Qazi has been dealing with fever for the past few days inside the Bigg Boss house and has been taking some much-needed rest whenever he gets the chance. Recently, he was feeling a little low on energy and was taken to the medical room, where he was examined by the doctor. He continues to be inside the Bigg Boss house, and we remain in touch with the BB team regarding his well-being.” Our Rockstar Qazi has been dealing with fever for the past few days inside the Bigg Boss house and has been taking some much-needed rest whenever he gets the chance. Recently, he was feeling a little low on energy and was taken to the medical room, where he was examined by the doctor. He continues to be inside the Bigg Boss house, and we remain in touch with the BB

team regarding his well-being. Even while taking it a little easy, Qazi continues to participate, entertain everyone and bring his infectious positivity to the house. That’s our Rockstar! We request everyone to stay calm, keep faith and continue showering Qazi with your love, prayers and positive energy. ?We’ll keep you updated, and once he’s feeling completely back to himself, we know our most energetic Rockstar will be back with his full aura and unstoppable energy! ??

The statement further added, “Even while taking it a little easy, Qazi continues to participate, entertain everyone, and bring his infectious positivity to the house. That’s our rockstar. We request everyone to stay calm, keep faith, and continue showering Qazi with your love, prayers, and positive energy. We’ll keep you updated, and once he’s feeling completely back to himself, we know our most energetic Rockstar will be back with his full aura and unstoppable energy! Until then, keep supporting him and keep the love coming. Rest. Recover. And roar back, Rockstar! We’re all with you. Team Qazi.”

In previous seasons, Pranit More, Abhishek Malhan, Sidharth Shukla, and Paras Chhabra have also been through similar situations. They had to exit the show for a few days and return after recovering. In the last few episodes, Qazi has been appearing unwell; in fact, in the live feed, contestants were seen discussing how Qazi is faking his illness again. Captain Udit Singh was seen forcing Qazi to do his duties; while the singer showed her his medical reports, she asked him to continue with the chores. Eventually, Bigg Boss had to intervene and tell Udit that Qazi is not in a condition to do his duties.

On the latest episode of Bigg Boss 20, Qazi appeared to have some mood swings, while he got into arguments with Scout OP and Aman Gandhi; the singer cried over Arishfa’s sweet gesture for him. Qazi has called Arishfa his daughter on the show, and the two have not been talking for a few days. While Qazi and Mahhi Vij have been singled out, on Tuesday, Qazi got emotional while talking to Mahhi, expressing how he was hurt by Arishfa’s behavior. After the nomination task, while contestants were preparing lunch, Qazi urgently needed to eat something. He requested Aamrapali to give him some food, even if it was a leftover from the previous day. Arishfa, who overheard the conversation, gave her bowl of vegetables to Qazi. Her gesture left Qazi very emotional. He told Mahhi the entire incident and said, “The girl did this for me; I still didn’t speak to her. No one has asked me yet how I am feeling, and I am really hurt by her. I treated her like a younger sister.” As per the latest promo, tonight Qazi and Scout OP will get into a huge argument; things will escalate into the two also pushing one another.

Legendary actor won Oscar for debut role in On the Waterfront

Eva Marie Saint, the pale, willowy actor who won an Academy Award for her first movie, On the Waterfront, and starred opposite Cary Grant in the Alfred Hitchcock thriller North by Northwest, has died. She was 102. Saint, whose acting work lasted well into her 90s, died at her home in Los Angeles on Tuesday, confirmed family representative Jeff Sanderson. Saint had one of the most spectacular debuts in Hollywood history, as the love interest of Marlon Brando’s tormented Terry Malloy in On the Waterfront, and her first trip to the Academy Awards was memorable too. Pregnant with her first child, Saint accepted her Oscar from Frank Sinatra and smilingly murmured a unique winner’s speech: I think I may have the baby right here. (Her son, Darrell, was born two days later.)

The award for the 1954 classic made her an instant star, but she soon astonished Hollywood with a firm independence that would mark her career. She refused offers of studio contracts and declined chances to follow up on her great success, explaining that she was taking time off to become acquainted with her new son. (A daughter, Laurette, was born in 1958.) In her first decade in Hollywood, Saint appeared in a mere seven films. She declined such top-level productions as The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit with Gregory Peck, Summer and Smoke with Laurence Harvey, and The Rainmaker with Burt Lancaster. She credited her husband, TV and stage director Jeffrey Hayden, with persuading her to star in Hitchcock’s North by Northwest, the classic 1959 thriller in which Saint plays a spy who seduces Grant, but ends up falling for him. Cary Grant and Eva Marie Saint in North by Northwest. Cary Grant and Eva Marie Saint in North by Northwest.

“I vividly remember him saying, ‘Honey, I think you should find a quiet spot. I’ll take care of the children and I want you to really think about this and reread this script,’” she told Vanity Fair in 2014. “He was so right. And that’s what husbands are for.” Instead of being put off by her selectivity, studios continued offering her starring roles in such films as Exodus (with Newman), Raintree County (Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift), and All Fall Down with Warren Beatty. She turned more to television in the 1970s and enjoyed renewed popularity in the 1980s as the mother of Cybill Shepherd in the hit sitcom Moonlighting and as Tom Hanks’ mother in the comedy Nothing in Common. She won an Emmy for the 1990 miniseries People Like Us, and had roles in such 21st century movies as Because of Winn-Dixie, Superman Returns, and Winter’s Tale, adapted from Mark Helprin’s novel of the same name. In 2021, she played Marisa Tomei’s aunt in the brief audio play The Bus Ride, part of The Pack Podcast. When Saint emerged in the public consciousness, many believed her theatrical-sounding name must have been invented. She was born with it on July 4, 1924, in Newark, New Jersey. The family moved to Delmar, a small town near Albany, New York, where her father was a Goodrich Rubber Co. manager. Eva’s goal was to become a third-grade teacher like her mother, but at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, she tried out for a play and won the leading role.

After graduation, she lived with her parents and began hunting for acting jobs in Manhattan. After a fruitless year, she landed a two-line role as a telephone operator on a radio drama, and was soon working steadily on soap operas and nighttime dramas, appearing for two years as Claudia on One Man’s Family. Network television was booming in the early 1950s, and her looks and dramatic sense made her a favorite with casting people and producers. A critical turn in Saint’s career came when she auditioned before Elia Kazan, and was accepted into the Actors Studio, which shaped a generation of method-actor stars. She credited acting coach Lee Strasberg with helping her overcome her shyness. “Lee



Strasberg, when he got to know me a little bit, gave me a scene to do where I had to cry in front of my peers,” she told The Santa Barbara Independent in 2009. “I worried about it, I worked on it, I tried to use what I was learning at the studio. I finally did the scene, and I cried, and my peers were crying with me. It was just an incredible moment for me.” Saint was rejected for the single female role in the play Mister Roberts, but was hired to understudy the actor chosen, Jocelyn Brando, Marlon’s sister. In six frustrating months Saint never got to substitute for Brando. She finally made it to Broadway in A Trip to Bountiful, which she had played on television. Kazan invited her to try out for the female lead in On the Waterfront by improvising a scene with Brando. She was told to try to stop a young man from entering her apartment. She told the Los Angeles Times in 2001: “All I know is that Marlon got in the door and turned on the music. We started dancing. He flicked my skirt. Kazan saw the sparks fly, and that’s how I got the part.”

Arijit Singh marks 20 years in music with stadium-scale India tour

Mumbai: Playback singer Arijit Singh, who has completed two decades in the music industry, has announced a nine-city, stadium-scale India tour from January to May 2027 to celebrate his 20 years in music.

The tour will cover Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Mumbai, Bengaluru, New Delhi, Pune, Indore and Hyderabad. Talking about the tour, Arijit said in a statement, “20 years of music is a journey I feel very grateful for. The greatest part of it has always been the people, the listeners who have given these songs a life of their own.”

He added, “I’m really looking forward to travelling across India and experiencing that love together, live on stage. There are so many songs, so many memories and so many people to meet. I can’t wait.”

The experience will feature 360-degree spatial audio, kinetic LED fixtures, panoramic screens, laser arrays and stadium-scale pyrotechnics, with a live production designed to immerse fans in the experience. Mohit Bijlani, Founder, Team Innovation, said, “We take immense pride in presenting a nationwide tour of this magnitude to audiences across the country. Bringing India’s most loved voice to so many cities is a deeply meaningful milestone for our team. It is a genuine tribute to an extraordinary musical legacy, and we are thrilled to create an unprecedented live event. Every single detail of this journey is being designed to world-class standards, offering fans a live experience at a scale never seen before in his home country.”