

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

Umar's associate Aamir sent to 10-day custody

New Delhi
The Patiala House Court has remanded Aamir, a friend of Umar, an accused arrested in connection with a major terrorist attack in Delhi, to the National Investigation Agency's custody for 10 days. This decision was taken considering the arguments present-

ed by the NIA in court and the gravity of the case. Aamir was produced in court amid tight security. The hearing was held in a closed room. The media was not permitted during the hearing. The accused was presented before District Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna.NIA arrested Aamir, a friend of terrorist Umar.The



National Investigation Agency, which is investigating the car bomb blast in Delhi's Red Fort area, has

arrested a Kashmiri resident who conspired with the suicide bomber to carry out the terrorist attack. The

attack killed 13 innocent people and injured approximately 32 others. According to the NIA, the arrested accused, Amir Rashid Ali, is the registered owner of the car used by the suicide bomber in the blast. Preliminary investigations have revealed that the accused had mas-

terminded the entire plan in collaboration with the attacker. After taking over the case from the Delhi Police, the agency launched a massive manhunt for the accused. After conducting a search operation in several states, Amir Rashid Ali was finally arrested in Delhi.Bilal Ahmed's post-mortem was not conducted.The post-

42 Indians killed in Saudi Arabia bus accident



New Delhi
A tragic incident was reported from Saudi Arabia on Monday. Forty-two Indian nationals are feared dead in a road accident. The accident occurred around 1:30 a.m. last night when a passenger bus traveling from Mecca to Medina met with an accident.Telangana CM Expresses Deep CondolenceTelangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy expressed grief over the incident and released a helpline number. Initial reports indicate that some of the passengers were from Hyderabad. The CM has directed Shivadhar Reddy to

collect details of the victims. He also directed officials to coordinate with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Saudi Embassy for immediate relief measures.Owaisi Contacts Indian EmbassyHyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi expressed grief over the accident involving a bus carrying Indian Umrah pilgrims in Saudi Arabia. In a telephone conversation, Owaisi said he has contacted two travel agencies in Hyderabad and shared the passengers' information with the Riyadh Embassy. He also spoke with Abu Mathen George.

'Operation Sindoor' was just a trailer: Army Chief

Open warning to Pakistan; Army prepared after Delhi blast case



New Delhi
Following the car bombing near the Red Fort in Delhi, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi has sent a powerful message to Pakistan and the terrorist organizations it supports. He clearly stated that India's recent action, Operation Sindoor, was just a trailer and that the country is fully prepared for any major challenge. The Army Chief stated at the Chanakya Defence Dialogue on Monday that India will deal with terrorists and their supporters in the same manner. He said, "When any country promotes state-sponsored terrorism, it hin-

ders India's progress. In such a situation, we are forced to take action."General Dwivedi's warning to PakistanGeneral Dwivedi reiterated that India's stance is clear: talks and terror cannot go together. He said that India wants peace, but any country or organization that promotes terrorism will receive a strong response. The Army Chief stated that Operation Sindoor was completed in 88 hours and clearly demonstrates India's capabilities. He said, "If Pakistan gives us

eral terrorist hideouts and airbases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. He also stated that today's conflicts are multi-domain and can last for a long time, so the military is prepared for all eventualities. Tensions eased when Pakistan's Director General of Police (DGMO) initiated peace talks. However, India has clearly stated that the operation is only on pause, not over. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also warned that any future terrorist attack will be considered an act of war by India. Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan has stressed the need for integration of the armed forces, stating that during this process, each service will retain its individual identity and their best practices will be incorporated into the unified command.



Haryana Governor Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh along with his wife Mitra Ghosh met the Vice President of India C.P. Radhakrishnan at the Vice President's Enclave in New Delhi.

CM launches portal for fire safety certificate

New Delhi
Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has made the fire safety certificate renewal system online. She launched the portal for online renewal of fire safety certificates at the Delhi Secretariat on Saturday. Delhi Government Home and Education Minister Ashish Sood and senior officials from the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) were also present at the special event. The portal, devel-



oped through a joint effort by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Delhi

Government, fundamentally restructures the fire safety renewal process in Delhi.

The Chief Minister stated that over the past eight months, the Delhi Government has implemented several landmark reforms that are directly benefiting businesses, citizens, and various institutions in the capital. She explained that the processes related to fire permits, licensing, and other mandatory approvals have been simplified, transparent, and transformed into a single-window system.

CDS lashes out at defence companies: 'Show a bit of patriotism'



NEW DELHI: Flagging concerns that Indian arms companies were failing to deliver emergency procurements on time and that some of them were even inflating the extent of indigenous content in their products, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan has said the armed forces expect "a bit of nationalism and patriotism" in industry's "profit-driven endeavours". "Defence reforms are not a one-way street. (Domestic) industries will have to be truthful about their indigenous capabilities to us. You cannot leave us in the

There used to be riots here every third day, the same state gave us a model of law and order: Yogi

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, comparing Uttar Pradesh before 2017 with today's Uttar Pradesh, said that while riots used to occur every third day, sisters, daughters, and businessmen were unsafe, and the state faced an identity crisis, today the same state has given the country a model of law and order. This can only be achieved through effort. Today, every festival is celebrated with enthusiasm and joy, be it Holi-Diwali, Eid-Bakrid, or Christmas. This is how the rule of law works. After presenting medals and degrees to meritorious students at BRD University on Monday, Yogi said that the



medicine is bitter, but the results are pleasant. It is because of law and order that the state has attracted investments worth ₹45 lakh crore. Eight years ago, this same state did not receive even ₹5,000 crore in five years. Uttar Pradesh contributed

only 8 percent to the national economy. Today, the state has risen from 14th to second in the ease of doing business. The state used to be in the bottom five in almost all national schemes. Today, it ranks in the top three.CM Yogi also praised Uttar

Pradesh's contribution to Operation Sindoor. He said, "The drones manufactured here also played a major role. When it came to establishing the BrahMos unit, land was the biggest challenge, but we decided to provide free space for BrahMos in the capital itself. We were asked how such a large piece of land could be given away for free, but I was determined. The land would have been worth barely 200 crore rupees at the time, but with the establishment of the BrahMos unit, Uttar Pradesh will receive 300 to 500 crore rupees in GST annually."They were stealing flower pots from a Mercedes; if they had been caught, it would have brought shame to the

Bangladesh: Sheikh Hasina sentenced to death

Dhaka

The court has delivered its verdict on five serious charges against former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The court found her guilty and sentenced her to death. This decision has caused a sensation not only in Bangladesh but throughout the world. In its verdict, the Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal found Sheikh Hasina guilty of acts against humanity. In addition to the former Prime Minister, the court also ordered action against former Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and former Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Ali. A

three-judge bench headed by Justice Mohammad Golam Mazumder stated that all three accused were involved in the killing of protesters, which sparked violence across the country. The court declared Sheikh Hasina and Kamal fugitives and ordered the punishment of Chowdhury Abdullah Ali. The court acknowledged that the Hasina government ignored the demands of students. When a large number of students took to the streets to protest, the former Prime Minister made an offensive statement, calling them "Razakars."Following this statement by Sheikh Hasina, students, including female students, became enraged, and the protesters resorted to violence.

Kerala: BLOs boycott The Special Intensive Revision

Thiruvananthapuram



The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process was affected across Kerala on Monday as booth-level officers (BLOs) boycotted work following the suicide of one officer, allegedly due to work stress. According to reports, 44-year-old Anish George, a BLO in Payyannur, Kannur district, was found hanging in his home on Sunday. Family members and local residents alleged that he took the extreme step due to work pressure related to the SIR process.Trade Unions Protest, Demand Postponement of SIRSeveral trade unions of state government employees, including the Working Council of State Government Employees and Teachers and

the Joint Committee of Teachers' Service Organizations, protested at the district collectorate, demanding that officials refrain from putting excessive pressure on BLOs and consider postponing the SIR. The Kerala NGO Association also held protests across the state, demanding that SIR processes be halted to prevent further suicides.

Meanwhile, George's body was handed over to his relatives after a post-mortem on Monday. George's family reiterated that the pressure of SIR-related work was immense. George's brother-in-law, Saiju, told reporters, "He didn't even get time to eat or sleep properly.He was under immense pressure to complete the work assigned to him under the SIR exercise." Saiju further explained that senior officials constantly contacted George for updates. He said, "Given the immense workload, George's father told him not to worry even if he lost his job."The role of CPI(M) workers should also be investigated"Opposition leader V.D. Satheesan said that preliminary investigations indicate that CPI(M) workers should also be involved in George's suicide. He alleged, "We learned that George was threatened when a Congress booth-level agent accompanied him for the counting." He also alleged that both the BJP and the CPI(M) are trying to exclude traditional Congress voters from the electoral rolls.Satheesan also lashed out .

Amrit Pharmacy will be established in every medical college and district hospital

New Delhi
Union Health and Family Welfare Minister J.P. Nadda on Saturday announced the extensive expansion of the AMRUT network across the country, stating that the goal now is to provide AMRUT pharmacies in every medical college and every district hospital in the country, ensuring access to affordable medicines for every citizen. Nadda was addressing the gathering after inaugurating the 10th foundation day celebrations of AMRUT (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for

Enemy drones will be destroyed mid-air: Force will include anti-drone systems

New Delhi

In Operation Sindoor, the Pakistani Army used a large number of drones against India. In response, the Indian armed forces are strengthening their capabilities against enemy drones. To this end, the Army and Air Force are placing orders for 16 indigenously developed "Drone Detection and Interdiction Systems." This system is capable of targeting and disabling enemy drones with a laser beam from a



distance of two kilometers.The Defense Ministry is expected to soon approve the Defense Research and Development Organization's (DRDO) Integrated Drone Detection and Interdiction System (Mark 2). Defense officials stated

that the 10-kilowatt laser beam will double the range of enemy drones. The previous system was only capable of targeting enemy drones up to a distance of one kilometer.Five-kilometer range being testedDRDO is continuously developing long-range laser-based drone detection and interception systems. In this development, India has also successfully tested a Direct Energy Weapon System, which can target systems up to five kilometers away.

Railways now prepare reservation charts 8 hours before departure

Delhi: Indian Railways will compile the reservation chart 8 hours before the train's departure, up from 4 hours, to improve passenger convenience. This adjustment aims to reduce passenger uncertainty, especially for waitlisted tickets. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw evaluated ticket booking reform efforts before making the decision. He said the ticketing process should be smart, transparent, and efficient, prioritizing passenger comfort. The reservation chart will be prepared at 9 p.m. the night before for trains departing before 2 p.m. A gradual implementation will provide a smooth transition without disturbance. Travelers from outlying places or suburbs of big cities will benefit from additional time to check their ticket status and make alternate travel plans. Waitlist passengers will receive early ticket confirmation updates, making their



DJB served with a notice by NGT

Delhi: National Green Tribunal (NGT) has served notice on the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) following a petition alleging that private developers had unlawfully dug borewells and were drawing groundwater without authorization. According to the petitioner, Arun Kumar Tomar, nothing happened after he complained to the

travel plans more predictable. Indian Railways plan to upgrade its Passenger Reservation System (PRS) by December 2025. The Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) is

DJB chairman. According to Tomar, 19 private builders in Delhi had allegedly dug illegal borewells. The charges necessitate confirmation by means of a spot examination by the DJB, as pointed out Prakash Shrivastava. It further stated that the relevant SDM should subsequently take the required measures.

developing a PRS that can handle 10 times more loads. Over 1.5 lakh tickets can be booked and 40 lakh ticket enquiries handled each minute if deployed.

Rural Journalists Association Meeting Concludes, Focus on Impartiality, Unity, and Journalists' Interests

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Gazipur. Muhammadabad TehsilAn important meeting of the Rural Journalists Association, Tehsil unit, was held on Wednesday in the Tehsil Journalists' Auditorium. The meeting was conducted by the organization's president, Ramvilas Pandey. Several active journalists from the tehsil area were present. Various journalists discussed in detail the technical and administrative challenges they face during news gathering. Journalists stated that they often face obstacles while collecting news at the grassroots

level, which require organizational efforts to overcome. Organization President Ramvilas Pandey stated that journalism is a mirror of society, and maintaining its credibility is every journalist's primary responsibility. He emphasized that journalists must discharge their duties with impartiality and fearlessness. Only by remaining united can we effectively raise social issues.

"Clean and fearless journalism is the foundation of a journalist's respect." The journalists present at the meeting decided to further strengthen the organiza-

tion, increase mutual coordination, and effectively raise issues related to the safety and rights of journalists with the administration. All journalists unanimously stated that concrete steps will be taken to protect the interests of journalists in the coming days. Vice President Pradeep Kumar Pandey, Somnath Singh Kushwaha, Narendra Rai, Reyaz Ahmed, JP Rai, Angad Dubey, and Ramashankar Sharma, along with many other journalists, were present at the meeting. The meeting concluded in a cordial and positive atmosphere.

Arvind Kejriwal Slams BJP

Delhi: AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal urged slum dwellers to protest against the BJP-led govt's demolition drives and reject both the BJP and Congress in future elections. Addressing a protest at Jantar Mantar, Kejriwal said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi said 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahan Makan', but what he

meant was 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahan Maidan'. His promises are false, and I urge you not to fall for them in future." He alleged that the Rekha Gupta-led Delhi govt has "ruined" the city in just five months. "We left a perfectly fine Delhi. But these people ruined it. There are long power cuts, school fees have been hiked, and their

ministers and MLAs are busy looting Delhi," he charged. Calling for unity among slum dwellers, Kejriwal said, "There are 40 lakh slum dwellers. If you take to the roads, they will be forced to stop the demolitions." He added, "The Anna movement started from Jantar Mantar and removed the Congress from power.

A Tehsil-level sports and cultural program for children with disabilities was held

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Soraon

A Tehsil-level sports and cultural program for children with disabilities was organized in the courtyard of BRC, Soraon, on Monday under the leadership of Block Education Officer, Suman Mishra. The program was inaugurated by lighting a lamp at the statue of Goddess Saraswati. Block Education Officer, Holagarh, Lalji Sharma was also present. Children with disabilities from all categories participated in a running competition. Children with intellectual



disabilities, visual impairments, and hearing impairments participated enthusiastically.

Visually impaired children participated in a touch-and-identify competition, while hearing impair-

ments participated in a painting competition. Children with orthopedic impairments participated in a calligraphy competition. Children with intellectual and visual impairments participated in a chair race. A singing competition and cultural program for visually impaired children were successfully organized. To make this program successful, Special Educator and Guide Teachers of Soraon Tehsil, Dilip Tiwari, Manoranjani Devi and Brijesh Yadav, Arvind Singh, Dayanand Mishra, Gayatri Yadav BRC staff organized the disabled sports competition.

Police launch major crackdown on cow smuggling, illegal pistol, shovel, and beef remains recovered

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Gazipur. A notorious cow smuggler was injured and arrested in a police encounter by the Nonhara police station team. One country-made pistol, one 315-bore empty cartridge, one shovel, and beef remains were recovered from his possession. As part of the Superintendent of Police's campaign against crime and criminals, the Ghazipur police were checking suspicious individuals and vehicles at various locations when Inspector-in-Charge Nonhara received infor-

mation from an informant that the accused in connection with the beef found in the sack last night were present in the Siwan of village Baraar and were attempting to bury the remaining remains. They could be apprehended if prompt action was taken. To verify this information, Inspector-in-Charge Nonhara and his team arrived near the location. Hearing the sound of the police team, the criminals targeted the police team and fired one round from a country-made pistol with the intention of killing

them. The police team fired in self-defense in a balanced manner and the criminal got shot in his left leg. The injured criminal is being sent to Sadar Hospital, Ghazipur for first aid. Taking advantage of the darkness, two other accused managed to escape from the spot. Further legal action is being taken. In-charge Inspector Nonhara Pawan Upadhyay along with his team and outpost in-charge Atwa Mod Ajay Kumar along with his team were present in the arresting police team.

High-budget projects can now be approved by DJB

"Delhi: The Delhi government has granted the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) financial autonomy, allowing it to unilaterally approve high-cost projects, including ones surpassing Rs 50 crore, which could greatly reduce administrative impediments that the agency has been facing. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced the decision, calling it a "historic step" towards expediting the implementation of vital projects pertaining to the regeneration of the Yamuna River, the control of drains, and the supply of drinking water. "Our government is dedicated to providing people with results-oriented governance, not confusing them with red tape," Gupta reportedly stated, according to the (CMO) For the first time ever, the Delhi government has grant-



ed the Jal Board the power to make decisions and finish projects, which is a monumental step forward. The evolved into something more than just a symbol; it can now function independently and effectively. According to the chief marketing officer, the Board can skip waiting for Cabinet clearance on projects worth crores of rupees. This decision to give the Delhi Jal Board additional money is a huge leap forward in terms of making the government more efficient

Govt allocates 12,952 crore for public transport system

The BJP government, led by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, presented its maiden budget on Tuesday, March 25. Gupta presented 1 lakh crore budget for 2025-26, a 31.56% increase from last year. In the budget for the financial year 2025-26, the government has allocated 12,952 crore to improve Delhi's public transport system. It has allocated 1,000 crore to improve the connectivity of Delhi with the NCR region.

Delhi L-G Saxena asks the CM Rekha Gupta to reconsider the old vehicle fuel ban

Delhi : Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has written to Chief Minister Rekha Gupta to review the blanket fuel restriction on end-of-life (EOL) vehicles in Delhi amid growing public concerns. Starting July 1, the Commission for Air Quality Management directive, which has since been overturned, prohibited petrol pumps from refueling diesel vehicles older than 10 years and petrol ones older than 15 years, causing confusion and criticism around the city. In a



comprehensive letter, L-G Saxena noted the CAQM directive presents practical, legal, and socio-economic issues. He mentioned the CM's recent meeting and the

Environment Minister's request to CAQM to suspend the order due to technical issues and uneven enforcement across NCR. Saxena called the fuel embargo on

Delhi govt approves waiver on late payment surcharge

Delhi: Delhi govt has given in-principle approval to waive late payment surcharges on inflated water bills, which will bring relief to lakhs of people who have raised concerns about receiving inflated bills. The waiver, however, will be for domestic and government houses, not for commercial consumers. Water minister Parvesh Verma said the scheme will be launched in two months. He said that the implementation awaits a software upgrade, shifting the existing Oracle-based system to a cloud-based platform. "Once the new system is operational.

older vehicles "perhaps breach legal certainty in need of a comprehensive reappraisal," and equitable treatment. warning that it could

Delhi may hire a third party to provide fire OKs

Delhi : Delhi government may hire licensed third-party firms to handle fire safety certifications and no objection certificates (NOCs), relieving the fire department. This is part of a larger attempt to make city business easier. Fire agencies no longer issue NOCs in various states. Instead, private fire

safety firms that are certified by the state after an examination of their capabilities and competence have been given the duty, said a home department official who oversees fire services. This is being considered to let fire departments focus on fighting without managing certification requests.

The official stated that no proposal has been written while the notion is being considered. The tentative plan calls for third-party audits of major businesses like factories, with the fire department granting certificates. Smaller businesses like offices could be certified directly by agencies. "Nothing

is finalized. The official said all possibilities are being studied. The move follows the government's removal of Delhi Police licensing requirements for hotels, discotheques, swimming pools, amusement parks, video game parlours, and auditoriums to reduce bureaucracy.

Sensational revelation in Sakshi's murder case: Army man killed under pressure from love affair and marriage

Sakshi's wings were tied with a scarf; her school bag was found 500 meters from the crime scene, The accused is posted as a pilot in the Bofors unit in Patiala, Punjab; he was home on leave

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Police have solved the murder of Sakshi Yadav (17), an 11th-grade student found buried in a deserted garden in Lakhrawan village, Tharwai police station area. The case took a new turn when the investigation revealed that Sakshi was murdered by none other than her lover, a Naik in the Army. The police's revelation has sent shockwaves throughout the region. Sakshi left for school from her uncle, Havildar Shyam Lal Yadav's quarters in the Cantonment area on November 10th but never returned home. After several days of searching, her body was found buried in the deserted forest of Lakhrawan on Saturday. Her legs were bound with a scarf, her face bore deep wounds, and her body was decomposed. A shoe found nearby and her school bag, found 500 meters away, proved crucial in the investigation. Based on the mobile numbers written in notebooks found in the bag, the police began piecing together clues. The investigation revealed that Sakshi had been in a long-term love affair with a soldier living near the cantonment. The woman had been pressuring him to marry her, but the soldier's marriage had been arranged elsewhere. Fear and fear of social stigma had caused him stress. According to the police, to escape this pressure, he called Sakshi to meet him in a secluded garden. When a dispute escalated, he murdered her and buried her body in a pit. Surprisingly, when villagers, police,



and a crowd gathered at the scene upon receiving information about the body, the accused soldier was also among the crowd. He watched the entire incident from the front to avoid suspicion. The accused is currently posted as a pilot at the Bofors unit in Patiala, Punjab, and was home on leave. The police gathered evidence against the accused using squad dogs, technical investigations, and items found. The phone number, call details, and location written in the

copy clearly revealed the murder. During the interrogation that continued late into the night, several facts emerged, based on which the police arrested the accused from the scene. Following Sakshi's murder, the family is in a state of mourning. The family demands that their daughter's murderer be punished severely. The police are now thoroughly investigating every aspect of the case and will soon present a detailed report on the entire incident.

Naib Tehsildar attacked, head injured with stone



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Naib Tehsildar Rajiv Shukla was attacked. On Monday evening, he had arrived to remove illegal encroachment from leased land. He had also called for a bulldozer. As soon as the revenue team began demolishing the illegal construction, a mob attacked. The Naib Tehsildar was injured in the stone pelting, suffering a head injury. Two

police officers were also injured. Chaos ensued. During this, the mob also set fire to three huts, destroying all the belongings in the huts. The revenue team had to halt the operation and return. The injured have been hospitalized. The Naib Tehsildar received stitches on his head. The incident occurred in Karnaipur village, under the Baharia police station. Police have registered a case against 13 people.

Overtaking a luxury car, the occupants of the vehicle rolled into a ditch, narrowly escaping



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ajhuwa. Near the Kanwar border of the Kaushambi Saini police station, the occupants of a high-speed luxury car collided with a tanker and rolled into a ditch. According to the incident, Ankit Agnihotri, son of Vimal Agnihotri, and his unidentified friend were traveling from Kanpur to Prayagraj in a luxury vehicle. While trying to overtake, they collided with a tanker on the road in front of Chaudhary Restaurant near the Kanwar border. The car collided with the tanker's side

and fell into a ditch below the highway. The luxury vehicle overturned several times and was completely destroyed in the accident. However, there were no casualties. The driver, Ankit Agnihotri, son of Vimal Agnihotri, was injured. The container driver, Laxmikant, a resident of Aligarh, fearfully parked the tanker and the vehicle in Ajhuwa town. The Ajhuwa outpost police arrived at the scene, treated the injured, and began questioning the tanker driver. The tanker driver, Kali, was on his way to Bihar with a load of asphalt from Gujarat.

A gang is threatening complainants, and the police are also negligent

Several influential people are coordinating between the police and the bank to hush up the matter

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Kaundhiyara While the Chief Minister of the state is implementing a zero-tolerance policy towards crime, Yogi's police are merely investigating the case of opening accounts for the poor in the name of employment and then committing cyber fraud using those accounts. In the Kaundhiyara police station area, the police investigation is merely a formality, while the gang members are openly threatening women, causing fear and panic among them. When will the police take this matter seriously and investigate? This is a major



question for the victims. On Monday, women reached the police station and filed a complaint. Dozens of women from the village panchayat, along with half a dozen organized members from the village itself, opened bank accounts for women in the name of employment and committed cyber fraud of lakhs of rupees from these

accounts. The women have complained about this to higher authorities. On orders from higher authorities, the Kaundhiyara police are searching for the accused. On Monday, they served a legal notice at the bank, demanding the women's account details. Distressed by the complaint, the

accused are openly threatening the women and are trying to hush up the matter by blaming the police administration and bank employees. Following the complaint, dozens of women from the village, distraught by the threats and angered by the lack of police action, reached the Kaundhiyara police station and announced that if strict action is not taken against the accused, they will be forced to protest. Surprisingly, despite such serious allegations, it is taking the police three days to obtain information about the relevant bank accounts. There are reports that local intermediaries have begun colluding with the bank and

police to hush up the matter. While cyber fraud is on the rise, if police negligence leads to the case being suppressed, the morale of cyber fraudsters will skyrocket. It remains to be seen whether the police will investigate the case and bring the accused to justice, or whether the case will be shelved due to interference from middlemen and influential people. This time, the victims have decided to complain to the district commissioner and the Chief Minister. The matter is being investigated. Account details have been requested from the bank. Action will be taken after the details are received in three days. Abdus Salam Khan.

Illegal encroachments removed from four locations

Prayagraj

A campaign against illegal encroachments is being conducted under the leadership of the District Magistrate in all tehsils of Prayagraj district. On Monday, as part of a comprehensive campaign against illegal encroachments on barren land, barns, new fallow land, chauk marg, and pond land, illegal encroachments were removed from four locations in all tehsils of the district. Chauk marg in villages Dihiya, Viraha, and Pathartal in Tehsil Koraon, and road land in village Mahuli, were cleared of



encroachment. District Magistrate Prayagraj Manish Kumar Verma has directed the Sub-Divisional Magistrates and other officials of all tehsils to take immediate action on encroachment-related complaints. Furthermore, the District Magistrate Prayagraj has directed all Sub-Divisional Magistrates and

Tehsildars to conduct a new survey of government land/Gram Sabha land in the tehsils, determine the categories of encroachments based on this survey, and take action against encroachments accordingly. So far, this campaign has yielded positive results, and the campaign against encroachment will continue in the coming days.

Eight students from Dharma Devi Inter College will participate in the 69th National Rifle Pistol Shooting Competition



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Kaushambi. District Magistrate Dr. Amit Pal honored eight students from Dharma Devi Inter College, Ken Kanwar, who will participate in the 69th National Rifle Pistol Shooting Competition, to be held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, from December 6 to December 9, 2025. Reshma

Devi, Madhu Devi, Neelu Kushwaha, Palak Jaiswal, Shikha Verma, Aniket Tiwari, Prachi Yadav, and Rudra Narayan in his office on Monday and congratulated them on winning medals at the national level. These students will make Kaushambi district proud by representing Uttar Pradesh.

Let us tell you that these stu-

dents have won medals in the state level rifle pistol shooting competition held in Varanasi from 13th October to 16th October, 2025 and have been selected to participate in the competition to be held at the national level. District School Inspector Rajesh Kumar and Principal Dr. Ram Kiran Tripathi were present on this occasion.

Superintendent of Police held a meeting with subordinates to prevent road accidents.

Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar said that road users should be safe and no family should be torn

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Kaushambi On November 17th, during Traffic Month, Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar held an important meeting at the police office to reduce road accidents and issued strict instructions to prevent them. He stated that road accidents should be prevented so that road users are safe and no family is torn apart. During the meeting, the Superintendent of Police clearly told his subordinates that concrete steps need to be taken to reduce road accident deaths in the districts. To address this problem, the Ministry has launched a program called "Zero Fatality District" (ZFD). Its aim is to significantly reduce and eventually eliminate accidental deaths in these high-risk districts. The Superintendent of Police stated that the police are



committed to preventing accidental deaths and are working together to achieve the goal of safer roads. To address this problem, the Ministry has launched a program called "Zero Fatality Districts" (ZFD). Its aim is to significantly reduce and eventually eliminate accidental deaths in these high-risk districts. This ranking is based on an analysis of three years of road accident data. Under the pro-

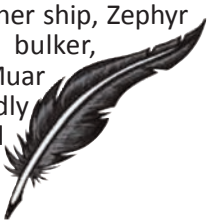
gram, a new initiative has been launched to reduce road accidents in Uttar Pradesh. "Critical Corridor Teams" will be formed in 233 police stations across 20 districts, including Lucknow. These teams will be provided with specialized training and resources. These teams will analyze the causes of accidents. Its objective is to make the roads safe. To control road accidents, 'Critical Corridor Team' will be

formed in 20 districts. Necessary guidelines were given to the team for effective implementation. In the meeting, Circle Officer Traffic, Nodal Officer of CC Team Bhaiya Santosh Kumar Singh, Sub Inspector in charge of CC Team formed under Police Station Saini/Thana Kokhraj, Police Station Sandipanghat and team members Chief Constable and Constable were present.

Editorial

Protect and preserve the identity of the tribal communities

It is surprising that the strategic islands of Andaman, Car Nicobar, and Great Nicobar have not been developed all these years into ports and military bases to enhance trade and security in India's maritime zone. Nicobar offers excellent connectivity to at least five countries to the east—Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka—as well as Indian ports on the eastern coast. Some islands in Nicobar and Lakshadweep are out of bounds for outsiders, as these are inhabited by tribes that have not had any contact with the outside world. The scenic Barren Island is also out of bounds, as it is the only active volcano in India. There can be no two opinions as far as the need to protect the privacy of the tribes inhabiting some of these islands. There are reports of earlier attempts to establish contact with them and draw them into the civilisational mainstream, which were unsuccessful. Rules and regulations were made considering their resistance and respecting their right to continue with their unique lifestyle. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956, designates tribal reserves and restricts entry for outsiders. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, provides a legal framework against exploitation, while the Forest Rights Act, 2006, recognises their land rights. The Ministry of Home Affairs has put in place several restrictions and announced specific policies for the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) such as the Jarawas and Shompen. So, several laws and restrictions are already available to protect and preserve the identity of the tribal communities. In this scenario, there is hardly any need to shelve strategically important projects and infrastructure development schemes that will boost trade and commerce, tourism and maritime economy, and connectivity. Out of the 10 busiest container terminal ports in the world, six are in China, and one each in Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These account for as much as 60 to 70 per cent of the 20-foot and 40-foot (1 TEU and 2 TEU) containers transshipment. Apparently, nearly all these container terminals and other ports in Asia and the Indian subcontinent, as well as in China and the Far East, depend on the shipping lanes through the Malacca Strait, which accounts for nearly \$3.5 trillion in global trade. The Strait of Malacca is also an important maritime highway for the stakeholders of Indo-Pacific as it connects the Indian and Pacific Oceans. For the Quad and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), this sea lane of communication, accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the global GDP, becomes the lifeline to trade, commerce, and connectivity. There is no reason why India should not have a technologically equipped, functional, state-of-the-art port in Nicobar to tap into the trade happening through its precincts. Besides the economic uplift, a port facility in Nicobar and on other islands in the Indian Ocean can help India resolve other challenges too. By virtue of the gigantic number of ships—about 90,000—passing through a narrow Strait, the sea lanes of communication and the ports have become choke points in the Indian Ocean. Interestingly, in spite of the vast expanse of the sea, ships follow a designated route guided by navigation software, GPS, and Electronic Charting System (ECS), very much like the flight path in the sky. This often results in ships cruising very close and colliding due to massive waves, ocean currents, or simply not following the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS). In 2021, a container ship, Zephyr Lumos, collided with the bulkier, Galapagos, off the port of Muar in the Strait of Malacca, badly damaging the Galapagos and resulting in a huge oil spill.



It depicts the ideal state of affairs under their Utopia in such a complete fashion

Hemingway has a short story set in the Spanish Civil War context in which an old man leaving his town on the approach of rebel armies sits on the outskirts and shows concern, to a questioner (a foreign correspondent) with the fate of his old cat that he was obliged to leave behind than with the tragedy of the people involved in the horrors of the unusually savage civil war! We know that all through the long national liberation movement in India the British could find quite a number of Indian collaborators at the expense of their own countrymen. They did not feel the passion for freedom to any marked extent. They could not imagine how the country could manage without the British to govern them! To the large majority of people everywhere the status quo and the customary round seem to be as much part of nature as the stars, the sun and the moon. They cannot imagine a different state of affairs. In moral experience we are keenly aware that people have the greatest difficulty in realising in imagination the inward feelings and attitudes of their own neighbours. A great writer has a short story showing how the heads of husband and wife on adjacent pillows entertain widely different thoughts that seem to belong to separate worlds! The great problem of human life is this one of increasing understanding of men of each other's inward life by means of a more sensitive imagination. Socialist (communist) propaganda takes full advantage of this failing



of human beings. It depicts the ideal state of affairs under their Utopia in such a complete fashion that nothing is left to the imagination of those who are carried away by the promises of socialism regarding its new heaven and new earth, regarding its abolition of poverty, its reign of equality, its opportunity for self-realisation for all and so on. No schemes of logical criticism of the economics, psychology and philosophy of communism can have any effect on the believer and the fellow traveller. He comes to believe in the Marxist Gospel as in a new Bible or Koran as an infallible revelation for the scientific age of the present and future. The picture presented by the propaganda of the communist-socialists occupies the imagination of the intelligentsia of the present age, by and large, by reiteration, emphasis and appeal to humanitarianism as the only way of redeeming the under-dog. It bemoans the critical faculties. Moreover, criticism presupposes knowledge of alternatives. The greatest service that philosophy as a systematic science of reflection on ultimate reality and ultimate values renders

to civilisation, as pointed out so impressively by Dr. A. N. Whitehead, is the suggestion of alternative vision of society and natural relations or structure. Such alternative ideas release the mind from the stranglehold of custom or dogma, new or old and create an attitude of mind more open and hospitable to new ideas and rival hypotheses. It is therefore necessary to break the spell of socialist dogma on the imagination of fellow travellers and those attracted by its dogma on travellers and those attracted by its Utopia as the only way of progress based on science. This can be done by showing alternatives. Professor Bauer (specialist in the economy of backward peoples in the University of London) has said after a study of Indian Plans and Policies that the Indian Government seems more interested in realising socialism than in economic development itself! He has recorded his deliberate opinion that in the absence of the elaborate structure of controls and regulations, cribbing, cabinning and confining Indian enterprise in the private field, a faster and more many-sided progress in development would result.

That is to say, his special knowledge of economic facts and ideas enabled him to see other alternative possibilities in the Indian scene at present blocked by official programmes and policies and their acceptance as good and inevitable by the public. Even the opposition parties have failed to present sufficiently well-informed and comprehensive schemes of development making for better results without curbing individual initiative, repressing capital formation and freezing investment in the private sector. Another reason for this state of affairs, that is, for the failure of imagination on the part of critics and the general public to visualise their own schemes of development inspired by their own principles, views of social ideals and economic well-being and to present them to the electorate in rivalry to the official policy is their inability to think of alternatives. There was an opportunity before Indian leaders at the advent of independence in August 1947. But unfortunately India had a leader, sold body and soul to socialism at the moment of national self-government. Even before the first Five-Year Plan was launched under the auspices of the Planning Commission in perfect imitation of the Soviets, Parliament was enacting the Industrial Policy Resolution (1949) which laid down the outline of socialist policy reserving the commanding heights of the economy, as the phrase goes (in British Socialist parlance) meaning nationalisation or otherwise taking control of

the key industries, transport, insurance, railways, communications, mines, steel and other heavy industries for government ownership and management. The imagination of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru was completely dominated by the socialist programme of centralised economy after the pattern of Soviet Russia. The other members of Parliament had not the imagination to visualise the deleterious consequences for production and liberty, price levels, tax levels, misery depths and so on of such socialism as was realised through the years. They did not think out the rationale of the policies of socialism afresh. They took the European programmes for granted. They betrayed slave mentality in the intellectual and temporal field to an astonishing extent, for which the country is suffering even today. For one thing, the policies have not been reviewed from a rationalist and experiential point of view in the light of Indian conditions. The results of the Plans in terms of actual effects on the economy—prices, taxes, production, redistribution, national income, prosperity all round etc. have not been assessed from an independent point of view even yet. The founding of the Swatantra party is one sign of the awakening on the part of the intelligentsia that an alternative policy is possible and necessary. The work of the Libertarian Social Institute of Mr. Lotvala has been earliest in the field with its own independent and critical rethinking of Marx and communist programmes.

Qatar played all sides, peacemaker to Islamist safe haven. Now there's no place to hide

There, standing in a grey puddle of light under the glass-domed lounge at the Bayerischer Hof in Munich, Germany, former Afghan spymaster Amarullah Saleh understood the nation he had given his life to build was about to die. For almost a decade, the Taliban had enjoyed safe haven in Doha, operating a de facto embassy there with diplomatic protections. They received funds, drew up combat plans, and travelled to meet their top leaders in Karachi and Peshawar. The killing in Afghanistan, however, had continued without interruption—and President Ashraf Ghani wanted the jihadists gone. He said as much to the Emir of Qatar during the Munich Security Conference in 2020. A smile on his face, the Emir replied: "Well, we have only permitted them to stay in Qatar. Everything else, including their expenses, is managed and overseen by the Central Intelligence Agency. If you want this to end, ask the CIA to stop." This week, Qatar's

role as peacemaker in the Middle East came under assault, as a squadron of Israeli combat jets targeted terrorist group Hamas' headquarters, not far from Doha's famous Corniche. The bombing took place just as Hamas was discussing a Gaza ceasefire proposal made by US President Donald Trump. There was no reaction from the formidable air defences at Al-Udeid air base, home to the Qatar Emiri Air Force, the United States Air Force, and the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force. For decades, Qatar has sought security and prestige as the mediator between the United States and nations in conflict across the Middle East—sending billions of dollars to Hamas with the complete approval of the Israeli Prime Minister, funnelling cash to Benjamin Netanyahu's aides, helping the Islamists who seized power in Syria, and exerting influence from Egypt to Libya and Tunisia. As the world order threatens to buckle under new strains.

The key difference between India and China's response to Gen-Z protests in Nepal

The Generation Z-led protests in Nepal have caught the global attention, and international agencies as well as countries have come forward to condole the loss of around 30 lives and hundreds who were injured. While the United Nations noted, "We are shocked by the killings and injury of protesters in Nepal today and urge a prompt and transparent investigation." How did Nepal's closest neighbours, India and China, respond? A day after the protests began in Nepal on 8 September, India stated the next day that it was "closely monitoring the developments in Nepal... (and) our thoughts and prayers are with the families and deceased. India also added that "as a close friend and neighbour, we hope that all concerned will exercise restraint." The same evening, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "The violence in Nepal is heart-rending. I am anguished that many young people have lost their lives. The stability, peace and prosperity of Nepal are of utmost importance to us. I humbly appeal to all my brothers and sisters in Nepal to support peace." There was a divided crowd on social media about India's

approach, whether it was helpful and friendly or interventionist, but this came as no surprise, as the so-called border blockade of 2015 had already set the social media toolkit on India with hashtags like #BackoffIndia #GoBackIndia. It would not be an exaggeration to say that small-state syndrome became an intense public mood in Nepal as it approached relations with India, especially after Nepal promulgated the constitution in 2015. In a carefully worded statement, India added that it had 'noted' the new constitution and avoided using words like "welcome" to acknowledge the promulgation. In the same statement, India had urged that "issues on which there are differences should be resolved through dialogue in an atmosphere free from violence and intimidation and institutionalised in a manner that would enable broad-based ownership and acceptance" as it was deemed as external interference. However, these hashtags often resurface. While India quickly reacted to current developments, some in Nepal eagerly awaited a statement from China—its northern neighbour. Interestingly, China's response to Gen Z to

the current political developments appeared cautious and calculated, reflecting its broader regional strategic interests. After 2008, Beijing has carefully treaded with the Communist leadership in Nepal to deepen its diplomatic ties and goodwill in Nepal. The move has been viewed as a key element for strategic influence over the region. Leaders like KP Oli and Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda did not hesitate to use the China card to stoke the nationalistic sentiments in Nepal. Finally, on 10 September, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson issued a statement saying, "China and Nepal are each other's traditional friends and neighbours. Hope the various sectors in Nepal will approach the domestic issues properly and restore order and stability in the country soon." This was a typical Chinese statement—deliberately vague, refraining from specifying the events or parties involved, and notably omitting any reference to the human cost of the unrest. The carefully crafted words reflect China's preference for cautious diplomacy and projects that they do not comment.

Lifting night shift ban increased female employment in India—only among big firms

Do laws designed to protect women from unsafe working conditions constrain the demand for their labour? This question sits at the centre of global debates about protective legislation in labour markets. Our recent research (Gupta et al. 2025) examines what happened when Indian states lifted long-standing bans that prevented women from working night shifts in factories. Our findings offer important lessons for policymakers seeking to expand female employment, particularly considering the significant labour reforms that

have been recently initiated by many state governments. Do laws designed to protect women from unsafe working conditions constrain the demand for their labour? This question sits at the centre of global debates about protective legislation in labour markets. Our recent research (Gupta et al. 2025) examines what happened when Indian states lifted long-standing bans that prevented women from working night shifts in factories. Our findings offer important lessons for policymakers seeking to expand female employment,

particularly considering the significant labour reforms that have been recently initiated by many state governments. This "paternalistic discrimination" (Buchmann et al. 2023) reflects a global pattern. At least 20 countries still prohibit women from working at night, while 45 countries ban women from sectors deemed "unsafe" by lawmakers (World Bank, 2024). These restrictions, however well-intentioned, assume women lack agency to make their own employment choices and that employers are unable to provide safe workplaces for

all workers. India's experience is particularly important given its strikingly low female labour force participation rates and the potential for manufacturing to provide formal employment opportunities for women. In the early 2000s, a series of High Court judgements held that prohibitions against women working at night were unconstitutional because they deprived women of economic opportunities. Following these judgements, between 2014 and 2017, seven Indian states — Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh,

Flipkart Under Investigation for GST Billing Loophole

Delhi : Walmart-owned Flipkart is under a preliminary tax probe for allegedly changing its invoicing processes to lessen its GST tax due. Investigators claimed the corporation disguised seller marketplace fees as "transportation costs" to claim reduced GST rates for small road transport operators. It would lower the company's tax bill. Online marketplace activities like buying, selling, charging vendors commission, listing, and facilitating payments normally incur 18% GST. The article said the Directorate General of Goods and Services Tax Intelligence (DGGI) is investigating Flipkart accusations. Mint said that regulators will submit a show-cause notice for prosecution if they have comprehensive proof against the corporation. A Madras High Court lawyer wrote to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Flipkart's invoicing practice. The



Federation of International Trade Investor Gunodaya Association raised the issue in a press statement on August 23, the article said. The Supreme Court of India monopolistic heat hit the company earlier this year. The apex court said the e-commerce giant created market monopolies and worried about smaller businesses' future. Flipkart's apparent use of its dominant position prompted the bench to notify the company's counsel of their monopoly investigation. The investigating Amazon and Flipkart's alleged anti-competitive actions in 2020, including subsidizing some e-retailers.

PM to inaugurate SEMICON India 2025

Delhi : The administration boasted that the fourth edition of SEMICON India 2025, which has grown double the size of last year's edition, will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 2. New Delhi's Yashobhoomi (IIICC) will host the gathering from September 2-4, 2025. Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, and South Korea will all have their very own pavilions during SEMICON India. The United States, Malaysia will each host one of six country-specific roundtables. The number of states

In a \$235 million lawsuit against Byju's CEO, QIA

Delhi : Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) subsidiary Qatar Holding has petitioned the Karnataka high court to enforce an arbitral award of \$235 million (Rs 2,060 crore) against Byju Raveendran and Byju's Investments. From Feb 28, 2024, the claim includes 4% annual interest compounded everyday, totaling over \$14 million (Rs 123 crore). The disagreement began in September 2022 when Qatar Holding loaned BIPL \$150 million. Raveendran personally insured the debt to buy 17.8 million Aakash Educational Services shares. The funding terms prohibited the transfer of those shares, but Raveendran trans-



ferred them to another Singapore corporation, breaking the agreement. Qatar Holding wanted \$235 million early payments after repeated failures. Arbitration in was held in March 2024 when BIPL and Raveendran failed to comply. An emergency arbitrator froze assets up to the disputed amount worldwide, which the

Singapore high court confirmed. Finally, on July 14, the panel ordered \$235 million plus interest paid immediately. The enforcement suit seeks recognition of the award as a court judgment and an injunction on transfers and attachment of Raveendran and BIPL's Indian moveable and immovable assets.

The CCI approves Adani's plan to acquire JAL

Delhi : A regulator for fair trade If Adani Group is successful in its effort to acquire debt-ridden Jaiprakash Associates during the current insolvency process, the deal would be sanctioned in principle by CCI.

In a press release, the regulator described the proposed combination as involving the

acquisition of up to 100% of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL) shares by Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL), Adani Infrastructure and Developers Pvt Ltd (AIDPL), or another entity within the Adani Group.

The Adani Group's acquisition of JAL has been authorized by the Competition

Commission of India (CCI). The firm in question must obtain the competition watchdog's approval before submitting a resolution plan, as a result of a recent Supreme Court decision pertaining to the interpretation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

CAG report criticizes income tax department's arrears

Delhi : The CAG report on Income Tax department performance, tabled in Parliament, raised concerns over non-sharing arrears and outstanding demand data with the audit team. The report (No. 14 of 2024) found that the I-T department failed to furnish information for over 42% of requisitioned instances, restricting audit scope. "The I-T dept did not provide data on cases closed after March 2020, preventing verification of the correctness of the closure of these cases," noted. On March 2021, CAG reported that the I-T outstanding demand, raised but not achieved, was Rs 14.41 lakh crore, with Rs 10.58 lakh crore 'under dispute', 73% of the total. "Audit noticed instances of exaggerated tax demands



raised by the I-T dept, such as not allowing credit for taxes already paid by the assessee, levying incorrect interest, and committing mistakes while giving effect to the appeal orders," the CAG said. The report also found that nullified demands remained in outstanding demand, and the delay in implementing appeal orders delayed refunds, result-

ing in the I-T department issuing refunds for the inflated demands with interest and harassing assessee. Audit found incorrect reporting of outstanding demand, failure or delay in recovery of outstanding demand, and systemic issues like lack of granular data, risk scoring technique in setting targets, dossier report non-maintenance.

DGCA approves IndiGo's 6-month extension of agreement with Turkish Airlines

Delhi: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has approved IndiGo's request to extend its agreement with Turkish Airlines, subject to regulatory conditions, the airline confirmed. Sources confirmed that the extension has been granted for 6 months, till February 28, 2026. The present extension was supposed to expire on August 31. In a statement issued by IndiGo, it said, "We acknowledge the acceptance of IndiGo's request for extension to its wet lease arrangement with Turkish Airlines, subject to conditions laid down by the regulator.

Distributors want bottled water, aerated drinks and GST lowered

Delhi : Before the 56th GST Council meeting next month, a key consumer products distributor association has called for a reconsideration on classifying aerated beverages as "sin" commodities and a reduction in the 18% GST on bottled water. The All India Consumer Products Distributors Federation (AICPDF) said taxing aerated beverages as "sin" goods at 28% with cigarettes and tobacco ignores the fact that over 70% of sales come from small packs of 10-20 drinks, mostly consumed by



low-income groups. These products are in the highest GST slab (28%), plus a 12% compensatory cess. "Listing these with dangerous products like cigarettes and tobacco is unjust and disproportionate. It reduces affordability and demand in a sector that sustains millions of

shopkeepers "AICPDF national president Dhairyaashil H Patil stated. Over 450,000 wholesalers and 13 million are represented by the federation. The federation also claimed lowering GST on bottled water from 18% will increase compliance, affordability.

Suzuki commits to investing Rs 70,000 cr in India

Delhi : While speaking at the e-Vitara launch, Toshihiro Suzuki, President of Global Suzuki, announced that Suzuki will spend Rs 70,000 cr in India over the course of five to six years. According to the head of the manufacturer, the investment would help boost production, introduce new models, and protect the company's position in the world's third-largest automobile market. More than 11 lakh people have found direct employment in the value chain thanks to the Japanese company's investment of more than Rs 1 lakh crore in India. Production of the e-Vitara electric SUV will begin in Gujarat, India, and will go to 100 different nations. Nevertheless, e-Vitara's launch in India has not yet been scheduled. The business plans to



Flight deck of Airbus helicopters to be manufactured by Mahindra

Delhi: An additional supplier for the main fuselage of the H125 helicopter, Mahindra Aerostructures (MASPL) has been given a contract by Airbus Helicopters, which is a boon to the "Make in India" aviation industry. Industrialization is scheduled to commence at the MASPL site in Bengaluru as per the contract, with the first fuselage delivery anticipated for 2027. After MASPL was awarded the contract to manufacture the fuselage of the H130 helicopter in April 2025, this work package was initiated. "This new contract

spend Rs 3,200 crore by FY26 to set up an electric vehicle line at the Gujarat site. There are three separate factories on the 640-acre property, with a total annual capacity of 750,000 units. image.png

Cotton imports were duty-free till year-end

Delhi : The Centre has extended a cotton-import duty exemption until the end of the year to make the domestic garment sector more competitive, especially with the US's 50% tax on Indian exports. The Centre suspended 11% customs charges on raw fibre imports from August 19 until



September 30. The tax break would last until December 31, the finance minister declared.

Srijit Misri, a member of the Apparel Export Promotion Council, praised the decision, saying, "Council chairman Sudhir Sekhri wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting a policy initiative to save the sector and livelihoods due to the business environment and US tariffs. This move

is welcome." Tiruppur Exporters Association general secretary and Esstee Exports India Pvt Ltd chairman N Thirukumaran stated the exemption "stabilise the cotton prices in India to be at par with international prices". "The extension has come as a timely relief for the textile industry.

Three Bangladesh-India border land ports to close

Delhi : Though the news of a decrease in the goods and services tax (GST) has brought joy to consumers and businesses alike, it has also created an unusual dilemma for brick-and-mortar and online stores. According to businesses, festive demand, which typically starts with the Ganesh holiday in Maharashtra and Onam in the south, is being subdued while consumers wait for the GST rates to truly decrease, leading to a decline in retail prices. In the days leading up to Dussehra and Diwali, the festive opening is typically a very busy time, so this



is causing us concern. Companies selling automobiles and consumer products, as well as retailers, are sitting on their hands until a decision is made on the ground, due to the news of a GST rate cut and the imminent fall in retail prices. Stores selling white goods, such as televisions, air conditioners, and dishwash-

ers, have the same challenge. Customers are already contacting us in droves to find out when they may expect to see price reductions. According to the CEO of a leading consumer products company, buyers are now saying they will wait for the price cut before taking delivery.

Gangwal sold his 3.1% share in Indigo for more than Rs 7,000 crore.

Delhi : Interglobe Aviation (Indigo) promoter Rakesh Gangwal and the family trust are selling 1.2 crore shares, or 3.1% of the company's equity, for a minimum of Rs 7,028 crore, or \$801 million. 11 Improvements to the Cloud in 2025. The sale's term sheet said that the Indian branches of JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs, and Morgan Stanley are in charge of the block deal, which is set to conclude on Thursday at a floor price of Rs 5,808

per share, which represents a 4% discount to Interglobe Aviation's Tuesday closing. In September 2022, when he and Rahul Bhatia, another co-founder and promoter of the company, resolved their disagreement, Gangwal, one of the founding-promoters of India's leading airline, began selling his stake in the business. This will be Bhatia's eighth round of stake sale in Indigo, according to statistics from 2022.

Dark times for entertainment

Filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt calls mainstream entertainment "dark times," warns social media, algorithms, and AI are stifling creativity and passion

Filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt says the very nature of the mainstream entertainment business is to get maximum attention, and with the establishment and rapid growth of social media, the situation has only worsened. Bhatt was at a panel discussion with Kapil Sibal on Saturday, where he discussed the current state of entertainment in media and called it nothing but "dark times."

"The very nature of the mainstream entertainment business is to get maximum accolades and attention. Ever since we stepped into this digital age and there was social media, the power of the establishment to muzzle you up, to gang up and go after you is so enormous that you are a voice in the wilderness," he said.

The filmmaker, who is known for films such as *Saaransh*,

Sadak and *Aashiqui*, added, "You are actually going out to quote numbers, and even before you begin, you're crushed. So I would say that these are dark times."

Bhatt also expressed concern about algorithms and artificial intelligence that make people play safe, stifling passionate ideas. He noted how earlier those who dared to speak would get isolated.

"There were those ready to jump off the cliff for an idea. They were so consumed by passion. Now, algorithms, everybody wants to play it safe. Now it's AI. So I think my concerns are that... as it is, we were thoughtless," he said.

"There were very few movies that could stand up and speak. Those who dared to speak were isolated... And then there would be wisdom dished out to you, saying that if you want to say something so passionately, write a poem or write a book," he added.

Vijay Varma on Pankaj's generous compliment

Vijay Varma reveals Pankaj Tripathi's praise became most meaningful, inspiring him after months of dedicated study

Actor Vijay Varma recently opened up about a compliment from Pankaj Tripathi that left a lasting impression on him. Despite having never been to Bihar or knowing anyone from the state personally, Vijay Varma had spent months studying Tripathi's interviews to understand his journey.

Speaking on the sidelines

of the Jagran Film Festival, Vijay Varma revealed that the praise from the acclaimed actor became the most meaningful compliment of his career.

Speaking about his remarkable command over dialects in projects like *Gully Boy*, *Mirzapur*, and *Dahaad*, he said, "I'm not that kind of actor who can change his body a lot for every film. I can't eat a lot. So, I try to make a difference with my voice and style. My personal interest is that the region from which a character belongs, should sound like that he's from that region."

"My best compliment was given by Pankaj Tripathi. He's from Siwan. I've never been to Bihar in my life. And I don't have any close friend or acquaintance from Bihar. So, I used to sit and listen to Ravish Kumar's interviews. Kanhaiya Kumar's interviews. Pankaj Tripathi's interviews. I used to listen to them every day for three months."

Pankaj Tripathi

Celebrity power couple Ravie Dubey and Sargun Mehta made a blissful visit to the revered Shree Mahakaleswar Temple in Ujjain. During their visit, the couple offered prayers and also took part in the sacred *Bhasma Aarti* on Sunday. Sharing their experience in the temple, Ravie said, "The arrangements were good. The temple committee left no stone unturned, not just for us but the massive crowd of devotees who had arrived at the temple. With the blessings of Shree Mahakal, everything was carried out with much ease."

Ravie and Sargun offer prayers

Pic: X



'Please be careful'

Aditi Rao Hydari warns fans about imposter using her identity on WhatsApp to contact photographers

Pics: Instagram @aditiraohydari



Actress Aditi Rao Hydari issued a statement revealing that someone has been impersonating her on WhatsApp and using her photos to contact photographers with fake photoshoot requests.

On Sunday, the actress took to her Instagram handle, and shared a note along with the WhatsApp details of the impersonator. The 39-year-old actress wrote, "I wanted to flag something that a few people brought to my notice today. Someone has been pretending to be me on WhatsApp, using my pictures and messaging photographers about 'photoshoots'."

Further, Aditi added, "It isn't me. I don't reach out like this, and I don't use any personal number for work. Everything always goes through my team. Please be careful and don't engage with that number. If you come across anything odd, just let my team know. Thank you to all those who have my back and are so protective and kind."

Hi Everyone,

I wanted to flag something that a few people brought to my notice today. Someone has been pretending to be me on WhatsApp, using my pictures and messaging photographers about "photoshoots".

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Love,
Aditi



Mouni Roy reveals her new passion for knitting

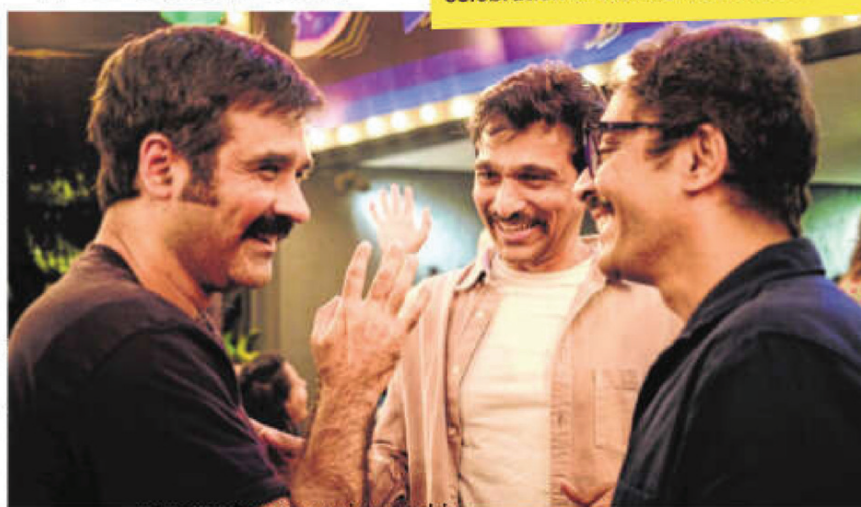
Actress Mouni Roy has revealed a surprising new passion off-screen-knitting. Taking to her Instagram handle, the Gold actress revealed her new hobby of knitting, describing it as both relaxing and creatively fulfilling.

Mouni Roy shared a few photos and videos, offering a glimpse into her knitting journey. In one image, she is seen hanging out with her close friends Disha Patani and Krishna Shroff, while another candid shot captures her with Shaheer Sheikh, both with their backs to the camera. In solo pictures, the *Brahmastra* actress is spotted enjoying some quiet time reading books. Sharing these images, Mouni Roy simply wrote, "Apparently I knit now what about you? #sweetnovember."



Fun moments at Prithvi Theatre Festival

At Prithvi Theatre Festival 2025, Pratik Gandhi, Vrajesh Heerji, and Mukul Chaddha enjoyed the event together. Actor Naseeruddin Shah warmly interacted with an audience member, while Arundhati Nag added grace to the festival. Fans captured these moments, making the festival a memorable celebration of theatre and performances.



TIGHTENING OR SOFTENING | 'US doesn't have workers with 'certain talents'

TRUMP TELLS TALL TALES

MUMBAI

The United States has introduced new guidance that could allow visa officers to deny visas or green cards to foreign nationals with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

The move is framed as an expansion of the century-old "public charge" rule, which comes even as President Donald Trump defended the H-1B visa programme, saying the US continues to rely on foreign talent for specialised industries. The mixed signals have sparked unease among students and skilled workers, particularly from India.

Health-based visa screening expanded

A directive issued to US embassies and consulates around the world instructs visa officers to flag applicants whose medical conditions might require care costing "hundreds of thousands of dollars" over a lifetime. The list includes cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancers, diabetes, metabolic conditions, neurological disorders, and a range of mental health issues. Obesity has also been noted due to comorbidities like hypertension, sleep apnoea, and asthma.

Traditional health checks required for US visas historically focused on communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis. New guidance reflects a shift toward identifying long-term medical risk



and financial burden criteria that may be considered in admissibility, even in non-immigrant categories.

What this means for students

While the rule applies broadly, there is rising concern about its effect on international students, in particular those applying for F-1 visas. Students already need to show sufficient funds for tuition and living expenses and must prove they will not become a "public charge."

Under the updated approach, consular officers will also evaluate whether applicants with chronic conditions can afford potential medical costs "over their entire expected lifespan" without relying on public assistance or institutional care. This has triggered strong reactions online, particularly from Indian students.

One student said on condition of anonymity, "So now

having diabetes or being overweight can get your U.S. visa rejected? Half of our parents and relatives have these conditions. This feels like they're creating new ways to filter students out."

Another student voiced financial concerns, saying, "US health care is already crazy expensive. Even with full financial proof, how do they expect students to show lifetime medical coverage? Feels like they're shutting doors on middle-class students."

Some are worried about how minor conditions may suddenly carry weight. A student preparing for Fall 2026 said, "I have mild asthma, but now I'm stressed about whether this will go against my F-1 visa. Nobody knows how strict the consulates will be."

Others noted the rule's potential to disproportionately affect Indian applicants. "Obesity is so common here because of lifestyle and genetics," a student said. "If that

becomes a visa issue, a lot of Indian students will be affected. This rule is going to create unnecessary discrimination."

Universities and education advisers are now watching closely to understand how strictly the guidance will be enforced and whether students with strong financial backing will be shielded from adverse decisions.

Trump says US "Needs Foreign Talent"

Even as health-based screenings tighten, President Donald Trump has publicly defended the H-1B visa category, which allows US companies to hire highly skilled foreign workers.

In an interview with Fox News host Laura Ingraham, Trump rejected suggestions that the US has enough domestic talent to meet industry needs.

"You do have to bring in talent," he said, adding, "You don't have certain talents... You

can't take people off an unemployment line and say, I'm going to put you into a factory. We're going to make mistakes."

His remarks come despite an ongoing federal crackdown on H-1B misuse. In September, the administration revived "Project Firewall," under which the Department of Labor launched at least 175 investigations into suspected visa programme abuses. A sharp increase in the application price of \$100,000 has been part of the crackdown, and state officials like Florida Governor Ron DeSantis have ordered universities to stop recruiting people under the H-1B visa.

The administration's approach has seen pushback, including lawsuits and objections from lawmakers who warn that aggressive restrictions could strain the US-India relationship. Five US lawmakers recently called upon Trump to reconsider his September 19 proclamation because of its "potentially negative impacts."

Despite this, the White House insists that reforms aim to put "American workers first." Indian professionals remain the most affected demographic, receiving more than 70% of all approved H-1B visas in 2024. But as health-based screening and skilled-worker visa reforms both tighten, uncertainty continues to cloud the outlook for students and professionals looking to pursue opportunities in the United States.

(With inputs from IANS)

Australia rolls out new visa rules for students

MUMBAI

Australia has rolled out a major change to how international student visas are processed, introducing a new tier-based system that could affect the speed at which applications move. The rule, known as Ministerial Direction 115 (MD 115), came into effect today and replaces the earlier MD 111 directive.

Under the new system, visa processing speed is now directly linked to how well each university or college manages its approved enrollment cap.

ity, and local services.

Australia has been working to stabilise its international education sector following months of high demand. Officials said that visa lodgements dropped by 26%, and new student commencements fell by 16% after recent policy changes. This drop gave the government room to shift to a more structured visa framework.

While regional universities have welcomed the move, arguing it ensures a fairer distribution of enrolments, several large metropolitan universities, including those

fect.

The rule does not block anyone from applying, but delays are now tied to institutional priority instead of individual eligibility.

Students should keep in mind: Applicants who were targeting the 2026 intake may want to consider adjusting the timeline. Experts advise:

- Apply early, especially if choosing large metropolitan universities.
- Monitor the quota system's alignment with the institution's compliance level.
- Ensure that all documents



Priority 1: Institutions using less than 80% of their quota

→ Students can expect faster visa movement.

Priority 2: Institutions using 80% to 115% of their quota

→ Processing may be moderate.

Priority 3: Institutions that are above 115% of their allowed limit

→ Files may move slower, even if all documents are complete.

The government says the system is designed to bring more control to enrolments after a sharp rise in applications earlier this year strained universities, housing availabil-

ity in the Group of Eight, have expressed concerns about possible uncertainty and longer waiting times for students.

Impact on Indian students: The new rule for many Indian applicants means that the choice of university may make a difference in visa speed more than ever.

Students applying to institutions operating within their limits—especially regional campuses—may see quicker processing.

Those applying to universities over their cap may experience delays, even if their documentation is per-

are complete and up-to-date, since any delay will push the timeline further.

Consider regional campuses, which possibly provide easier processing.

Australia will hold information sessions for universities and colleges throughout November and December to help them transition to the new rule.

As the upcoming academic year approaches, students are expected to watch institutional trends closely, with MD 115 potentially reshaping decision-making for thousands of aspirants from India and across the world.

New opportunity: Russia declares 300 fully funded scholarships

Education Desk

MUMBAI

Indian students planning to study abroad now have a new opportunity as the Russian government has opened applications for 300 fully funded scholarships for the 2026-27 academic year. The programme allows students to pursue higher education at several leading Russian universities, covering a wide range of courses across multiple disciplines. The scholarship scheme is open to undergraduate, specialist, postgraduate and doctoral programmes, along with advanced training courses. Under this initiative, students are exempted from

paying tuition fees at most universities, except at Lomonosov Moscow State University and MGIMO.

Courses Available

- Medicine and Pharmacy
- Engineering and Architecture
- Agriculture
- Management and Economics
- Humanities
- Mathematics and Natural Sciences
- Space Science and Aviation
- Sports and Arts

Several engineering and medical programmes are also taught in English. For those unfamiliar with Russian, the government provides a one-



year language preparatory course before the degree begins. The selection process takes place in two stages. In the first stage, applicants are evaluated based on their aca-

demic performance and documents such as recommendation letters, research work or certificates from academic competitions. Those who make the shortlist go on to the

second stage, which includes placement in suitable universities and the visa process, which is overseen by Russia's Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

Applications for the first round should be received no later than January 15, 2026. The Ministry of Education, Government of India, has further clarified that it is not involved in the nomination or selection of candidates under these scholarships.

All applications are to be submitted only through the official web portal, education-in-russia.com; the authorities have warned that entries via any other platform will not be considered.

India needs 86.11 million enrolments to meet NEP target, says Report

India needs 86.11 million enrolments by 2035, an 85% increase from the current level, requiring a sustained 5.3% compounded annual growth rate in higher education capacity, according to a new report. "To achieve the ambitious New National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 target of 50 pc in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 2035, India's higher education system must accommodate approximately 86.11 million students— an 85 pc increase from its current levels.

This translates to a sustained annual growth rate of around 5.3 pc over the next decade, a daunting challenge that necessitates a significant expansion in both student seats and faculty capacity," the report said.

"Traditional brick-and-mortar institutions will remain foundational, but they alone cannot meet this scale. Therefore, a differentiated approach is essential - one that includes systemic adoption of technology-enabled, flexible learning

pathways such as digital universities, virtual learning ecosystems and credit-based online programmes that extend access beyond physical campuses," it added.

The findings are based on three focused roundtables with over ten universities in the northern region, complemented by secondary research and analysis, reflecting the lived experiences and priorities of higher education leaders navigating transformation on the ground. —PTI

fifth forum

College Board to launch two new Advanced Placement courses

MUMBAI

The 2025 College Board India Forum in Mumbai brought together senior leaders from MIT, Oxford, Princeton, NUS, NMIMS, and dozens of Indian institutions, marking one of the strongest global turnouts the event has seen. The fifth edition of the forum focused on the future of admissions, digital transformation, and students' changing expectations in an AI-powered world.

This year, the College Board announced it would introduce two new AP courses, AP Business with Personal Finance and AP Cybersecurity for 2026. The courses fall under a new initiative called AP Career Kickstart, which will contribute to bringing career-relevant learning to high school students far earlier. With financial literacy and digital security fast becoming life skills, these new offerings signal a new turn: blending academic rigour with real-world readiness. India's presence in the AP and SAT ecosystem keeps growing at a rapid pace. Meanwhile, India's presence in the AP and SAT ecosystems continues to grow rapidly. The number of Indian schools offering AP programmes has doubled in just one year, AP sections have grown by 65%, student

enrolment is up by 9%, and more than 50 Indian universities now accept SAT scores.

Speaking to The Free Press Journal, Rushi Sheth, Vice President for the College Board's International Division, said the Mumbai edition reflects the Board's expanding engagement beyond Delhi. "This is our fifth India forum, and we're excited to bring it to Mumbai after two years in the capital. It reflects our commitment to Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities because more educators and students are gaining access to SAT and AP programmes," he said, adding that next year's forum will be held in Bengaluru.

Admissions in focus

The Mumbai forum, Sheth explained, was designed to move beyond the usual conversations around global mobility. "Everyone attending already understands the value of global exposure. What they really want are deeper conversations," he said.

One of the highlights was a mock admissions masterclass crafted around real-world decision-making. Since Indian students often present exceptionally strong portfolios, Sheth said the goal was to build empathy on both sides of the admissions table. "We gave counsellors hands-on experience of how tough it is to choose between very qualified ap-



plicants. Anyone can say selective admissions is difficult, but feeling that difficulty helps them guide students better."

International student caps

With concerns around proposed caps on international students resurfacing in the US, UK, Canada, and Australia, Sheth clarified that most of these remain discussions, while there are no legal caps in force as of October 2025. "There's talk, but nothing has passed into law not in the U.S., not in the U.K., not in Australia. Universities operate independently from political cycles. Their commitment to global student communities doesn't change every four years," he said.

He added that during the forum's morning plenary, leading admissions officers reaffirmed this independence.

Fully digital SAT

A major milestone cel-

ebrated at the forum was the complete transition of the SAT to digital mode. "No more paper," Sheth said. "Paper can get lost, delayed, or compromised. The digital SAT is encrypted, secure, delivered instantly, and scored faster."

The AP programme has also transitioned to digital delivery. The big announcements, however, were the two new AP courses - Cybersecurity and Business with Personal Finance. Designed with university faculty and endorsed by employers, these courses aim to prepare teenagers for a marketplace where early career awareness is becoming common.

"Today's students don't wait until 22 to think about careers. They want to build things, grow brands and

start businesses. We want to give them space in high school to explore that," Sheth said.

He illustrated the urgent need for financial literacy with a personal observation: on his own phone's home screen, eight out of 13 apps deal with money. "Students spend and save money too, but many have no formal understanding of taxes, loans, or interest rates. We want to change that."

SAT returns to pre-pandemic momentum

Even as some universities reinstated test requirements post-pandemic, Sheth said SAT participation has not declined.

"In the class of 2025, more than two million students

took the SAT, the highest since before COVID. Students value the SAT because it gives them a choice. A strong score helps them stand out; if they don't want to send it, they can withhold it."

He added that universities value the SAT for its predictive power, noting that it contributes to holistic review and helps institutions assess if a student is likely to succeed and graduate on time.

India's AP and SAT figures tell a story of rapid expansion. "Indian schools with authorised AP instructors doubled this year. Three Indian universities now credentialise AP for credit or placement, and over 50 accept SAT scores," Sheth said.

One SAT score, he emphasised, now opens doors to universities across the U.S., U.K., Singapore, and India. "A student applying to Princeton, Oxford, NUS, Ashoka, or FLAME no longer needs separate exams. That's great for access."

Sheth confirmed that new

SAT test centres are being set up nationwide. "We are expanding capacity in Lucknow, Pune, and several other cities. Becoming a test centre is free; we just need basic paperwork. Students should not have to travel far to take the SAT."

AP aligns with India's education landscape

While the IITs and IIMs continue to dominate specialised education, Sheth said AP fits naturally with India's rising liberal arts ecosystem. "AP replicates first-year university courses in the liberal arts model, so it aligns beautifully with institutions like Ashoka, FLAME, Shiv Nadar, and others that offer interdisciplinary learning."

He further pointed out that even one practice test boosts SAT scores by an average of 25 points, while three or more can improve scores by 60+ points. "There's no magic formula, just practice. And we give it away for free."

AI in classrooms and testing

Sheth said educators should not avoid AI but treat it as a tool that accelerates learning without replacing authenticity. "For SAT and AP, students still need to demonstrate skills independently. That won't change. But AI can support instruction."

He cited AP Computer Science Principles as an

example: students can now use AI for coding during coursework but must explain their design decisions during assessments. "That ensures authenticity. AI should push students higher, not cause cognitive decline." He also hinted at future AI-powered SAT prep tools. "I'd love to see guided tutoring powered by AI. If it helps students perform their best, we'll explore it."

On whether Indian students make unique mistakes in an AI-driven world, Sheth was quick to reject stereotypes. Indian students are no different from American or Australian students. They're ambitious and ethical. The challenge is simply updating our expectations so that human skills remain at the centre."

The 2025 College Board India Forum reinforced India's rising influence in global higher education. With digital assessments, new AP courses geared toward real-world skills, expanding test centres, and strong partnerships with both Indian and international universities, the College Board's presence in India is growing deeper and more strategic.

And for students navigating an evolving world of admissions, Sheth offered a simple closing message: "Practice, authenticity, and confidence matter more than anything else."

Briefs

GREATER NOIDA
Preeti
secures
medal

Returning after a year away from international action and a draining battle with Hepatitis A, **Preeti Pawar** marked her comeback in style, securing a medal for India at the World Boxing Cup Finals here on Sunday. The 22-year-old defeated fellow Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medallist Nigina Uktamova of Uzbekistan by unanimous decision to move to the semifinals of the women's 54kg category. A month before the Paris Olympics, Preeti had been diagnosed with Hepatitis A. "It has been a challenging period for me as I was detected with Hepatitis A a month before the Olympics. But that also motivated me to make a comeback and feel like I have become stronger," Preeti said after her bout. Despite the illness, she pushed through the Olympics.

KOLKATA
Bavuma
backs his
defence

South African captain **Temba Bavuma** on Sunday said his game is built around an unshakeable defence, which stood him in good stead on a disintegrating Eden Gardens track, where 38 wickets fell inside eight sessions. On his comeback from a five-month calf injury, the South African skipper's composure stood out as he led his side to a remarkable 30-run win over India in the opening Test. This was South Africa's 10th win in 11 Tests under his leadership. "Look, I'm a guy who always backs my defence. I think my game is that simple. I try to play around my defence," said Bavuma who made 55 not out.

RAJKOT
Gaikwad,
Rana shine as
India A win

Ruturaj Gaikwad made an unbeaten fifty following Harshit Rana's three-wicket burst as India A crushed South Africa A by nine wickets in the second

FIRST TEST | South Africa seal their first Test win on Indian soil after 15 years

India's spin gamble backfires

KOLKATA

Indian batters' frailties against high quality spin in challenging home conditions were exposed yet again as South Africa outplayed their fancied counterparts by 30 runs in the opening Test here on Sunday for their first success in India after 15 years.

Chasing 124, India never showed the composure or method that Temba Bavuma had demonstrated earlier in the day to be bowled out for 93 in 35 overs.

Hospitalised due to a neck injury, Shubman Gill was not available to bat on day three.

However, reports late in the day revealed that the India captain has been discharged from the hospital where he was receiving treatment for neck injury.

On an under prepared pitch expected to favour Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav, it was off-spinner Simon Harmer's match haul of eight wickets that made the difference.

It was India's fourth loss at home in the last six Tests including the 0-3 debacle against New Zealand on turning tracks last year. The loss has reignited the debate on Indian batters' ability on turning tracks.

"We should have chased this down. The pressure kept on building in the second innings," said stand-in-captain Rishabh Pant at the post match presentation.

Head coach Gautam Gambhir said the batters' should have found way to score runs on this surface.

"It wasn't an unplayable wicket. This is exactly the kind of wicket we were looking for. The curator was very supportive," said Gambhir.

Washington Sundar (31 off 92) and Jadeja (18 off 26) gave India hope in the run chase as



South African players celebrate after the team's victory during the third day of the first Test.

Scoreboard

South Africa first innings: 159
India first innings: 189
South Africa second innings: 153
India second innings: Y Jaiswal c Verreynne b Jansen 0, KL Rahul c Verreynne b Jansen 1, W Sundar c

Harmer b Markram 31, D Jurel c Bosch b Harmer 13, R Pant c&b Harmer 2, R Jadeja lbw Harmer 18, A Patel c Bavuma b Maharaj 26, K Yadav lbw Harmer 1, J Bumrah (not out) 0, M Siraj c Markram b Maharaj 0, S Gill (absent hurt). **Extras:** (LB-1)

1. Total: (all out, 35 overs) 93. Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-1, 3-33, 4-38, 5-64, 6-72, 7-77, 8-93, 9-93. **Bowling:** M Jansen 7-3-15-2, S Harmer 14-4-21-4, K Maharaj 9-1-37-2, C Bosch 2-0-14-0, A Markram 3-0-5-1.

they played with soft hands and admirable calm.

But Harmer broke through, trapping Jadeja (18) as India's innings wobbled again.

Washington followed soon after, undone by Aiden Markram's part-time off-break.

Dhruv Jurel played with maturity early on and survived a close call via DRS, but lack of runs pushed him into an ill-fought one-handed pull that found Bosch at deep mid-wicket.

Pant looked vulnerable. His 2 off 13 did not inspire a lot of confidence. A tentative push gave Maharaj a return catch

and summed up India's scrambled mindset.

Axar Patel (26 off 17) briefly ignited Eden with two sixes and a four, but with only Bumrah for company, risks outstripped returns. Maharaj nailed him soon after, ending India's hopes as the stadium fell silent again.

What will rankle India more than the defeat is that their own spin blueprint backfired.

In the morning session, Bavuma's plucky 55 not out brought South Africa back in the game on an uneven pitch alive before left-arm quick Marco Jansen (2/15) reduced

India to 10 for two at lunch.

The explosive Yashasvi Jaiswal, tentative and late on the stroke, fell for a four-ball duck as a steep good-length ball kissed his outside edge to Kyle Verreynne.

In his next over, Jansen went around the wicket and got the big scalp of KL Rahul for 1, rushing him with lift from a back-of-length ball that ballooned off the glove.

South Africa stretched their overnight 93/7 (lead 63) to 153, courtesy Bavuma's assured effort and Corbin Bosch's brisk 25 off 37 balls in a 44-run eighth-wicket stand that frustrated India for 44 minutes.

Pant's decision to not use Jasprit Bumrah from the more dangerous Club House End where he got his first-innings flier baffled many.

South Africa stretched the advantage past 100 thanks to Bavuma's assured effort. Bavuma, playing his first Test since leading them to historic WTC triumph at Lord's, was immovable through the morning and brought up the first fifty of the match with a fine-leg boundary off Bumrah.

He survived an lbw scare on 54 when Siraj's appeal was overturned with the ball missing leg stump. Siraj, however, struck twice in the same over.

Kumble questions decision not to give Bumrah first over

Ex-India captain felt pacer should have been given first over on day 3

KOLKATA

Not handing the ball to lead pacer Jasprit Bumrah to start the third day's play on a challenging Eden Gardens surface was "questionable", said the legendary **Anil Kumble** after India succumbed to a 30-run defeat in the opening Test against South Africa here on Sunday.

Set a target of 124 to win, India were bowled out for 93 as the match ended on the third afternoon.

"A target of 123 was a bit too much. When the day started, South Africa were 63 for 7 and that was the lead. Temba Bavuma was still there. But having spread-out fields and not giving the first over to your best bowler, Jasprit Bumrah, was questionable. All three wickets that fell were to the fast bowlers," Kumble said on JioHotstar.

Kumble was full of praise for South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma, saying he doesn't always get the credit he deserves despite leading the team to the World Test Championship triumph earlier this year.



A target of 123 was a bit too much. When the day started, South Africa were 63 for 7 and that was the lead. Temba Bavuma was still there. But having spread-out fields and not giving the first over to your best bowler, Jasprit Bumrah, was questionable. All three wickets that fell were to the fast bowlers

Anil Kumble,
former India skipper

Gambhir backs Eden Gardens curator over pitch controversy

India head coach questions team's ability to handle pressure and score runs on challenging surfaces

KOLKATA

India's head coach **Gautam Gambhir** on Sunday backed Eden Gardens' under-fire curator while lamenting his batters' inability to "absorb pressure" and find a way to score runs on the challenging surface in the opening Test against South Africa.

South Africa successfully defended 124 to humble India by 30 runs, having bowled the home team out for 93 in their second innings to wrap up the match under three days.

The result continued the worrying trend of home reversals that has seen them lose four of their last six home Tests and nine of the 18 matches under Gambhir.

"It was not an unplayable wicket, there were no demons," Gambhir said at the post-match media interaction.

"If you are willing to put your head down and if you have a solid defense, if you have a temperament, you can definitely score

It was not an unplayable wicket, there were no demons. If you are willing to put your head down and if you have a solid defense, if you have a temperament, you can definitely score runs

Gautam Gambhir,
India head coach



runs," he said.

The match saw 38 wickets (as Shubman Gill was retired hurt) fall in just eight sessions and out of them the pacers had a share of 16, while spinners accounted for 22.

"We keep talking about turning track, but if you look at the 40 wickets, majority of the wickets went to seamers," Gambhir said in his assessment.

"So, if you are out on the turning track or seamers. I don't think it was a tough wicket. It was a wicket where your technique can be judged, your mental toughness can be challenged, and more important than that is your temperament.

"Because if you are looking to grind, if you are looking to bat long, then you can make runs. But if you are in an attacking mindset, or if you try to play attacking cricket, then it is difficult. "All the people who have played good defence, whether it is KL Rahul, Temba or Washington, all of them have made runs."

Pant feels Indian batters should have adapted better

India vice-captain stated team will come back stronger in Guwahati

KOLKATA

Ruing India's inability to chase down 124 against South Africa in the first Test, vice-captain Rishabh Pant on Sunday said the batters should have adapted to the challenge of playing on a tricky Eden Gardens surface.

India were bowled out for 93 as SA celebrated a 30-run win to take 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

"After a game like this, you can't dwell into it too much. We should have been able to chase it. The pressure kept on building. We didn't capitalise enough. There was help from the wicket (for the bowlers)," said Pant, who came for the post-match presentation ceremony in the absence of injured regular captain Shubman Gill.

Pant said the hosts will come back stronger in the second Test at Guwahati.

"A score of 120 can be tricky on these surfaces. But having said that, we should have been able to soak in the pressure and capitalise. We haven't



India's vice captain Rishabh Pant plays a shot during the third day of the first Test.

thought about the improvements but we will come back strong for sure," he added.

The wicketkeeper batter said the eighth wicket stand of 44 runs between South Africa

captain Temba Bavuma and Corbin Bosch was the turning point of the match.

"Temba and Bosch had a good stand in the morning. That partnership between

After a game like this, you can't dwell into it too much. We should have been able to chase it. The pressure kept on building. We didn't capitalise enough. There was help from the wicket (for the bowlers)

Rishabh Pant,
India vice-captain

them hurt us," he said.

South Africa skipper Bavuma credited the bowlers for keeping his side in the game.

"We want to be a part of these games and be on the right side of the result. It was tough for us and we needed the bowlers to bring us back in.

"We were able to change our bowlers frequently and that worked for us. Our bowlers, as and when they were called, brought us in," he added.

WC Qualifying

Oyarzabal stars as Spain remains perfect, Belgium held

BARCELONA

Mikel Oyarzabal scored twice as Spain maintained its perfect form in World Cup qualifying with a 4-0 win in Georgia on Saturday as it closed in on a berth at next year's showcase tournament.

Luis de la Fuente's side has scored 19 times while conceding zero goals in five group victories.

The European champion is poised to wrap up a spot in

the finals when it meets Turkey on Tuesday in its last qualifier.

Spain leads Group E by three points over Turkey, which beat Bulgaria 2-0 on Saturday.

The only way the Turks could pip Spain for the top spot and grab a direct ticket to the World Cup would be by winning in Seville by a huge margin.

A tiebreaker would be decided by overall goal difference. Spain is on +19, while Turkey is on +5.

Even so, De la Fuente said it was too early to celebrate.

"We have maximum respect for all our rivals, including Turkey," De la Fuente said. "We have to keep our feet on the ground and maintain this attitude until we are mathematically qualified."

The home side didn't miss injured stars Lamine Yamal, Pedri González or Rodri against the overmatched Georgia.

The Real Sociedad striker Oyarzabal led Spain with his

two goals and an assist. Martín Zubimendi and Ferran Torres also scored as their team was up 3-0 by halftime.

Oyarzabal opened the scoring with a penalty in the 11th minute and headed in the fourth goal in the 63rd minute.

Those were goals 20 and 21 for him on his 50th appearance for Spain. His most important goal for his country was the winner in the 2024 European Championship final, a 2-1 vic-

tory over England.

Turkey locked up a top-two finish and assured a playoff spot after Hakan Çalhanoğlu scored a penalty and Bulgaria defender Atanas Chervnev added an own goal.

The 12 group winners from European qualification go directly to the World Cup. France, England and Croatia have won their groups.

The continent's remaining four berths are decided by a playoff of the dozen runners-up.



Spain's Mikel Oyarzabal celebrates after scoring.

AP