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Suspending Indus Treaty With Terror-Harbouring Nation Decisive Step: President



New Delhi: The suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) by India was a decisive action against a nation that gives a safe haven to terrorists, President Droupadi Murmu said on the eve of the 80th Independence Day today. She also referred to India's young demography and called them the nation's future. "Sixty-five per cent of our country's population is below the age of 35. This young population is our most valuable asset. The youth of our country are talented, committed, and skilled," she said. "Our students are the architects of India's future. Just as the government and society must remain united to ensure national security, everyone must contribute through joint and concerted efforts to safeguard the present and future of our

Sindoor, she said, "During the commemoration of one year since the launch of Operation Sindoor on May 7, we remembered the unmatched valour of our armed forces." "That historic operation against terrorism demonstrated the capability of Indian armed forces to act with precision. It sent a clear and firm message to terrorists and those who support them that no matter where they hide, they will have to face the consequences of their actions," she said. Referring to the government's decision to suspend the IWT, the President said: "Suspension of the Treaty with a country that harbours

terrorism is a decisive step in the interest of our nation, especially the farmers." Last month, India had said that Pakistan's aggressive posturing on the IWT had no effect on India's decision to keep the treaty in abeyance until the neighbouring country stops supporting cross-border terrorism. Ever since India decided to keep the IWT in abeyance following the April 2025 terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam that killed 26 tourists, Pakistan has been lying to the international community that India's decision sets a dangerous precedent for nations that share transboundary rivers.

Lok Sabha Seeks Rahul Gandhi's Reply on Privilege Notice Over Shah Remark

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha secretariat has sought a response from Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi on two separate complaints of "breach of privilege" filed by BJP MPs Anurag Thakur and Sanjay Jaiswal for his remarks against Home Minister Amit Shah during the debate on the anti-paper leak bill. The secretariat has

asked Gandhi to submit his response to the allegations against him by August 28. Jaiswal, who is also the chief whip of the BJP in the Lok Sabha, shared a copy of the Lok Sabha secretariat's communication to Gandhi as well as his complaint against the LoP, alleging that the Congress leader's remarks made in the House against Shah during the

Bihar job aspirants plan indefinite hunger strike

Patna: Bihar's examination protests are set to intensify with student leader Dilip Kumar announcing an indefinite hunger strike in Patna from August 18, putting fresh pressure on the state government over delayed teacher recruitment and alleged irregularities in competitive examinations. Kumar, president of the Bihar Student Union, has demanded the resignation of Education Minister Mithilesh Tiwari, immediate progress on the Teacher Recruitment Examination-4 process and action on complaints linked to other recruitment examinations. The protest comes after weeks of warnings from aspirants who say repeated delays and uncertainty

have disrupted preparation schedules and employment prospects. The planned fast is expected to bring the recruitment dispute back to the centre of Bihar's political debate. Aspirants have held demonstrations over TRE-4 for months, including a large mobilisation in Patna on May 8 that ended in a police lathi-charge after protesters demanding the recruitment notification clashed with security personnel. TRE-4 is one of Bihar's largest pending recruitment exercises. The Bihar Public Service Commission's examination calendar lists 46,595 positions under the fourth phase of school teacher recruitment and



schedules the examination for September 22-27, with results tentatively expected in November. However, candidates have continued demanding the formal advertisement and clarity over vacancies, eligibility provisions and the recruitment timetable. Tiwari had earlier told aspirants that the TRE-4 schedule would be released in July and urged them to continue preparing for the examination. Student representatives subsequently stepped up pressure after the anticipated timetable failed to satisfy their demands for a formal recruitment notification. By late July, Kumar had warned that the student movement would escalate unless the government acted. The confrontation has acquired wider significance because examination-related protests are unfolding across several states. Dem-

onstrations at Delhi's Jantar Mantar over education and recruitment issues were followed by an agitation in Jharkhand involving aspirants alleging irregularities in examinations conducted by the Jharkhand Public Service Commission and Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission. Jharkhand's movement has been marked by an extended hunger strike led by Devendra Nath Mahto, whose health deteriorated during the agitation. Protesters there have sought investigations into alleged recruitment irregularities and demanded direct intervention by Chief Minister Hemant Soren. The dispute escalated further when demonstrators attempting to march towards the Assembly encountered police action involving lathis, tear gas and water cannon.

Pawan Kalyan's Wife Visits Padagaya Temple, Offers Special Prayers



Kakinada District, August 14: Anna Lezhneva, wife of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, visited several temples in the Pithapuram Assembly constituency. On the occasion of the first Friday of the holy Shravan month, she visited Lord Kukuteswara Swamy at the Padagaya shrine and

performed special prayers at the temple. Temple officials welcomed her. After the darshan, Vedic scholars blessed her with Vedic chants. She later visited the Sripada Srivallabha Mahasamsthanam. Anna Lezhneva also visited Lord Bhimeswara Swamy and the Goddess at Draksharamam in Konaseema district.

Upon her arrival at the temple, State Minister Vasamsetti Subhash and Jana Sena in-charge Poliseti Chandrasekhar welcomed her. She subsequently performed special prayers at the temple. It is known that Pawan Kalyan recently underwent successful shoulder surgery at a hospital in Mumbai. In this

context, Anna Lezhneva appears to be visiting several temples across Andhra Pradesh and offering prayers for his recovery. A few days ago, she also visited Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala. She reached Tirumala on foot via the Alipiri steps and had darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

70 Lakh Tonnes of Garbage to Be Cleared by October: Minister Narayana

From Our Staff Reporter Rajamahendravaram, August 14: Minister Narayana said that around 7,000 tonnes of garbage are generated every day in Andhra Pradesh. The minister visited Rajamahendravaram on Friday and, speaking on the occasion, criticised the previous government for imposing a garbage tax on people. He alleged that despite collecting the garbage tax, the previous government left behind lakhs of tonnes of accumulated waste. He said that the remaining 70 lakh tonnes of garbage in municipalities across the state will be completely cleared by October. He recalled that a decision was taken during 2014-19 to establish 10

waste-to-energy plants, but alleged that the previous Chief Minister cancelled the projects due to a lack of understanding. Minister Narayana said that after the coalition government came to power, waste-to-energy plants are being established in Kadapa, Kurnool, Tirupati, Nellore, Vijayawada and Peddapuram. Once the waste-to-energy plant at Peddapuram is completed, garbage generated in Rajamahendravaram will be transported there, he said. Meanwhile, he said fresh waste-processing plants are being set up in 107 municipalities for waste management. These plants will be completed by the



end of September to facilitate solid waste management, he added. Minister Narayana also said that the Chief Minister has directed that municipal elections across the state

should be held simultaneously. A decision on conducting the elections will be taken once the court delivers its verdict on the issue of merged villages, he said.

CM Launches Advanced Firefighting Vehicles in Andhra Pradesh

From Our Staff Reporter Guntur, August 14: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu launched advanced firefighting vehicles in the state on Friday. He flagged off the new fire vehicles at a programme held on Seed Access Road. A total of 58 modern firefighting vehicles, procured at a cost of ₹40 crore, will be made available. The Chief Minister launched 25 advanced firefighting vehicles, 20 water bowlers, and 13 quick-response multipurpose firefighting vehicles.



The Fire Services Department has procured 25 advanced firefighting vehicles to deal with emergencies in rural and forest areas. The Andhra Pradesh government has purchased 20 water bowlers to ensure a continuous supply of water required

to control major fires. The 13 quick-response multipurpose firefighting vehicles will help fire personnel reach narrow and congested areas quickly. In the first phase, the government had already made 65 firefighting vehicles available at a cost of

₹33 crore. Officials explained the special features of the vehicles to the Chief Minister. Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, Fire Services Department DG Venkata Ramana, and other officials attended the programme.

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu said that the Left Main Canals of the Veligonda and Polavaram projects will be commissioned and water supplied by the end of August. He said that pending compensation of ₹600 crore will be paid to the displaced families of the Veligonda project between August 17 and 24. The minister stated that the irrigation sector, which he alleged was subjected to five years of destruction by the "Goddali Party," is now being revived and taken forward. Minister Nimmala said that 77% of the Polavaram project works have been completed and that the project will also be developed as a tourist destina-

tion. He said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu envisions developing river-based tourism from Polavaram to Bhadrachalam. He stated that water from the Polavaram Left Main Canal will be taken to Anakapalli by the end of this month. The minister assured that the canal would provide abundant water to North Andhra. He said that sup-

plying 3 TMC of water through the Left Main Canal would be sufficient for data centres and other industrial requirements. Nimmala Ramanaidu said that the government will complete 36 priority projects as per schedule in the coming days. He added that, in view of the expected impact of El Niño, drinking water is being given the highest priority.



Jagan Is a "Dull Student" Who Does Not Attend Assembly: MP Kesineni Sivanath

Vijayawada, August 14: MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni) launched a sharp attack on former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. He alleged that Jagan's mental condition was not good and remarked that Jagan was not attending the Assembly because he was a "failed student." He claimed that Jagan was avoiding the Assembly out of fear that the irregularities in the APPSC would be questioned if he attended. He criticised Jagan as a "dull student" who does not come to the Assembly. The MP said that students and teachers were holding massive rallies today over the DSC issue. Taking a jibe at the YSRCP, he said they were not staging "Gen Z movements" with people aged 50 or 60. Kesineni said that teachers would conduct a massive rally in the heart of Vijayawada on August 16 (Sunday). He advised Jagan to learn a lesson after seeing these rallies.

EDITORIAL

Gen Z.. From Jantar Mantar to Jharkhand!

Home Minister Amit Shah, who has been avoiding the media in Parliament for the last 20 days, has come to a situation where he has no choice but to answer. The mainstream media did not even cover the Delhi agitations. But it covered the protests in Jharkhand very well. This is just a play played by the BJP. On one hand, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat talks to the media that the gen ji are traitors of the country and that the governments should listen to their demands and solve their problems. Such double standards are possible only for our political parties. That is why the youth of this country have lost faith in our traditional political parties. They are not depending on any party. They are taking independent leadership and taking up agitations to solve their problems. The famous Indian English poet and writer Ruskin Bond wrote a poem saying 'If only rats roared..'. It contains all such absurd and improbable things. But even smaller creatures, cockroaches, roared in the national capital today and forced the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. Moreover, as a result of their roar, the examination law has gained more teeth. The investigation into the leakage of NEET UG question papers has intensified. Above all, a consciousness has been ignited among the dormant student youth. Lathis, bullets and barricades could not stop them. The anti-corruption movement that took place at Jantar Mantar shook the Delhi capital. Thousands of youth, led by Cockroach Janata Party founder Abhijit Deepke, questioned the incompetence of the government. It was fueled by Sonam Wangchuk's hunger strike. The activities of Parliament have come to a standstill.

The Prime Minister had to resign in the face of no other option. Another demand was compensation of Rs 1 crore to the families of NEET victims. Although the Act to conduct the exams strictly was passed in 2024, it was not implemented properly. Now, some more classes have been added to it and 10 years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10 crore have been included in this Act for those responsible for leakage. The Cockroach Janata Party is just an online party. But it has a huge following. The youth, who had lost faith in traditional parties, expressed their support for the CJP and risked their lives to participate in the protest at Jantar Mantar. The mainstream media did not give it publicity. The BJP and its affiliated branches branded this movement as treason. They promoted them as anarchic forces and anti-social elements. But the CJP concentrated all its energies on compensation for the NEET victims and succeeded in that. Their desire is that the exams should be conducted in a disciplined manner. Because for some time now, examinations in the country have lost their sanctity and have become a mockery. Leakage of question papers has become common. As a result, students and youth have lost faith in the system itself. Job seekers have also had similar experiences. All this has come together for the CJP. That is why they took part in this movement with determination. Lathis with pellets and nails did not stand in front of their courage. That is why the CJP was able to make its agitation successful even though no party directly participated. It gave a good message to the country.

Inspired by this message, now the Genji movements have spread across the country. In Telangana state, it is known that the youth are planning to protest against the closure of schools and the release of notifications for the implementation of the job calendar. Similarly, in Andhra Pradesh state, we are hearing that the Genji youth are planning to organize protests against the coalition government that is implementing anti-people policies. In some other states too, we are reading that the youth will be alert and will come out on the roads to protest the governments and their corrupt activities. Especially, reforms in the education system, leakage of question papers in exams, and corruption are going to be their main issues.

The eastern Indian state of Jharkhand is in turmoil today. A large number of youth are protesting against irregularities in the examinations conducted by the Jharkhand Public Service Commission and the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission. Jharkhand Lok Tantrik Krantikari Morcha leader Devendranath Mehto has been on a hunger strike for more than nine days and has lost 10.5 kg. Police resorted to lathicharge during the protests on Monday. Protesters are holding their protest at the Jaipal Singh Munda Stadium in Ranchi. In protest against the lathicharge on them, the state BJP president and former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi, the leader of the opposition in the assembly, has called for a state bandh on the 11th of this month. The youth became even more agitated when the police used tear gas shells and water cannons. They ignored the barricades. They expressed their protest by dancing on them. They are strongly alleging a lack of transparency in the JSSC recruitment, demanding the cancellation of the 14th GCSC preliminary examination and a CBI or judicial inquiry into it. Their main demand is that justice should be done to the deserving. The former chairman of JPSC was arrested on this occasion. The government has also decided to cancel three exams. The double standards of the main parties are evident in these movements. While the Bharatiya Janata Party, which opposed and suppressed the protest movement at Jantar Mantar in Delhi, is in opposition in Jharkhand and is demanding the cancellation of the exams, the Congress Party, which came to support the Delhi movement, is making waves in Jharkhand. It is noteworthy that the Congress Party is supporting the government there. That is why it can be said that the youth of the country have developed aversion, aversion and opposition to traditional political parties. The youth's opposition has gone so far that they are reluctant to even invite the Chief Justice of India as the chief guest. Students of the prestigious Hyderabad NALSAR University have refused to receive their degrees from him at the convocation ceremony and have submitted signed letters to the Vice Chancellor and Registrar. Earlier, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences had postponed the CJI's program. This means that the Chief Justice's comments on the youth and his attitude towards watching videos of police brutality against protesters have hurt the youth of this country. The decision to boycott the CJI is a reflection of their anger. The frustration and despair among the youth of the country is being exposed through these protest movements. Resignation of individuals or ministers is only a temporary solution. But it is clear that they want a system free from irregularities, irregularities and corruption.

DRDO Is Being Restructured. But The Real Problem Remains Unsolved

India stands at a defining moment in its technological and strategic journey. The ongoing reforms within the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) are not merely another bureaucratic restructuring. They represent perhaps the most consequential institutional reform in India's defence innovation ecosystem - R&D. If executed with conviction, they could determine whether India becomes a genuine technology power or continues to remain dependent on others for critical military capabilities. According to government sources, the Prime Minister's Office has directed that the restructuring of DRDO be completed by 2026. The objective is ambitious: transform DRDO into a leaner, more efficient, and globally competitive research organisation, capable of delivering next-generation military technologies. The urgency is welcome. But structural reforms alone will not solve India's defence innovation challenge. The deeper questions concern talent, resources, institutional culture, and national priorities. R&D in national security must never be viewed as a cost centre. It is a strategic investment that safeguards sovereignty. Every breakthrough in propulsion, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, semiconductors, or autonomous systems translates directly into military capability and geopolitical leverage. For a rising power aspiring to become a developed nation by 2047, under-investing in defence R&D is not merely poor budgeting, but a strategic mistake.

The DRDO's achievements deserve recognition before criticism. Its record in missiles and strategic systems is remarkable by any global standard. The organisation has delivered the Agni to Akash and Nag, cruise missile BrahMos in partnership with Russia, and is now at work on complex air defence systems like Project Kusha. Its contributions to radar systems, electronic warfare, secure communications, sensors, and naval technologies have substantially strengthened India's armed forces. Working alongside defence public sector undertakings, the DRDO has enabled indigenous warship construction and advanced combat systems that were once considered beyond India's technological reach. These successes dem-

onstrate that India can build world-class defence technologies when policy, scientific leadership, and political commitment converge. Yet, modern warfare is evolving much faster than traditional research institutions. The battlefields of today have fundamentally altered military thinking. Autonomous systems, unmanned platforms, AI, drones, electronic warfare and cyber capabilities, and advanced propulsion are becoming the decisive technologies of future conflicts.

What To Do In Military R&D

It is precisely in several of these areas where India continues to lag. The Kaveri jet engine programme remains unfinished after decades. Indigenous propulsion technologies still trail global leaders. Autonomous and unmanned systems require much deeper investments than India currently makes. The country also lacks commercial-scale semiconductor fabrication facilities, forcing dependence on imported chips that power radars, avionics, communication systems, and electronic warfare equipment. These technological vulnerabilities cannot simply be addressed by reorganising laboratories. Managing DRDO, therefore, is not merely about restructuring departments. It is about rethinking how India conducts strategic research itself.

Three fundamental questions deserve honest answers.

1. Is DRDO Attracting Country's Finest Talent?

The answer is uncomfortable: not consistently.

Every year, India's best engineering graduates leave for universities, laboratories, and technology companies across the United States, Europe, and other global institutions. Thousands of Indian-origin scientists today contribute to cutting-edge research at organisations such as DARPA, NASA, leading semiconductor companies, AI laboratories, and global tech firms. Their work defines tomorrow's technologies - but rarely under the Indian flag.

If India can produce world-class scientists, why cannot its premier defence laboratory attract and retain them?

2. Does DRDO Possess Adequate Resources?

Again, only partially.

DRDO operates 52 laboratories across multiple technology domains. Yet the existence of laboratories does not automati-

cally translate into cutting-edge innovation. Scientific excellence depends upon concentration of talent, sustained funding, modern infrastructure, international collaboration, but with ownership.

Its budget tells the story. For FY 2026-27, the DRDO has been allocated approximately Rs 29,100 crore, or roughly USD 3.5 billion. While this represents a significant national commitment, it remains modest when compared with global competitors.

The United States Department of Defence spends well over USD 100 billion annually on research, development, testing, and evaluation. China's defence R&D expenditure is estimated at around USD 44 billion every year. Both countries allocate roughly 12-15% of their defence expenditure to R&D and technological development. India's allocation remains closer to 5-6 per cent, leaving a substantial capability gap.

Recognising these limitations, the government has wisely opened nearly one-fourth of the defence R&D budget to private industry, startups, and academia. This is an important beginning.

However, genuine innovation ecosystems cannot be built through outsourcing alone. They require seamless integration between government laboratories, universities, industry, and venture capital - something that countries like the United States and Israel have perfected over decades. For example, more than 430 multinational R&D centres operate in Israel, and we all buy their technologies.

3. Remuneration
Scientific talent today competes in a global marketplace. Compensation is not the sole motivation for researchers, but it certainly matters. Policymakers must ask an uncomfortable question: has India seriously debated what globally competitive remuneration looks like for scientists working on critical technologies?

International laboratories offer vastly superior research facilities, greater autonomy, stronger peer networks, and significantly better compensation.

If India wants the best minds to remain - or even persuade Indian-origin scientists abroad to return - it must compete globally rather than administratively.

DRDO should be empowered



to recruit globally, collaborate internationally where national interests permit, offer flexible compensation for exceptional researchers, and create mission-oriented teams.

Kalam's Mould Model

Pride is still worth millions, and to build that, the organisation must offer mission, autonomy, recognition, and accountable leadership. What DRDO needs is a cadre of leaders in the Kalam mould, scientifically credible, institution-building, turning individuals into high-performance teams. The objective should not merely be to reform DRDO but to transform it into India's equivalent of a strategic innovation ecosystem - combining the agility of DARPA, the scientific excellence of leading research universities, and the industrial depth of advanced defence economies. Equally important is India's university ecosystem. Defence innovation must go beyond government laboratories. Sadly, universities have failed in applied research. Unfortunately, barring a handful of institutions, much of Indian higher education remains disconnected from frontier technological development.

This must change. Every major DRDO mission should be institutionally linked with universities, IITs, IISc, startups, and private laboratories. Long-term grants, doctoral fellowships, defence innovation clusters, and tech incubators should become part of DRDO's core mandate rather than peripheral initiatives. A nation of India's scale cannot depend on one organisation alone to produce every strategic technology.

A Big Or Smaller DRDO? A Pointless Question

The ongoing reforms thus present a historic opportunity. The question is not whether DRDO should become smaller or larger. The real question is whether India is prepared to build an entirely new model of defence innovation - one that rewards excellence, embraces global standards, attracts the best minds, and concentrates resources on technologies that will define future wars. For too long, India has measured self-reliance by counting platforms produced. The next phase of Atmanirbhar Bharat must instead be measured by the technologies invented. The reforms must, therefore, move beyond organisational charts and laboratory consolidation. They must invest in people, ideas, and institutions. Missiles alone will not secure India's technological future. Leadership in propulsion, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors, autonomous systems, and advanced materials will.

What DRDO Must Do Within

DRDO's reform agenda must go beyond structure and manpower; it must embed world-class project management as a daily operating norm. The organisation already has procedural documents, but unless these are enforced uniformly across projects, they remain paperwork rather than capability. For strategic R&D, process discipline is not administrative overhead; it is what turns scientific ambition into deliverable systems. Building such an ecosystem will demand political courage, investment, and institutional flexibility. It will also require abandoning outdated bureaucratic practices in favour of scientific excellence and merit.

The Coast Pays, Delhi Collects: What The Centre's Mineral Bill Takes From States

On August 12, the Lok Sabha passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026. There was no debate. What the House voted upon was the reversal of a judgment nine judges of the Supreme Court had spent thirteen years arriving at, and the extinction of a taxing power that belongs, under our Constitution, to the states.

Let me be fair to the Government, for its case is not frivolous. In July 2024, in Mineral Area Development Authority v. Steel Authority of India, a nine-judge Bench held by eight to one that royalty is not a tax but a contractual payment, and that the states retain their own power to tax mineral rights and mineral-bearing land. Correcting an error of 1989, it allowed demands back to 2005, payable from this April, leaving mineral states with claims worth thousands of crores and industry with matching liabilities. That deserved an answer.

But this Bill raises more questions than it has tried to answer.

Let's begin with where the

matter was first settled: the Constituent Assembly itself. In December 1948, Professor KT Shah asked the Constituent Assembly to declare all natural wealth - our land, our minerals, the seas around our coasts - to be public property, held privately by no one and worked by public enterprise alone. The Assembly declined. Our Constitution vests the ownership of minerals in nobody but the owner of the land, and land is Entry 18 of the State List. Where the framers wanted the Union to own a resource, as with the seabed in Article 297, they said so. What they wrote instead was a division of powers, chosen with care. On taxation, they placed two entries side by side. Entry 50, taxes on mineral rights, is subject to any limitations Parliament may impose by a law relating to mineral development. Entry 49, taxes on lands and buildings, is subject to nothing at all. Men who had just written an override clause did not forget how to write a second. The omission was a decision, and it is the decision on which the Court turned in 2024.

This Bill restricts both. On mineral rights, the Government is within its rights. On mineral-bearing land, it does what the framers declined to permit, by declaring land a subject of mineral regulation. That provision will very probably fall in court, handing the industry the very uncertainty the Bill was meant to end. Two further defects: any state levy uncollected before commencement is deemed invalid at all material times, while whatever has been collected need not be refunded. So the company that paid has lost its money, the company that did not owes nothing. And the Bill fixes no limit itself, leaving the Central Government to decide by rules what a state may levy. A constitutional entitlement has become a licence issued from New Delhi. Who pays? Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh had all either legislated such levies or stood to gain from the judgment. Arrears since 2005 are cancelled by a single clause. Nor is this a quar-

rel between Union and Opposition: Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are governed by the party that governs at the Centre, and lose as much as Jharkhand or Karnataka. Which is why the Bill went to no committee, where members from those states would have had to say aloud what it costs them.

Now coming to my home state. Kerala (soon to become Keralam) has not, so far as I am aware, levied a tax of this kind, and I make no claim of any arrears due to it. What Keralam loses, though, is the only fiscal instrument it ever had over the vital resources under its soil. Heavy mineral sand and china clay are more than ninety per cent of the value of our mineral production. Our mineral economy is not a mine in a forest. It is our coastline. At Chavara in Kollam lies one of the world's finest ilmenite deposits. What does Keralam earn from it? A royalty rate fixed in Delhi that it may not revise, half of the mineral blocks worked by a central undertaking, and Union control under the Atomic Energy Act over monazite, the

most valuable constituent of all. Set that beside what is happening in the water. On March 4, 2025, our Assembly unanimously asked the Centre to withdraw the 2023 amendment to the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, alarmed at the auction of blocks off the Kollam coast. The auction proceeded, and the royalty accrues to the Union. So: seaward of the shoreline and the seabed is the Union's, and the revenue flows to Delhi; landward, mineral-bearing land is now taken out of the State's fiscal reach. In my own constituency, the Department of Mining and Geology has delineated heavy mineral areas along the Veli-Kazhakkuttom and Vizhinjam-Kovalam stretches. Nothing is mined there today, but the Union Budget proposes rare earth corridors in Keralam. Who lives there? Poor fisherfolk. Pallithura, Valiyathura, Poonthura, Beemappally, Vizhinjam, and Adimalathura are among the most densely settled fishing coasts in India, losing land to erosion every monsoon, already living with the repercussions of a major port development.

Permanent Solution to Mondigate Drainage Problem: Minister Pemmasani

Guntur, Pen Power, August 14: A permanent solution is being initiated for the decades-old Mondigate drainage problem in Old Guntur. Union Minister of State Dr. Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, along with MLA Mohammed Naseer Ahmed, laid the foundation stone for modernization works funded by ₹6.23 crore from the Railway Department. The project aims to increase drainage capacity and prevent sewage and rainwater from entering homes during heavy rains. The works are expected to benefit more than 50,000 families in Old Guntur. Railway officials said the upgraded



system will enable the additional discharge of over 25 cubic metres of water. Remaining works will be completed after the monsoon season.

NTR District Ready for 80th Independence Day Celebrations



Vijayawada, Pen Power, August 14: All arrangements have been completed for the 80th Independence Day celebrations in NTR District. District Collector

Dr. G. Lakshmisha and Vijayawada Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhara Babu inspected the full-dress rehearsal held at Makineni Basava Punnaiah Stadium in Singh Nagar on Friday. The celebrations on August 15 will feature flag hoisting, police parade and bike stunts, drum performances, cultural programmes and tableaux showcasing government development and welfare schemes. Minister for IT and Education Nara Lokesh will hoist the national flag and address the gathering. The Police Commissioner said elaborate security and traffic arrangements have been made for the event.

Continuous Monitoring of Public Grievance Redressal: Collector Lakshmisha

Vijayawada, Pen Power, August 14: District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha said special constituency-level Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programmes are helping authorities directly address people's problems at their doorstep. As part of the "One Month - One Constituency - Four Visits" programme, a special grievance meeting was held at Vatsavayi Sri Vasavi Kalyana Mandapam in Jaggaipeta constituency on Friday. The Collector and MLA Sriram Rajagopal (Tatayya) received petitions and directed officials to take prompt action.

A total of 106 petitions were received, including 68 related to Revenue, 9 to



Panchayat Raj and 8 to Survey matters. The Collector said every petition is being closely monitored and re-

solved within the prescribed timeframe. The MLA said the programme is helping resolve long-pending is-

ssues, including pensions, house sites, housing, land measurements and revenue-related problems.

Plant One Tree and Protect the Environment: Collector Dinesh Kumar



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 14: Polavaram District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar urged every

person to plant and protect at least one tree to safeguard the environment. The Collector, along

with Joint Collector Surapati Prashanth Kumar, participated in a tree-planting programme held at the

PMRC office premises on Friday as part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations.

He said trees are essential for clean air and a healthy environment and called upon people to plant saplings and nurture them for future generations. He added that coordinated plantation programmes would be taken up across the district to increase green cover.

Joint Collector Prashanth Kumar urged people to plant trees at government offices, villages and residential premises across all 12 mandals and actively contribute to environmental protection.

New Opportunities with Machine Learning in Electrical Engineering

Gandepalli, Pen Power, August 14: Machine Learning is increasingly transforming the field of Electrical Engineering, said Dr. A. Srikanth, Assistant Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering, NIT Andhra Pradesh, Tadepalligudem.

A guest lecture on "Applications of Machine Learning in Electrical Engineering" was organised by the EEE Department of Aditya University. Dr. Srikanth explained applications of Machine Learning in fault detection, load forecasting, predictive maintenance and smart grids. He advised students to develop strong skills in Artificial Intelligence and Ma-



chine Learning, which are expected to play a key role in the future of the power sector. University officials

encouraged students to upgrade their technical skills in line with research and industry requirements.

Stay Alert Against Cybercrimes

- Women Should Make Use of Legal Provisions: Polavaram OSD Admin M. Javali Alphan



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 14: Polavaram OSD Admin M. Javali Alphan urged people to remain vigilant against cybercrimes. She visited the highly sensitive village of Mohanapuram on Friday and conducted an awareness programme on cybercrime, women's safety, road safety, drug prevention and laws related to women. Addressing the women, she said several laws are in

place for women's protection and urged them to understand and make proper use of these legal provisions. She appealed to parents not to encourage child marriages and stressed the importance of providing quality education to children for a better future.

Awareness on Cyber Frauds

Alphan advised victims of cyber fraud to immediately report the incident by calling the 1930 cybercrime

helpline. She cautioned people to be careful while using online applications and not to share personal information, bank details or OTPs with unknown persons. She also called for greater awareness among families and students about cyber fraud.

Addateegala Circle Inspector Gajendra Kumar explained the measures being taken by the police department for women's safety and urged women and girls

to approach the police without hesitation if they face any problems. Gangavaram SI S. Venkaiah advised parents to pay special attention to their children's education, stating that education is the key to building a better future.

OSD Inspects Tribal Welfare School

Later, the OSD inspected the Tribal Welfare Ashram Boys' High School at Mohanapuram. She interacted with students and enquired about their education and school facilities. She distributed pens and pencils to the students and planted saplings on the school premises, highlighting the importance of environmental protection. Former MPP Dr. Teegala Prabha, former ZPTC member Venkat Reddy, TDP State Farmers' Wing official spokesperson Kanigiri Rambabu, Mandal Committee president Venkat Reddy, police officials, staff, teachers, students and villagers participated in the programme.

Programmes to Inspire Patriotism Among Youth: Collector Rajababu

Ongole, Pen Power, August 14: Prakasam District Collector P. Rajababu said various programmes are being organised to educate the younger generation about India's freedom struggle, national unity and patriotism as part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations. The Collector, along with Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari and other officials, launched a tree-planting programme at the Collectorate premises on Friday. He said activities including Tiranga rallies, Viksit Bharat programmes and selfie videos have been organised from August 10 to 15, with efforts to ensure the national flag is displayed at every home. Collector Rajababu urged



people, especially youth, to actively participate in the celebrations and contribute

to environmental protection by planting and nurturing trees. Similar programmes

are being conducted on a large scale at village and mandal levels.

Water Hyacinth Opens Self-Employment Opportunities for SHG Women: Collector



Kakinada, Pen Power, August 14: District Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad said the government is

promoting the use of water hyacinth, which obstructs water flow in canals, as a resource for women's economic

empowerment.

The Collector inspected a month-long training programme for 40 SHG women from

Karapa and Kajuluru mandals at Gorrupudi village on Friday. The women are being trained to make handicrafts, decorative items and other useful products from dried water hyacinth. He said the government is also providing marketing support through the 'Swayam' brand and encouraging online sales to reach wider markets. Training in jute bag making will also be provided to ensure year-round employment. The Collector assured that subsidies would be provided for machines required for bag-making and encouraged women to focus on both production and marketing.

MP Sana Satish Babu Reviews Kakinada Development



Kakinada, Pen Power, August 14: Rajya Sabha MP Sana Satish Babu participated in the District Review Committee (DRC) meeting held at the Kakinada Collectorate on Friday and reviewed the implementation of development and welfare programmes. The MP directed officials to organize special loan and job fairs to improve employment opportunities for youth. He also stressed expanding self-employment and skill development programmes. He called for effective implementation of Central and State government schemes for the economic development of fishermen and urged officials to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits. MP Sana Satish Babu also reviewed other development works and called for faster implementation of welfare schemes and projects for the direct benefit of the public.

Minister Narayana Inspects Solid Waste Management Centre

Rajahmendravaram, Pen Power, August 14: Municipal Administration Minister Ponguru Narayana inspected the dumping yard opposite the paper mill on Friday along with Commissioner Rahul Meena and MLAs Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary and Adireddy Srinivas. The Minister said the state generates around 7,000 tonnes of solid waste daily and that the government is taking steps to make Andhra Pradesh a dumpyard-free state. He said 107 waste-processing plants have been sanctioned to process daily waste, with the remaining facilities expected to be operational by



September-end. Narayana said the government is also reviving Waste-to-Energy projects and plans to establish six plants across the state. He added that legacy waste is being processed and the RDF generated will be supplied to cement factories. MLA Gorantla appealed to people to avoid dumping plastic and other waste into drains, especially in view of the upcoming Godavari Pushkarams. MLA Adireddy Srinivas said the government would provide a permanent solution to the long-standing compost yard problem in the city.

Grievances Received Under ‘One Month–One Village–Four Visits’ in Karapa

Karapa, Pen Power, August 14: District Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad received petitions from the public at the Chandranna Meeting Hall in Karapa on Friday as part of the ‘One Month–One Village–Four Visits’ programme being conducted in Kakinada Rural constituency. Officials from the Revenue, Rural Development and other departments participated in the programme and addressed public grievances. The Collector urged residents to make use of the programme and bring their issues to the authorities for speedy resolution. As part of the Har Ghar Tiranga programme, the Collector also planted saplings at the Karapa MPDO office premises and called upon people to participate in environmental protection and patriotic activities.



Comprehensive Plans for Heritage Sites Ahead of Godavari Pushkarams

Rajahmendravaram, Pen Power, August 14: East Godavari District Collector Keerthi Chekuri directed officials to prepare comprehensive development plans for historical and archaeological sites in Rajamahendravaram ahead of the Godavari Pushkarams in 2027. The Collector inspected the Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu birthplace, Rallabandi Subbarao Museum, Cotton residences and Damerla Rama Rao Art Gallery. She reviewed infrastructure, maintenance and visitor facilities at the sites. She called for coordinated measures focusing on tourism development, heritage conservation and improved



visitor amenities, keeping in view the large number of devotees and tourists expected from across India and abroad during the Pushkarams.

Seven Workers Killed As Water, Debris Flood Uttarakhand Hydro Project Tunnel

Lucknow: Seven workers were killed and 14 injured after a sudden rush of water and debris entered an under-construction tunnel at the Vishnugad-Pipalkoti hydroelectric project in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, triggering a major overnight rescue operation, officials said. The incident occurred around 7 p.m. Thursday inside a tunnel of the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation-owned project near Mayapur in the Pipalkoti area. Construction work was being carried out by Hindustan Construction Company. Chamoli District Magistrate Gaurav Kumar said a large-scale, multi-agency rescue operation was launched immediately after the incident. "By 11 p.m., 21 workers were evacuated from the tunnel," Kumar told reporters.

Officials said around 30 workers were inside the tunnel when a landslide and heavy water seepage suddenly blocked part of the passage. By around 11 p.m., 21 workers had been brought out, seven of whom were declared dead. Fourteen injured workers were taken to hospitals for treatment. The district administration mobilized teams from the National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, police, fire services



and the District Disaster Response Force. Heavy machinery and specialized equipment were deployed to clear debris and reach the affected section. NDRF team commander Amrit Lal Meena said the tunnel was heavily flooded when his team arrived. "When our team reached the site and started the operation, there was a lot of water inside the tunnel and water was also seeping from the sides. Since then, the water level has increased considerably," Meena said. NDRF personnel who entered the tunnel reported that large quantities of water had accumulated inside and that water was continuing to seep through the sides. Rescue workers used blue plastic drums to help move through the flooded section.

The incident has again raised concerns about the risks associated with tunnel construction in Uttarakhand's geologically fragile Himalayan terrain. The same project was the site of another serious accident in December, when two loco trains collided inside a tunnel while more than 100 people were working underground. About 60 workers, officials and other personnel were injured. Construction work was subsequently halted for a period following the accident. Tunnel accidents and disasters have repeatedly exposed the hazards associated with major infrastructure projects in Uttarakhand. In August 2025, 19 workers were trapped inside a National Hydroelectric Power Corporation tunnel in

Pithoragarh after a landslide blocked its entrance. Rescue teams had to clear debris to reach the workers. The state's most prominent tunnel rescue came in November 2023, when a section of the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel in Uttarkashi collapsed, trapping 41 workers underground. All 41 were rescued after a 17-day operation that involved multiple agencies, specialized equipment and experts from India and abroad. The accident also recalls the February 2021 Chamoli disaster, when a sudden flood and massive quantities of debris swept into tunnels at the Tapovan-Vishnugad hydropower project during the Rishi Ganga disaster. More than 100 people died in the disaster, many of them workers at hydropower projects in the area.

Bombay HC Pushes Maharashtra Govt To Aggressively Implement ABC Programme To Control Stray Dog Menace



Mumbai: The Bombay High Court on Friday directed the Maharashtra government to aggressively implement of the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme, observing that controlling the growing stray dog population was central to addressing the problem of dog attacks and rabies. A bench of Acting Chief Justice Ravindra Ghuge and Justice Gautam Anhad was hearing a suo motu petition initiated following directions of the Supreme Court to High Courts

to monitor the stray dog menace and dog-bite incidents in their respective states. During the hearing, Additional Government Pleader O A Chandurkar placed several affidavits filed by the State before the court and said implementation of the ABC programme was among the measures being undertaken. The bench, however, emphasised that sterilisation had to be carried out on a large scale and effectively to prevent further growth of the stray dog population.

"Your administration must realise one thing: if you implement the ABC programme, which you call the sterilisation programme, aggressively, there will be no growth of stray dogs," Acting Chief Justice Ghuge observed. The court said authorities should focus on sterilising adult dogs rather than merely trying to catch an increasing number of stray animals. "Instead of trying to catch hold of the growing number of dogs, you have to catch hold of the adult dogs so that it is

ensured that they are sterilised," the bench said. It added that preventing the birth of more puppies would address the problem at its source. "If you stop the growth, the rest falls in line," the court observed. The bench said that once the population was brought under control, authorities could concentrate on other aspects, including preventing rabies and ensuring proper management of the remaining dogs. First, you should stop the growth of the dogs. So that one major problem is resolved," Justice Ghuge said. The court also sought details on the frequency with which data relating to rabies cases, medicines and other relevant information was updated on the State government's website. Chandurkar said the data was updated regularly. Senior advocate Mihir Desai was appointed as amicus curiae to assist the court in the proceedings. The bench directed the State to place updated information and compliance details before it at each hearing.

Karnataka Government Moves To Lift Gutka Ban Two Days After Imposing It Amid Arecanut Price Concerns

Bengaluru: Two days after banning Gutka and Pan Masala, that contain tobacco and nicotine, the Karnataka Government has made a U-turn and is preparing to withdraw the order. The move followed a delegation of elected representatives from eight districts, predominantly cultivating arecanut, meeting Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and requesting him to reconsider the government decision, as the move would adversely affect the price of arecanut. Shivakumar, who said that he was not properly briefed on the issue and took the Health Department officials to task for not properly briefing him about the issue before it was brought to the cabinet. He also directed the Health Department officials to withdraw the notification issued on Aug 12, after the cabinet approved the earlier notification.



Following health concerns over Gutka, the Karnataka Health Department had prepared a notification to ban Gutka and Pan Masala containing tobacco and nicotine. After the earlier ban of Pan Masala containing tobacco and nicotine, the manufacturers started selling pan masala and the tobacco mix separately, leaving the mixing to

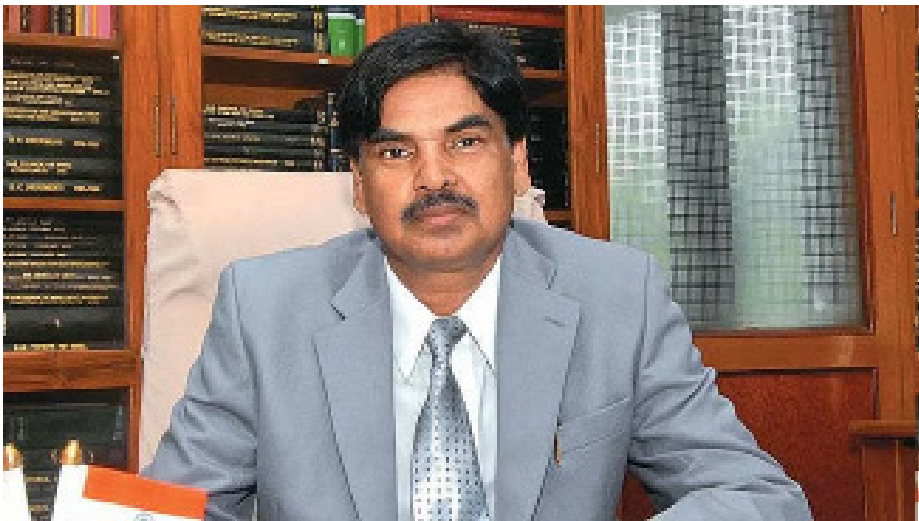
the consumers. Following the new complaints, the Health Department had prepared a notification to ban Gutka and Pan Masala as whole, not allowing the tobacco and nicotine mix to be sold separately. The notification was placed before the cabinet on Thursday and the cabinet gave consent to the notification, which ordered a ban on Gutka sale

for one year. This created a knee jerk reaction in the rural areas, where the Gutka addicts started hoarding Gutka. In places like Koppal, people purchased Gutka and Masala Mix, which contains tobacco, stashed them into gunny bags and took them home. This created a severe shortage of Gutka and the Rs.25 per packet Gutka started selling for Rs.100.

Elected Once, Re-elected Six Times: Why BCI Chief Manan Kumar Mishra's Never-Ending Tenure Is Ruffling Feathers

New Delhi: A petition before the Supreme Court has put the Bar Council of India (BCI) under the spotlight, seeking structural reforms to the way its top leadership is elected and how long its chairman and vice-chairman can remain in office. Filed by advocate M. Varadhan, through advocates Sandeep Pandey and Rajesh Singh Chauhan, the plea challenges the proviso to Section 4(3) of the Advocates Act, 1961, Bar and Bench reported. The provision allows a BCI member to continue in office until a successor is elected. The petitioner argues that, in practice, such a provision can facilitate prolonged occupancy of key positions and weaken meaningful rotation in the country's apex regulatory body for lawyers. Manan Kumar Mishra was first elected as Chairman of the BCI in 2012. After a brief intervening period when Shri Biri Singh Sinsinwar served as chairman from April 17, 2014, to November 9, 2014, Mishra returned to the post on November 9, 2014 and has remained in the chair ever since. He was most recently re-elected unopposed for a record seventh consecutive term on March 1, 2025.

As of August 2026, he has therefore remained at the helm for approximately 11 years and nine months. His tenure is particularly notable because the BCI Rules prescribe a two-year term for the chairman and vice-chairman, subject to the member's tenure in the Council. Mishra has, however, remained chairman through repeated



A Supreme Court plea has sought structural reforms in the Bar Council of India, including fixed two-year terms and a three-term lifetime cap for its chairman and vice-chairman. The petition highlights BCI chief Manan Kumar Mishra's nearly 12-year tenure and recent NALSAR controversy, while also noting his role as a BJP-nominated Rajya Sabha MP from Bihar.

re-elections. He was elected unopposed for a record seventh consecutive term in March 2025. In simple terms, a standard two-year term would ordinarily mean that six full terms amount to 12 years. Mishra's continuous tenure is now approaching that mark, despite the chairman's post being designed around two-year election cycles. The issue raised by the petition is therefore not that Mishra has simply held one exceptionally long statutory term. Rather, it is that repeated re-election has allowed one individual to remain in the same leadership position for nearly 12 years.

The petition argues that elections alone do not necessarily guarantee meaningful institutional democracy if the same individuals continue to dominate key positions. It seeks a fixed two-year tenure for the BCI chairman and vice-chairman

and proposes a lifetime limit of three terms, whether consecutive or otherwise. The petitioner also wants safeguards against circumventing such limits through alternative designations, interim arrangements, nominations, committees, re-elections or similar mechanisms. Another major demand is a transparent and equitable rotational system for the chairman's post, ensuring that representatives from different states and regions get a genuine opportunity to lead the national regulator. The petition points out that representatives from 20 of India's 28 states have not held the BCI chairmanship in the past 30 years, despite the Council's national character.

Why Regional Rotation Is Being Demanded

According to the Bar and Bench report, the petitioner argues that the BCI represents the legal profession across India and that its lead-

ership should reflect that national character. The concern is that prolonged control by the same individuals can limit the entry of new representatives, ideas and regional perspectives. The plea therefore seeks broader institutional reforms covering not only leadership tenure but also financial, regulatory and institutional accountability. The central argument is that a democratic election process should produce meaningful changes in leadership over time rather than merely provide a mechanism through which existing office-bearers can repeatedly return to power.

The NALSAR Controversy That Put BCI Under the Spotlight

The petition comes shortly after a controversy involving the NALSAR University of Law in Hyderabad brought the BCI's decision-making powers into sharp focus.

Government tightens scrutiny of Air India safety

New Delhi: The government has warned Air India to strengthen operational oversight and accept full responsibility for safety as authorities move to tighten drug-testing requirements across the aviation sector following a serious mid-air incident involving one of the airline's Airbus A320 aircraft. The Civil Aviation Ministry has directed the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to accelerate revisions to its rules governing tests for psychoactive substances and increase the proportion of safety-sensitive aviation personnel subjected to mandatory screening. The intervention signals tougher regulatory scrutiny of both airline management systems and employee fitness standards. Air India, meanwhile, has begun mandatory substance screening for all its pilots, extending checks beyond existing regulatory requirements. The programme covers pilots at Air India and its budget subsidiary Air India Express and involves more than 5,000 flight crew members. Tests are being conducted alongside training sessions, following flights and at designated locations linked to pilots' home bases.

Existing DGCA rules require airlines to randomly test at least 10 per cent of flight crew annually for specified psychoactive substances. Air India's decision to test its entire pilot population represents a significantly wider internal safety exercise, aimed at re-



inforcing confidence in the carrier's operational standards.

Government concern intensified after Air India flight AI2379, operating from Phuket to Delhi on August 4, suddenly lost about 300 feet of altitude during cruise. The Airbus A320neo, registration VT-EXO, stabilised and subsequently landed safely in Delhi. Twenty passengers and four crew members were injured in the episode. The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers and eight crew members.

The captain subsequently tested positive for marijuana in a confirmatory drug test. Authorities have not established any connection between that result and the aircraft's sudden altitude loss, and investigators are examining technical, operational and human factors before determining the cause of the incident.

A preliminary Airbus assessment has added a significant technical dimension to the investigation.

The aircraft briefly lost functionality in all three hydraulic systems, leaving its elevators and ailerons unavailable for roughly four seconds. Those flight-control surfaces govern crucial pitch and roll movements. The first officer applied a full nose-down command during the episode, but the controls did not immediately respond before the hydraulic systems recovered.

Airbus has asked Air India to conduct additional checks on the aircraft's systems and sensors and provide further technical information. The assessment has not identified a root cause. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau has classified the occurrence as a serious incident and is investigating with technical assistance from Airbus and France's Bureau of Enquiry and Analysis for Civil Aviation Safety.

Post-flight technical records have also indicated multiple warnings involving hydraulic pressure, flight

controls and autopilot functions around the time of the altitude loss. The expanding evidence has reinforced the need for investigators to distinguish between technical failures and separate questions involving crew fitness rather than drawing an early causal connection between the two.

The government's instructions to the DGCA are expected to lead to broader testing coverage and a review of how positive results are handled. One issue under examination is whether regulations should distinguish more clearly between prohibited substance use and positive findings caused by legitimate medication for conditions such as pain or allergies, while imposing stronger consequences where substance dependence or unauthorised consumption is established. The tougher approach comes as Air India remains under heightened scrutiny over safety management and operational discipline.

Jantar Mantar Protester Moves Supreme Court Over Rape, Abduction Threats



New Delhi: A participant in the student protests at Jantar Mantar in Delhi has approached the Supreme Court seeking protection against alleged threats of rape and abduction, as well as what the petitioner has described as continuing acts of vigilantism. The plea was mentioned before Chief Justice of India Surya Kant,

with the petitioner's counsel stressing the urgency of the matter and pointing to alleged threats and harassment that are continuing even after the petition was filed. During the hearing, the petitioner's counsel told the Chief Justice that the urgency stemmed from ongoing incidents of alleged vigilantism, rape threats and

threats of abduction. The counsel said videos documenting some of the incidents had already been placed on record, while additional videos had emerged after the petition was filed. According to LiveLaw, the counsel said some of the newly surfaced videos were so disturbing that they could not even be

described in open court. The submission prompted the court to take note of the urgency surrounding the plea. CJI Surya Kant agreed to list the matter on Tuesday, August 18, along with other pending petitions concerning the student protests. The Supreme Court has already been dealing with multiple matters arising from the protests, including allegations concerning police action, FIRs registered against students and requests for protection and other relief. The latest petition brings the alleged personal safety threats faced by protesters, particularly those reporting sexual harassment and intimidation, before the court. The plea comes against the backdrop of allegations that women who participated in the student protests have faced harassment both online and offline.

Supreme Court Quashes Rahul Gandhi's Savarkar Case, Cites Missing UP Govt Sanction

New Delhi: The Supreme Court quashed the criminal complaint and related proceedings against Congress leader and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over his remarks about freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu set aside the Lucknow trial court's order summoning Gandhi, holding that the mandatory government sanction required for the prosecution had not been shown to have been obtained. According to The Times of India, the Uttar Pradesh government's affidavit contained no disclosure that such sanction had been granted. During the hearing, the bench noted the absence of the required sanction and consequently

quashed the complaint and the orders passed by the magistrate. The court observed that the affidavit filed by the Uttar Pradesh government contained no indication that the necessary sanction had been granted. The Supreme Court's decision was therefore based on a procedural and legal requirement, rather than an assessment of whether Gandhi's remarks about Savarkar were defamatory, hateful or otherwise unlawful. The case dates back to November 17, 2022, when Gandhi was addressing a rally in Akola, Maharashtra, during his Bharat Jodo Yatra. Gandhi had made remarks about Savarkar, alleging that he had collaborated with the British and received a pension from them.



The comments triggered a complaint in Lucknow by advocate Nripendra Pandey, who alleged that Gandhi's remarks were intended to insult Savarkar and promote enmity or hatred. A magistrate subse-

quently issued summons to Gandhi. Gandhi challenged the proceedings before the Allahabad High Court's Lucknow bench.

However, the High Court declined to quash the proceedings in 2025 and directed Gandhi to pursue the appropriate revision remedy. Gandhi then approached the Supreme Court, seeking an end to the criminal proceedings. The latest ruling follows an earlier hearing in April 2025, when the Supreme Court had stayed the proceedings. That bench, which included Justice Dipankar Datta, had strongly criticised Gandhi's remarks, describing them as "irresponsible" and cautioning against making statements that could mock or demean freedom fighters.

BJP MLA's Daughter Sparks Controversy After Allegedly Slapping Woman SI Over Temple Entry Denial; FIR Filed

Bengaluru: This woman sub-inspector did not take the slap on her cheek lightly just because the woman who hit her was daughter of a sitting BJP MLA and wife of her senior colleague in the department. She just went ahead and lodged an FIR in her police station against Aishwarya, daughter of Tumakuru Rural MLA B Suresh Gowda, whose husband happens to be a DySP in the police department. Suresh Gowda has declined to openly support his daughter and said that the issue should be investigated as per law and he will not interfere with the issue. The incident took place on Wednesday at Arati Ukkada village in Srirangapatna taluk, Mandya district. Since it was auspicious 'Bhimana Amavasya', the full moon day that falls on the day beginning of Shravana maasa, there was heavy rush at the Ukkada Maramma temple. Aishwarya had obtained VIP entry, but even the



VIP queue was moving slowly. She, along with her two children, wanted to go to the sanctum of the temple. When she asked the sub-inspector Savita, who was in charge of the VIP lane, she flatly refused saying that there was a huge crowd and no one would be allowed inside the sanctum. Aishwarya has tried to introduce herself as MLA's daughter and her husband was DySP in the police department. However, Savita

said that she could not do that since such a deviation will cause inconvenience to a lot of people, who were waiting for hours together to have a darshan.

At that point, the area inspector Lakshmi, who was on duty in civil dress went inside the sanctum to check something. This enraged Aishwarya, who picked up a quarrel with Savita. Though Savita tried to explain that she was the Police Inspector, who was overseeing the security of

the temple for the day, Aishwarya started arguing with Savita and demanded that she should be immediately taken inside the sanctum. When Savita also refused in a raised voice, Aishwarya slapped her. Savita immediately reported the issue to her superior Lakshmi and continued her duty at the temple. In the evening, she lodged a complaint against Aishwarya in Kyathanahalli police station, where an FIR has been registered.

'Moral Responsibility': CJP's Saurav Das Demands Manan Kumar Mishra's Resignation After CJI Surya Kant Slams BCI Order Against NALSAR Students

New Delhi: Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) co-convenor Saurav Das called for the resignation of Bar Council of India (BCI) chairman Manan Kumar Mishra, days after the Supreme Court criticised the Council for intervening in the NALSAR University of Law enrolment controversy. Taking to X, Das said Mishra should take "moral responsibility" and step down, while accusing the BCI of overstepping its authority in the matter. The demand came after Chief

Justice of India Surya Kant strongly questioned the BCI's intervention, saying the Council had no authority to interfere with students' right to protest. The CJI also said the Supreme Court would not allow students to be prevented from expressing their concerns through peaceful and lawful demonstrations. The court restrained the BCI and state bar councils from taking punitive or criminal action against students or faculty members of national law universities or other univer-



sities in connection with the dispute. The Supreme Court also issued notice to the BCI on a petition challenging the Council's actions and seeking directions against simi-

lar orders in the future. A bench headed by CJI Kant, along with Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, asked the Council to file its response within two weeks.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches CBDC-Based DBT in Chandigarh, Paving the Way for Greater Transparency in PDS

From Files to People’s Lives: Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches CBDC-Based DBT Pilot in Chandigarh
A New Era of Transparent Foodgrain Delivery: Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches CBDC-Based DBT in Chandigarh
Technology Meets Food Security: Chandigarh Launches CBDC-Based DBT Model for Transparent PDS Delivery
“No Compromise on Farmers’ Interests”: Shivraj Singh Chouhan Says Farmers’ Welfare Remains Paramount in Trade Deals



New Delhi, August, 14 (PIB): Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare and Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today launched a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)-based Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system at an event held at Tagore Theatre in Chandigarh, chaired by Punjab Governor Shri Gulab Chand Kataria. Union Minister for Education, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and New and Renewable Energy Shri Pralhad Joshi and Union Minister of State for Food and Public Distribu-

tion Smt. Nimuben Jayantibhai Bambhaniya attended the event as special guests. Shri Chouhan said the initiative marks an important step towards bringing greater transparency, security and timeliness to the Public Distribution System (PDS). He said that under the leadership and guidance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, there will be no compromise on the interests of farmers and the poor.

A New System for Transparency and Trust

Singh Chouhan said the CBDC-based DBT system will enable payments for ra-

tion and foodgrains to reach beneficiaries directly, securely and transparently. The pilot launched in Chandigarh is intended to serve as a model for adoption across the country. Under the new system, technological safeguards have been incorporated to ensure that beneficiaries can use the funds only for purchasing foodgrains and other essential food items, preventing the money from being diverted for other purposes. At the same time, beneficiaries will have greater choice. In addition to wheat and rice, they will be able to opt for pulses or

other essential food commodities. Shri Chouhan praised the departmental team and officials for developing the system and described the initiative as a major technological innovation.

Commitment to Farmers’ Interests

Chouhan made it clear that there would be no compromise on farmers’ interests in matters relating to agricultural policy and food security. He said that all agreements entered into with countries across the world concerning farmers have been guided by the principle that national interest, farmers’ interests and public interest remain paramount. “Sadly, the Opposition has a problem even with this,” he said. Referring to the country’s strong stocks of wheat and rice, Shri Chouhan said India is now capable of meeting its domestic requirements and exporting when necessary. He said that under the Prime Minister’s leadership, the transparent delivery of PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi and other benefits will continue, with the protection and welfare of farmers remaining the

government’s highest priority.

Strong Remarks on Disruptions in Parliament

At the event, Shri Chouhan also strongly criticised disruptions in Parliament and the conduct of the Opposition, stressing that the dignity of democracy must be upheld. He said such disruptions amount to an insult to the Constitution and the democratic process, and that necessary decisions will be taken in the national interest. Shri Chouhan emphasised that debate is essential in a democracy, but disruption is unacceptable.

PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana and Social Security

Union Minister Shri Chouhan praised the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, saying that providing free foodgrains to more than 800 million people represents one of the country’s major social security measures. He said the scheme is not merely about ensuring that people have enough food to eat. It also strengthens the economic position of families by reducing their

household expenditure, allowing them to use their savings for children’s education and other essential needs. Shri Chouhan said the government’s objective is to ensure that no poor person goes hungry and that there is no shortage of food on any household’s plate.

Benefits of DBT and New Technological Safeguards

Shivraj Singh Chouhan said DBT has ensured that benefits reach account holders directly, thereby reducing the scope for intermediaries and irregularities. At the same time, he acknowledged that once money is transferred in cash, there can be a risk of it being used for purposes other than those intended. This is why the CBDC-based system has been designed with technological safeguards that ensure the benefit is spent directly on ration and other food items, thereby preventing misuse. He once again commended the department for developing this technological innovation.

APEDA and Government of Tripura Organise International Organic Buyer-Seller Meet to Expand Global Market Linkages

New Delhi, August, 14 (PIB): The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, in collaboration with the Tripura State Organic Farming Development Agency (TSOFDA) and the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of Tripura, organised an International Organic Buyer-Seller Meet in Agartala, Tripura, to provide a direct platform for the state’s organic producers, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), exporters and international buyers to explore new business opportunities and establish long-term market linkages. Around 200 participants participated in the programme, including more than 20 international buyers from countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Italy, Greece and Argentina, 27 exporters, 96 farmers representing 22 FPOs/FPCs, and officials from various Government departments. The diverse participation provided a platform for direct interaction among farmers, producer organisations, exporters, Government stakeholders and international buyers, facilitating discussions on sourcing opportunities, market requirements and potential business linkages.

The event featured 12 vibrantly curated stalls showcasing the diverse range of organic and naturally produced products that Tripura has to offer, including Queen Pineapple, GI-tagged Kalikhasa Rice, Organic Ginger and Turmeric, Black Sesame, Jackfruits, Scented Lemon and other fresh and exotic organic products. The stalls provided international buyers with an opportunity to explore Tripura’s unique agricultural offerings through product displays, direct interactions with producers and discussions on potential sourcing and business opportunities. The International Organic Buyer-Seller Meet provided a platform for meaningful commercial engagement between Tripura’s organic producers and international buyers while promoting the state’s organic identity in global markets. The initiative is expected to generate new business linkages, encourage long-term sourcing partnerships and contribute to improved market access and income opportunities for farmers.

The event was graced by Agriculture Minister, Government of Tripura Shri Ratan Lal Nath. IAS, Secretary, Agriculture & Horticulture, Government of Tripura, Shri Apurba Roy, Executive Director, IFOAM Organics Asia and senior officers from APEDA, Ms Jennifer Chang, also attended the programme and shared their perspectives on strengthening the organic sector and expanding market opportunities for organic producers. Agriculture Minister Shri Ratan Lal Nath, appreciated the efforts to promote Tripura’s organic products in international markets and highlighted the importance of strengthening market linkages for organic farmers and producer groups. He said, “Tripura’s farmers are producing quality organic products with strong potential in domestic and international markets. Connecting our farmers and FPOs directly with international buyers can create new opportunities for better market access and income generation. The Government of Tripura will continue to support initiatives that strengthen organic farming and enable our farmers to benefit from emerging global opportunities.”

The event also featured the felicitation of organic farmers by the Agriculture Minister in recognition of their contribution to the state’s organic agriculture movement and their role in building sustainable agricultural value chains. APEDA continues to work closely with State Governments, FPOs, exporters and other stakeholders to strengthen India’s organic export ecosystem through certification support, capacity building, infrastructure development, market promotion and international buyer linkages. The initiatives in Tripura form part of these continued efforts to expand the global footprint of India’s organic products and create sustainable opportunities for farmers across the North Eastern Region.

Today’s Horoscope



Aries

Outdoor activities will be tiring and stressful today. All the money you had invested in the past to make your future prosperous will reap fruitful results today. You are best to avoid raising issue that could upset your relationship with loved ones. Romance rules your heart and mind. A member of your family may insist on spending some time with you today. Although you'll agree to this, but it will be time-consuming. An old friend of yours might come along with the old beautiful memories you have with your life partner. Today you will understand that your loved ones are your constant source of happiness and joy. Remedy :- Offer coconut in running water and help maintain good health.



Taurus

Cultivate a harmonious nature to kill your hatred because it is more powerful than love and deadly affects your body. Remember evil triumphs sooner than good. Investment concerning your residence will be profitable. Relatives from distant place would contact you today. Personal guidance will improve your relationship. Good news most likely from a distant place expected by late evening. With just little efforts, the day might become the best day of your married life. It is also important to say what you have in your mind or heart, as it deepens the love. Remedy :- Enjoy a blissful family life by worshipping and greeting Lord Shiva, Bhairava, Hanuman.



Gemini

Your mind will be receptive to the good things. Improvement in finances is certain. Friends will invite you over to their place for an enjoyable evening. Your romantic relationship will suffer today. You can remain free the whole day and watch as many movies and programs on TV as you want. If you want the day to go well, just don't utter a single word if the mood of your spouse is off. It is going to be an awesome day, as you might go out and watch a movie with your friends. Remedy :- Donate Moon related items like rice, sugar, milk etc., to religious organizations and institutions for love and affection among family members.



Cancer

Don't waste your time in building castle in the air. Rather conserve your energy to do something meaningful. Due to any member of your family falling ill, you may face financial problems. Although at this time, you should worry about their health more than money. Family front seems to go smoothly and you can expect full support to your plans. You will cherish the spice of exotica in your sweet love life today. In today's busy lifestyle, it gets difficult to find time for yourself. But today is your lucky day, as you will have plenty of time for yourself. Rain is known for romance and you will feel the similar ecstasy with your life partner throughout the day. Remedy :- To enjoy the benefits of good health, ensure that your home gets sufficient sunlight.



Leo

Your willingness to help each and everyone will leave you tired and exhausted. Sudden inflow of funds takes care of your bills and immediate expenses. Family members will be very demanding. Instant romance could come your way if you go out with friends in the evening. You can spend a good day reading an interesting magazine or novel. Your efforts to make the marital life better will show you the colors better than expectations today. It is going to be a day with more religious activities such as visiting a temple, offering something to needy and practicing meditation. Remedy :- To gain family happiness, offer a combination of one red chilly, 72 grain of lentils and 5 red flowers at any Hanuman temple.



Virgo

No need to worry about your health today. People around you will lift your morale and spirits. Pending issues become murkier and expenses cloud your mind. Do not neglect your social life. Take some time from your busy schedule and go out to attend the party with your family. It will not only relieve your pressure but also remove your hesitation. You need to be in your best behaviour because it won't take much to upset your lover today. You know the importance of personal space, and you are likely to get a lot of free time today. In this time, you can play a game or go to the gym. Your relatives might cause some harm your marital bliss today. Remedy :- Perform regular abhishek to Shिवling and enrich your finances.



Libra

Don't exert yourself beyond a point and remember to take proper rest. The economic side is likely to strengthen. If you had lent money to a person, you are expected to get that money back today. Your thirst for knowledge will help you make new friends. Your beloved brings you immense romantic pleasure even as work pressure occupies your mind. Pending problems need to get sorted out soon and you know that you have to start somewhere- so think positively and start putting efforts today. Looks like you and your spouse are getting enough time to make love today. Singing and dancing may help you get rid of all the stress and exhaustion you accumulated throughout the week. Remedy :- Showing affection and helping widows will be beneficial for health.



Scorpio

Feeling of hatred could prove costly. It not only undermines your tolerance power but also retards your discretion power and creates a permanent rift in relationship. Today, seek the blessings of your elders before going out of the house, as it will benefit you. Youngsters may seek some advice on school projects. New romance for some uplifts your spirits and keeps you in a cheerful mood. Favourable planets will bring you plenty of reasons to feel pleased today. The day might become one of the best days of your married life. Excess work can cause you mental stress. However, meditating for a while during the evening can help you recharge your batteries. Remedy :- Feed Fishes with wheat flour balls



Sagittarius

Find the solace in the company of children. The therapeutic powers of children not only those of your own family but even the off-springs of others can give you solace and calm your anxiety. Real estate investment would be lucrative. Invitation in a award function of your child would be the source of happiness. You would likely to see your dream coming true as he lives upto your expectations. Be cheerful and courage to face downs in love. A spiritual leader or an elder provides guidance. The low health of your spouse might become an hindrance in your work, but you will be able to manage everything somehow. Remedy :- To enjoy good health, keep the middle space of your home neat and clean



Capricorn

A beneficial day and you may be able to find relief from a prolonged illness. Keep your anger under control and treat everyone in the office nicely. Deviating from this path can cost you your job, thereby directly deteriorating your financial situation. Your unnecessary finding faults in others could be criticised by relatives. You must realize that it is only wastage of time. You don't gain anything from this. Better to change your habit. You would meet the person who loves you more than his life. Some of you will undertake a distant journey-which will be hectic-but highly rewarding. Today, you will spend the best time of your life with your spouse. What can be better than chit-chatting with friends today! It is the best way to do away with boredom. Remedy :- Family happiness will increase by distributing Kheer (sweet dish made up of rice) to girls who are economically backward.



Aquarius

Some of you might be forced to make important decisions today which might make you tensed and nervous. Today, you are likely to attain economic benefits due to your children. This will make you very happy. Good advice from family members will bring gains to you today. Your boyfriend or girlfriend may remain angry today because of their familial conditions. Try to calm them down by talking. Natives of this zodiac sign are very interesting. Sometimes they will feel alive amidst their friends, but would love to spend time alone at times. Adding to it, you'll be able to take out some 'me' time from your busy schedule. You might struggle in the morning to get ready due to power-cut or something else, but your spouse will come to your rescue. Today, you can get some bad news from someone living abroad. Remedy :- Include use of white clothes in your daily wear for good health.



Pisces

Start meditation and yoga for physical gain especially mental toughness. Surplus money should be invested in real estate. Company of friends will provide comfort. You will have to forget the beloved as you confront with realities. Realizing the fragility of time, you will like to spend your time in solitude away from everyone. It would also be beneficial for you to do so. The day will provide you a respite after a difficult phase in married life. You might give way to foodie in you, and savor many delicacies. You may also visit a restaurant where exotic cuisine is served. Remedy :- Donate raw coal to any person who irons clothes for a living (dhobi/presswala), and enrich your love life.



New Delhi, August, 14 (PIB): The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu graced the opening of Amrit Udyan Summer Annuals Edition, 2026. The Summer Annuals of Amrit Udyan will be open for the public from August 16 to September 15, 2026. During that period, the Udyan will remain open from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, with the last entry at 5:00 PM. The Udyan will remain closed on all Mondays for maintenance. Entry and exit for visitors will be from Gate No. 35, located near North Avenue Road. Entry to Amrit Udyan will be free of cost. Visitors have to book their slots online at visit.rashtrapatibhavan.gov.in in advance. Booking of slots for a particular day will close at 10.00 AM on the previous day. There will be no on-the-spot booking available. For the convenience of the visitors, drinking water stalls, First Aid posts, Rain Shelter and Restrooms will be set up along the route of the visit. A shuttle bus service with the banner ‘SHUTTLE SERVICE FOR AMRIT UDYAN’ will also be available from Central Secretariat Metro Station to the entry point to the Amrit Udyan at an interval of every 30 minutes between 9.30 AM and 6.00 PM.

Lindsay Clancy Trial: Duxbury Mom Accused of Killing 3 Kids



London: The Lindsay Clancy murder trial in Plymouth, Massachusetts, has drawn widespread attention because it raises difficult questions about severe mental illness, postpartum psychiatric disorders, maternal healthcare and criminal responsibility.

Clancy, a former labor and delivery nurse, is accused of killing her three young children at the family's Duxbury home in January 2023. Her defense does not dispute that she was responsible for the children's deaths. Instead, her attorneys argue that she was experiencing a profound psychiatric crisis involving postpartum psychosis and bipolar disorder and therefore should not be considered criminally responsible for her actions.

Prosecutors have offered a sharply different account. They argue that Clancy deliberately created an opportunity to be alone with her children and carried out the killings intentionally.

The case centers on January 24, 2023, when Clancy's husband, Patrick, left the family's home to pick up food and medication.

According to prosecu-

tors, Clancy used exercise resistance bands to strangle her three children during his absence. The victims were five-year-old Cora, three-year-old Dawson and eight-month-old Callan.

After the killings, Clancy seriously injured herself and jumped from a second-floor window in what prosecutors and investigators have described as a suicide attempt.

She suffered catastrophic spinal injuries and was left paralyzed from the waist down. She has attended the proceedings in a wheelchair.

The tragedy has also

been accompanied by testimony portraying a more complicated picture of Clancy's life before the killings. Witnesses have described her as a loving and attentive mother whose psychological condition appeared to deteriorate dramatically in the months preceding the deaths. Defense puts mental health under the microscope

Clancy's attorneys are seeking to establish that severe mental illness fundamentally altered her ability to understand reality and appreciate the consequences of her actions. Their case focuses heavily on postpartum psychosis,

a rare but potentially devastating psychiatric condition that can develop after childbirth. Symptoms can include extreme confusion, hallucinations, delusions, paranoia and severe changes in mood or behavior.

The defense maintains that Clancy was struggling with serious psychiatric symptoms and repeatedly attempted to obtain professional help. Her treatment history included appointments with several mental-health providers, emergency medical care, crisis-line contacts and a voluntary psychiatric hospitalization.

‘Don’t Come To Mexico’: Sikh Youth’s Cry For Help From Mexico Goes Viral



Mexico: A video of a distressed Sikh youth, allegedly stranded in Mexico, has surfaced online, showing him crying and appealing to people not to attempt illegal migration routes to

the United States. In the 33-second video, the youth is seen lying on a bed, appearing injured and visibly frightened. With folded hands, he warns others against travelling to Mexico

through the so-called “donkey route” and urges them not to fall into the trap of agents promising a safe journey abroad. The youth claims he reached Mexico through the route and later tried to escape. He alleges that he was assaulted after attempting to flee and was left unable to walk properly because of his injuries. He also points towards the person recording the video and appears to say that the same person had brought him there. The video was reportedly uploaded on TikTok on August 13 from an account named @amol_singh before being shared by several users on X. The identity and location of the youth could not be independently established from the video. The footage has renewed

concerns over the risks associated with the “donkey route”, an illegal and dangerous migration network used by some Indians seeking to enter the US through Latin America.

Reports cited in the information available say such journeys can cost between Rs 20 lakh and Rs 50 lakh, with expenses sometimes reaching Rs 70 lakh. Migrants may make payments in instalments at different stages of the journey. The case also comes amid reports of migrants being exploited, assaulted and held hostage by criminal groups along these routes. Authorities and experts have repeatedly warned people against relying on illegal migration agents and taking dangerous routes to foreign countries.

Who Was Kim Hak-Sun? Woman Who Broke Silence on ‘Comfort Women’

S.Korea: Commemorates the day in 1991 when Kim Hak-sun became the first survivor to publicly testify about her harrowing captivity. Kim Hak-sun was a courageous South Korean woman who was the first to publicly reveal that Japan compelled young women into sexual slavery during World War II. These individuals were referred to as "comfort women." International Memorial Day for Comfort Women is observed every year on August 14 to remember the victims of wartime sexual slavery during World War II and honour survivors who continue to seek recognition and justice. The day also serves as a reminder of the suffering endured by thousands of women and girls, particularly across Asia. During World War II, a courageous South Korean woman named Kim Hak-sun was the first to openly reveal that Japan had forced young women into sexual slavery. She was abducted by Japanese soldiers when she was a teenager and made to labor in a military camp. She and other victims remained silent for many years because they were afraid



or humiliated. She got up and shared her experience on television on August 14, 1991. She also filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government.

Every year, August 14 is observed as International Memorial Day for Comfort Women. The unfortunate day is dedicated to honouring an estimated 200,000 women and girls from Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan and other occupied territories who were forced into military sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II. But why was August 14 chosen? The date was chosen because a victim survivor from Korea

stepped forward on this day in 1991 to publicly testify about her imprisonment. The term “comfort women” is a euphemism used to describe women who were subjected to sexual slavery by the Japanese military before and during World War II. Many of the victims came from Korea, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan and other parts of Asia. They were often deceived, coerced or forcibly taken to military-run brothels, where they were subjected to repeated sexual violence. August 14 holds particular significance because it marks the day in 1991 when South Korean survivor Kim Hak-

sun publicly spoke about her experiences, becoming one of the first survivors to come forward publicly. Her testimony encouraged other survivors to share their stories and brought greater international attention to the issue. International Memorial Day for Comfort Women therefore stands as a solemn tribute to survivors and victims while highlighting the importance of human rights, dignity and preventing sexual violence during armed conflicts. It also reminds the world that remembering painful chapters of history is essential to ensuring that similar atrocities are never repeated.

China's Record Trade Surplus Risks Global Economic Crisis, Warns Foreign Policy Analysis

New Delhi: China's relentless policy of driving exports and widening its trade surplus, by any means, has hit the manufacturing sector of advanced economies such as the United States and those in Europe, as well as developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, according to an article. China has completely ignored the global consensus that its overcapacity is harming other countries. However, now this problem is approaching a breaking point. And if that breaking point comes, the consequence could be a global economic crisis at a time when governments are particularly ill-equipped to manage the fallout, the article in Foreign Policy magazine laments. Over the past two decades, China has established the largest trade surplus in recorded history. In 2025, this reached nearly \$1.2 trillion, growing at three times the rate of global goods trade. This is politically and structurally unsustainable—creating an increasing and underappreciated risk to the entire global economy, according to the article by Michael B.



G. Froman. When the Chinese economy was much smaller, a strategy based on driving export growth at two or three times the rate of overall global economic growth was possible because there was sufficient global demand to absorb its exports. Today, however, China has a much larger economy and cannot continue on this trajectory without eventually running out of customers. Chinese overcapacity and why the next global economic crisis could originate in China. <https://t.co/Jod0Hsyjwz>

The article cites a UN report which states that China now accounts for roughly

30 per cent of global industrial production, and by 2030, it is expected to reach 45 per cent. With the exception of the US economy immediately after World War II, there is no historical precedent for such a concentration of industrial power. Measured as a share of global GDP, China's current manufactured goods surplus is greater than the combined surpluses of Germany and Japan at any point during the 1980s. Since China has outgrown its economic model, the country's exports are bound to stall, which would create a major crisis in the world economy. A sudden slowdown in its economy

would send shock waves around the world, especially among China's major trading partners, not only in the Asia Pacific but also in countries elsewhere whose economies have become intertwined with China's, the article observed. The surest way to avoid this costly chain of events is a preemptive and gradual rebalancing of the Chinese economy. This has long been China's best path toward more sustainable growth, and a route the United States has advocated for years. But whereas in decades past it was a smart choice, now it is a necessity, the article concluded.

Trump Imposes New US Tariffs On Drones, Components To Curb Foreign Supply Dependence



New York: US President Donald Trump has announced new tariffs on imported drones and their components, including products sourced from several major US allies. The administration said the measures were necessary because the country has become overly dependent on foreign suppliers for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). Under a proclamation signed by Trump, certain drones considered particularly sensitive from a

national security perspective will face a 100% ad valorem tariff. Smaller drones will attract a 25% tariff. The White House said the measures are aimed at addressing risks associated with foreign-made drones and strengthening domestic production. Imports of drones and components from the European Union, Japan, Liechtenstein, South Korea, Switzerland and Taiwan will face a 15% tariff. Products imported from the UK will be subject

to a 10% duty. Trump said the tariff decision followed an assessment by Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick into the impact of foreign imports of unmanned aircraft systems. According to the administration, the review found substantial penetration by foreign producers and concluded that the US was excessively reliant on overseas sources for drones and related components. The assessment also found that products sup-

plied by certain foreign entities could create security and safety concerns. At the same time, the administration said US manufacturers do not currently have sufficient capacity to meet the country's security requirements. The new tariffs are scheduled to take effect in 21 days. However, different timelines will apply to some drone components. Duties on components considered less sensitive will begin 180 days after the proclamation was signed. A similar 180-day timeline will apply to products approved by the Pentagon for exemption from the Federal Communications Commission's "Covered List" within 20 days of the proclamation. The announcement adds to Trump's broader reliance on tariffs as a central instrument of US trade and foreign policy. The administration has continued pursuing tariff measures despite legal challenges and criticism from some economists and analysts.

US CENTCOM To Form Multinational Attack Drone Task Force In West Asia

Florida [US]: US Central Command (CENTCOM) has announced plans to establish the first-ever multinational, multi-domain attack drone task force to integrate unmanned systems operated by the United States and regional partners across West Asia, amid continuing conflict and heightened security tensions in the region. The new unit, designated Task Force Falcon Strike, will employ one-way attack drones comprising unmanned systems operating above, on and below the sea, CENTCOM said in a statement on Thursday. The initiative comes nine months after CENTCOM established Task Force Scorpion Strike, described by the US military as its first dedicated one-way attack drone squadron in the Middle East. Scorpion Strike has since reached several operational milestones, including the first launch of an aerial attack drone from a US Navy warship in December last year. The unit also employed one-way



unmanned aerial systems during Operation Epic Fury and used unmanned attack vessels during strikes on Iranian port facilities in July, according to CENTCOM. "Task Force Falcon Strike will expand on Scorpion Strike's success given the tremendous innovation happening among our regional allies and partners," said Admiral Brad Cooper, CENTCOM commander. "Integrating and deploying our new capabilities together will help us rapidly realise the new possi-

bilities that are on the horizon," he added. CENTCOM has begun consultations with regional countries and is formally inviting partners to participate in the task force. As partners join, Falcon Strike is expected to expand attack-drone capabilities across West Asia and develop what CENTCOM described as a unified, multi-domain, multinational deterrent. "The United States military has a lot of strong partnerships and friends in the region," Cooper said. "We are collectively stronger when we in-

tegrate and deploy new capabilities together." Personnel from US Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT), which launched Task Force Scorpion Strike, will lead the staff of Falcon Strike, comprising US and regional representatives. SOCCENT is headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida and is responsible for planning and conducting special operations across CENTCOM's 21-country area of responsibility spanning West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia.

India teams ready for Hockey World Cup 2026 challenge in Europe

Hyderabad: The FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, starting on August 15 in Belgium and the Netherlands, will be broadcast live on JioHotstar and the Star Sports Network from 4:30 pm onwards. India's men's team will begin its campaign against Wales on Saturday, followed by the women's team taking on China. For the Indian men's hockey team, the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 presents an opportunity to end a wait of more than five decades. India's last World Cup triumph came in 1975, but the team heads into this edition with renewed confidence after winning the 2025 Asia Cup. Belgium and the Netherlands, the co-hosts, will also be among the teams to watch, with strong squads and the advantage of playing on home turf. Australia, Germany and Argentina bring proven quality and tournament experience and could pose a strong challenge to India's title ambitions.

For the Indian women's team,



the opportunity is equally significant, but for a different reason. India have never won the FIH Women's Hockey World Cup, making this a golden opportunity for the team to create a legacy of its own. After three matches in the opening pool stage, the top two teams will advance to a second stage, where they will play two more games. Their head-to-head

points from the first stage will be carried forward, making every result, point and goal potentially decisive in the race to the semifinals.

Key Detail:

For Indian hockey fans, all 100 matches will be streamed live on JioHotstar, while India's matches will be available with English and Hindi commentary on Star Sports channels.

Sri Lanka captain Dhananjaya de Silva defends Dickwella recall ahead of India Test



Galle: Sri Lanka skipper Dhananjaya de Silva has strongly defended giving wicketkeeper-batter Niroshan Dickwella a recall for the upcoming first Test against India by stating that superior glovework is the primary prerequisite for selection due to the tricky nature of the pitch at the Galle International Cricket Stadium. The selection of

Dickwella, who averages 31 with the bat after 96 Test innings, has triggered considerable outrage in the island nation, with critics questioning why in-form domestic performers like Sadeera Samara wickrama and uncapped Anjala Bandara were overlooked for selection in place of injured Kusal Mendis. "The only thing I have to tell Niroshan

Dickwella is to keep well. That's why he's in the team. Dickwella had to leave the Test squad over the last few years because Kusal Mendis went to No. 7, and Kusal has played well there in the last few years, so Dickwella didn't get a chance to come back. But when you play at Galle, the most important thing is that the player with the best glovework plays," the Sri Lanka skipper said in the pre-match press conference.

He also revealed that the team management and selection panel were on the same page regarding giving the call-up to Dickwella. "The decision to recall Dickwella is one we had with the coach and selectors, and they all agreed. We did have the chance to give an opportunity to another player, but as the keeper with the best glovework, Dickwella came through." Apart from Dickwella, de Silva also addressed concerns surrounding fast bowler Lahiru Kumara, whose career has been repeatedly stymied by fitness breakdowns – most recently walking off with a hamstring injury during the tour of West Indies in June. "As a country and as a team, we don't have a huge pool of players that we can experiment with.

Gill eyes WTC final berth as India begin Sri Lanka Test challenge

Galle: When India will take on Sri Lanka in the opening Test at the picturesque Galle International Cricket Stadium on Saturday, it will also mark India's landmark 600th Test match and the 50th game at the historic venue. While the historical numbers add considerable interest to the fixture starting on India's Independence Day, skipper Shubman Gill made it clear that his primary focus remains firmly fixed on securing a berth in the upcoming World Test Championship (WTC) final. India are in fifth spot and need to win almost all of their remaining games to enter the final at The Oval in June 2027. "Very comfortable with the role, and I think the way we have been progressing in the past year has been very pleasing to see from my perspective, and I think we are taking all the right steps in the right direction.

"Obviously, the main goal is to play the World Test Championship final, which is next year. We have got about nine Tests, and I think we have to win around six or seven to have a good chance of qualifying. So in terms of that, I think this is a very important series for us, and we have had the right kind of preparation leading up to the series," Gill told reporters on the eve of the match. Unlike past tours often marred by



rushed itineraries, India arrived early in Sri Lanka and had a productive warm-up fixture against Sri Lanka Cricket XI in Colombo. "It's never easy for the players to be able to adapt, and most of the players in this team, I think, require a bit of time to be able to adjust to the conditions. It is not like a lot of the players have a lot of matches or a lot of experience under their belt, so the extra time in preparation definitely helps," added Gill.

He also had immense confidence in the squad's fast bowling department despite the absence of Jasprit Bumrah, and had special praise for pacer Prasidh Krishna. "Gurnoor Brar is excellent as he can extract bounce with an old ball at a good pace, but Prasidh Krishna is bowling well of late, as we have seen in the warm-up match. So it's a tough call. Prasidh has recently been

bowling the best that I have ever seen him bowl.

"Bumrah is not there, but I think it is a really good opportunity for some of the other bowlers to really step up and leave a mark on the series. You have to keep trying different things to be able to take wickets. You have to create opportunities, especially on day 1 and day 2. "There could be a chance that there is not much happening from the wickets. So how can you create pressure? How can you keep the game from slipping away too much from you? Having those kinds of creative fields is important." There was also some praise for left-handed batter Devdutt Padikkal, and the tactical challenge Galle brings to the table as a venue. "Devdutt was here earlier with India A and did well. He has got all the skills and the potential to succeed in this format.

Ba Ba Black Sheep First Song Aaja Meri Jaani Out



An unexpected turn of events forms the core of Chitralayam Studios' upcoming new-age crime comedy 'Ba Baa Black Sheep'. Bringing together crime, comedy, eccentric characters and a series of surprising situations, the film promises to deliver a fresh and entertaining experience for audiences. Presented by Donepudi Chakrapani and produced by Venu Donepudi under the Chitralayam Studios banner, the film is directed by Guni Manchikanti. The cast includes Tinnu Anand, Upendra Limaye, George Maryan, Akshay Lagusani, Vishnu Oi, Karthikeya, Vismayasri, Malvi Malhotra, Kasyap, Raja Ravindra and others in promi-

nent roles. The film has another interesting distinction to its credit. 'Ba Baa Black Sheep' is the first South Indian film to be shot entirely in Meghalaya. The production team travelled through various parts of the state, capturing its spectacular landscapes and natural beauty, including the picturesque locations of Cherrapunji. The film's teaser had earlier created curiosity by introducing its quirky characters and offering glimpses of the unusual situations that drive the story. Its fast-paced treatment, comic elements and unexpected twists gave audiences a peek into the film's distinctive world. The makers have now announced that 'Ba Baa Black Sheep' will

have its grand theatrical release on October 9, coinciding with the Dussehra festive season. The team also unveiled the first lyrical song, 'Aaja Meri Jaani', marking the beginning of the film's musical promotions. Rockstar Devi Sri Prasad launched the song. Devi Sri Prasad appreciated the song's energetic and youthful vibe and congratulated the team for attempting a unique concept. He also wished the film and its entire team a successful theatrical journey.

'Aaja Meri Jaani' Adds Colour and Energy

'Aaja Meri Jaani' is a lively party number featuring Akshay Lagusani and Vishnu Oi. With vibrant visuals, energetic per-

formances and a catchy rhythm, the song brings a celebratory mood to the film's promotions. Electronic Kili and Arcado have composed the music, while Kittu Vissapragada has penned the lyrics. Benny Dayal's powerful and energetic vocals add to the song's appeal, complementing its peppy beats and youthful composition. The makers have designed the song as a fun-filled musical number with a strong youth appeal, making it an energetic start to the film's music promotions. Producer Venu Donepudi said, "We are pleased to have successfully completed the shoot of 'Ba Baa Black Sheep', which is centred around a very interesting incident. The post-production activities are now nearing completion, and we are preparing for a grand theatrical release on October 9 during the Dussehra festive season.

"Filming the entire movie in Meghalaya is a memorable achievement for our team. We explored several beautiful locations across the state, including Cherrapunji, and the experience has given the film a distinctive visual identity. With proper planning and the dedicated efforts of everyone involved, we completed the shoot within the planned schedule. "I sincerely thank our director Guni, the actors, technicians and the entire crew for their commitment and support throughout the making of the film. We are excited to share more updates with audiences soon and look forward to bringing 'Ba Baa Black Sheep' to theatres this Dussehra."

#VenkyAnil5 FL: Powerful Intro As Colonel Venkat Reddy

The makers of #VenkyAnil5 / #NKRAR2 have added a fresh dimension to the film's growing buzz by revealing Victory Venkatesh's first look. Co-starring Nandamuri Kalyan Ram and directed by Anil Ravipudi, the film is progressing swiftly, with its shoot in Hyderabad.

Venkatesh appears in a completely new avatar in the poster, stepping into the shoes of Lt. Colonel Venkat Reddy, an Indian Army officer with expertise in counter-terrorism and hostage negotiation. Wearing combat camouflage and accompanied by sunglasses and a scarf, the actor carries a calm but unmistakably authoritative expression. His placement beside a luxurious car further strengthens the action-oriented military mood.

The backdrop is equally striking. The Army insignia and crossed-swords symbol reinforce the identity of the character. The rugged surroundings give the first look a gritty quality, making Venkatesh's military avatar stand out.

The reveal comes after Kalyan Ram's traditional first look, which was unveiled on his birthday and met with an enthusiastic response. With the two actors introduced in distinctly contrasting styles, expectations are naturally building around the combination they will share on screen.

The film is backed by Sahu Garapati under the Shine Screens banner and presented by Suresh Productions, Smt. Archana, and Zee Studios. Keerthy Suresh and Krithi Shetty are the heroines.

