

"The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him."



THE MILAN EXPRESS

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

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MEA Calls for 'Mutual Respect' Amid Row Over Meloni Remarks

Milan Express

New Delhi. The Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday stressed the importance of mutual respect and diplomatic understanding while referring to India's strong and expanding relationship with Italy, following remarks made during a recent Congress event involving party leader Rahul Gandhi. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was responding to questions about comments made at an event attended by Rahul Gandhi. During the programme, Gandhi appeared to mock Prime Minister Narendra Modi's diplomatic style by imitating a hug. Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit, who joined him in the gesture, also referred to Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in a jibe at the Prime Minister. Without directly commenting on the political exchange, Jaiswal highlighted the importance of India's relationship with Italy. "We have strong relations with Italy. In recent years, our relations with Italy have expanded and strengthened in every way," Jaiswal said. He emphasised that diplomatic engagement should be based on mutual consideration and respect, adding that maintaining such understanding between the two sides was important for further strengthening bilateral ties. The remarks came amid continued political debate over the nature of Prime Minister Modi's international engagements and his personal rapport with foreign leaders. The MEA reiterated that India's diplomatic relationships are guided by mutual respect and a broader understanding between partner countries.

Bihar Cooperative Department Clerk Tushar Kumar Wins Bronze at Commonwealth

Milan Express

Patna. Tushar Kumar, a clerk with the Bihar Government's Cooperation Department, has brought laurels to the state and the country by winning a bronze medal at the Senior Commonwealth Fencing Championship-2026 in Lagos, Nigeria. Kumar secured the bronze medal as a member of the Indian men's foil team at the prestigious championship. His achievement has been widely appreciated by officials and employees of the Cooperation Department. Cooperation Minister Ramkripal Yadav congratulated Kumar and extended his best wishes, saying the achievement was the result of his hard work, dedication and continuous practice. The minister said that a member of the Cooperation Department had demonstrated exceptional sporting talent and enhanced the pride of Bihar and the country. He described the achievement as a matter of great pride and happiness for the entire department and expressed confidence that Kumar would continue to bring recognition to Bihar and India through his performances. Cooperation Department Secretary Dharmendra Singh and Registrar, Cooperative Societies, Rajnish Kumar Singh also congratulated Kumar and wished him greater success in future competitions. Officers and employees of the department expressed happiness over the achievement and wished Kumar a bright future. They expressed hope that he would continue to deliver strong performances for the country in upcoming international competitions.

If Congress Had Stood Firm in 1947, India Would Not Have Been Partitioned: Yogi

Milan Express

Ayodhya. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday launched a sharp attack on the Congress and Samajwadi Party, saying India's Partition could have been avoided had the Congress stood firm in 1947. He also claimed that if a Prime Minister like Narendra Modi had been in office at the time, the large-scale killings of Hindus during Partition would not have taken place. Speaking at a programme organised at Digambar Akhara on the 23rd death anniversary of Paramhans Ramchandra Das Maharaj, Yogi paid tribute to the late seer on behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government and devotees of Lord Ram. The Chief Minister recalled Paramhans Ramchandra Das Maharaj's contribution to the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, saying that construction of a grand temple dedicated to Lord Ram in Ayodhya was the central mission of his life. He said Maharaj remained devoted to the Ram Janmabhoomi movement from 1949 until his death.

Government Undertaking Major Reforms to Make Examinations Reliable: President

Milan Express

New Delhi. President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said public examinations open doors of opportunity for students and the government is undertaking comprehensive reforms to make the examination system more transparent, secure and reliable for the country's youth while curbing the use of unfair means. In her address to the nation on the eve of the 80th Independence Day, President Murmu described students as the builders of India's future. She said that just as national security requires unity between the government and society, safeguarding the present and future of students also requires collective efforts. She said government initiatives and new economic activities were

creating employment and growth opportunities for young people across various sectors. She urged youth to identify these opportunities and explore new avenues for success. Emphasising that the physical and mental well-being of young people is fundamental to the country's future, she called upon families and society to provide a supportive environment for their growth. The President said sports were being promoted as an important means of youth development and nation-building. Under the 'Khelo India' programme, infrastructure and support systems for sports are being developed from the grassroots to the national level. Increased



women won eight of India's 13 gold medals at the recently concluded Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. The President said more than 100 million women are associated with self-help groups and the target of making three crore women 'Lakshmi Didi' has already been achieved. The country is now moving towards creating another three crore Lakshmi Didis. Women account for nearly two-thirds of beneficiaries under the MUDRA scheme. She said women's leadership is also expanding alongside their economic empowerment. The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, passed in 2023, provides for 33 per cent reservation for women

in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies, which she said would make democracy more inclusive. Highlighting India's demographic strength, Murmu said nearly 65 per cent of the country's population is below 35 years of age. She described this youthful population as India's most valuable asset and said the participation of young entrepreneurs has helped build a strong startup ecosystem. The President also called for greater sensitivity towards senior citizens. She noted that around six crore people aged 70 years and above are eligible for free healthcare coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh annually. She said preserving the dignity and sense of belonging of senior citizens is a responsibility shared by the entire society.



Heartfelt greetings to all fellow citizens on the 80th Independence Day



“

I extend my best wishes to all of you on this great festival of Independence. There's only one mantra for 140 crore Indians - Viksit Bharat. To build a Viksit Bharat, we will neither stop nor bow down, and we will build a Viksit Bharat in 2047.

— Narendra Modi ”

Live telecast of the Independence Day celebrations from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Doordarshan Network from 6:30 AM onwards.

Tricolour Embodies India's Unity, Integrity and Pride; Make 'Har Ghar Tiranga' a Mass Movement: CM Samrat Choudhary

Patna, (Agency): Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Friday led a grand Tiranga Yatra in Haveli Kharagpur of Munger district under the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign, calling upon people to make the initiative a mass movement and describing the national flag as a symbol of the country's unity, integrity and pride.

The procession began from Ambedkar Chowk and concluded at Patel Chowk. Bihar government ministers, legislators, members of the Legislative Council, school students, social and political workers and a large number of local residents participated enthusiastically in the march. Haveli Kharagpur



was immersed in a patriotic atmosphere as the procession made its way through the town. Participants carried the Tricolour and raised slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. Patriotic music, the sound of drums and spirited slogans filled the air, while people waved the national flag and expressed their

nation, patriotic spirit and the feeling of national unity among citizens.

The Chief Minister appealed to people to make Har Ghar Tiranga a campaign involving every section of society. He said the national flag binds citizens together and reminds them of their responsibilities towards the nation.

During the Tiranga Yatra, Choudhary paid floral tributes to several eminent personalities. At Nandalal Bose Chowk, he offered flowers at the statue of renowned artist Nandalal Bose. At Ambedkar Chowk, he paid tribute to Dr BR Ambedkar, while at Patel Chowk he paid homage to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Partition Was a Deep Wound Inflicted on Mother India for Political Gain; Its Pain Can Never Be Forgotten: Sanjay Sarawagi

Patna, (Agency): The Bihar unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) organised a tribute and remembrance programme at its state headquarters in Patna on Friday to mark Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, paying homage to the countless innocent people who lost their lives or endured the unbearable pain of displacement during the Partition of India in 1947.

BJP Bihar president Sanjay Sarawagi, state organisation general secretary Bhikhubhai Dalsania and several senior party leaders, ministers, office-bearers and a large number of party workers attended the programme.

Addressing the gathering, Sarawagi said August 14 represented one of the darkest chapters in Indian history, when a line of



Partition was drawn across the country for political interests and the pursuit of power. "Partition was not merely a line drawn on a map. It was like a dagger that cut through the lives of millions of people and families, forcing them to leave behind their ancestral lands, homes, businesses and memories and embark on unfamiliar journeys," he said. He said women and children endured unimaginable suffering during the

Horrors Remembrance Day had brought the suffering of millions of victims back into public discourse. He said Partition Horrors Remembrance Day has been observed across the country since August 14, 2021. Its objective was not merely to remember the past but also to make future generations understand the enormous price a nation and society can pay when political interests take precedence over national interest. The BJP state president said the ideological journey of the party had begun with the resolve for an undivided India and the principle of "Nation First". Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya had inspired people to attach the highest importance to national unity and integrity, he said.

CM Samrat Choudhary Meets Nitish Kumar in Patna, Political Circles Abuzz Over Courtesy Visit

Patna, (Agency): Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Friday met former chief minister and Janata Dal (United) national president Nitish Kumar at his residence in Patna.

The meeting took place a day after Nitish Kumar returned to Patna following his participation in the Monsoon Session of Parliament. It was the first meeting between Choudhary and Kumar since the former chief minister returned to the state capital.

Sharing details of the meeting on social media, Choudhary described it as a courtesy meeting with former Bihar chief minister



Nitish Kumar. JD(U) national working president and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Jha was also present during the meeting. Choudhary's visit to Kumar's residence soon after the latter's return to Patna is being viewed as politically significant and has triggered fresh discussions in Bihar's political circles.

Tiranga Yatra Led by Union Minister Nityanand Rai Highlights Patriotism, National Unity and the Vision of a Strong India

Patna, (Agency): A grand Tiranga Yatra was taken out on Friday from the Mohiuddinagar Assembly constituency to the Morwa Assembly constituency in the Ujjainpur Lok Sabha constituency under the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign. The procession was led by Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, with a large number of party workers, youngsters and patriotic citizens participating on motorcycles. Participants carried the Tricolour and raised patriotic slogans throughout the route. The atmosphere reverberated with chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and

"Vande Mataram", while people in large numbers joined the procession carrying the national flag.

Addressing participants, Nityanand Rai said the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign, launched on the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had emerged as a powerful movement of public participation. The campaign, he said, was helping take the spirit of patriotism, national unity and integrity to every section of society.

He said people from all sections were enthusiastically associating themselves with the campaign out of respect for the Tricolour and



a sense of national pride. The Tricolour was not merely a flag representing three colours, he said, but a symbol of the heartbeat, honour, pride and self-respect of Indians, as well as an eternal reminder of the sacrifices made by the country's brave soldiers and freedom fighters.

The Union minister said national festivals not only strengthen the unity and integrity of the country but also provide an opportunity for citizens to remember their responsibilities towards the nation.

State BJP general secretary Dhanraj Sharma, Samastipur West district president Shashidhar Jha, Mohiuddinagar MLA Rajesh Singh, Rosera MLA Virendra Singh and Legislative Council member Tarun Singh were among those who participated in the Tiranga Yatra along with a large number of party workers and local residents.

Bihar Police Officers, Personnel Among 18 Chosen for Gallantry and President's Police Medals Ahead of Independence Day

Patna, (Agency): A day ahead of Independence Day, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs announced the names of police officers and personnel selected for various police medals across the country. Eighteen officers and personnel from the Bihar Police have been chosen for honours in different categories this year.

Among those selected are a police station in-charge from Patna for the Police Medal for Gallantry, while a woman IPS officer and an Inspector General (IG) have been chosen for the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

The awards will be presented on the occasion of Independence Day in recognition of outstanding courage, distinguished service and dedication to duty.

The selection of the 18 Bihar Police personnel has brought recognition to officers and members of the force who have demonstrated exceptional commitment in maintaining law and order and serving the public.

The gallantry award to the Patna police station in-charge recognises his courage and exemplary conduct in the line of duty.

Prohibition Has Brought Several Positive Changes to Society; Swift Action Assured on Bharata Tiwari Case: Bijendra Prasad Yadav

Patna, (Agency): Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Bijendra Prasad Yadav on Friday said the state government had decided to provide a government job and financial assistance to a family member of Bharata Tiwari, based on the interim report of a judicial inquiry commission constituted to investigate the case. He also assured that lawful action would be taken against officials found involved in the incident.

Yadav was speaking to reporters after participating in a public grievance hearing organised at the Janata Dal (United) office in Patna. He said the government had



constituted a judicial inquiry commission headed by a retired judge to investigate the Bharata Tiwari case. Based on the commission's interim findings, the government had taken the decision to provide employment and financial assistance to a member of the affected family.

sumption and the National Democratic Alliance government's policy on prohibition was clear.

"Several positive changes have been witnessed in society since prohibition was implemented," he said, adding that continuous action was being taken against those violating the law and such enforcement would continue in the future.

State minister Jama Khan, who was also present at the programme, criticised Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejaswini Yadav, alleging that he was not serious about Bihar and was failing to discharge his responsibilities as Leader of the Opposition.

CM Samrat Choudhary Hoists Tricolour at Loksevak Residence, Urges People to Share Pictures on Social Media



Patna, (Agency): Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Friday hoisted the national flag at the Loksevak Residence in Patna as part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign ahead of Independence Day. He paid tribute to the immortal martyrs and freedom fighters who made the supreme sacrifice for the country.

Moving Honda Car Catches Fire in Patna, Three Including Child Escape Unhurt; Locals Battle Flames for 20 Minutes

Patna, (Agency): A moving Honda car caught fire suddenly in Patna's Shrikrishnapuri police station area on Friday, triggering panic among local residents. Three people, including a child, were travelling in the vehicle when flames erupted from the bonnet.

The incident occurred near the corner of Santushti Gali. According to the car owner and driver, businessman Dharmesh Kumar, smoke was first noticed coming from the front section of the engine. He immediately stopped the vehicle and stepped out to inspect it. Within moments, flames began rising from beneath the bonnet.

There were three occupants in the car at the time of the incident, including a child. Seeing the flames, nearby residents rushed to the spot and immediately helped all three occupants get out of the vehicle safely.

Locals Use Utensils and Water Pipes to Douse Flames



After the fire broke out, local residents began efforts to extinguish it without waiting for emergency assistance. People used whatever

started directing a strong stream of water from his home's motor pipe towards the car.

After around 20 minutes of sustained efforts, the residents managed to bring the fire under control.

A fire brigade vehicle subsequently reached the spot. The fire caused extensive damage to the car's engine and other components.

Meanwhile, the owner of a house adjacent to the spot

Public Notification Regarding Energization

Auxiliary Transformers of E.I. Huts at Pirpanti station yard

Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines and premises situated on the completed sections of the undernoted section of Eastern Railway that the 25000 Volt, 50 Hz AC overhead traction wire will be energized on or after 31.08.2026. On and from 31.08.2026, the overhead traction line shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line.

Energisation of Auxiliary Transformers of E.I. Huts at Pirpanti Station Yard of Malda Division of Eastern Railway:

Sl. No.	Loc.No/Km	Date of Energisation
1.	Loc. No. AT-253/2X (CH : 253/54.50) (Down Line)	31.08.2026
2.	Loc. No. AT-254/17X (CH : 254/301) (Up Line)	
3.	Loc. No. AT-256/10X (CH : 256/286) (Down Line)	
4.	Loc. No. AT-PPT/1013X (CH : 256/454) (Common Loop Line)	

Chief Electrical Engineer/Con

EASTERN RAILWAY

BRIEF

Massive Tricolour March in Bihpur Resonates with 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'



Milan Express Bhagalpur: A grand Tricolour march was organised in Bihpur block on Friday under the leadership of Bihar Road Construction Minister and local MLA Engineer Shailendra, turning the area into a vibrant display of patriotism. The nearly 2.25-km march began at SD College, Gauripur, and concluded at the premises of Vaishnavi Durga Temple in Babhangama. Participants proudly carried the national flag and raised spirited slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Vande Mataram'. Patriotic songs played throughout the route further added to the festive atmosphere. Administrative officials, school-children, teachers, Jeevika Didi members, NCC cadets, political party workers and a large number of local residents participated enthusiastically in the march. Addressing the gathering, Minister Shailendra said, "The Tricolour is not merely a piece of cloth; it is a symbol of the honour, pride and glory of our nation." He urged citizens to hoist the national flag at their homes and uphold the country's dignity and national pride. SP Vaibhav Sharma said the Tricolour march was not merely a campaign but a collective expression of respect, pride, duty and responsibility towards the nation. He added that such programmes strengthen the spirit of patriotism among the younger generation. The event was attended by DCLR Shailendra Singh, officiating Vice-Chancellor Prof. (Dr.) Ranjana Jha, SD College Bhagalpur Principal Prof. (Dr.) Arvind Singh, Gauripur SD College Principal Phananjay Mishra, SDPO Aniket Amar, BDO Abhinav Bharti and CO Aditi Ranjan. Inspector Mahesh Kumar Singh, Bihpur SHO Santosh Sharma, Jhandaapour SHO Prashant Kumar, programme coordinator Prabhunandan Chaudhary, Prof. Gautam, Ajay Singh, Mukesh Rana, Arun Singh, Prof. Prema Priyadarshini, Prof. Usha Mishra and Kundan Kumar were also present, along with a large number of teachers, parents and local residents.

Youth Shot Dead After Leaving Temple, Body Found in Bamboo Grove

Milan Express Bhagalpur: A 30-year-old man was allegedly shot dead by unidentified assailants in Dauniya Tola under Navgachhia police station area late Thursday evening. The body of Rahul Rai, son of farmer Varun Rai and a resident of Tetari Dakshinbari Tola, was found in a bamboo grove behind a school near Pakra Maidan. According to reports, Rahul had left a temple on Thursday evening when the attackers allegedly surrounded him in the bamboo grove and opened fire. He sustained bullet injuries to his chest and back and died at the spot. Police recovered Rahul's motorcycle and a live cartridge from the scene. His family members alleged that a woman had called him to Pakra shortly before the incident, after which he was allegedly attacked. Police are investigating the possibility of a love affair and a deeper conspiracy behind the killing. However, the exact motive has not yet been established. Navgachhia SP Vaibhav Sharma and the SDPO reached the spot with a police team soon after receiving information about the incident. The body was sent for post-mortem examination. A forensic team was also called to the scene and collected evidence. SP Sharma said the police have begun a technical investigation based on evidence recovered from the scene, mobile call details and statements of the victim's family members. He said intensive raids are underway to arrest those involved and that the case is expected to be solved soon.

Flowers Showered from Sky as Over 2 Lakh Kanwariya

Milan Express Bhagalpur: Sultanganj witnessed a massive gathering of devotees on Friday ahead of the third Monday of Shravan, with more than 2.02 lakh Kanwariyas setting out for Deogarh to offer holy Ganga water to Baba Baidyanath. According to official figures, 2,02,857 devotees had collected sacred water from the north-flowing Ganga and left for Baba Dham by 2 pm. The movement of pilgrims continued uninterrupted till late evening. Amid pleasant weather, the Kanwariya route turned



saffron as thousands of barefoot devotees walked towards Deogarh carrying their Kanwars. The atmosphere became even more vibrant when a helicopter showered flowers over the pilgrims as part of the administration's arrangements. As flowers rained from the sky,

TNB College Hosts Cultural Programme on Independence Day Eve

Milan Express Bhagalpur: A soulful cultural programme was organised at TNB College on Friday on the eve of Independence Day under the aegis of the college's Cultural Council. The programme began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by Principal Prof. (Dr.) Deepo Mahto, Cultural Council Chairperson Dr. Janak Kumari Srivastava and senior faculty members. Addressing the inaugural session, Principal Prof. Deepo Mahto praised the Cultural Council for its preparations and the attractive decoration of the college auditorium. He encouraged students to focus not only on academics but also on develop-



ing practical skills and talents. Earlier, Dr. Janak Srivastava welcomed the guests. Students showcased their talents through a variety of cultural performances. The highlight of the event was a collective presentation in which students combined live singing, musical instrument per-

formances and dance. Their coordination and synchronisation captivated the audience and created a vibrant atmosphere. Inayat, Mehr, Afsha, Srishti and Zeba impressed the audience with their melodious singing. Babli, Muskan, Navya, Arya Ranjan and Komal won appreciation

for their energetic dance performances, while Neeraj enthralled the audience with his impressive instrumental performance. The programme reflected the students' artistic talent and provided a spirited beginning to the Independence Day celebrations.

Child Rights Commission Conducts Surprise Inspection of Kasturba Gandhi Girls' School

Milan Express Bhagalpur: Bihar State Commission for Protection of Child Rights member Dr. Supriya Das conducted a surprise inspection of the Kasturba Gandhi Girls' School in Navgachhia on Friday during his official visit to Bhagalpur district. Dr. Das inspected the school's residential facilities, quality of education, security arrangements, cleanliness and other aspects related to the protection of child rights. He emphasised that ensuring a safe, fear-

free and quality educational environment for girls must remain the administration's top priority. He directed the school authorities to ensure that there was no negligence in providing nutritious food, safe drinking water and adequate health facilities to the students. He also stressed the need to maintain an environment befitting the dignity of the Kasturba Gandhi Girls' School so that every student can pursue her education without fear or hesitation.

Students, NCC Cadets Take Out Tricolour March

Milan Express Bhagalpur: Students of Ganpat Rai Salmarmuria Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Nargakothi, Champanganagar, along with NCC cadets of 84/4 Troop, organised a grand Tricolour march on Friday under the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. The march began near Vishwavidyalaya Police Station and proceeded to Sarai. Carrying the national flag with enthusiasm and discipline, the students spread the message of patriotism, national unity, integrity and respect for the country. Patriotic slogans raised during the march filled the surroundings with a spirit of nationalism. School Principal Amaresh Kumar said that 'Har Ghar



Tiranga' is not merely a campaign but a powerful means of promoting pride, unity and a sense of responsibility towards the nation. He said such programmes help develop patriotism, discipline, social responsibility and national consciousness among students. He appealed to students and parents to hoist the Tricolour at their homes

on Independence Day and express their commitment to the unity and integrity of the nation. The programme was organised under the guidance of Lieutenant Colonel Vikas Mandal, Commanding Officer, 4 Bihar Battalion NCC, Bhagalpur. NCC Officer S/O Sagar Kumar, ex-servicemen Jairam Oraon and Sudhakar Mishra, along with Shashi Bhushan Mishra, Atul Dubey, Sanjay Kumar, Gurudev Kumar, Vishwajit Kumar, Ranjit Kumar, Kapil Kumar, Ravindra Kumar, Shashidhar Mandal and Kailash Mandal played key roles in making the march successful.

79 YEARS OF FREEDOM

A million reasons to be proud

From the sacrifices that won us our freedom to the dreams that continue to shape our future, we celebrate the spirit of a nation that never stops rising.

Happy Independence Day

from the Adani Parivar

Civic Chief Inspects Fair Area on Scooter

Deoghar (agency): Deoghar Municipal Commissioner Sulochana Meena conducted a late-night inspection of the Shrivani Mela area on a scooter on Thursday, interacting with devotees and local residents to understand the problems they were facing. Her unconventional approach to monitoring arrangements during the busy pilgrimage season has drawn appreciation from people in the area.

The district administration and Deoghar Municipal Corporation have been working continuously to improve facilities and ensure the safety and convenience of devotees attending the annual Shrivani Mela. Officials have been regularly visiting different parts of the fair area to monitor crowd management, traffic arrangements, sanitation and other civic facilities.



Meena chose to travel through the fair area on a scooter late at night, allowing her to assess the situation more closely and reach places where larger official vehicles may have difficulty navigating because of heavy crowds. During the inspection, she spoke directly with devotees and local residents and listened to their concerns regarding arrangements in the area. The municipal commissioner said the large number of devotees visiting the fair makes movement of bigger

vehicles difficult in several parts of the area. She said travelling on a scooter enabled her to move through congested stretches without causing disruption to traffic or inconveniencing pilgrims.

She also said that reaching people directly helped officials understand their concerns more effectively. According to Meena, public facilities are meant for the people, and there is little purpose in having such facilities if residents and visitors have to face unnecessary difficulties or wait for assistance.

Meena said the convenience of the public should remain the priority for government officials. She emphasised that officials should give greater importance to the needs of people living and working in their areas of responsibility rather than focusing primarily on their own convenience.

"Reaching crowded areas on a scooter is easier," she said, explaining that the decision also allowed her to interact more freely with people. When an officer reaches an area using an ordinary mode of transport and moves among the public, residents may feel more comfortable approaching the official and discussing their concerns, she said. The commissioner further stressed the importance of making the best use of available resources. She said an officer's ability to deliver effective services despite limited resources is

an important part of administration. With officials carrying significant responsibilities during a major event such as the Shrivani Mela, she said public convenience must come before personal comfort. Meena said moving around the area in an ordinary manner also helped her get a clearer picture of the ground situation. Direct inspections, she said, provide officials with an opportunity to identify practical problems that may not always become apparent through reports or routine reviews. She also appreciated the security arrangements put in place by the district administration and police during the fair. The Shrivani Mela attracts large numbers of devotees, making effective crowd management, traffic regulation and security arrangements crucial to ensuring a smooth pilgrimage experience.

JMM Announces Stir Against Mineral Law Amendment

Ranchi (agency): The ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) on Thursday announced a statewide agitation against the passage of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, alleging that the legislation would undermine the state's constitutional rights and cause significant financial losses to Jharkhand.

The announcement came after Chief Minister Hemant Soren held a meeting with senior party leaders at his official residence. Following the meeting, JMM central general secretary Vinod Pandey addressed a press conference at the party's central camp office in Ranchi and said the party would not accept what it described as an injustice to Jharkhand. Pandey said the amendment bill, passed by



the Lok Sabha on Thursday under the Narendra Modi-led BJP government, was a direct attack on the rights of states and the country's federal structure. He claimed that the legislation would weaken Jharkhand's financial position and reduce the state's authority over its mineral resources.

The JMM leader said his party would strongly oppose the amended mineral legislation and take the issue to the streets. According to him, the amendment would

adversely affect the state's rights and financial interests, prompting the party to launch a sustained movement to protect Jharkhand's share of its natural resources. Pandey alleged that the Centre introduced the amendment without conducting adequate studies and got it passed on the strength of its majority in Parliament. He claimed that Jharkhand could suffer a direct financial loss of around Rs 15,000 crore because of the changes.

Nine Jharkhand Police Personnel Get President's Medals

Ranchi (agency): Nine police personnel from Jharkhand have been selected for the President's Police Medals on the occasion of Independence Day 2026, with Inspector General Shailendra Kumar Sinha receiving the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service. Eight other personnel have been chosen for the President's Police Medal for Meritorious Service. Sinha is the only police officer from Jharkhand to receive the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service this year. The honour recognises his long and distinguished service in the police department and his contribution to policing over the course of his career. The eight other recipients have been selected for the President's Police Medal for Meritorious Service. They include personnel from different ranks, ranging from constables and head constables to an assistant sub-inspector, highlighting the contribution of police personnel working at various levels of the department. The recipients of the Meritorious Service Medal are Constable Aurangzeb Khan, Constable Sanjay Kumar Singh, Head Constable Jitendra Kumar Singh, Head Constable Purna Bahadur Singh, Head Constable Nand Kishore Mahto, Havildar Yogendra Kumar Das, Constable Anita Tirkey and Assistant Sub-Inspector Pankaj Kumar Rai. The awards recognise the dedicated service and notable contributions of the personnel during their respective tenures.

CID Raids Multiple Locations in JPSC

Ranchi (agency): The Jharkhand Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has intensified its search for seven wanted accused in connection with alleged irregularities in various competitive examinations conducted by the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC). CID teams have carried out raids at multiple locations in Ranchi and other districts as part of efforts to trace and arrest the accused.

The case is registered as CID police station case number 16/2026. According to the investigating agency, seven people suspected of being involved in the alleged examination irregularities are currently on its radar. Search operations



have been launched at their known and suspected locations, although none of the seven has been arrested so far. According to a CID press release, the wanted accused have been identified as Aditya Pandey, a resident of Peoples Ground in Namkum, Ranchi; Pawan Kumar Singh of Harinaraj in Tatiliwai, Ranchi; Ravishankar Kumar of

Baralata under Town police station in Palamu; Santosh Kumar Singh of Hamidganj under Town police station in Palamu; Sanand Prakash of Sector 3, Bokaro Steel City; Lalu Kumar Yadav of Korra under Sadar police station in Hazaribagh; and Saurabh Kumar Pandey of Hathghar in Bengabadi, Giridih.

The CID has been conducting searches at locations

linked to the seven accused as part of the ongoing investigation. Since the accused are from different districts, the operation has extended beyond Ranchi to Palamu, Bokaro, Hazaribagh and Giridih. The investigation has also entered a crucial stage with the agency focusing on the examination of OMR carbon copies used during the examinations. A team constituted by the CID has started the process of matching and scrutinising the OMR carbon copies collected during the investigation. Officials believe that detailed scrutiny and comparison of the OMR sheets could provide important evidence regarding the alleged irregularities in the examination process.

Health Dept Put on Alert Amid Student Protest



Ranchi (agency): Jharkhand Health Minister Dr Irfan Ansari has directed the health department to remain fully alert in view of the ongoing student protest in Ranchi and ensure round-the-clock deployment of additional doctors at the protest site to deal with any medical emergency.

Ansari issued the instructions to RIMS Director Dr Dipendra Kumar Sinha and Ranchi Civil Surgeon Amarendra Prasad. He directed them to ensure that additional doctors remain available at the protest site 24x7 so that medical assistance can be provided immediately if any participant or other person develops a health emergency during the agitation. The minister also instructed hospitals to keep a special 10-bed ward ready as a backup for emergencies arising during the protest. He asked the RIMS director and civil surgeon to regularly review the situation and keep the health department informed about developments. The health department has been asked to maintain adequate medical preparedness throughout the period of the student movement. The minister stressed that there should be no shortage of medical support in case protesters or members of the public require immediate treatment. Apart from the protest-related arrangements, Ansari also directed officials to remain particularly vigilant about diseases during the ongoing monsoon season. With mosquito activity increasing during the rains, he instructed the department to strengthen preparations to prevent diseases such as dengue, malaria, typhoid, kala-azar and diarrhoea. Officials have been asked to ensure that measures such as spraying bleaching powder and carrying out fogging operations are implemented effectively in areas where they are required. The objective is to reduce the risk of disease outbreaks during the rainy season and ensure timely intervention if cases are reported. The minister also called for special attention to the health of children. He directed health officials to ensure that children showing symptoms such as fever, body ache, headache or a drop in platelet count are examined without delay. If such symptoms are detected, the minister instructed officials to take necessary medical action and ensure timely rescue and treatment wherever required. Health teams have been asked to remain prepared to respond to cases that may emerge during the protest or because of seasonal illnesses.

DC Orders Action Against Opium Cultivation

Dumka (agency): The Dumka district administration has stepped up efforts to curb drug trafficking and substance abuse, with Deputy Commissioner Abhijeet Sinha directing officials to identify and destroy illegal opium cultivation and strictly enforce drug-free zones within a 500-metre radius of schools and colleges. The directions were issued during a meeting of the District NCORD Committee chaired by Sinha on Thursday. The meeting reviewed the current drug situation in the district and assessed measures being taken to prevent the trafficking, sale and misuse of narcotic substances. Officials



were instructed to regularly monitor activities aimed at reducing the demand for drugs and to strengthen coordination among different government departments and agencies. The administration stressed the need for identifying drug-related activities at the grassroots level and taking coordinated action against those involved.

Particular emphasis was placed on identifying the sources of drug networks operating in the district, as well as middlemen and distribution channels. Officials were asked to trace the entire chain involved in the supply of narcotic substances and take direct action against those facilitating their movement and distribution. Circle

officers and police station in-charges were directed to strengthen their local intelligence networks and remain vigilant about drug-related activities in their respective areas. They were also asked to identify locations where illegal opium cultivation is being carried out and ensure that such crops are destroyed. The administration also decided to strictly implement the 500-metre area around schools and colleges as a drug-free zone. Officials were directed to pay special attention to educational institutions and their surroundings to prevent the sale and consumption of narcotic substances among students and young people.

Special checking drives will also be conducted at hotels, restaurants, markets and other public places, according to the directions issued during the meeting. Officials have been asked to take strict action against illegal purchase and sale of drugs as well as their consumption.

The administration also reviewed the role of the prison authorities in preventing drug-related activities. Officials expressed concern over the possibility of drug networks operating from inside jails and directed the prison administration to take effective steps to prevent such activities. The jail superintendent was instructed

to maintain close surveillance over the activities of inmates and strengthen monitoring mechanisms inside the prison. Particular attention is to be paid to prevent communication or coordination linked to drug networks operating from within correctional facilities. The district administration has stressed that controlling drug abuse requires coordinated action by the police, district administration, education authorities, health agencies and other departments. Officials have therefore been asked to share information and coordinate enforcement measures to ensure that drug-related activities are identified at an early stage.

NDRF Rescues Two Devotees From Drowning

Dumka (agency): A major accident was averted at the Shivganga pond in Basukinath during the ongoing Shrivani Mela after two devotees from Dhanbad nearly drowned while taking a bath on Thursday. Members of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), deployed at the site, responded quickly and rescued both devotees from the deep water. The incident occurred when 40-year-old Rajesh Kumar Singh, a resident of Dhanbad, was bathing in the Shivganga pond. He reportedly lost his

balance and accidentally moved into a deeper section of the pond. As he began struggling in the water, his 42-year-old friend Nishikant Singh attempted to rescue him. However, Nishikant also entered the deep water and soon began struggling to stay afloat. Seeing both men in difficulty, other devotees present along the bank raised an alarm and called for assistance. NDRF personnel stationed at the Shivganga ghat immediately sprang into action. The rescuers entered the water without delay and, after considerable effort, managed to pull both devotees to safety.

The timely intervention of the rescue team prevented a potentially serious incident. After being brought out of the water, both men were provided immediate first aid and medical assistance. Their condition subsequently returned to normal. The devotees were reportedly shaken after the incident, but the NDRF medical team provided necessary treatment at the spot. Officials said there was no further complication after the two men received medical

attention. Members of the rescue team subsequently appealed to devotees to exercise extreme caution while bathing in the Shivganga pond. They urged pilgrims not to cross the barricades installed for their safety and to follow all instructions issued by the administration and rescue personnel. The incident has once again highlighted the importance of safety arrangements at water bodies during the Shrivani Mela, which attracts a large number of devotees every year.

High Court Orders Removal of Low-Hanging Roadside Hoardings

Ranchi (agency): The Jharkhand High Court has directed the Ranchi Municipal Corporation to remove all advertising boards, hoardings and placards installed at a height of less than 12 feet from the road surface, particularly those fixed to street-light poles on road dividers. The court observed that such installations could pose a serious risk to pedestrians and motorists.

The direction was issued during the hearing of peti-



tions filed by the Jharkhand State Outdoor Advertising Association and RDS Advertising and Marketing Group. Justice Anand Sen, while hearing the matter on Thursday, directed the

ed to the case. One of the photographs showed a large unipole extending towards the road, with part of the structure reaching into the middle of the carriageway. The court observed that such a structure could endanger pedestrians and other road users. The court also noted that some advertising boards fixed to street-light poles on road dividers were installed at such a low height that motorcycle and scooter riders could potentially collide with them.

K'taka Bill proposes 3-5 years in jail, Rs 5-10 lakh fine for unauthorised use of public property

Bengaluru (Agency): The Karnataka government has proposed stringent penalties for unauthorised use of government premises and public property, with offenders facing up to three years in prison and/or a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh. The provisions are part of the controversial Karnataka Regulation of Use of Government Premises and Public Property Bill, 2026, which seeks to regulate the use of government lands, buildings, roads, parks, playgrounds, water bodies and other public property by private individuals, organisations, associations and societies. The Bill states that unauthorised use would amount to trespass and could also attract an additional fine of up to Rs 5,000 per day if the violation continues after conviction. The bill is mooted by the state Home Department, headed by Minister Priyank Kharge. A day after the Cabinet approved the Karnataka Regulation of Use of Government Premises and Public Property Bill, 2026, BJP State President and MLA, B.Y. Vijayendra, on Friday accused the state government of attempting to curb the activities of the RSS. He challenged Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar



and Home Minister Priyank Kharge to ban the organisation if they had the courage to do so. The proposed law makes prior written permission mandatory for holding or organising a procession, meeting, assembly, function, celebration, event, training programme or any other activity on government property. Under the Bill, an application must be submitted at least seven days before the proposed activity, excluding the day of the procession. If the competent authority does not communicate its decision within seven days, the application would be deemed to have been allowed. The Bill defines a procession as a gathering of more than 10

people moving as a group on public property with a common objective. The definition specifically covers political, religious and social processions as well as route marches. Marriage and funeral processions and certain unorganised gatherings are excluded. The competent authority, identified as the jurisdictional Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police or another authorised officer, can refuse permission after an inquiry and consultation with the local body or police authorities. The reasons for rejection have to be recorded in writing. The grounds for refusal include public order, decency and morality, safety and security of people and property, preservation of communal harmony, prevention of slogan-shouting or utterances that could cause nuisance or resentment among other religious, political, social, linguistic or cultural groups, traffic management, public inconvenience and protection of the original or intended use of the property. Authorities can also impose conditions on permitted gatherings, including restrictions on timings, dispersal, noise levels and the number of participants. Restrictions can also be imposed on carrying articles capable of causing physical harm, including weapons, arms, guns, lathis and sticks.

Gujarat leaders pay tribute to victims on Partition Horrors Remembrance Day

Gandhinagar (Agency): Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Deputy CM Harsh Sanghani on Friday paid tributes to those who lost their lives and suffered displacement during the Partition of India, marking Partition Horrors Remembrance Day. In a post on social media platform X, CM Patel described the Partition as more than the drawing of geographical boundaries, saying it had been a dark chapter of immense pain, displacement and inhuman suffering for crores of citizens. "On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, I pay my humble tribute to all those who lost their lives in that horrific tragedy," CM Patel said. He also paid tribute to those who endured the pain of leaving behind their motherland, relatives and homes, while displaying courage, hard work and patience in rebuilding the country. Sanghani, in a separate message, also remembered those affected by the Partition. "On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, I respectfully pay tribute to the memory of millions of Indians who endured the pain of Partition and the suffering of displacement," he said. Partition Horrors Remembrance Day is observed annually on August 14. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the observance in 2021, saying the day would commemorate the struggles and sacrifices of people affected by the Partition and serve as a reminder of the need to strengthen social harmony. The Partition in 1947 led to one of the largest episodes of mass displacement in modern history, with millions of people moving across the newly created borders of India and Pakistan amid widespread violence and communal tensions. Estimates of the number of people displaced and those killed vary considerably among historical sources.

Security forces arrest 13 militants; recover large cache of arms, ammunition

Imphal (Agency): Security forces in Manipur, in separate joint operations, have arrested 13 militants, including two leaders, belonging to different banned outfits, and recovered a large cache of arms, ammunition and other incriminating materials during the past 24 hours, officials said on Friday. A police spokesman said the 13 militants were apprehended in Kakching, Bishnupur, Imphal West, Thoubal, Churachandpur and Kangpokpi districts during coordinated operations carried out by the Manipur Police and Central forces, including the Assam Rifles. The arrested militants



belong to the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP), People's Liberation Army (PLA) and its political wing, the Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), United National Liberation Front

(UNLF), People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) and United Kuki National Army (UKNA). The spokesman said the arrested militants were reportedly involved in various unlawful activities, including attacks on people, kidnapping, forcible collection of "subscriptions" and recruitment of youths into the banned outfits. Security personnel recovered arms and ammunition, several incriminating documents, subscription receipts, cash, seals, letterheads of the banned outfits and other materials from the possession of the arrested militants. The 13 arrested militants included self-styled Lieutenant of PREPAK Phundreimayum Ihungo (41), alias Abdul Kalam alias Achumba, and self-styled Lance Corporal of RPF/PLA Wanghebam Apoicha Meitei (45), alias Maikel.

17-day UPST agitation ends in Kerala after Satheesan govt's assurances

Thiruvananthapuram (Agency): The 17-day agitation by the Upper Primary School Teacher (UPST) Rank Holders Association in front of the Secretariat was called off on Friday following assurances from General Education Minister N. Shamsudeen that the protesters' key demands would be examined and favourable decisions taken wherever possible. The decision came after a crucial meeting between the Minister and representatives of the rank holders. The protesters had been demanding an end to the PSC practice of issuing fresh notifications without adequately reporting existing vacancies, arguing that this



was reducing the chances of candidates already included in the rank list. The Minister assured the association that its demand to stop issuing notifications without reporting vacancies would be considered sympathetically. He also promised to examine the demand for extending the validity of the existing rank list so that more candidates

could secure appointments before it expires. Another major demand concerned the appointment of PSC candidates to HTV posts. The government informed the protesters that this issue, along with their demand relating to the teacher-student ratio in government schools where teaching posts are facing abolition, required a detailed examination. The government sought 45 days to study these matters. The discussions also brought to light the vacancies at the upper-primary level in Model Residential Schools and Fisheries Schools. Representatives of the rank holders told the Minister that these institutions were functioning without adequate upper primary-level teachers. Taking note of the issue, Shamsudeen directed the Director of General Education to examine the possibility of filling the vacancies from the existing upper primary school rank lists of the respective districts and initiate appropriate action.

BJP accuses K'taka Minister of seeking exemption; Cong denies allegations



Bengaluru (Agency): The Karnataka BJP on Friday criticised Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan alleging that he had sent a request to Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar seeking exemption from the duty of hoisting the Tricolour during Independence Day celebrations, citing engagements with party organisational work and bypolls. However, the Congress has rejected the BJP's allegations. The BJP also targeted Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, over the matter and demanded his apologies. Leader of the Opposition in the Karnataka Assembly, R. Ashoka, on Friday targeted Congress MP Gandhi, alleging that such an attitude was part of the Congress' culture and demanded an apology from the LoP and the Congress leadership. "Rahul Gandhi and the Congress leadership, who believe that party power is more important than the nation, should apologise to the people of Karnataka," Ashoka demanded. He also accused Zameer of placing party politics and electoral calculations above the National Flag and the country's Independence Day celebrations. "Those who do not even have the willingness to hoist the National Flag are nothing but anti-national elements in this government. For a responsible minister, has party politics become more important than the sacred duty of paying respect to the Tricolour on Independence Day?" Ashoka said. Questioning Zameer's request for exemption, Ashoka said the government provides ministers with all necessary facilities and arrangements to enable them to attend official programmes. "I don't know which great work he has other than hoisting the National Flag. The government provides all facilities for him to reach the spot and makes all arrangements for him to stay," Ashoka said. He recalled the sacrifices made by freedom fighters for the country's Independence and said it was inappropriate for a minister to claim that he did not have time to hoist the Tricolour.

APPSC Group-I exam report Andhra govt's attempt to divert attention from Mega DSC 'scam', claims YSRCP

Amaravati (Agency): The YSR Congress Party has alleged that the Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu-led coalition government in Andhra Pradesh was trying to divert public attention from alleged irregularities in District Selection Committee (DSC) recruitment by citing the report of the Special Investigation team (SIT) in the alleged lapses in APPSC Group-I exam held in 2020. YSRCP spokesperson, Konda Raajev, on Friday termed it a "political drama" by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to shield his son and Education Minister Nara Lokesh in alleged irregularities

in recruitment of teachers through DSC. He alleged that ahead of the Assembly session, the government hurriedly started reviewing the APPSC Group I issue. "They obtained a SIT report and started political campaign and misleading propaganda through yellow media," he said. The YSRCP spokesman alleged that the government was trying to unsettle careers of 163 Group I officers though the SIT did not find any wrongdoing in the candidates' qualification, conduct of the examination, answer sheets, merit and the final list. He pointed out that answer



sheets were in custody of the High Court and the selection of candidates was done as per the guidelines of the High Court. The spokesman said 326 candidates had attended the interviews and many of them were from IITs and IIMs. Some of the

candidates had attended civil services interviews. Earlier, another YSRC spokesperson, Yanamala Nagarajuna Yadav, and Party Youth Empowerment Cell Convener, Salambabu, said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu was using the SIT report Group-I recruitment as a diversion from the alleged irregularities in Mega DSC. Stating that unemployed youth were protesting over DSC paper leaks and sports quota irregularities, they said the Group-I issue was now being raised to divert public attention and avoid questions during the coming Assembly session.

Security beefed up in Assam ahead of I-Day celebrations



Guwahati (Agency): Security has been intensified across Assam ahead of Independence Day following a boycott call issued by the banned United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA-I) and NSCN/IMPRN, with authorities stepping up surveillance to ensure peaceful celebrations across the state, officials said on Friday. The outfits have urged people in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland to stay away from Independence Day programmes. Unlike some previous years, however, they have not called for a general strike, citing the flood situation in Assam. Police have strengthened security at all designated celebration venues, besides vital installations, public places and other sensitive locations. Additional patrolling and surveillance have been deployed, while security forces are maintaining close watch for any attempt to disrupt the celebrations. Inter-state borders have also been placed under heightened surveillance as part of measures to prevent the movement of militants or any subversive activity. "We are confident of an incident-free Independence Day," a senior police official said. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma will hoist the national flag at Khanapara field in Guwahati, while ministers and senior government officials will oversee celebrations at various locations across the state. Security arrangements were reviewed earlier this week at a high-level meeting jointly chaired by the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police. Senior district officials participated through video-conference. The review covered anti-sabotage measures, surveillance of sensitive installations, intelligence-sharing among security agencies, route sanitisation, checking mechanisms and round-the-clock monitoring of celebration venues. Such boycott calls have been a recurring feature in Assam and the Northeast, particularly around Independence Day and Republic Day. ULFA-I has historically opposed the celebrations as part of its demand for a sovereign Assam.

NIA arrests three accused in Himachal police station IED blast case

Shimla (Agency): The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday arrested three accused in connection with the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion that took place on January 1 near the premises of Police Station Nalagarh in Himachal Pradesh's Solan district. According to the NIA, the blast occurred at around 9.40 a.m. near the outer wall adjoining the room of the Investigating Officer within the police station complex.

VDC member killed, another injured as fellow member opens fire in J&K's Udhampur

Jammu (Agency): A Village Defence Committee (VDC) member was killed and another seriously injured when their colleague opened fire at them in J&K's Udhampur district on Friday, officials said. The incident occurred in the Moungrai area of Udhampur. Officials said the incident occurred in the morning when the persons were travelling towards Damnot Police Post. During the journey, an argument reportedly broke out, following which the accused opened fire at them, killing one and The



deceased was identified as Baldev Singh, son of Kartar Singh, and the injured as Ramesh Singh, son of Nak Ram. "All the persons involved in the incident are members of the VDC," the official said, adding that police have taken cognisance of the incident and further investigation is underway. Village Defence

Committees (VDCs), now officially renamed Village Defence Guards (VDGs), are civilian security groups established in the mid-1990s across remote, hilly areas of Jammu and Kashmir to protect vulnerable local populations and counter militant attacks. Formed initially in 1995 under a state government scheme to provide local self-defence capabilities in far-flung areas, the VDCs consist of local volunteers, ex-servicemen, and ex-police, led in many cases by a Special Police Officer (SPO).

EDITORIAL

From Honour Killings to Online Mobs: Politics of Policing Dissent in India

The recent Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protests led me to reflect on the existence of honour killings in India. You might reasonably ask why. What does a social media-fuelled Gen Z movement against the country's education minister have to do with the ghastly practice of killing your own wives and daughters for defying social norms? A lot more than you would imagine. For centuries, Indians have adhered to their revered honour codes as a means to enforce order and discipline. There were two key reasons for this: one, a lack of political centralisation, and two, an absence of government at the local level.

Before its founding as a constitutional republic in 1950, India spent millennia under the split rule of several political dynasties that were rarely unified. These empires, kingdoms, and princely states regularly shrank and expanded, from generation to generation, often leaving people to function on their own.

The courts and governments of Indian kings and emperors were far-flung and difficult to access for most people who lived in small towns and villages. And in many cases, rulers simply decided that the best way to govern such a vast and diverse land was to let people follow whatever norms and customs they fancied.

If the king's court was too far away, the villages had to build their own political and judicial structures. And these were generally overseen by the village elders. If you had a dispute with your neighbour over your shared well, you went to the village elders. If you felt cheated by a bad business deal, you went to the village elders. But unlike kings and emperors, village elders did not have a permanent standing police force to enforce their laws. How were a bunch of old men (and often, priests) supposed to uphold social order, punish wrongdoing, and deter crime? It was through the weaponisation of honour. When a villager was found guilty of violating society's norms, they were ostracised and shamed in the public square by collective will.

In a world where the government was virtually absent, this mechanism was more effective than the use of force. Without access to state-run public services, people relied on their neighbours for everything. If they cut you off, you lose your means of survival.

Under these practices, individual freedoms were relegated to an afterthought. The first line of defence in honour-driven societies was at the household level. Men were to act as heads of their families and keep their women and children in check. And if they failed, society would harass the whole lot of them en masse.

That brings us to the recent protests. In the throes of the chaos that gripped Delhi's streets, a 15-year-old girl launched a torrent of vitriol against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a video that went viral. Outraged that a young girl had violated age-old honour codes, social vigilantes doxxed her and threatened her in her own home, forcing the girl and her mother to move out. Under duress, the young girl later apologised for her words.

This wasn't, however, an isolated incident. Many young women - and even underage girls - reported similar online and offline harassment after their participation in the protests was exposed. Parents became wary and distressed about their daughters' participation in the protests, because it invariably affected their own family's honour and safety.

Communalisation was also inevitable. As has long been customary, the participation of individuals who belonged to religious minority groups was highlighted in media coverage, accompanied by a caricaturing of their entire communities. These counteractions - based on the idea that women or minorities must not express themselves so strongly - are central to Indian society. But it is also in open conflict with any mature idea of democracy. Modern representative democracies - including India's - operate under the assumption of one person, one vote. But you cannot possibly practise your rights as an individual if you're constantly worried about your family's honour and safety.

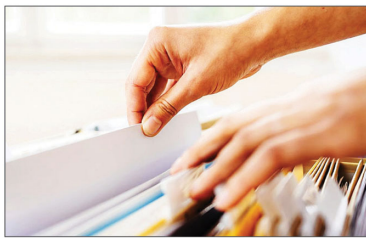
How Court Delays and CIC Missteps are Strangling RTI in India

VENKATESH

“Last month, the Delhi High Court upheld the Central Information Commission (CIC)'s finding that the National Stock Exchange (NSE) is a public authority under the RTI Act. Soon afterwards, the Supreme Court stayed that judgment. The Additional Solicitor General argued that the NSE is a private company and mere regulation by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is not enough to impose on it the transparency obligations applicable to governments and their instrumentalities.

Readers will recall that more than a decade ago, investigations into a whistleblower's letter revealed serious internal governance failures and other wrongdoings at the NSE. Its CEO had claimed that she was always guided by a nameless and faceless Himalayan guru in her official duties. SEBI imposed a hefty fine for her transgressions. Well-meaning citizens' efforts to bring entities like the NSE or public utilities like Delhi's DISCOMs, Indraprastha Gas (IGL), and even Mother Dairy, which supplies milk, fruits, and vegetables to Delhiites, under the RTI Act have faced stiff and continued opposition. The RTI application that resulted in the NSE being declared a public authority was initiated in 2006. The five-member CIC issued a unanimous decision in 2007, which was upheld by a single judge of the Delhi High Court in 2010 and, more recently, by two judges constituting the court's division bench. Now, after twenty years, this matter will be brought afresh before the apex court.

In March this year, the Delhi High Court remanded the cases of Delhi's DISCOMs and IGL back to the CIC, en bloc. The CIC's original finding that the DISCOMs are covered by the RTI Act is from 2006. The Commission reiterated its find-



ing in 2007 at the instance of the Delhi High Court. Now, the case is back in the CIC's court for a fresh consideration of all facts, including whether the minority shareholding by public sector companies in them constitutes substantial financing by the Delhi government. Meanwhile, information about the functioning of these bodies, which provide essential public services, remains locked up like sarkari secrets, decade after decade.

In recent years, remanding such cases back to the CIC has not always led to a robust consideration of all arguments or well-reasoned decisions. For example, another RTI case from 2007, in which the Mumbai International Airport Ltd. (MIAL) was declared a public authority, was remanded back in 2020. A two-member bench of the CIC set aside its earlier order on the mere technicality that the

RTI applicant had filed a direct complaint about MIAL's opacity instead of going through the two-stage appeals process. The RTI applicant was not even provided the opportunity to file the appeals afresh. Of late, it is not uncommon for information commissions to cherry-pick from the uneven RTI case law emanating from the constitutional courts while deciding routine matters, even to the extent of creating new obstacles to RTI. For example, earlier this year, the CIC cited a 2017 order of the Madras High Court (N Saravanan v. The Chief Information Commissioner & Ors.) to rule that legal practitioners cannot be permitted to use RTI to obtain documents for their clients. That order does not contain any cogent reasoning. Yet, the CIC has cited it more than once to bar lawyers and advocates from using RTI.

Strangely, nothing in these orders indicates that the Commissioners had considered other case laws on the same subject. In 2016, the Himachal Pradesh High Court had ruled that the credentials of an RTI applicant have no relevance and are not at all to be taken into account while giving the information. "Truth remains the truth, and it is not important who accesses it", the court had observed.

A year after the Madras High Court's order, the Supreme Court ruled that the standing of an RTI applicant is irrelevant for deciding whether the information sought ought to be disclosed or not (Feran Hotels Pvt Ltd. v. The State Information Commissioner, Greater Mumbai & Ors.).

The CIC has completely ignored this ruling of the highest court of the land and has repeatedly denied RTI to advocates, as if they are lesser mortals because of their profession. How deeply the Commissioners or their legal assistants researched the case law is anyone's guess. Lately, both courts and information commissions offer little satisfaction to citizens as dispute resolution bodies. RTI matters must be adjudicated with as much care as cases involving the infringement of other fundamental rights.

NEET, Viksit Bharat and The Job Structure India Needs



TCARANGANATHAN

Forest fires do not start unless the undergrowth is dry. Perhaps, the NEET protest is reflecting the underlying apprehension about insufficient availability of STEM seats. Medical seats account for barely 1.5-2% of our higher-education intake. China has double that, and the US sits even higher at 4-5%. In a globalised world, such gaps can trigger the same psychological reactions that food shortages and rationing did in the 1960s and 70s. Scarcity of seats, amidst increased aspirations, creates a tinderbox of frustration. Accelerated capacity creation without diluting quality ought to be the response.

The reason why NEET drew such a sudden outpouring of community support was that it tapped into wider anger about how opportunities are distributed. The earlier popular use of the phrase "Khan Market gap" was not just about Delhi's elite culture; it reflected a perception that privileges and public resources were largely appropriated by the capital and a few metros, while smaller centres were left behind. Lower-order front-facing government jobs have stagnated, especially in peripheral areas, even as ministries and higher-cadre civil service positions multiplied in Delhi. This imbalance fed resentment, and NEET became

the lightning rod for that anger - a symbol of how dignified jobs and fair chances are hoarded in privileged pockets. Globally, lowered opportunities have produced similar frustrations. Brexit in the United Kingdom drew on fears of job loss and cultural displacement. The MAGA movement in the United States tapped into working-class anger over deindustrialisation and distrust of elites. Social media has amplified these anxieties everywhere, exposing inequalities and organising resistance faster than institutions can respond. China is somewhat insulated, with over a third of its workforce in manufacturing, especially tech. But India, with the world's largest youth population, sits at the epicentre.

India's factory jobs have been growing, but factories cannot remain the main avenue of employment. We must rebalance our development strategy - not abandon manufacturing, but build a job structure that mirrors the dignity and breadth of opportunities found in developed countries. Services exports and remittances have so far cushioned growth, but these escape valves are narrowing as global discord and tighter labour markets bite. Meanwhile, we now produce over 8 million graduates every year. Educated youth face higher unemployment and underemployment, with many trapped in informal, low-paying roles. The frustration is not just about job quantity, but about job dignity.

A solution lies in the quicker implementation of Viksit Bharat. Comparing our employment structure with developed economies reveals serious anomalies. Advanced economies - whether the UK, EU, USA, Japan or South Korea - have about a quarter or more of their workforce in health, education, and government, and only 10-15% in manufacturing. India's manufacturing share is similar, but hovers around only 12% for these three vital sectors. Corrective steps - creating dignified jobs beyond the metros to reduce our imbalances - will also reduce the pressure on NEET seats.

Building Champions Through Strong Pathways, The Khelo India Way

CRAIG FULTON

Sport has the power to shape lives. It gives young people an opportunity to challenge themselves, build confidence and believe in what they can achieve. That is why investment in sport is about much more than winning medals. It is about investing in people and creating opportunities for future generations. The government of India's decision to expand the Khelo India Scheme significantly and strengthen support for National Sports Federations reflects that vision and reinforces the role of sport in youth development and nation building. What stood out to me most in the revamped scheme is its commitment to creating a seamless pathway for every talented young Indian, from school playgrounds and village sports fields to the Olympic podium. Every athlete starts somewhere. The important thing is making sure they know what comes next. The introduction of initiatives such as Khelo India Feeder Schools and Khelo India Utkrisha Vidyalayas, together with an expanded network of training centres and academies, can help ensure talented young athletes continue progressing instead of falling through the gaps.

The scale of the investment also sends an important message. Building successful sporting systems requires long-term commitment. Facilities matter, but so do the opportunities available to young athletes as they develop. Creating stronger pathways, expanding competitions and supporting athletes through every stage of their journey will help build a deeper talent pool for the future.

Finding talented athletes is only the first step. They need time to develop, quality coaching and regular competition. The introduction of the Emerging Khelo India Athletes programme, supported by a stronger talent identification framework, can help ensure more young athletes receive the guidance and support they need throughout their journey rather than only when they reach the elite level.

As a coach, I was encouraged by the establishment of the National Coach Accreditation Board. Coaches influence athletes long before they represent their country. Investing in coaches is just as important as investing in athletes because better coaching strengthens the entire system.

The Itihasa of Prithviraj Chauhan: Beyond the Myth of the Legendary King

DEVUTT PATTANAIK

“Every age gets the Prithviraj Chauhan it needs. The contemporary Hindu nationalist imagination needs a martyr, the last defender of a civilisation, blinded but unbroken, killing the invader with a single arrow guided by sound alone. This is the Prithviraj of the Prithviraj Raso, enlarged and popularised through decades of retelling, and most recently installed on cinema screens via Akshay Kumar.

But this image is a late construction. Long before the nationalist imagination got to work, two older traditions had already told very different stories about the same king, and neither of them had any use for a hero. The Jain textual tradition, preserved in works like the Prabandha Cintamani and the Puratana Prabandha Sangraha, presents Prithviraj as a case study in failed kingship. He is not defeated by a superior enemy. He defeats himself. The recurring motif is sleep. In one account, he sleeps for ten consecutive days while his army is destroyed around him. In another, he is captured because he has eaten after a religious fast and fallen into too deep a slumber to be roused. These are not incidental details. In Jain frameworks of governance, the ideal king is one of disciplined senses, wakeful discernment,

and careful attention to counsel. Prithviraj violates these norms. He cuts off a minister's ears. He ignores loyal advisors. He shoots at a target and hits someone else. When imprisoned, he is tricked into shooting a metal statue of the Sultan, believing it to be the real man - the would-be avenger reduced to a blind archer fooled by a decoy. The Jain texts are not interested in Prithviraj as a religious or civilisational symbol. They are interested in him as a political warning. This is what happens when a king stops listening.

The Alha epic, sung across Bundelkhand and the Gangetic plains, offers a completely different problem with the same man. Here, Prithviraj is neither lethargic nor easily fooled. He is energetic, resolute, brave, and entirely villainous. The epic belongs to the Banaphar heroes,



Alha and Udai, warriors of the Mahoba kingdom that Prithviraj crushed. From their perspective, the king of Delhi is an outside aggressor, an imperial bully, the reincarnation of Duryodhana. His defining characteristic is not sloth but arrogance, specifically, the arrogance of caste.

This is where the Alha tradition

cuts deepest. Prithviraj's contempt for the Banaphar heroes is explicitly caste contempt. He dismisses them as sons of Ahir mortals, cowherd-born, unfit to stand beside Rajputs. When his own daughter Bela dies, he refuses to allow Alha and Udai to light her funeral pyre - they are too low-born for that honour. Bela ignites it herself,

with a flame from her own hair. The episode is devastating as social commentary. The high-status king is so consumed by hierarchy that he cannot even grieve properly. His daughter burns herself rather than wait for his caste arithmetic to resolve.

What is striking is that despite their opposite portraits (the sleeping king versus the aggressive one, the incompetent archer versus the daring warrior), both traditions converge on certain damning details. Both record that Prithviraj captured the Sultan of Ghor multiple times and released him, whether seven times or twenty-two. Both insist that internal treachery was decisive in his final defeat: in the Jain texts, it is the ministers he mistreated who guide the Ghurid army to his camp; in the Alha, it is the character Mahli who engineers the betrayal.

Several US states proclaim India Day, hail diaspora's contribution



Washington (Agency): Several US states and cities have proclaimed August 15 as India Day, honouring India's Independence Day and recognising the Indian American community's growing contributions to the country's economy, culture and civic life. Governors in Delaware, Washington and Nebraska issued proclamations marking the occasion. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lieutenant Governor Jim Tresselt also officially recognised the Federation of Indian Associations Ohio and the Consulate General of India in New York for jointly celebrating India's 80th Independence Day. Cities and local governments across Washington state joined the observance. Seattle, Bellevue, Kent and SeaTac issued proclamations, as did the Metropolitan King County Council. The declarations highlighted India's democratic journey, the shared values linking India and the United States, and the work of Indian Americans in business, science, technology, education, healthcare and public service. US Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington also sent greetings to the Indian community and the Consulate General of India in Seattle. "Please accept my warmest greetings and best wishes as you celebrate the 80th Independence Day of India and Flag Hoisting Ceremony," Cantwell said. "This year is also especially meaningful as India and the United States celebrate 80 years of diplomatic relations," she said. "Over the past eight decades, the partnership between the world's two largest democracies has continued to grow and flourish, reflecting our shared democratic values and our commitment to prosperity, innovation, and opportunity." Delaware Governor Matt Meyer proclaimed August 15 as 'India Day' across the state. His proclamation said Delaware had been strengthened by the cultures and traditions represented in its communities,

including its growing Indian American population. It said Delawareans of Indian heritage had enriched the state through their work, leadership and service, contributing to shared prosperity and creating opportunities for future generations. Washington Governor Bob Ferguson also proclaimed India Day. He said Indian Americans enriched the state's "cultural fabric, economic vitality and civic life", including as innovators, entrepreneurs, educators, artists and professionals. Ferguson's proclamation recognised the community's religious and cultural diversity. It also credited the Consulate General of India in Seattle with fostering people-to-people ties between India and Washington state. Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen issued a similar proclamation. It said Nebraska's Indian American community contributed to the state's economy, civic life and cultural fabric. It also cited the shared values of democracy, diversity and mutual respect between India and the United States. In Ohio, DeWine and Tresselt thanked the Indian community for its efforts "to showcase their native country and to increase the awareness of India's historic past." The Metropolitan King County Council said more than 100,000 Indian Americans lived in the county. Its proclamation also noted that Washington state had an Indian community of about 200,000 people. The council recognised India's progress in education, healthcare and economic development and proclaimed August 15 as "India's 80th Independence Day" in King County. Seattle Mayor Katie B Wilson proclaimed India Day in the city. Bellevue Mayor Malakoutian, Kent Mayor Dana Ralph and SeaTac Mayor Mohamed Egal issued separate declarations recognising the cultural, social and economic contributions of Indian Americans.

UN experts warn of deepening gender-based repression under Taliban rule in Afghanistan



Geneva (Agency): The United Nations experts warned that institutionalised gender-based repression has further deepened under Taliban rule in Afghanistan, amid mounting restrictions on the Afghan population, particularly women and girls. The statement came as Afghanistan approaches nearly five years since the Taliban took power. "Five years may be a short period in the life of a country, but it is a long one in a child's life. A generation of girls has now been denied secondary education. A girl who was in grade six when the ban began is reaching adulthood without another day in school," the experts said. They quoted an Afghan girl as saying, "It has been five years since I was deprived of my education. It is deeply depressing to feel that you cannot move forward but are stuck where you were five years ago." The experts reiterated that the Taliban's "intentional and targeted gender-based deprivation" of fundamental rights amounts to the "crime against humanity of persecution" on gender grounds. As this repression forms part of an institutionalised system of gender-based discrimination, oppression and domination, the experts said it can also be characterised as "gender apartheid". They called on the global community to actively support the codification of "gender apartheid as a distinct crime against humanity". According to the experts, the Taliban have continued to impose repressive measures on the Afghan population, including a decree on the criminal rules of courts that permits violence against women as long as it does not "break bones" or "leave obvious bruises". They noted that another decree governing the separation of spouses implicitly permits child marriage and makes it extremely difficult for women and girls to escape abusive or forced marriages, while these decrees also discriminate against religious minorities. Expressing grave concern, the experts said that enforcement measures, some involving cruel and inhuman punishment, have also intensified in Afghanistan. In 2025 alone, they said, more people were publicly flogged than in all the previous

years of Taliban rule combined. "Women have been turned away from hospitals on account of their attire or for lacking a male guardian, denying them their right to access health care. In June 2026, at least 30 women and girls were jailed in Herat for allegedly violating the Taliban's dress code. When residents protested, security forces opened fire, killing at least two people, including a boy," the experts highlighted. The experts also decried the deepening humanitarian crisis, which remains among the world's most severe and neglected, fuelled by the loss of humanitarian funding, a faltering economy, drought and mass returns of Afghan refugees from neighbouring countries including Pakistan and Iran. They noted that more than 17 million Afghans - over a third of the population - faced acute food insecurity during the past winter, with nearly 4 million children acutely malnourished. The experts called on the global community to restore humanitarian funding and ensure that Afghan women - disproportionately harmed and largely barred from public life - can both deliver and receive assistance. "Afghanistan is not a safe country: mass returns and forced deportations in violation of the obligation of non-refoulement must stop, particularly for those who face heightened religious risks, including religious or ethnic minorities and LGBT persons," the experts added.



Trump opens US Navy shipbuilding to allies

Washington (Agency): US President Donald Trump has opened a path for foreign companies to build ships for the US Navy as part of a sweeping effort to revive America's shipbuilding industry, accelerate naval expansion and clear mounting construction backlogs. A presidential memorandum signed on Thursday permits overseas suppliers to build the first two vessels in selected ship classes. They must also invest in US shipyards, transfer technology and train American workers. According to the presidential proclamation, all subsequent vessels must be built in the United States. Foreign participants must establish a new American shipyard or acquire a controlling stake in an existing one. They must also create a US supply chain for ship construction and maintenance, a media release said. The approach is based on the 'Finland Model', adopted in October 2025 for medium icebreakers. It can be used for up to three classes of Navy and support vessels, including surface combatants, tankers and roll-on ships. The memorandum said foreign sourcing was needed to bridge immediate gaps while rebuilding domestic capacity. "The Department of War shall restore both capacity and competition to the maritime industrial base as it expands our naval force structure," Trump said in the memorandum. The administration blamed complex designs and repeated changes for cost overruns, delays and cancellations. It said six major Navy shipbuilding programmes had large order backlogs, while the country's commercial shipbuilding sector was not globally competitive. The memorandum directs the Secretary of War to submit an acquisition plan for new surface combatants within 90 days. The proposed ships must be capable of conducting anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare and convoy escort missions. The Navy will be barred from making repeated changes to mature foreign designs selected under the programme. Any alteration will require approval from the Secretary of War, in consultation with senior Navy, White House and budget officials. Trump also delegated authority to the Secretary of War to approve national security waivers allowing military vessels to be built in foreign shipyards. Congress must be notified, and a contract cannot be signed until 30 days after lawmakers receive the determination. The order separately directs officials to prepare a plan within 60 days to replace electromagnetic aircraft-launch equipment and advanced weapons elevators aboard the future aircraft carrier CVN-81 with traditional steam and hydraulic systems.

PoK: JAAC alleges two people injured in firing by Pakistani security forces in Rawalakot

Islamabad (Agency): The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), which has been leading the protest in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoK), has alleged that two people have been injured in firing by Pakistani security forces in Rawalakot. The JAAC urged international human rights groups and media to monitor the situation in PoK. The video shared by JAAC on X, shows several people gathered in a room while a man was undergoing treatment. In the video, the man said that a person was injured after security forces opened fire at people in PoK and vowed to continue the protest. While sharing the video on X, JAAC stated, "Two people have been injured following



firing by security forces in Rawalakot. The use of force against civilians is deeply alarming. We call for an immediate end to violence and urge international human rights organisations and the media to closely monitor the situation on the ground." The JAAC's statement comes after thousands of people took part in protest rallies held in several parts of PoK on Thursday, expressing full support to the JAAC and raise their voices against the brutal violence unleashed by the Pakistani forces over the past many months. Several videos were posted on social media platforms, including by JAAC, showing people gathered in large numbers on the streets of Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot,

"ye gundagardi na bhai na, ye daishtgardi na bhai na, ye afra tafi na bhai na" and "awaaz do hum ek hai, Mirpur mein, hum ek hai, Kotli mein, hum ek hai, Rawalakot mein, hum ek hai, Bagh mein, hum ek hai, Muzaffarabad mein, hum ek hai." Sharing videos of the protest on X, JAAC stated, "Large number of women and children have joined the ongoing protest in Rawalakot, standing alongside their families and communities to raise their voices for fundamental rights, justice and the implementation of public demands. Their participation reflects how deeply this movement has reached across society." PoK is currently witnessing the most extensive confrontation between the local population and the Pakistani state in decades, with deadly violence, suspension of the internet, and allegations of police brutality. The protests, which initially began over increasing prices of electricity and essential commodities, have transformed into a movement calling for political reforms, greater accountability, and representative government. In recent weeks, several videos posted on various social media handles, including that of the JAAC, have showed the brutality of Pakistani forces in PoK. On August 1, JAAC member Sardar Umar Nazir Kashmiri said that more than 50 people have been killed and hundreds injured during the brutal crackdown by Pakistani forces in PoK.

UN warns Al Qaida seeking to establish terrorist cells in Bangladesh

Dhaka (Agency): The United Nations Security Council has warned that Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) is attempting to use Bangladesh as a base to establish terrorist cells. The finding appears in the 38th report of the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. The report was submitted to the Security Council committee dealing with Islamic State, Al-Qaida and associated groups. The report said that the November 2025 Red Fort attack in Delhi was

linked to AQIS, while highlighting concerns over the group's efforts to use Bangladesh as a base for building terrorist networks. Bangladesh media reported. Against this backdrop, the team warned that terrorist threats "intensified" in South Asia. After the democratically elected Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was forced into exile by an uprising in which Islamist elements played a leading role, fears have mounted over terrorist groups finding a fertile ground there.

NATO fighter jets shoot down drone that entered Latvian airspace

Riga (Agency): Fighter jets from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Baltic Air Policing mission shot down a "foreign drone" that entered Latvian airspace on Friday, a report said. The Latvian armed forces said the drone entered Latvia's airspace due to "Russian electromagnetic warfare" and that it was detected over the Baltic nation's Balvi. Euro News reported. They said that additional air defence units have been deployed at the country's eastern borders and will continue to keep watch on its airspace. "As long as Russia's aggression in



Ukraine continues, a recurrence of cases where foreign drones enter or approach Latvian airspace is possible," the armed forces said. Airspace threats were identified in Preiļi, Rezekne, Balvi, Audaugarda, and Aluksne areas, but these have since ended, Euro News reported. The latest drone interception in Latvia comes after several such incidents have been reported in NATO airspace. Last month, Romanian Air Force pilots shot down a third drone that entered Romanian airspace without authorisation. According to the Ministry of National Defence

of Romania, the drone was safely shot down 12 km northeast of Sulina, within Romania's territorial waters. Romanian President Nicusor Dan congratulated the pilots for their work and called Russia's actions "inadmissible and intolerable" for violating Romania's airspace. According to the investigation conducted by the General Prosecutor's Office, the drone shot down was of the Shahed type, used by Russia against Ukraine. Investigations into the drones shot down later are ongoing. "Romania's diplomatic protest against the Russian Federation will be based on these investigations." Dan noted. "It is inadmissible and intolerable for the Russian Federation to continue violating Romania's airspace, which is, at the same time, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) airspace and European Union airspace. Such actions are unacceptable, and we treat them with the utmost seriousness, alongside our allies," he stressed. On July 25, a drone violating Romanian airspace was shot down about 10 km west of Sfântu Gheorghe in central Romania.

Tanzid Hasan becomes first Bangladesh batter to hit Test ton against Australia

Darwin: Playing in just his second Test match, young left-handed opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim etched his name into the record books by becoming the first Bangladesh batter to score a Test century on Australian soil on day two of the ongoing first Test on Friday. Tanzid, 25, produced a disciplined yet aggressive 101 off 190 balls to put the visitors firmly in the driver's seat. Tanzid's landmark knock surpassed former opener Hannan Sarkar's 23-year-old record of 76, which was previously the highest individual Test score by a Bangladeshi batter in Australia back in 2003 in Cairns. Building on the early momentum provided by speedster Hasan Mahmud's brilliant figures of 6-55 that skittled Australia out for a paltry 198 on day one, Tanzid anchored Bangladesh's response with remarkable composure against a formidable home attack featuring Australia skipper Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood, and Nathan Lyon. Surviving an early scare when he was dropped on zero by Lyon in the second over, Tanzid showed elite temperament. He forged a solid 102-run second-wicket partnership with Mominul Haque (49) before skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto joined him to further stretch the visitors' lead. While being very strong through the off-side, Tanzid reached his maiden Test hundred in 188 balls with a crisp punch to long-off, and celebrated the milestone alongside his captain after punching the air in delight. His watchful innings included eight boundaries and a towering straight six off Beau Webster.

Golf: Shubham Jaglan fires final-round 64 to bag maiden title at Coal India Open

Kolkata: Shubham Jaglan produced a superb final-round six-under 64 to claim his maiden professional title by two shots at the second edition of the Rs 1 crore Coal India Open at Tollygunge Club. The 21-year-old from Panipat, Haryana, posted rounds of 67, 65 and 64 to finish the weather-shortened tournament at 14-under 196. Jaglan earned the winner's cheque of Rs 15 lakh and climbed 12 places from 26th to 14th in the PGTI Rankings. His season's earnings increased to Rs 26,99,875. "It feels pretty awesome," said Jaglan. "The first win is very special. I was nervous over the last few holes, so I'm proud of the way I finished." The tournament was reduced to 54 holes after heavy rain disrupted the second round. The fourth round was cancelled, with Friday's third round serving as the final round and being played with a shotgun start. Jaglan began the final round from the second hole. He was tied fifth and four shots behind overnight leader Jamal Hossain at the start of the round. His challenge suffered an early setback when he bogeyed the opening hole, but his calm response set the tone for the rest of the day. "I made a poor swing with my first shot, but I didn't get upset," he said. "I knew I had to shoot a low score after starting four behind, so I kept my cool." Jaglan recovered quickly and moved into contention during a decisive stretch. A birdie on the difficult sixth was followed by an eagle on the par-five seventh, transforming the momentum of his round. His six-under 64, the lowest score of the final day, featured an eagle, six birdies and two bogeys. It allowed him to erase the four-shot deficit and move clear of the field. The pressure returned on the closing holes. After seeing the leaderboard on the 18th, Jaglan knew his lead had been reduced to one

shot. Instead of adopting a defensive approach, he struck two assured shots and finished with a birdie to secure the title. "I knew I was only one ahead, but the standard on the PGTI is so high that you can never let up," he said. "I hit two great shots and made the putt. You have to keep pushing." His father Jagpal Jaglan, who has caddied for him for nearly a decade through junior, amateur and professional golf, was once again on the bag. "We understand each other very well, and I don't think anyone believes in me

Tata Steel transfers ownership of Jamshedpur FC to Churchill Brothers FC



Jamshedpur: Tata Steel has agreed to transfer its equity shares in Jamshedpur Football & Sporting Private Limited (JFSL), the company that owns the Indian Super League club Jamshedpur FC, to Goa's Churchill Brothers Football Club for a token consideration to ensure continuity for JFC players and coaching staff. As part of the transaction, which was made in accordance with All India Football Federation (AIFF) regulations, the club's "ISL sporting licence, 12 players and two coaches" will also be transferred to Churchill Brothers. "Tata Steel Limited and Churchill Brothers Football Club signed an agreement to this effect today. Churchill Brothers will take over the contracts of all JFC players and coaching staff with effect from

September 2026, offering them the opportunity to continue their professional football careers in the ISL. Churchill Brothers carries close to four decades of footballing legacy in Goa, with two I-League titles and a strong record in Indian domestic football," Tata Steel stated in a release. The transfer brings an end to Tata Steel's direct ownership of Jamshedpur FC, which has been a prominent part of the company's sporting ecosystem in Jharkhand. D.B. Sundara Ramann, vice president, Corporate Services, Tata Steel, said, "Churchill Brothers is a club with real history in Indian football, and we are glad that this agreement gives our players and coaches the opportunity to continue playing club football."

DPL 2026: 'We planned to take the match deep,' says Ashwini after Purani Dilli's win over North Delhi

New Delhi: Purani Dilli 6 batter Ashwini Chhillar revealed that the team decided to take the match deep and remain in the competition after they pulled off a stunning last-over victory against North Delhi Strikers in the Delhi Premier League (DPL) 2026 on Friday, recovering from a precarious position to snatch a thrilling four-wicket win. Reflecting on the memorable victory and his crucial contribution with the bat, Ashwini Chhillar expressed his delight at getting the

team over the line through calculated planning. "Winning a match like this brings immense joy. We had a clear plan: if we wanted to win, we needed to take the game deep and keep wickets in hand till the end so everyone coming down could contribute 10 to 15 runs. That was my mindset, especially after coming out to bat early today," Chhillar said after the match. Discussing the atmosphere within the squad and the mindset surrounding batting combinations, Chhillar highlighted

the team's readiness to seize key moments. "In the initial matches, players like Anuj and Lakra were scoring the runs. The mindset in the dugout has always been that whenever any player gets an opportunity at a new position, they have to step up, make it count, and win the game for the team," he explained. Despite playing a crucial knock of 45 off 36 balls, Chhillar admitted to a touch of disappointment at not staying until the very last ball to finish the chase himself.



This could be my last WC, I'm determined to achieve what we haven't yet: Manpreet



New Delhi: Ahead of the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, veteran midfielder Manpreet Singh has expressed his determination to capture a maiden World Cup medal and stated that it could be his final World Cup. The FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 presents India with a chance to end a 51-year wait for glory in the men's competition, with the team looking to add a second title to its historic 1975 triumph. Having secured back-to-back Olympic medals at Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024, the former captain said that adding a World Cup medal remains the ultimate unfulfilled objective for him. "This World Cup means a

lot to me because it's my fourth edition. We have won back-to-back Olympic medals, but a World Cup medal is still missing," Manpreet told JioStar. "Every player dreams of having both. For me, this could be my last World Cup, so I am approaching it with that mindset. I am determined to achieve what we haven't yet." The team has the experience and the talent to go all the way. We have prepared well, and the belief is high. Indian sports are rising across the board, and hockey is no different. We have won Olympic medals, and now it's time to go all the way in the World Cup," he headed.

Aiming to keep individual form high and power Barak Legends to APL title, says Bishal Saha



Guwahati: Standing at the top of the batting charts in the inaugural Assam Premier League, Barak Legends opener Bishal Saha said his primary focus remains on sustaining his fine individual form to lead his franchise in clinching the trophy. The left-handed batter has emerged as one of the standout performers of the tournament by amassing 279 runs from six innings at an impressive average of 55.8 and a strike rate of 122.91. For Saha, holding the Orange Cap is the culmination of targeted preparation over the past few months. "I have been hearing about the league since the last 5-6 months. I was preparing for it. I am in a good mindset right now. I scored a good run in the first match. Now, I just have to contribute for the team. I am improving

my score and the total of the team. That's it. It's simple," Saha said in a statement issued by the franchise on Friday. He also explained the importance of providing explosive starts at the top of the order, and made it clear that dominating the early overs remains central to his batting approach. "I want to win in powerplay. I want to capitalise on powerplay. If I perform well in powerplay, then the other players will play well," he added. He also credited the Assam Cricket Association (ACA) for launching the franchise-based league, and added that it is a vital stepping stone for local players to catch the eye of state selectors and advance to higher levels. "APL is the biggest platform for us right now."

The new format for the 2026 Hockey World Cup



that run simultaneously from August 15 to 30. While the guile and fight for the showpiece remain the same, teams will have to contend with a new format implemented in both the men's and women's World Cups this time around. Unlike in the previous editions, the tournament won't be having the conventional route to the medal matches through quarterfinals; instead, a second group stage phase has been introduced to test the best of the sides. What is the new Hockey World Cup format? To start with, 16 teams are traditionally placed in four pools of four each. In the men's World Cup, Pool A features the Netherlands, Argentina, New Zealand and Japan; Pool B has Belgium, France, Germany and Malaysia; Pool C includes Australia, Spain, Ireland and South Africa, while Pool D goes with England, India, Pakistan and Wales.

New Delhi: The men's and women's hockey World Cups are right on the horizon as the top teams around the world gear up for the ultimate showpiece in Belgium and the Netherlands. 16 heavyweights each in the men's and women's circuits will step onto the field, giving it their all for the coveted trophies in the World Cups

Centre steps in with jobs, Kerala govt boosts by awarding cash rewards for sporting personalities



Thiruvananthapuram: Four Malayali sportspersons have received the Centre's recognition in the form of government jobs, with the Mumbai Income Tax Department appointing them under the sports quota, while Kerala steps up its financial rewards for sporting excellence. Sandra Mol Sabu, Jilna M.V., Shyam Prasad U. and Alphonsia M. received their appointment orders from Alok Kumar, Mumbai Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, at an event at Aaykar Bhavan. The four have excelled in athletics, football and badminton. Sandra, who won gold in the 4x400m mixed relay and women's 4x400m relay at the 2026 Asian U-23 Athletics Championships in China, has been appointed as a Multi-Tasking Staff member. She had earlier won gold and silver at the 2024 Asian U-20 Athletics Championships in Dubai. Alphonsia, who represented Kerala in the Senior Women's National Football Championship in the 2024-25 and 2025-26 seasons, has also been appointed as Multi-Tasking Staff. Jilna, who won silver in the 4x100m relay at the South Asian Senior Athletics Championships in Ranchi and the National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships in Chennai in 2025, has been appointed as a Tax Assistant. Badminton player Shyam Prasad has also been appointed as a Tax Assistant. He won the men's doubles title at the 2023 APACAS Karakoram International Series and finished third in the men's doubles at the 2025 South Zone Inter-State Badminton Championships.