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Development Authority
Kannur-208024

CM distributes Rs 300 crore loans to self-help groups, unveils development projects

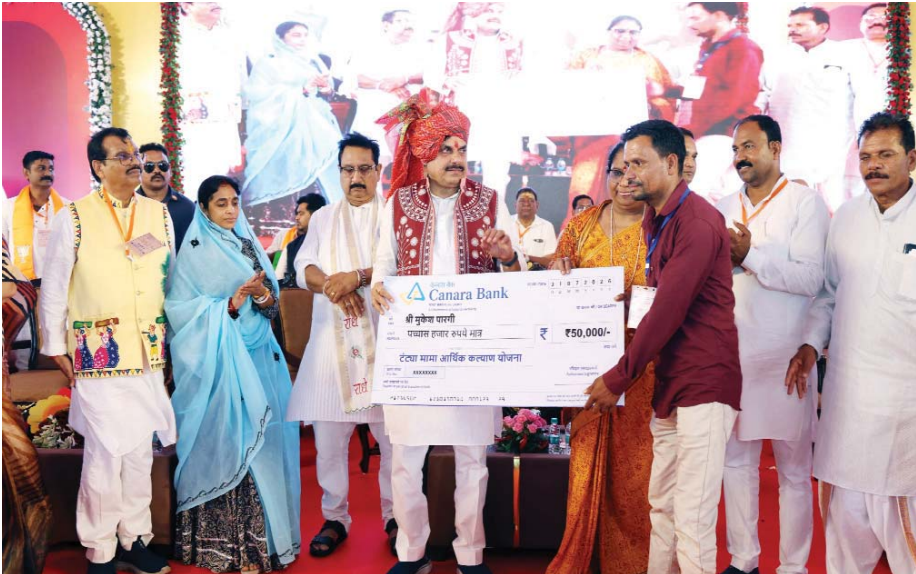
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jhabua

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Friday reaffirmed the Madhya Pradesh government's commitment to women's empowerment, rural livelihoods and employment generation, while distributing Rs 300 crore in loans to self-help groups and inaugurating and laying the foundation for development projects worth over Rs 283 crore in Jhabua district.

Addressing the state-level Capacity Building and Loan Distribution Programme for Self-Help Groups at Thandla Government College Ground, the Chief Minister said women are playing a transformative role in strengthening self-help groups and contributing to agriculture, animal husbandry, banking and entrepreneurship. He said the state is observing Agriculture Welfare Year and women are emerging as key partners in rural prosperity.

Highlighting measures for women's empowerment, Yadav said Madhya Pradesh has reserved 50 per cent seats for women in urban local bodies and panchayats and 35 per cent of government jobs. He also referred to the Centre's commitment to providing 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament.

The Chief Minister said self-help groups have become a strong vehicle for economic independence, with women earning up to Rs



10,000 a month through various livelihood activities. He said 196 Didi Cafes are being operated across the state, including four in Jhabua, while women-led groups are managing 85 Livelihood Libraries and are engaged in more than 150 non-farm enterprises.

As part of the programme, Yadav distributed Rs 300 crore in loans under the State Rural Livelihood Mission, including Rs 10.80 crore for 215 self-help groups in Jhabua district. He also inaugurated 28 development and infrastructure projects worth Rs 109.17 crore and laid the foundation for 29 projects valued at Rs 174.64 crore. Beneficiaries of various government schemes received assistance, while meritorious students were

honoured during the event.

Emphasising employment generation, the Chief Minister said the government is creating new opportunities through industrial investment and MSMEs. He announced that a new telecommunications manufacturing unit in the Gwalior region is expected to generate 14,000 jobs, while the PM MITRA Mega Textile Park in Dhar will create around three lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities, benefiting cotton growers and local youth.

Yadav also described Jhabua as an ideal region for natural farming and interacted with progressive farmers and women agricultural facilitators. He said natural farming is helping farmers reduce cultivation costs,

improve soil fertility and increase incomes. He noted that women are now operating tractors and drones, while Drone Didis, Bank Sakhis and Pashu Sakhis are playing a vital role in rural development. He added that women-led farmer producer organisations in the state have recorded business worth Rs 958 crore, while more than 64,000 Lakhpati Didis are driving economic transformation in tribal areas.

The Chief Minister announced that from the next academic session, stitched school uniforms would be supplied through self-help groups, creating another livelihood opportunity for women. He also said monthly assistance of Rs 1,500 under the Ladli Behna

Bhopal police arrest fake cops duo

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Shahpura police have arrested two youths for allegedly posing as police personnel and extorting money from motorists by threatening them with traffic violations in Bhopal. A fake pistol was also recovered from one of the accused during the operation.

According to police, the accused, identified as Aman Khan and Kartik Mishra, were arrested on Thursday night after information was received that two men in civil clothes were stopping vehicles at Shahpura Square, claiming to be police personnel and demanding money from commuters in the name of helmet checks and other traffic violations.

A police team rushed to the spot and detained both men. During questioning, they initially tried to mislead investigators by claiming they were posted at Kohefiza police station. However, sustained interrogation revealed that the claim was false.

Police said Aman Khan works as an HR executive at an IT company in MP Nagar, while Kartik Mishra is an LLB student. During a search, officers recovered a fake pistol from Khan's possession, which was seized.

Investigators said the duo used to stop motorists in civil dress, threaten them with police action for not wearing helmets or violating traffic rules and demand money on the spot. No official traffic challans were issued during the alleged extortion.

Several bystanders recorded videos of the incident, questioning the accused about their identity.

CM highlights natural farming as key to higher income in Jhabua

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jhabua

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Friday said Jhabua district has immense potential for natural farming, describing it as a sustainable agricultural practice that not only promotes better health but also enhances farmers' incomes. He said the state government is implementing a series of initiatives under the Agriculture Welfare Year to encourage natural and organic farming in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of sustainable agriculture.

The Chief Minister was addressing farmers and agriculture facilitators during the state-level Capacity Building and Loan Distribution Programme for Self-Help Groups held at Thandla in Jhabua district. During the programme, he interacted with progressive farmers and Krishi Sakhis from different parts of the district to understand their experiences and discuss the government's efforts to promote natural and organic farming.

Yadav commended Krishi Sakhi Sangeeta Damor from Devigarh village in Meghnagar block for her contribution to spreading awareness about natural farming. Damor informed the Chief Minister that after completing a five-day training programme, she has been training around 125 farmers in her village and nearby areas in preparing natural inputs such as Beejamrit, Jeevamrit and Neemastra. She said she has been practising natural farming on nearly one hectare of land while working with the ATMA project for the past four



years to promote improved agricultural practices.

Sharing her experience, Damor said adopting natural farming and better crop management techniques increased her wheat yield from 35 quintals to 45 quintals per hectare, resulting in a significant rise in income. She said natural farming has helped reduce cultivation costs while improving productivity and profitability. She also thanked the Central and state governments for promoting sustainable farming practices.

During the interaction, the Chief Minister personally walked up to the Krishi Sakhi to learn about their experiences and the additional income they were earning through natural farming. He also extended his greetings to the women ahead of the Raksha Bandhan festival.

Yadav also interacted with progressive farmer Vimal Bhabor from Khedi village in Jhabua block, who shared how natural farming had transformed his livelihood. Bhabor said he owns 25 bighas of agricultural land and combines farming with animal husbandry. With support from

the Agriculture Department through training programmes, exposure visits and farmer workshops, he adopted organic farming five years ago and shifted to natural farming two years ago.

Bhabor informed the Chief Minister that he has established a Bio Resource Centre (BRC) under the National Mission on Natural Farming, where he prepares Jeevamrit, Beejamrit and other natural agricultural inputs for use on his farm and for distribution among neighbouring farmers. He currently cultivates vegetables, fruits and other crops using natural farming methods.

He said that while conventional farming earlier earned him an annual profit of around Rs 50,000, natural farming has increased his yearly income to Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.50 lakh. In addition, between March and June 2026, he earned Rs 5,500 from his Bio Resource Centre, nearly Rs 1.50 lakh from his nursery, around Rs 1.60 lakh from the sale of naturally grown fruits and vegetables, and Rs 6,000 from vermicompost production.



Traders stage a protest against the Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) act of sealing and notice drive targeting illegal commercial activities in residential areas, at 10 no stop, in Bhopal on Friday.

Police trained in crash response and traffic management

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Police Transport Research Institute (PTRI) organised a two-day training programme on road safety management to strengthen the capacity of police personnel in preventing road accidents, improving traffic management and ensuring timely assistance to accident victims through government welfare schemes.

The programme was conducted under the directions of Additional Director General of Police Mohammad Shahid Absar and was attended by police personnel ranging from the rank of Additional Superintendent of Police to Constable.

The training focused on key aspects of road safety, including accident prevention, modern traffic management techniques, enforcement strategies and post-



crash response. Participants were also sensitised to various government schemes that provide financial assistance and cashless treatment to road accident victims.

Officials said the initiative is part of the state's efforts to reduce the number of road accidents and fatalities by equipping police personnel with updated knowledge and practical skills.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, PTRI, T.K. Vidyarthi, spoke on analysing accident

trends, developing preventive strategies and implementing effective road safety measures. He also briefed participants on the Prime Minister's Relief Scheme and the Rahveer Scheme, which aim to provide timely support to accident victims and encourage bystanders to assist those injured in road crashes.

Assistant Inspector General of Police Abhineet Kumar Ranjan delivered detailed sessions on the Hit-and-Run Victim

Compensation Scheme, data entry in the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) and the Electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR). He also explained the procedures related to the First Accident Report (FAR), Interim Accident Report (IAR) and Detailed Accident Report (DAR).

The technical sessions included traffic enforcement by S.S. Lalli, traffic engineering by Dr. Mayank Dubey, traffic management by ACP Devendra Yadav and post-crash management by Ashish Sharma, Head of the 108 Ambulance Service.

Senior PTRI officials, including Rajesh Mishra, Manoj Kumar Sharma and Himanshu Kartikeya, were also present during the programme. Participants were awarded certificates upon successful completion of the training.

FDA books Neemuch pharmacy for violating drug sale norms

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Neemuch

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has stepped up its enforcement drive against violations of drug regulations in Neemuch district, suspending the licence of a medical store for six days and initiating action against another pharmacy for non-compliance with statutory provisions.

The action was carried out under the directions of Collector Himanshu Chandra and the guidance of the Deputy Director, Food and Drug Administration, as part of a district-wide inspection campaign aimed at ensuring adherence to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.

During the inspections, officials examined the sale and purchase records of medicines, verified mandatory documentation and checked compliance with regulations governing the storage and sale of codeine-based cough syrups as well as Schedule H and Schedule H1 medicines.

M/s Shri Shyam Chemist at Malkhedra was found operat-

ing without the presence of a registered pharmacist. Inspectors also detected lapses in maintaining mandatory sale records and other statutory documents. Officials said a show-cause notice had earlier been issued to the proprietor, but the reply was found unsatisfactory. Following the inquiry, the medical store's drug licence was suspended for six days under the relevant provisions of the law.

In another case, M/s Shri Bhairavnath Medical and General Store at Raghunathpura in Singoli was also found functioning without a registered pharmacist and was unable to produce the prescribed sale records during the inspection. The FDA has served a show-cause notice to the proprietor, seeking an explanation within the stipulated period. Officials warned that failure to submit a satisfactory response could lead to suspension or cancellation of the establishment's drug licence.

The department has directed all medicine retailers in Neemuch district to strictly follow the legal provisions governing the sale of medicines.

Short circuit sparks showroom fire

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

A fire broke out at a garment showroom in Bhopal's busy Chowk market on Friday afternoon, damaging clothes worth lakhs of rupees and triggering panic in the congested commercial area. The blaze was brought under control before it could spread to adjoining shops, averting a major mishap.

The incident occurred at Nema Designer Studio, a clothing store known for bridal lehengas and other garments. Shopkeepers noticed thick smoke billowing from the premises and immediately alerted others in the market. Local traders and residents rushed to the spot and began efforts to contain the flames while the fire brigade was informed.

Preliminary investigations suggest the fire was caused by a short circuit. With the help of people nearby, the blaze was largely controlled before firefighters arrived, limiting the damage to the affected shop.

Information panel seeks reply from Cheetah Project director

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh State Information Commission has summoned Cheetah Project Director Uttam Sharma over the alleged denial of information sought under the Right to Information (RTI) Act regarding the Cheetah Project at Kuno National Park.

The commission took up a complaint filed by activist Ajay Dubey, who alleged that several RTI applications submitted in 2024 seeking information on the project were either rejected or not properly addressed.

The information sought included records relating to permissions for tranquillising cheetahs, blood test reports, post-surgery reports of injured cheetahs, details of mineral material used in construction works inside Kuno National Park, permission granted for a documentary on the Cheetah Project and information on medical facilities, equipment and doctors available at the cheetah hospital.

During the hearing, State Information Commissioner Rajesh Bhatt directed Uttam

Sharma to appear before the commission in three of the four cases under consideration.

The Forest Department had declined to provide the requested information, citing provisions of Sections 8(1)(a) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, stating that the information related to security concerns and personal information. In some cases, applicants were also asked to pay the prescribed fee for accessing records.

Dubey alleged before the commission that Sharma had violated provisions of the RTI Act since 2024 by acting as both the Public Information Officer (PIO) and the First Appellate Authority while disposing of RTI applications, a practice he claimed was contrary to the law.

The complainant has sought the imposition of a penalty on the officer, a departmental inquiry and compensation for the alleged violation of RTI provisions.

The commission is expected to seek a detailed response from the Cheetah Project Director during the next hearing before deciding on further action.

GMC reappoints removed officer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Gwalior

The Gwalior Municipal Corporation has come under scrutiny after reappointing a building officer who was removed following the collapse of a dilapidated wall that claimed a woman's life earlier this month.

Rajeev Soni was relieved of his responsibilities as building officer after the July 22 incident at Gudagudi Naka, where a woman died in the wall collapse. The action was then seen as an effort to fix accountability.

However, in the latest transfer order issued by Municipal Commissioner Sangh Priya, Soni has been appointed as the building officer for the South Assembly constituency, barely nine days after his removal. He has also been given additional charge as Assistant Engineer in charge of the PM e-Bus service.

The decision has raised questions over the civic body's accountability, with critics arguing that an officer removed after such a serious incident has been entrusted with another key responsibility within days.

Gas survivors demand clean drinking water near UC site

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Four organisations representing survivors of the Bhopal gas tragedy on Friday alleged that residents living around the abandoned Union Carbide factory are being supplied sewage-contaminated drinking water, accusing the Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) of failing to address a long-pending public health issue.

Addressing a press conference, the groups released a report claiming that nearly 70 per cent of drinking water samples collected from the affected localities tested positive for faecal coliform, indicating contamination with sewage.

Nawab Khan, president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha, said 63 water samples were collected from taps across 30 settlements, of which 43 samples tested positive for faecal coliform. According to the report, drinking water supplied to 19 of the 30 localities was found to be contaminated. The organisations also claimed that 90 per cent of samples drawn from the Upper Lake supply and 25 per cent of those sourced from

the Kolar Dam supply showed contamination.

Rashida Bee, president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationary Karmchari Sangh, alleged that residents in the affected areas are reporting diarrhoea, vomiting and other water-borne illnesses, while private clinics have witnessed an increase in typhoid cases. She said the Supreme Court had directed authorities in 2004 to provide piped drinking water after groundwater contamination from toxic waste near the abandoned factory came to light.

Balkrishna Namdeo of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Nirashrit Pensionbhogi Sangharsh Morcha said the Supreme Court had also directed the civic body in 2018 to lay sewer lines and improve drainage in the area. He alleged that despite assurances, the work has not been completed.

Rachna Dhangra of the Bhopal Group for Information and Action demanded immediate implementation of the proposed sewage and drainage network, strict action against officials responsible for the alleged lapse and an independent system to regularly monitor drinking water quality.

CM celebrates Raksha Bandhan with tribal sisters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jhabua

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's visit to the home of Basant Singh Bamaniya, a tribal resident of Thandla in Jhabua district, turned into a heart-warming celebration of the state's tribal heritage, family values and cultural traditions. During the visit, the Chief Minister spent time with the family, shared a traditional meal, interacted with women and children, and participated in an early Raksha Bandhan celebration by getting Rakhi tied by tribal sisters.

The Chief Minister was in Thandla to attend the state-level Capacity Building and Loan Distribution Programme for Self-Help Groups. He was accompanied by Tribal Affairs Minister

Vijay Shah, Minister Nirmala Bhuria and Member of Parliament Anita Nagar Singh Chouhan, who also visited the family's home and interacted with its members.

Setting aside official protocol, the Chief Minister embraced the traditional tribal way of life by sitting on a godadi, a traditional floor mat, and enjoying lunch served on pattals (leaf plates) in the courtyard of the family's mud-and-clay house. Family members welcomed the guests with warmth and served traditional tribal dishes, including urad dal and the local delicacy Paniya, which the Chief Minister appreciated while praising the family's hospitality.

With Raksha Bandhan approaching during the holy month of Shraavan, the visit assumed special significance as tribal women tied Rakhi

on the Chief Minister's wrist and prayed for his well-being. Extending his greetings on the occasion, the Chief Minister said the festival symbolises the enduring bond of affection, trust and respect between brothers and sisters.

The Chief Minister also met the family's Ladli Behna beneficiaries and Ladli Laxmi daughters, enquiring about their well-being and experiences with various welfare schemes. Reiterating the government's commitment to women's welfare, he said the state remains focused on ensuring the dignity, safety and empowerment of women while improving the quality of life of every family.

During his interaction with the children, the Chief Minister blessed them for a bright future and spent time with young Shivansh, encour-

aging him with affection. He also held an informal conversation with the family members about their livelihood, children's education, traditional customs and the benefits they were receiving under various government schemes.

Speaking during the visit, the Chief Minister said the traditions, customs and cultural values of the tribal community form an invaluable part of Madhya Pradesh's heritage. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to the holistic development of tribal communities while preserving their unique identity and cultural legacy.

Basant Singh Bamaniya informed the Chief Minister that although his family had received a pucca house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, they continue to live in their ancestral mud-and-

clay home. He said the traditional house carries the memories of generations and represents the family's cultural roots and emotional attachment. According to the family, the natural surroundings and peaceful environment of the ancestral home provide a sense of belonging that cannot be replaced. Bamaniya is also a beneficiary of the Mukhyamantri Jan Kalyan (Sambal) Yojana.

The visit reflected the government's emphasis on connecting with tribal communities at the grassroots level while recognising and respecting their traditions, lifestyle and cultural heritage. The informal interaction, shared meal and festive celebrations underscored the importance of preserving indigenous customs alongside the state's ongoing development initiatives.



Women tie Rakhis to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav during the loan distribution and interaction program with the women of self-help groups in Thandla, Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh on Friday. Pioneer photo



Muslim devotees offer Friday prayers at the premises of a dargah adjacent to the disputed Bhojshala Complex after the Supreme Court permitted prayers at the site, in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh on Friday. The interim order allowed devotees to offer namaz at the designated dargah area adjoining the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula complex. Pioneer photo

Over 10,000 saplings planted on Dewas hill

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Dewas

More than 10,000 saplings were planted on Shankargarh Hill in Dewas on Friday as part of the state government's Amrit Harit Maha Abhiyan, a large-scale plantation drive aimed at promoting environmental conservation and expanding the city's green cover.

The plantation campaign was led by MLA Gayatri Rajee Pawar, who planted a Triveni sapling along with Mayor Geeta Agrawal, Mayor Representative Durgesh Agrawal, Collector Rituraj Singh, Superintendent of Police Puneet Gehlot, Municipal Commissioner Dalip Kumar and other public representatives.

The drive witnessed participation from elected representatives, government officials,

teachers, students, industrial organisations, social groups, environmental volunteers and local residents, who joined hands to transform Shankargarh Hill into a greener landscape.

Addressing the gathering, Gayatri Rajee Pawar said the campaign reflects the collective commitment towards environmental protection and sustainable development. Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative, she urged citizens to plant more trees to ensure a cleaner and healthier environment for future generations. She said efforts would continue to preserve and further develop the hill as an important green zone.

Mayor Representative Durgesh Agrawal said the plantation drive was supported by people from all sections of society, who also pledged to

protect the saplings after planting them. He added that the Dewas Municipal Corporation is working towards its target of planting 1.70 lakh saplings across the city.

Collector Rituraj Singh said the district administration had set a target of planting over 10,000 saplings at Shankargarh Hill in a single day and appreciated the enthusiastic public participation in the campaign. unicipal Commissioner Dalip Kumar said the district and civic administration, with support from industries, educational institutions and social organisations, have already planted around 75,000 saplings across the city. He added that the plantation drive will continue at various locations to achieve the city's overall afforestation target and strengthen long-term environmental conservation efforts.

CM to unveil Rs 362 crore sewerage project

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav will visit Jabalpur on Friday to inaugurate a series of development, sanitation and environmental projects aimed at improving urban infrastructure and promoting sustainable growth in the city.

The Chief Minister will launch an ambitious 11 lakh plantation campaign under the 'Catch the Rain' initiative at Dumna Nature Park. As part of the campaign, 5 lakh saplings will be planted using the Miyawaki afforestation technique in Umaria, Dumna and Kathonda. He will also inaugurate a five-acre Plant Identification Park at Umaria, a Navgrah Vatika at Dumna Nature Park and launch the construction of soak pits under the Catch the Rain cam-

paign to strengthen groundwater recharge and water conservation.

Later, at a programme to be held at Geeta Bhavan near Ghantaghar, the Chief Minister will inaugurate the Amrut 1.0 Sewerage Project, developed at a cost of Rs 362.31 crore. The project includes three major sewage treatment plants at Kathonda, Lalpur and Tewar, which are expected to benefit around 89,000 households by improving the city's sewerage and sanitation infrastructure.

During the visit, the Chief Minister will also dedicate a modern laundry facility equipped with advanced infrastructure at Civil Lines and inaugurate a newly constructed fish market at Gurandi, built at a cost of Rs 2.5 crore. The market will provide modern commercial facilities to 55

traders.

As part of the programme, Yadav will flag off city bus services to strengthen urban public transport and distribute digital cards to 500 beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri SVANidhi Scheme, aimed at supporting street vendors through access to formal financial services.

The Chief Minister will also inaugurate the newly constructed Tilwara police station and residential quarters for police personnel, adding to the city's public safety infrastructure. The visit is expected to mark the inauguration of several key projects focused on environmental conservation, urban sanitation, public transport and civic amenities, reinforcing the government's emphasis on sustainable urban development in Jabalpur.

Revised rolls add 27.4 lakh voters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh has recorded an increase of 27.40 lakh voters following the completion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, according to the latest voter list prepared by the State Election Commission ahead of the 2027 urban local body and panchayat elections.

The updated figures show that the state now has 5,67,21,353 registered voters, compared to 5,39,81,065 voters recorded after the SIR exercise conducted between November 2025 and February 2026.

The revised electoral roll reveals a significant rural dominance, with 4,06,70,369 voters residing in rural areas, while 1,60,50,984 voters are from urban areas.

The State Election Commission released the updated report after district election officers across the state published the revised electoral rolls on July 27.

Officials said the voter list assumes importance as it will form the basis for the 2027 municipal corporation, municipality and panchayat elections. However, the commission clarified that the final electoral rolls for the local body polls will be prepared with reference to December 31, 2026, indicating that further additions and deletions in the voter list are expected before the elections. According to the previous electoral roll prepared after the SIR exercise, the state had 2,79,04,975 male voters, 2,60,75,186 female voters and 904 third-gender voters.

BMC demolishes illegal building

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Friday demolished an illegally constructed two-storey building in Subhalaya Vihar at Bawadiya Kalan and imposed a fine on a fair organiser for littering at Bittan Market as part of its enforcement drive against violations of civic regulations.

The demolition was carried out at House No. B-93 in the Gaurav Grih Nirman Cooperative Society. According to the civic body, the original plot measures 1,312 square metres, but an unauthorised ground-plus-one (G+1) structure had been constructed over nearly 900 square metres.

Officials said the plot was designated as a single residential unit in the approved

Town and Country Planning layout. However, the land was allegedly subdivided without permission and portions were illegally sold, resulting in construction that violated the sanctioned layout. Following an investigation, the corporation demolished the unauthorised structure in the presence of officials and adequate security.

The civic body advised residents to verify approved layouts and obtain all necessary permissions before purchasing property or undertaking construction to avoid legal action.

In a separate action, the BMC imposed a Rs 16,200 fine on organisers of a fair held at Dussehra Ground in Bittan Market after officials found large quantities of garbage scattered across the venue during an inspection.

Residents block road over smart meters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mandsaur

Hundreds of residents staged a protest in Mandsaur on Friday evening, alleging that the installation of smart electricity meters had resulted in sharply inflated power bills. Demonstrators blocked a key road, removed smart meters from their homes and demanded that the electricity distribution company restore conventional meters.

The protest began at around 6 pm at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Square, where consumers gathered after placing the removed smart meters at the protest site. The road blockade disrupted traffic in the area, forcing police to divert vehicles through alternate routes. Despite continuous rain, protesters remained at the venue, raising slogans against the power distribution company.

The agitation was led by District Panchayat member Dilip Singh Gurjar and saw participation from women, men and children. It marked the third major protest against smart meters in the district within the past month, following similar demonstrations on June 5 and June 17, when memorandums were submitted to the electricity distribution company.

Addressing the gathering, Gurjar alleged that electricity bills had increased significantly after the installation of smart meters, placing an unbearable financial burden on consumers, particularly middle-income and economically weaker families. He claimed that several domestic workers earning between Rs 3,000 and Rs 4,000 a month had received electricity bills of nearly Rs 2,000, making it difficult for them to manage household expenses.

The protesters demanded immediate withdrawal of smart meters and reinstatement of conventional electricity meters. They alleged that repeated representations to

the power utility had failed to resolve the issue and claimed that electricity connections of some consumers who removed smart meters had been disconnected.

Residents also expressed dissatisfaction over the absence of senior administrative officials, saying they had waited for more than an hour and a half without any representative reaching the protest site.

Change of DOB

I, IC/Army No. 14415285-Y Rank (EX) HAV Name Anil Kumar Shukla resident House No. 6, Barkhedi Kalan, Neebad, Bhopal Madhya Pradesh 462044 do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-
(a) That I want to change date of birth of my spouse/dependent (Name) Lalita Shukla from 10/06/1976 to 04/05/1980
(b) I am enclosing copy of PAN Card/Matriculation Certificate/Passport /ECHS Card/Driving License /Election ID Card/Aadhar Card as proof.

**BANK OF MAHARASHTRA**

Zonal Office Chhindwad /क्षेत्र कार्यालय चिंदवड

कस्टडी रिकवरी /Recovery Dept.

e-mail: cmrrecovery_chh@bankofmaharashtra.bank.in

HEAD OFFICE:
LOKMANGAL 1501,
SHIVAJINAGAR, PUNE - 5

[Rule-8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immoveable Property)

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-section (2) of Section 13 read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, Notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession physical of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with the Rule 8 of the said rules.

S No.	Name & Address of Borrower & Guarantor	Amount due to the bank as per notice	Details of Immoveable Property of which possession taken by the bank	Demand Notice Date Possession Date
1.	Branch - Khamaria Borrower - Mr. Lucky Chouhan S/o Narendra Chouhan Co Borrower- Mrs. Archana Chouhan W/o Lucky Chouhan	Rs.12,00,458/- (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Four Hundred Fifty-Eight Only @ 7.65% as on 12.05.2026	All pieces and parcels of Khasra No. 238/1/1/2/1/1/2, Ph No: 26/1, Teh Waraseoni, District Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh, 481331 (Admeasuring 1036 Sq. Ft) Owned by: Mr. Lucky Chouhan S/o Narendra Chouhan Bound as:- North - Road, South - Road, East - Land of Rahangdale, West - Land of Meshram	12.05.2026 29.07.2026 Physical

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Bank Of Maharashtra for an amount hereinabove mentioned. The details of the properties mortgaged to the Bank and taken possession by the Bank are as above. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

CHIEF MANAGER & AUTHORIZED OFFICER

BANK OF MAHARASHTRA

डैक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra

भारत सरकार का अंग

Zonal Office - Wright Town, Jabalpur 482001
TELE : 0761-2480065

E-Auction Sale Notice For Sale Of Hypothecated (Vehicles) Assets

Notice is hereby given to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s in particular and public in general that despite several notices to the Borrowers/Guarantors, they have failed to repay the Bank's dues in Vehicle loans as mentioned in the said notices. Therefore, the vehicles are seized by the Bank. The vehicles will be put for sale on 18.08.2026. On-line E-Auction / Bidding through website (<http://baanet.com>) at 12.00 pm to 4.00 pm. The vehicles will be sold "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis, for recovery of the balance due to the Bank of Maharashtra from the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned in the table. Details of the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, amount due, Short description of the movable property reserve price and the earnest money deposit are given as under -
The borrowers are once again requested to deposit total dues along with further interest, cost and expenses before the above date to get back possession of your vehicles/tractor failing which the same will be sold and proceeds adjusted with your account.

Date of E-Auction - 18-08-2026 Time - 12.00 p.m to 04:00 p.m. with auto extension for 10 minutes				
S No.	Names of Borrowers & Guarantors and Branch	Amount Due as on	Short description of the Movable (Vehicle)	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit Bid Increment value
1.	Borrower- Mr. Katakam Ravinder S/o Katakam Rajeshwar 1-81 Bodepalli, Adilabad Pin 504273 Branch: Panna Road Satna	Rs. 1026198 /- plus unapplied interest at applicable rate of interest, other cost and expenses w.e.f. from 20.07.2026	Model: TATA NEXON GREY + PMT Colour: DAYTONA GREY Regi No. 24BH4907G Engine No. - REVTRN21EVXK65169 Chassis No. - MAT627502RAE19460 Regi Date: 18.06.2024 Mfg Year: 05/2024	Rs.66000/- Rs.66000/- Rs.10000/-

Vehicle Inspection Site- Bank of Maharashtra, Branch- Panna Road, Satna

Date & Time of inspection of property on: 14/08/2026 between 11.00 am to 05.00 p.m. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link "https://www.bankofmaharashtra.in/progsale.asp" provided in the Bank's website and also on psballiance portal (<http://baanet.com>). Or contact CM Recovery, Shri Bhushan Mohite, Mob.No.9923257090

Date: 01.08.2026

Authorised Officer - Bank of Maharashtra

Ujjain gears up for Simhastha 2028 with homestay push

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ujjain

In a major step towards strengthening tourism infrastructure ahead of Simhastha 2028, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB), in collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (MPSTDC) and the District Archaeology, Tourism and Culture Council, organised a Homestay Promotion and Training Workshop in Ujjain on Friday.

The initiative is aimed at expanding quality accommodation options for the millions of pilgrims and tourists expected to visit Ujjain during Simhastha while encouraging community participation in the state's growing tourism sector. By promoting homestays, the government hopes to provide visitors with an authentic experience of Madhya Pradesh's culture, traditions and hospitality, while creating sustainable income opportunities for local families.

Addressing the participants, Dr. T. Ilayaraja, Managing Director of the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, said the Homestay Scheme would play a crucial role in meeting the increased demand for accommodation during Simhastha 2028. He said

the initiative would not only enhance the city's hospitality infrastructure but also enable residents to become tourism entrepreneurs by earning additional income through their homes.

The workshop brought together representatives from the tourism, revenue and urban administration departments, the District Archaeology, Tourism and Culture Council, non-governmental organisations and private property owners. Participants received detailed guidance on the Homestay Scheme, including eligibility conditions, the registration process, operational requirements and the financial benefits of joining the programme. Residents with spare rooms or

suitable residential properties were encouraged to register under the scheme and host domestic and international visitors. Officials highlighted that the initiative has been designed to make the registration process simple and accessible, allowing more households to participate.

Dr. D.P. Singh, Director of the Skill Cell at the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, said the Board's Homestay, Farm Stay, Gram Stay and Bed and Breakfast programmes are helping create sustainable livelihood opportunities by connecting local communities with the tourism industry. He added that beneficiaries are also provided training, technical guidance and financial assistance to help them establish and manage

quality accommodation facilities. Vice-Chancellor Dr. Arpan Bhardwaj said the Homestay Scheme would strengthen Ujjain's identity as a welcoming spiritual and cultural destination while empowering residents to become self-reliant. He said tourists who experience warm hospitality and local traditions are more likely to return, benefiting both homestay operators and the city's tourism economy. During the workshop, Ishita Joshi, Business Development Manager at MakeMyTrip, conducted a session on digital marketing, online booking platforms, property presentation and guest service standards to help participants attract modern travellers.

IN FOCUS



A child sitting on a pile of jackfruits during the three-day Halasu Mela, Jackfruit Festival, in Hubballi-Dharwad, Karnataka

PTI

CM Rekha to launch Delhi lakshmi portal, register first Beneficiary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Delhi Government will formally launch the Delhi Lakshmi Yojana on Saturday, August 1, with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta inaugurating the online portal at a programme scheduled for 11 am at the District Magistrate East office in Geeta Colony. Post-inauguration, the applications from eligible women will open, and the Government will aim to complete verification in time to release the first instalment by Raksha Bandhan.

During the launch programme, the Chief Minister will personally register a few eligible women, marking the formal begin-



ning of the application process. Applications from all other eligible beneficiaries will be accepted through the portal thereafter. The scheme provides ₹2,500 in monthly financial assistance to eligible women aged 21 to 60. A provision of ₹5,110 crore has been made in the 2026-27

Budget, and the scheme is expected to benefit over 17 lakh women across Delhi.

The Chief Minister said the Delhi Government has fulfilled one of its key promises to women and that the scheme is designed to strengthen their dignity, financial security, and self-reliance. She appealed to all eligible women to apply for the scheme and avail its benefits.

The launch on August 1 sets a compressed operational timeline. The Government must process applications, complete eligibility verification, and disburse the first instalment before Raksha Bandhan, which falls in August. Completing that cycle for a large beneficiary base across 13 districts within

weeks of portal launch is the administrative test the scheme now faces.

Eligibility under the Delhi Lakshmi Yojana requires that applicants be women between 21 and 60 years of age with a family annual income not exceeding ₹2.50 lakh. Women who already receive benefits under any other Government financial assistance scheme or pension, income taxpayers, GST return filers, Government employees, women with more than three living children, families with annual electricity consumption exceeding 2,400 units, families with a member employed by any Government or PSU, families owning a four-wheeler, and women with a criminal record are not eligible.

Wife stabbed with scissors in Jagatpuri, husband absconding

ABHINAV KUMAR JHA
■ New Delhi

A 54-year-old man allegedly stabbed his 50-year-old wife in the neck with a pair of scissors at their residence in East Delhi's Jagatpuri area on Wednesday night.

The man fled the scene before police arrived. A PCR call reporting the murder was received at Jagatpuri police station at around 9 pm, and multiple teams are now searching for the absconding accused. The deceased has been identified as Komal, 50. Her husband, the accused, has been identified as Kamal, 54. The FIR has been registered on the basis of the statement of the couple's son, Gaurav, at Jagatpuri police station.

Police personnel, including the SHO and the investigating officer, rushed to the address after the PCR call was received and found Komal lying dead on the floor. The crime team inspected the scene and collected evidence. The body was shifted to Dr Hedgewar Hospital, where doctors declared her dead, and was subsequently sent to the Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital mortuary for post-mortem examination.

The case has been registered under Section 103(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which deals with the offence of murder. Investigators have launched a search operation to trace Kamal, who remains absconding. Police said multiple teams are working to locate him. The exact motive behind the killing has not yet



been established. Police said they are examining all possible angles and are awaiting the post-mortem report, which is expected to provide further clarity on the cause of death and the specific nature of the injuries.

The incident fits a grim pattern of domestic violence resulting in death that has marked Delhi's crime calendar in recent weeks. Wednesday night's Jagatpuri incident is distinct from both of those cases in that the weapon was not a firearm but a household item, a pair of scissors, which makes the attack a matter of close-range physical violence in a domestic space. The use of scissors also means the attack was sustained rather than instantaneous, and the post-mortem findings on the wound to the neck are expected to be significant for the investigation's account of what happened.

The fact that the accused fled the scene and has not been found as of the time of reporting suggests either that he had a plan for his movements after the attack or that the flight was panicked and unplanned.

Four minor Kanwar pilgrims drown in Ganga canal in Haridwar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Haridwar

Four minor Kanwar pilgrims from Chandigarh drowned in the Ganga Canal near Jatwara Bridge in Haridwar on Friday after they ventured into the midstream, apparently misjudging the depth of the water amid low water levels caused by silt-cleaning operations, police said.

The deceased, aged between 16 and 18, were part of a group that had come to Haridwar for the Kanwar Yatra and were returning after collecting Ganga water. According to police, the group stopped at



SDRF personnel carrying the body of a Kanwariya after four pilgrims allegedly drowned while bathing in the River Ganga in Haridwar

PTI

a ghat along the Ganga Canal near Jatwara Bridge in the Jwalapur area to bathe.

During this time, one of the Kanwariyas began to drown. His three companions

entered the canal in an attempt to rescue him but failed to gauge the depth of the water, and all four went missing.

Police said it was reported that the water level in the canal was low due to ongoing silt-cleaning operations, prompting the Kanwariyas to venture into the midstream, where they became trapped and drowned.

Panic spread at the spot following the incident. On receiving information, Water Police, local police and other rescue agencies reached the site and launched a search operation. Haridwar Superintendent of Police

(City) Abhay Pratap Singh said the bodies of all four Kanwariyas were recovered from the canal after an extensive search operation.

The bodies have been sent to the district hospital for post-mortem examinations, he said. The deceased were identified as Shivanshu (16), Nitesh (17) and Bharat (17), all residents of Sector 16 in Chandigarh, and Rohit Prajapati (18), a resident of Sector 26/30.

In a separate incident at Haridwar's Kangra Ghat, two Kanwariyas who were swept away by the strong current of the Ganga were rescued by a State Disaster Response

Force (SDRF) team. They were identified as 18-year-old Sudhish Thakur and 28-year-old Rahul, a resident of Baghpat.

The Kanwar Yatra, which spans about a fortnight, commenced on Thursday. The Ganga is currently in full spate due to continuous rainfall in the state in recent days.

Singh said that during the Kanwar Mela, police and the administration have been constantly urging devotees to bathe only at designated and safe ghats and avoid venturing into the main currents or deep waters of the Ganga and Ganga Canal to prevent such tragic incidents.

CID grills ex-PSC chief for 8 hours for third time over exam irregularities in Jharkhand

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Ranchi

The CID on Friday questioned former Jharkhand Public Service Commission chairman L Khiantge for around eight hours as part of its probe into alleged irregularities in examinations conducted by the agency, an official said.

This was the third round of questioning that the former state PSC chairman faced. He appeared before the CID sleuths around 11 am and came out of the agency's office around 7 pm, the official said. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) grilled Khiantge for about nine hours on Tuesday and around eight hours on Wednesday.

Khiantge resigned as the JPSC chairperson on July 22, a day before the CID sleuths searched multiple locations, including his official residence, in connection with its investigation into the alleged irregularities in the JPSC examinations. On Monday, Khiantge



said he "voluntarily chose to resign" to ensure an impartial investigation into the matter.

He was appointed to the post of JPSC chairman in February last year after he retired as the state's chief secretary.

Kerala not insisting on specific AIIMS site to avoid delays: Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Thiruvananthapuram

Kerala Devaswom and Health Minister K Muralaeddharan on Friday said the state Government would not insist on locating the proposed AIIMS at any particular place, as it did not want regional disputes to delay the project's allotment.

Speaking to reporters, Muralaeddharan said the Government had submitted details of multiple proposed sites for the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), including survey numbers, to the Union Health Ministry.

"We are not mentioning any specific location. We have pointed out locations. Including survey numbers, we have communicated the details to the Union Health Ministry. AIIMS can be established anywhere in Kerala and we will be happy with that because the project should not be lost over regional disputes. The Government has taken an open stance on this," he said. Responding to queries on the Devaswom



Recruitment Board, the minister said the Government had not taken any decision to transfer its recruitment powers to the Kerala Public Service Commission (PSC).

He clarified that the Government's decision pertained only to the Guruvayur Devaswom, where the Kerala High Court had held that the Devaswom Recruitment Board Act was not applicable in view of the Guruvayur Devaswom Act, which had received Presidential assent in 1978.

Life for Tahir Hussain in Ankit murder

"It must be recalled that the prosecution has failed to prove the allegation that Tahir had instigated or let any unlawful assembly. The allegation of Tahir Hussain putting his house as a launchpad or base for riots was neither a part of the charges framed against him, nor was specifically sought to be proved in evidence," the judge said. On being asked about his sentence, Hussain said, "Justice may be delayed, but it will not be denied. I will get justice from the high court. The match was fixed."

The court further treated the educational background of four of the convicts as a mitigating circumstance. It observed that Qasim, Nazim and Javed were illiterate while Anas had studied only up to class 4, making them more susceptible to misinformation and communal propaganda in the atmosphere prevailing during the riots.

Reacting to the judgement, Delhi law minister, Kapil Mishra expressed hope that the sentence would be converted into the death penalty by the Delhi High Court. In a post on X, Mishra wrote, "The cruelty with which Ankit Sharma was killed, stabbed with knives even after death, the body thrown into a drain—this is certainly the 'Rarest of Rare'. It is hoped that in the High Court, this life imprisonment will be converted to the death penalty." Tahir was also fined Rs 1,000 under IPC Section 188, Rs 20,000 each under Sections 153A, 147 and 148, Rs 50,000 under Section 365 and Rs 5 lakh under Section 302, with default sentences prescribed for non-payment.

Hussain's co-convicts were awarded life imprisonment under Section 302 IPC with a fine of Rs 25,000 each. They were also sentenced to six months under Section 188, three years under Section 153A, two years under Section 147, three years under Section 148 and seven years under Section 365 IPC, along with fines ranging from Rs 1,000 to Rs 10,000 under the respective provisions. All the sentences will run concurrently.

The judge, however, said that the offences had been committed with complete disregard for law and human life and said the convicts must face the full force of law for the remaining offences.

"All the sentences of all the convicts shall run concurrently. Benefit of section 428 Cr.P.C/ 468

BNSS shall be given to the convicts. Out of aforesaid fine imposed upon the convicts, Rs.5 lakh shall be paid as compensation to the family of the victim", the judgement said.

Sharma, 26, IB officer was dragged by the mob and attacked with knives, sticks, rods and stones before his body was dumped in a drain during the violence that swept through northeast Delhi in February-end. The body with at least 51 knife wounds was found the next day.

Meta India head named in FIR over posts...

Complainants say Meta did not do enough to prevent or quickly remove deepfake-style and manipulated content that could harm public figures and threaten public order.

Cybercrime officials said the investigation will look at both the people who created and shared the content, and whether the platforms' current tools for detecting AI-generated and manipulated media are effective.

Taslima returns to Kolkata

Nasreen is expected to take part in an anti-fundamentalism literary meet on Saturday in Kolkata likely to be attended amongst others by Chief Minister Suvenhu Adhikari and veteran Bengali novelist Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay.

She was forced to leave the city in November 2007 when the then Buddhadeb Bhattacharya Government had to call out the military to contain restive crowd after the then Imam of Tipu Sultan Barqati had given a call to blacken her face. Former Trinamool Congress MP late Idrish Ali had led a crowd protesting against her putting up in Kolkata and demanded her exit from the city.

The Left Government then asked her to go away. Before return to Kolkata Nasreen recalled her compelled exit saying she was returning to the city of joy, "with joy, but also with pain", recalling how Kolkata that had given her a home, friends, readers and a sense of nearness also forced her to leave. "I would not leave Kolkata on my own

FROM PAGE - 1

... the then West Bengal Government compelled me to leave... but still I always dreamt of coming back," she had said.

CM Yadav to launch Jan Vishwas drive...

The selected complainants will interact with the Chief Minister in person, while officials from the concerned departments will remain present to facilitate on-the-spot review and resolution of issues. The entire process will be monitored through the CM Helpline portal.

Apart from the public grievance redressal programme, the Chief Minister is also scheduled to hold a review meeting with district officials to assess the implementation of government schemes and development works. The visit will include separate interactions with representatives of the media and the industrial sector.

The communication, issued by the Public Service Management Department following directions from the Chief Secretary's Office, has instructed the district administration to ensure the presence of complainants and departmental officers at the designated venue and complete all preparations in advance.

The Chhindwara visit marks the beginning of the Chief Minister's Jan Vishwas Abhiyan 2026, which is expected to focus on strengthening public trust by ensuring effective grievance redressal, improving administrative accountability and enhancing direct engagement between the government and citizens.

Police kin allege one-sided narrative...

Upneet Kaur, wife of an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), said the night her husband returned home injured was traumatic for the family, including their two-year-old daughter. "Behind every uniform is not only a police officer; there is also a wife, children, parents and an entire family. We want people to understand that," she said. The families displayed photographs of injured police personnel during the press confer-

ence alongside figures they claimed reflected the scale of the violence. According to the presentation, more than 250 police personnel were injured, while over 110 barricades, 300 body protectors, 350 helmets, 20 louchailers, 10 hand-held metal detectors and an X-ray baggage scanner were damaged. They also claimed that more than 25 Government vehicles and other public property were vandalised.

Seema, wife of an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) who has served in Delhi Police for 33 years, recalled speaking to her husband on the morning of July 20 when he informed her that a large crowd had gathered and was preparing to march towards Parliament. Hours later, she received another call informing her that he had been admitted to Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Hospital. "When I spoke to him, he told me that some anti-social elements in the crowd attacked police personnel with stones, flower pots, slippers and shoes. After that, his phone battery died, and I was terrified," she said.

She said her husband returned home around 11 pm with his protective helmet broken.

"Had another stone struck his head after the helmet broke, he might not have survived. But for days, the only narrative discussed was that the police used brutality against students. That is only one side. We want what happened to police personnel and their families also to be discussed in Parliament," she said. Kunjal, a Delhi University student whose father, a sub-inspector, was injured in the clashes, said her father had served for 15 years as a Marine Commando in the Indian Navy before joining Delhi Police. She alleged that on July 25, while deployed near the stage at Jantar Mantar, her father was pulled into a mob, "almost lynched," and remained unconscious for nearly four hours at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. "When my father's colleagues brought him home around 10 pm, his uniform was soaked in blood. It was painful to see him in that condition," she said.

Kunjal also said she was deeply distressed by the reaction on social media. "When I opened social media, my father had already been declared a criminal. Later, I learnt that those accused of attacking police personnel had approached the Supreme Court. I felt I also had to seek justice for my father. We too have equal rights as citizens, and we hope justice will be done," she said.

Lakshya Singh, son of another injured ACP, said

Delhi Police ban drones, UAVs for 15 days ahead of Independence day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Delhi Police has prohibited the flying of drones, UAVs, hot air balloons, para-gliders and other sub-conventional aerial platforms across the national capital for 15 days ahead of Independence Day celebrations, citing security concerns.

In an order issued on Friday, Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar said intelligence inputs indicated that criminal, anti-social elements or terrorists inimical to India could use such aerial platforms to pose a threat to the general public, dignitaries and vital installations.



Cabinet extends PM-KISAN till 2030-31

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Friday approved extension of the PM-KISAN scheme for the next five years till the 2030-31 fiscal with an outlay of ₹3,15,614 crore. Under the scheme, each eligible farmer family receives annual financial assistance of ₹6,000.

This is disbursed in three equal instalments of ₹2,000 through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanism into Aadhaar-seeded bank accounts. Launched on February 24, 2019, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at providing assured income support to farmers nationwide.

Briefing media, Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Cabinet has extended the PM-KISAN scheme for five years till 2030-31. The total outlay stands at ₹3,15,614 crore.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi,



Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw speaks during a cabinet briefing in New Delhi on Friday PTI

approved continuation of the PM-KISAN scheme from 2026-27 to 2030-31, I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters here.

A total financial outlay of ₹3,15,614 crore has been approved for the

Scheme during this period, he added.

“The approval reiterates the Government’s commitment that the prosperity of farmers forms the foundation of the nation’s prosper-

ity,” the Government said in a statement.

The extension of the scheme will enhance farmers’ capacity to invest in agriculture, improve productivity, help reduce agricultural risks and strengthen the rural economy, it added.

Through this scheme, timely and transparent income support is being provided to eligible farmer families through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system.

Talking about the successful implementation of this programme, the Government said it has so far disbursed more than ₹4.47 lakh crore directly into farmers’ bank accounts through 23 instalments under the scheme.

Under the 23rd instalment, more than 9.49 crore farmers benefited, with over ₹18,984 crore released.

“Women farmers have received more than Rs 1.06 lakh crore under PM-KISAN, and nearly one out of every four beneficiaries is a woman farmer,” the statement said.

The Government highlighted that the assistance provided under PM-KISAN has enabled farmers to make timely investments in seeds, fertilisers, irrigation, agricultural machinery and other agricultural requirements.

“This has enhanced farmers’ productive capacity, reduced their dependence on informal credit and strengthened the financial stability of rural households,” it added.

Further, the Government said that the impact of the PM-KISAN Scheme has been assessed by various independent institutions.

According to the evaluation conducted by the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) of NITI Aayog, more than 92 per cent of beneficiaries reported that the amount was used for agricultural activities and agricultural investment. Around 85 per cent of beneficiaries confirmed an improvement in agricultural income and a reduction in dependence on informal credit.

CBI arrests two key suspects in murder of West Bengal CM’s aide Chandranath Rath

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi/Kolkata

On Friday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested two main suspects in the murder of Chandranath Rath, who was a close aide to West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari. Officials said these arrests may be connected to a rival political party member. The suspects, brothers Sagar Sonkar and Sahib Sonkar, had both worked with Rath in the past.

CBI officials said that while working for Rath, Sagar Sonkar often called a rival political party office using a landline. The agency is now looking into these calls as part of its wider investigation. The brothers were produced

before the designated court in Kolkata. Rath, who had served in the Indian Air Force and was a trusted aide to Adhikari, was shot and killed on May 6 near Madhyamgram in North 24 Parganas district when attackers on motorcycles stopped his car and fired at close range.

The murder took place two days after the West Bengal Assembly election results, when the BJP won by a large margin, and Adhikari became Chief Minister. The attack happened in a busy area near Kolkata airport, leading to political controversy and calls for a thorough investigation. Initially, the West Bengal Police formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and quickly arrested suspected



contract killers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Later, the case was transferred to the CBI, which filed its own FIR and set up a special team to look into the motive, financial dealings, and who may have ordered the killing.

CBI sources said the

Sonkar brothers were familiar with Rath’s schedule because they had worked closely with him. The agency is reviewing call records, focusing on Sagar Sonkar’s landline calls to a rival party office, to see if these were part of a larger political plot.

Officials said the investigation is ongoing and more arrests could follow as they uncover the network of handlers, intermediaries, and shooters. The murder raised tensions in the state after the elections. Adhikari described the killing as a targeted assassination connected to Rath’s role in the BJP’s victory. Opposition parties condemned the violence and called for a transparent investigation.

The CBI’s recent actions are seen as progress in finding both the killers and those who may have planned the attack. Rath, who was from East Medinipur, spent almost twenty years in the Indian Air Force before joining Adhikari’s political team.

Colleagues described him as a quiet organiser who liked to work behind the scenes. His death left a gap in the Chief Minister’s inner circle and highlighted ongoing issues with political violence in West Bengal after the elections.

Investigators are reviewing new evidence alongside earlier findings about the vehicles, weapons, and scouting activities used by the attackers before May 6.

The agency says it is following every lead and aims to uncover the full conspiracy, including any possible political connections. More updates will be shared as the special court proceedings move forward, agency officials said.

IMD forecasts below-normal rainfall in August-September

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

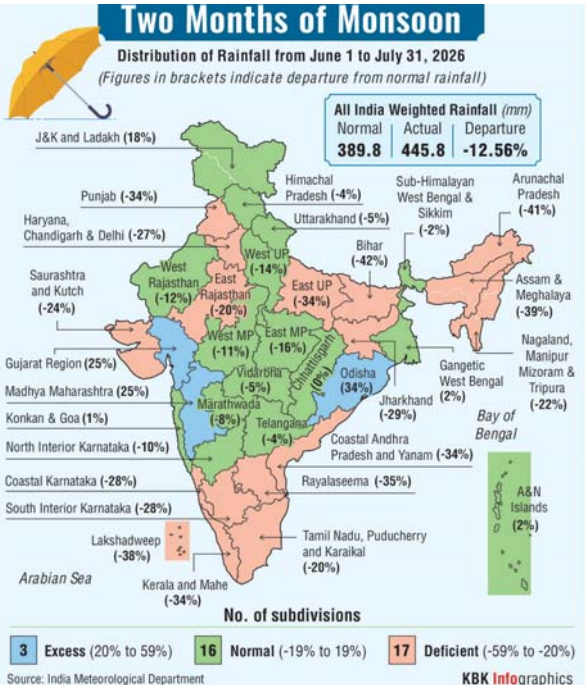
India as a whole is most likely to witness below-normal rainfall during the second half of the south-west monsoon from August to September, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in its monthly forecast issued on Friday.

The rainfall is expected to be less than 94 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA), it said.

LPA refers to the rainfall recorded over a particular region in a given period, such as a month or a season, averaged over a long period, typically 30 to 50 years.

The LPA of rainfall over the country as a whole during the August to September period, based on historical data from 1971 to 2020, is 422.8 mm.

In a statement, Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, director general of meteorology at the IMD, said, “During this (August-September) period, below-



below-normal, with less than 94 per cent of the LPA, the IMD said.

The LPA of rainfall over India during August, based on the 1971-2020 data, is 254.9 mm.

Currently, India is facing a rainfall deficit of 13 per cent for the period between June and July. At the end of June, this figure had stood at 35.4 per cent.

“The reduction in rainfall deficit happened due to good rainfall activity in July,” Dr Mohapatra said.

While the average rainfall in July is 280.5 mm, the country received 283.3 mm rainfall during the month this year.

There were two main reasons for this. First, four low-pressure systems (LPS) formed over the Bay of Bengal during the month, and two of them intensified into depressions.

There was also a rise in the number of LPS days. While typically July sees 13.5 LPS days, this time there were 24 LPS days.

TN CM Vijay allocates ₹340 crore to tackle water scarcity

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Chennai

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Friday allocated Rs 340 crore to ensure uninterrupted drinking water supply and support essential agricultural activities across the state. The directive was issued following a comprehensive review meeting held at the Secretariat under his leadership. The meeting assessed the Southwest monsoon rainfall, drinking water distribution in districts, and the status of agricultural crop cultivation, according to an official release.

During the meeting, the chief minister extensively reviewed several key issues, including water storage levels and reserves in dams, the extent of Southwest monsoon rainfall received so far in Tamil Nadu and the ground situation in districts with deficit rainfall and drinking water distribution across urban and rural areas.

In addition, Vijay also reviewed the ongoing agricultural works, the status of Kuruvai cultivation, and the



distribution of the Kuruvai package to farmers, availability and stock of fodder for cattle and progress and implementation of drinking water supply and other essential infrastructure projects.

Data presented at the meeting revealed that the Southwest monsoon rainfall has been below normal from June to July 31, 2026.

Specifically, 20 districts, including Chennai, Cuddalore, Kallakurichi, Kanchipuram, recorded a 19 to 59 per cent rainfall deficit.

Meanwhile, Chengalpattu and Ramanathapuram districts registered a severe deficit of over 60 per cent.

Haryana CM Saini pays tribute to Shaheed Udham Singh on martyrdom day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini paid heartfelt tributes to the great freedom fighter and symbol of indomitable courage, Shaheed Udham Singh, on his martyrdom day.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini paid floral tributes to the portrait of Shaheed Udham Singh at Sant Kabir Kutir, his official residence here, and remembered his unparalleled sacrifice.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister said that Shaheed Udham Singh’s indomitable courage, unwavering patriotism and supreme sacrifice for the honour of the motherland constitute an immortal chapter in the golden pages of Indian history.

Paying homage to the martyr, the Chief Minister said, “The nation will always remain indebted to his bravery, dedication and supreme sacrifice. The



resolve and patience he demonstrated in securing justice for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre are unparalleled.”

He further said that the life and ideals of Shaheed Udham Singh will continue to inspire future generations to walk the path of patriotism, sacrifice and service to the nation.

The Chief Minister added that everyone should imbibe the ideals of such great revolutionaries and work towards the progress and prosperity of the nation and the State.

ITC Limited

Extract of Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30th June, 2026

		Standalone		Consolidated			
Sl. No.	Particulars	3 Months ended 30.06.2026	Twelve Months ended 31.03.2026	Corresponding 3 Months ended 30.06.2025	3 Months ended 30.06.2026	Twelve Months ended 31.03.2026	Corresponding 3 Months ended 30.06.2025
1	Total Income from Operations	27588.56	84927.29	21731.84	30179.01	92339.13	23811.56
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax and Exceptional Items)	4759.41	26951.47	6543.48	5454.97	28325.09	7128.01
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional Items)	4759.41	26767.60	6543.48	5860.85	28033.39	7128.01
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional Items)	3578.82	20286.42	4910.73	4508.79	21018.15	5343.41
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	4021.93	19476.46	5099.56	4874.50	20374.86	5557.46
6	Equity Share Capital	1252.95	1252.95	1251.75	1252.95	1252.95	1251.75
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)		68675.66			71254.35	
8	Earnings Per Share (of ₹ 1/- each) (not annualised):						
1.	Basic (₹):	2.86	16.20	3.93	3.51	16.52	4.19
2.	Diluted (₹):	2.86	16.19	3.92	3.51	16.51	4.18

Note:

a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of the Statements of Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The unaudited Financial Results and Segment Results were reviewed by the Audit Committee, and approved by the Board of Directors of the Company at its meeting held on 31st July, 2026. The complete Statements of Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results are available on the Company's website at <https://itcportal.com/investors/quarterly-results.html> and on the websites of the National Stock Exchange of India Limited (www.nseindia.com) and BSE Limited (www.bseindia.com). The same can also be accessed by scanning the QR Code provided below.

b) Sproutlife Foods Private Limited ('Sproutlife') became a subsidiary of the Company with effect from 1st April, 2026, consequent to the Company acquiring the right to nominate majority of Directors on its Board. In accordance with Ind AS 103-Business Combinations, the Group has re-measured its existing interest in Sproutlife at fair value. The gain on remeasurement of ₹ 405.88 crores has been recognised as 'Exceptional Items' in the Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter ended 30th June, 2026.

c) The Limited Review for the Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results, as required under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, has been completed by the Statutory Auditors of the Company, who have issued an unmodified report on the same which has been forwarded to the Stock Exchanges.

Registered Office:

Virginia House, 37 J.L. Nehru Road, Kolkata 700 071, India
Dated: 31st July, 2026
Place: Kolkata, India

For and on behalf of the Board

Sd/-

Director & Chief Financial Officer
(DIN: 01804345)

Sd/-

Chairman & Managing Director
(DIN: 00280529)

The Financial Results along with the Limited Review Reports have been posted on the Company's website at www.itcportal.com and can be accessed by scanning the QR Code.

Website: www.itcportal.com
E-mail: enduringvalue@itc.in
Phone: +91-33-2288 9371
Fax: +91-33-2288 0655
CIN: L16005WB1910PLC001985

FMCG | Paperboards & Packaging | Agri Business | Information Technology

Assam to seek insurance, NBFC moratorium for flood victims

TONY DAS ■ Guwahati

The Assam Government on Friday decided to approach insurance companies and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) for expeditious disposal of claims and providing a moratorium to their customers from the four districts which have been badly affected by the floods this year, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Assessment of damage to houses, livestock, etc., is expected to be completed shortly, and the Government will try to ensure that funds for repair are disbursed at the earliest, he added.

The announcement came a day after the Chief Minister chaired a special meeting of the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC), in which it was decided that a six-month moratorium would

be offered to all flood-affected people in four districts for repaying loans.

At least 80 people have died and more than 2 lakh people have been affected in the deluge in the state so far. Four districts — Sivasagar, Chariadeo, Jorhat and Golaghat — have been impacted the most.

Addressing the media after chairing a Cabinet meeting here, Sarma said, "We discussed at length on how to provide more relief to the people at this crucial time."

He said it was decided to convene a meeting with both private and Government insurance companies on August 5 to urge them to expeditiously settle claims against insured damaged vehicles, livestock, etc.

"For the four districts of Sivasagar, Chariadeo, Jorhat and Golaghat, we will request them to collect the



claims themselves and settle them at the earliest," he added.

The CM further said the Government will also meet the NBFCs on August 5 with the request to grant a moratorium and such benefits to borrowers from these four

districts.

"Just as the banks have extended a six-month moratorium on loans or the term for loan repayment after our meeting with them yesterday, we will urge the NBFCs to provide similar benefits too," he said.

Sarma said assessment of damages caused to houses is being done in the worst-hit districts and is expected to be completed within a day or two, so that disbursement of ₹15,000 per family as interim relief can be done within August.

Assessment of affected students eligible for book purchase grants is also being undertaken, he added.

While distribution of free textbooks has already commenced, money from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the re-distribution of free school uniforms in the districts will be done on Saturday, Sarma added.

He said that the assessment of permanent damage to public infrastructure will start from August 7, and it will be carried out in a mission mode so that it is completed in 10 to 15 days, and funds for repair can be released by the

month's end.

"I will visit Sivasagar and Chariadeo before the launch of the assessment," Sarma added.

He further said that the Cabinet approved Rs 2 to 3 lakh for the repair and desilting of schools in these two districts, and will ensure that classes can resume at the earliest. "From September one, damage to roads, embankments, etc. will be assessed, which will require more funds for repair," the Chief Minister added.

On reports claiming that activities in Nagaland led to the flood fury in downstream Assam districts, Sarma said, "At this stage, I cannot comment. Nagaland is also under floods, and they are also suffering. These things can be discussed when the present situation is over," he said, avoding many questions on this regard.

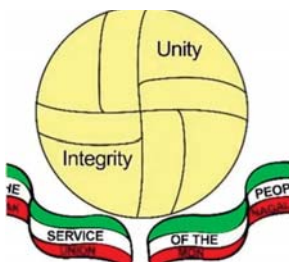
Konyak Union refutes claims linking Mon district to Assam floods

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Guwahati

The Konyak Union has strongly denied allegations linking the recent floods in parts of Assam to the release of water from a purported Dikhu Hydro Electric Project in Nagaland's Mon district or to alleged illegal coal mining activities in the Naginimora area.

In a press statement, the Union clarified that no hydro-electric dam or reservoir exists in Mon district, adding that the Dikhu Hydro Electric Project remains only a proposed project and has never been constructed or commissioned. It also said there is no evidence to support claims that alleged gold mining in Naginimora contributed to the flooding.

According to the Union, the floods were triggered by



exceptionally heavy rainfall and cloudburst-like downpours on July 19 and 20, which caused landslides, flash floods and overflowing rivers across Mon district before affecting Naginimora and Tizit.

The Konyak Union urged public representatives, organisations and the media to verify facts before making statements, warning that misinformation could harm the long-standing cordial relations between the people of Nagaland and Assam.

Khandwa: 4 stranded on island rescued by SDERF

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Bhopal

Four people stranded on a small island at the confluence of two rain-swollen rivers in Khandwa district were rescued safely in the early hours of Friday after an 11-hour operation carried out by the State Disaster Emergency Response Force (SDERF).

The incident occurred in the Handikundi area, around 20 kilometres from the Khandwa district headquarters, where the Sukta and Avana rivers meet. The group had gone for a picnic on Thursday when the water level rose rapidly following heavy rainfall in the region, cutting off their access to the riverbank and leaving them trapped on the island.

The stranded individuals were identified as Huzefa Hamid (40), Mayank alias Gopal (16), Ali Asgar (35), and Ayush (18). After receiving information at around 6.15



pm, police alerted the SDERF, which immediately rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation.

Officials said the rescue team initially attempted to send a motorboat to the island using safety ropes. However, the strong current made the operation too risky, prompting

rescuers to suspend the attempt to avoid endangering both the trapped group and rescue personnel.

As the water level remained high, the SDERF adopted an alternative strategy. Using drones, rescuers delivered life jackets, food packets and drinking water to

the stranded picnickers, ensuring their safety through the night. Officials also maintained constant mobile phone contact with them to monitor their condition and reassure them as the rescue operation continued.

Once the river current weakened and the water level receded slightly, rescuers resumed the operation. A motorboat, secured with safety ropes, was successfully guided to the island, and all four people were brought back safely at around 4.45 am on Friday.

Officials said the successful rescue highlighted the importance of patience, careful planning and the use of technology during disaster response. They also urged people to avoid visiting riverbanks and low-lying areas during the monsoon, as water levels can rise suddenly due to heavy rainfall upstream, posing a serious risk to life.

Army Chief unveils Xtreme Weather Grade diesel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth on Friday unveiled indigenously developed Xtreme Weather Grade (XWG) diesel, which can remain effective at temperatures as low as minus 42 degrees Celsius, and described it as a "game-changing" indigenous innovation that would enhance mobility, operational readiness and mission reliability.

Compliant with BS-VI standards and IS 1460:2025 specifications, it can be used in the Indian Army's existing vehicle fleet "without any engine modification or re-homologation," the defence ministry said. Developed jointly by the Indian Army and oil marketing companies, the specialised fuel will enhance the mobility, safety and operational availability of combat and logistics vehicles in extreme climatic conditions, it said.

The technology also has wider civilian use in high-altitude and severe winter regions and represents a significant step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat," the ministry said in a statement.

Conventional diesel can thicken and clog fuel filters at very low temperatures, affecting the operation of vehicles in high-altitude and snow-bound areas, officials said.

XWG diesel overcomes this challenge and remains effective at temperatures as low as minus 42 degrees Celsius, the ministry said. The Army chief, at an event held here, described XWG diesel as a "game-changing indigenous innovation" that would enhance mobility, operational readiness and mission reliability across extreme climatic conditions.

He highlighted that the fuel would eliminate practices previously required to keep vehicles functional during severe winters, thereby improving the safety and morale of personnel.

General Seth commended the Indian Army team and



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General Seth commended the Indian Army team and

the oil marketing companies for developing the solution within a year and expressed confidence that the collaboration would lead to further specialised fuels for diverse operational requirements.

Beyond its military applications, the technology will also benefit civilian vehicles in high-altitude and extreme winter regions by improving the reliability and safety of vehicles and equipment operating under severe climatic conditions, it said.

10 killed as 4-storey building collapses in Bhiwandi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Thane

At least 10 people were killed and three others injured after a four-storey residential building, tagged as 'dangerous' in 2020 by the local civic body and currently undergoing repairs illegally, collapsed in Bhiwandi town of Maharashtra's Thane district, officials said on Friday.

A portion of the Kohinoor Building in the Balaji Nagar area of the powerloom town, around 50km from Mumbai, came crashing down at 11.20 pm on Thursday, triggering a 19-hour-long multi-agency search and rescue operation that ended at around 7pm, they said.

Rescue workers from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Thane Disaster Response Force (TDRF), and municipal fire brigade personnel from Thane city and Bhiwandi were involved in the operation as heavy machinery and sniffer dogs were deployed to look for survivors under the debris, said the officials of the district disaster management cell.

Shrikant Pardeshi, Assistant Municipal Commissioner and PRO, Bhiwandi Nizampur City Municipal Corporation (BNCMC), told PTI that ten people lost their lives in the collapse, while three others were injured.

He said civic officials have approached the local Bhiwanda police for lodging a complaint against the contractor who carried out repairs in the building without obtaining permission from the BNCMC.

Senior Inspector Vikram Mohite of the Bhiwanda police said the process of registering a case against the contractor was underway.

The collapsed structure comprised 48 rooms, 12 on each floor. Around 9 pm on Thursday, residents heard "loud cracking sounds" emanating from the building, an official said.

Fearing the worst, locals immediately helped evacuate many families to other locations. However, while some occupants were still making their way out, the 'B' wing of



A portion of the Kohinoor Building in Balaji Nagar area of the powerloom town collapsed on late Thursday in Bhiwandi, Maharashtra on Friday. PTI

the building caved in, he said.

The officials said five of the deceased were identified as Shamim Shaikh (32), Ranjeet Singh (45), Miraj Rasul Shaikh (34), Santosh Kumar Pandey (42) and Shamim Ansari (30).

The BNCMC said it identified the building as "dangerous" in September 2020, and issued eviction notices on June 5 this year, subsequently disconnecting electricity and water supply. But despite that, the property owners

initiated structural repair works without obtaining any permission from the civic body.

Hours before the crash, on July 30, 2026, a civic team led by an Assistant Municipal Commissioner visited the site and noticed structural instability. The team immediately evacuated around 40 residents and labourers working there, said the civic body.

The contractor and workers were asked to stop the repair work, but they

refused to listen, it said, adding a few residents also refused to step out.

The civic commissioner ordered a strict punitive action and criminal proceedings against the contractor involved in the "illegal" repair works.

Maharashtra Water Resources and Disaster Management Minister Girish Mahajan visited the disaster site to inspect the ongoing relief operation and announced a financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of the deceased.

Talking to reporters, he said, "I have briefed Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis about the situation. Following directions from the CM, we are announcing a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragic incident."

The minister added instructions have been issued to hospital authorities to provide the best possible medical treatment to the injured persons at Government expense.

Non-local labourer killed in a terrorist attack in Kulgam

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

A non-local labourer, hailing from Chhattisgarh, was killed while another sustained injuries after terrorists opened fire on them in the Kelam area of Kulgam district late Friday evening.

This is the second incident of targeted killing in a span of 10 days. On July 22, a Jammu and Kashmir policeman, deployed on Amamath yatra duty, was killed in a surprise terrorist attack at Lal Chowk in Anantnag district.

A senior J&K police officer said terrorists fired upon two non-local labourers, working in a local brick kiln at Kelam, leaving both critically injured.

Bleeding profusely, the injured labourers were immediately shifted to a nearby hospital, where one of them succumbed to his injuries, while the other was undergoing treatment at the time of filing the report. Lieutenant Governor



Manoj Sinha strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Kulgam that claimed the life of a labourer from Chhattisgarh and directed security forces to intensify anti-terror operations to eliminate those responsible.

Soon after the attack, security forces rushed to the area, cordoned off the locality and launched a search operation to trace the attackers. LG Sinha in a post on X wrote, "I spoke with Director General of Police

Nalin Prabhat and other top security officials following the attack.

"I strongly condemn this cowardly terrorist act. I have directed our security forces to step up their operations and eliminate the terrorists," the Lieutenant Governor said. He said that J&K Police and security forces have cordoned off the area and launched an operation to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The Lieutenant Governor also stated that another injured labourer from Chhattisgarh had been shifted to hospital for urgent medical treatment.

Expressing condolences, Sinha conveyed his deepest sympathies to the bereaved family and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured labourer. "The J&K Administration and the entire nation stand firmly with the affected families during this difficult time", he said.

West Bengal STF arrests JeM operative for tracking Adhikari

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata

The Special Task Force of Bengal Police has arrested Hamim Mondal, an operative of Pakistan-based terror outfit Jaish-e-Muhammad. Digital devices recovered from him indicated his surveillance activities on several political functionaries, including travel movements of State Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari, officials said, adding he was picked up from the Renaissance township of Burdwan, a city 110 km north of Kolkata.

Mondal was picked up in a dramatic operation in the small hours of Friday, sources said.

He had recently shifted to his rented apartment at Burdwan after the State Government conducted an eviction drive in the Pil Khana area of Howrah where he originally lived, police said, adding he was a close confidant of Sajjad



Butt, one of the alleged persons involved in the 2019 Pulwama attack when a Jaish suicide bomber rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into a CRPF convoy in Kashmir, killing 40 personnel.

Sajjad and Mondal might have come into contact via social media a few years ago, officials suspected, adding he was also in touch with Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence.

Referring to the arrest, the Chief Minister said: "It is an extremely sensitive issue... it is not for me to comment on the issue as it involves a

larger national and even international angle... the STF will give a briefing later on... I can only say that some political persons, including Umesh Rai (a Bengal minister) and me."

Mondal, who was living with his parents and sisters at Burdwan, was on Friday remanded to 14 days' police custody by the designated judge, police said, adding they were analysing the various other data that had been recovered from him.

The police sources said electronic devices, including a mobile phone seized

from Mondal, were being examined to trace his communications, movements and alleged plans. "The police have to find out whether he was a recruiter and if so how many persons had he recruited and whether they have set up bases in the State or other places of the country... the full extent of his network has to be found out," a senior official said.

Incidentally, parts of Burdwan East had figured earlier on account of terror activities when in 2014 an accidental blast inside a house at Khagragarh exposed the presence of banned Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) operatives in the area.

In fact, the Union Home Minister had conducted a high-level meeting with four Chief Ministers of eastern India in Kolkata in 2022 to discuss the issue of rising terror threats.

CBI conducts searches in ₹105.44 crore PNB fraud case involving NCS Sugars Ltd

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH ■ New Delhi

On Friday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) searched 10 locations in Hyderabad, Vizianagaram, and Kakinada as part of a major bank fraud case involving NCS Sugars Ltd. The case, handled by the CBI's Bank Securities and Fraud Branch in Bengaluru, involves an alleged loss of ₹105.44 crore to Punjab National Bank in Chennai.

According to the CBI spokesperson, the agency registered the case against the company, its directors, and some unknown public servants after a complaint from PNB. The bank accused them of criminal conspiracy, cheating, breach of trust, misappropriation, and forgery.

The accused used forged documents to get credit, then diverted and misused the

loans instead of using them for business. The accounts became irregular and eventually defaulted, leading to major losses for the public sector bank.

The searches took place at the company's factory, its registered office, and the directors' homes. CBI teams collected documents and digital evidence for their investigation. Officials said they are now reviewing the materials to determine how far the alleged conspiracy extends, trace the money, and identify everyone involved, including any public servants. NCS Sugars Ltd, which makes sugar in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, has faced financial problems in recent years and has been going through insolvency proceedings since 2022.

The CBI is now investigating PNB credit facilities and



claims that forged documents were used to obtain and move funds.

Bank fraud like this is still a problem for India's public sector banks. Agencies like the CBI often look into cases where borrowers get loans by giving false information, inflating assets, or moving money to related companies. In this case, the complaint mentioned forged docu-

uments and the failure to use the funds for proper business purposes.

CBI officials said the investigation is still in its early stages. They expect the digital evidence to help trace transactions and find any transfers meant to hide how borrowed funds were used. Reviewing the seized records will show if the alleged forgery and fund diversion happened once or are part of a bigger pattern involving more people.

The agency said more action could follow after it finishes analysing the material. No arrests have been made so far. The agency has economic offence cases and says protecting public funds is a top priority. As they continue reviewing documents and digital devices, more information about the alleged conspiracy and the amount of diverted funds should emerge.

■ States Focus ■



FORMER ARMY CHIEF GENERAL VISHWA NATH SHARMA DIES AT 96

Former Army chief General Vishwa Nath Sharma (ret'd) died on Friday at the age of 96, the Indian Army said. General Sharma was the Chief of the Army Staff from June 30, 1988 to June 30, 1990, and saw action as a Major during the 1965 Indo-Pak War in the Lahore Sector. He commanded the Armoured Regiment and held important staff and instructional appointments. Post 1965 war, he was promoted to the rank of Bbrigadier. He commanded a Mountain Brigade in an insurgency-affected area and was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) in 1977 for distinguished service, according to his profile on the Army's website. Later, he commanded an Armoured Brigade in the Rajasthan desert. In 1980, he was elevated to the rank of Major General and commanded a Mountain Division in the Western Sector. (PTI)



GUJARAT ON RED ALERT AS HEAVY RAINS INUNDATE STATE

Gujarat remained in the grip of an intense monsoon spell on Friday as widespread heavy to extremely heavy rainfall triggered red alerts across several districts, inundated cities and towns, disrupted transport and forced authorities to step up emergency measures. The India Meteorological Department (IMD), in its latest nowcast, warned of intense rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and strong winds over large parts of south, central and north Gujarat. Red alerts were issued for several districts, while orange and yellow alerts remained in force across other parts of the state, indicating the likelihood of continued adverse weather over the next few hours. (PNS)

Modi, UK's Burnham pledge to take ties to new heights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Andy Burnham on Friday vowed to take the India-UK comprehensive strategic partnership to "new heights" and fully harness the trade and investment opportunities presented by the recently operationalised bilateral trade deal. Modi and Burnham discussed key aspects of the two-way ties during a phone conversation. In a social media post, Modi said he congratulated Burnham on assuming the charge of the top office and conveyed his best wishes for a successful tenure. "We agreed to work together across sectors such as technology, innovation, defence, security, clean energy, education and people-to-people ties and take the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to new heights," he said. "We will also collaborate closely to fully harness the



trade and investment opportunities presented by the recently operationalized India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, for the shared prosperity and well-being of both our people," Modi said. A British readout said Burnham began the conversation by reflecting on the strength of the UK-India partnership and the significant impact it has had on local communities across the UK. "The prime minister set out his ambitions to further enhance the UK-India relationship, including through the UK-India Vision 2035 framework and strong people-to-people links," it said. Burnham praised the contribution Indian communities in the UK make to the fabric of UK society, with Modi noting the links between the two leaders' own home cities of Manchester and Ahmedabad, in Gujarat, which he called the "Manchester of India", it said. Turning to trade, Modi underlined the value of the recently introduced free trade agreement which will create opportunities for people across both countries, it added.

BJP MPs protest in Parliament, demand CBI probe into alleged JPSC paper leak

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

BJP MPs from Jharkhand on Friday staged a protest in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue at Parliament premises demanding a CBI investigation into the alleged Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) paper leak. The protesting MPs claimed alleged irregularities in recruitment examinations in Jharkhand, accusing the JMM-led Government of jeopardising the future of students, and targeted the Congress for what they termed "double standards" over examination-related issues. Women and Child Development Minister Annpurna Devi alleged that students in Jharkhand have been protesting for the past five days over alleged irregularities in the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) examination and reports of paper leak. "The state Government has entrusted the conduct of these examinations to companies that have been black-listed. Such companies are playing with the future of our youth," she said. Claiming the Congress and their INDIA bloc allies speak selectively on examination-related issues, Devi said,



"They speak about the concerns of students in Delhi, but is Jharkhand not a part of the country? They do not speak about the youth of Jharkhand or their future because their Government is in power there." "Today, all of us MPs who

Anurag Thakur accuses Rahul, Priyanka of fabricated allegations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

BJP MP Anurag Thakur on Friday accused Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra of making "fabricated" allegations in the Lok Sabha in violation of the House rules. He said he has submitted a notice to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seeking action against Gandhi. The former Union minister also accused the opposition parties of insulting the armed forces and the police, alleging that their leaders question military operations, level false allegations against Union Home Minister Amit Shah and use objectionable language in Parliament. Thakur on Thursday submitted a notice of breach of privilege and contempt of the House against Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi for "use of unparliamentary and derogatory language and levelling grave and unsubstantiated allegations" against Home Minister Amit Shah.



Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, BJP MP Anurag Thakur and others during the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday (PTI)

In the three-page notice, Thakur requested Birla to refer the matter to the Privilege Committee for a detailed enquiry and appropriate action, including a direction to Gandhi to tender an unconditional apology to the House as well as to Shah. "We have repeatedly seen that the Congress and some opposition parties never

miss an opportunity to insult the Indian Army and the police. They questioned the airstrikes, surgical strikes and Operation Sindoor, and echoed the language of India's enemies," Thakur told reporters in the Parliament House complex. "It is unfortunate that the Congress leaders use objectionable language inside the House and level fabricated allegations in violation of the rules. I have submitted a notice under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha and urged the Speaker to take action," he said. Thakur said Gandhi made false allegations against the Union Home Ministry, and his party targeted the media and the police. "Rahul Gandhi levels false allegations against the Union Home Ministry. Priyanka Gandhi calls the media 'pet' in the House, while Rahul Gandhi comes outside and says that the media is aligned with the BJP. They also question the country's police," he said.

PM to visit Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, to inaugurate ₹17,900 crore projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka on Saturday, during which he will open a newly constructed international airport and lay the foundation and inaugurate multiple development projects worth more than ₹17,900 crore. Modi will lay the foundation stone for the ASIP semiconductor project at Visakhapatnam, being developed with an investment of more than ₹460 crore. During the day-long trip, the prime minister will first undertake a walk-through of the passenger terminal building of the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram in Andhra Pradesh's Vizianagaram district, an official statement said. He will then inaugurate



the airport and lay the foundation, inaugurate and dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over ₹17,900 crore in Bhogapuram, an official statement said. Modi will also address the gathering on the occasion. In the afternoon, Modi will inaugurate the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Youth Centre — Viveka Smaraka at the Ramakrishna Ashrama in Mysuru, Karnataka, and also address the gathering.

Developed under the public-private partnership (PPP) mode at a cost of more than ₹5,640 crore, the greenfield Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport has been designed to handle six million passengers annually, the statement said. The passenger terminal building has been designed to provide a modern, seamless and efficient travel experience, it said. The airport incorporates advanced infrastructure, cutting-edge tech-

nologies and sustainable features to enhance operational efficiency and meet future aviation requirements. The airport has been equipped with advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), building information modelling (BIM), Airside 4.0 technologies, airport predictive operations centre (APOC), biometric passenger processing, automated baggage handling and operational monitoring solutions, which are expected to enhance operational efficiency, improve passenger convenience and safety, and optimise resource utilisation, the statement said. The terminal has been designed in accordance with the green building standards and is registered with the US Green Building Council (USGBC). The airport's architectural design draws inspiration from the cultural heritage

of Andhra Pradesh, it said. The ASIP semiconductor project at Visakhapatnam is being developed by ASIP Technologies Pvt Ltd in partnership with APACT, Republic of Korea. It is Andhra Pradesh's first semiconductor manufacturing facility approved under the India Semiconductor Mission. The facility will manufacture around 96 million semiconductor chips annually and create high-skilled employment opportunities, while also fostering a robust ancillary ecosystem to support semiconductor manufacturing, the statement said. In Karnataka, the prime minister will inaugurate the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Youth Centre — Viveka Smaraka in Mysuru, which commemorates Vivekananda's historic visit to the city in November 1892 during his journey across India.

India can become global powerhouse in grassroots innovation: President

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said that India has the potential to become a global powerhouse in grassroots innovation by leveraging its vast scale and spirit of innovation. Meeting a group of grassroots innovators of Atal Innovations Mission, who had called on the President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre here, she said that societal changes do not come about through ideas alone and advancing these ideas requires an environment that guides talent and provides appropriate platforms and resources. Murmu emphasised that grassroots innovations are well-suited to society's needs,



as they combine local experience, scientific thinking, and individual creativity with a sense of social responsibility. The President said that India has the potential to become a global powerhouse in grassroots innovation by leveraging its vast scale and spirit of innovation. She said that the dream of Viksit Bharat will be realised when every citizen works with an innovation mindset to find solutions to problems.

Murmu was happy to note that various institutions and citizens are working together with a shared objective, and a culture of innovation is gaining strength. She expressed confidence that the benefits of such efforts will reach a wide cross-section of society. The President said that many innovators persisted in their efforts despite limited resources, uncertainties, and recurring challenges.

21st century will need youth who integrate knowledge across multiple fields: J&K LG

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jammu

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday that the 21st century would belong to young people who can integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines and discover innovative solutions to complex challenges. He made these remarks while inaugurating a series of new academic programmes at Cluster University Jammu. Sinha said the world today demands multidisciplinary thinkers rather than specialists confined to a single subject. "I believe that the 21st century will welcome those young people who are not specialists in just one subject but can integrate knowledge from multiple fields and discover new solutions," he said while addressing a gathering after launching the university's "design your degree" programme and other academic initiatives at Lok Bhawan here. "The future belongs to those who recognise possi-



Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha addresses the inauguration of academic and institutional initiatives of Cluster University of Jammu at Lok Bhavan in Jammu on Friday (PTI)

bilities, not boundaries. This initiative empowers students to shape their own academic journeys, combining subjects according to their interests, talents and aspirations," the Lieutenant Governor said. He said the frontiers of knowledge are expanding and the problems facing society are multidimensional, requiring multidisciplinary approaches for meaningful solutions. Sinha inau-

gurated integrated programmes in physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, mathematics and geography, saying such courses would help develop holistic researchers capable of addressing complex issues. Referring to climate change, he said understanding the issue requires contributions from several disciplines, including chemistry, physics, mathematics and geography.

Housing Ministry asks RERAs to give 4-month extension to projects hit by West Asia conflict

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry on Friday issued an advisory asking all state Real Estate Regulatory Authorities (RERAs) to grant a four-month extension in the registration and completion timelines of eligible real estate projects affected by disruptions arising from the ongoing conflict in West Asia. The ministry, in an advisory issued to all regulatory authorities, said the prevailing situation in West Asia has adversely affected global supply chains, resulting in a shortage of construction materials, thereby impacting the timely construction of the real estate projects. It said the ministry had received several representations from stakeholders in the real estate sector seeking relief in view of the disruptions affecting timely completion of projects. Referring to an Office Memorandum issued by the Department of Expenditure under the Ministry of Finance



on April 29, the advisory noted that the ongoing West Asia situation has been treated as "war" for invocation of the Force Majeure clause. Section 6 of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 provides for extension of registration of a real estate project on account of Force Majeure, which, inter alia, includes "war" affecting the regular development of a real estate project. Further, under Section 7(3) of RERA, the Authority may, instead of revoking the registration, permit it to remain in force subject to such terms and conditions as it considers appropriate in the interest of the allottees, it said.

In view of the Force Majeure conditions arising from the conflict, the ministry has advised regulatory authorities to issue suitable orders extending the registration and corresponding completion timelines of registered real estate projects by four months. The relief would apply to projects whose original, revised or already extended completion date falls on or after February 28, 2026. In order to avoid the need for submission of separate applications for extension of registration of individual real estate projects and issuance of separate orders thereon, state RERAs may issue a common order or direction in this regard.

Punjab Govt committed to freedom fighters' dreams: CM Mann

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Sunam

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday said the AAP Government is firmly committed to fulfilling the dreams of the freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifices for the nation. During a state-level function here to commemorate the 87th martyrdom day of Shaheed Udham Singh, Mann said the legendary revolutionary's unparalleled patriotism and supreme sacrifice would continue to inspire generations to serve the nation selflessly and the nation would forever remain indebted to the iconic martyr. Earlier, the chief minister paid floral tributes and laid a wreath at the memorial in honour of Shaheed Udham Singh. Mann also posted on X to pay tribute to Shaheed Udham Singh. "On the martyrdom day of the great revolutionary Shaheed Udham Singh Ji, who avenged the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, I pay my humble tributes to him. His unparalleled



Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann pays tributes to freedom fighter Shaheed Udham Singh on his 87th Martyrdom Day at his memorial in Sunam, Sangrur district, Punjab on Friday (PTI)

sacrifice for the honour and dignity of the nation will forever remain a great source of inspiration for all of us." Addressing the gathering here, Mann said Shaheed Udham Singh made the supreme sacrifice for the freedom of our country. It was a matter of immense pride and satisfaction for him to be part of the solemn occasion to pay tribute to the iconic martyr, he added.



Editor's
TAKE

Communal violence clouds
Balen Shah's 100-day tenure

Nepal's communal violence tests whether Balen Shah can fulfil his promise of an efficient government capable of restoring order in the Himalayan kingdom

Prime Minister Balen Shah, the rapper-turned- politician recently completed 100-days in office. However, what should have been a cause of celebration was drowned in the noise of communal violence. What began in Kaptanganj in Sunsari, in Nepal on July 26 over religious flags and loud music during separate Hindu and Muslim programmes quickly turned violent. Police firing killed at least one person and the unrest spread into parts of Madhesh Province. By July 30, the death toll had risen to three, with curfews imposed in several districts and the Army deployed to restore order.

Nepal's Terai is a densely interconnected social space where religious, ethnic, caste and political identities overlap. A quarrel over a flag or loudspeaker can become combustible when mistrust is already high. Provocative social-media content, identity-based mobilisation and the perception that the state is slow or partisan can turn a small dispute into a communal confrontation. That is where the 100-day record of Shah's government becomes relevant.

Shah came to power on an anti-establishment mandate, promising clean government, efficiency and rapid reform. His administration has begun anti-corruption investigations, administrative changes and digital-governance initiatives. Yet only about one-third of the government's 100-point agenda had been delivered by the 100-day mark. The violence raises a larger question: can a government promising to reform the state also make the state visibly fair, fast and effective at the grassroots?

The handling of Sunsari will matter beyond restoring order. The Balen Shah government must ensure an impartial investigation, prosecute instigators irrespective of community, scrutinise the use of lethal force and compensate victims. The National Human Rights Commission has already called for an impartial probe and accountability. Appeals for brotherhood will not be enough; equal justice is the only credible antidote to communal fear.

For India, this is not a distant crisis. Sunsari and the wider Madhesh belt lie close to the open India-Nepal frontier, where families, traders and tourists daily cross the border. Instability in Nepal's southern plains can have consequences for border security, trafficking, misinformation and local tensions in adjoining Indian areas. I

New Delhi's response should therefore be firm but restrained: reinforce border vigilance and information-sharing, remain in close contact with Kathmandu, and avoid any perception of interference in Nepal's internal affairs. India has a direct interest in a stable, democratic and inclusive Nepal, but stability cannot be built by taking sides in Nepal's communal politics.

The direction of Nepal now depends on whether this episode becomes a contained warning or the beginning of a pattern. Shah won power as the face of political renewal. His real test is whether that renewal can protect Nepal's tradition of coexistence.

Compensation cannot mend the loss

The NEET protests may have ended but can the death of a young student, driven to suicide by an examination system already tainted by leaks and repeated uncertainty, really be reduced to compensation? The government may call it relief; for grieving families, it risks becoming an unkindest cut—placing a price on lives that should never have been lost



AMITABH SRIVASTAVA

The just ended protests by students at Jantar Mantar ended with a sort of symbolic victory both for students and Government as the Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan was forced to resign and an agreement was signed between the Government and the striking students.

Sonam Wangchuk the unlikely hero who jumped in the protest launched by the Cockroach Janta Party to take out the sting from the protest was turned into Aana Hazare two days before the pact was signed between students and Government.

Among other things, the joint press conference televised by two Ministers of BJP and two leaders of CJP agreed to adequately compensate for the loss of lives due to the NEET paper leakages and reexamination between 2024/2026.

This is the unkindest cut of all to my mind.

All of us should be thankful to the Social Media, for a change this time, for showing live coverage of how the Delhi Police pounced on young unarmed girls with their batons giving them electric shocks here, there everywhere.

If this protest has been indeed an eye-opener, it's not for BJP or CJP but for these gutsy girls brought up on the slogan 'Beti Padhao' 'Beti Bachao' for the last 13 years.

Do they still have that option?

Those of us who have been writing on the education scenario for the last several years have watched with growing distress how young boys and girls, primarily from middle class families in India, have been ending their lives because they could not live up to the expectations of their 'greedy' parents.

Kota with its coaching mafias in Rajasthan takes the lead in catering to this greed (they term it 'dreams' to lure parents). And Bollywood has only glamorised this scenario by making several films on it.

But the compensation promised by the Government on July 25 is only for students who committed suicide in the last two years due to leaks in the NEET examination.

Only!

A little research shows that among the 12 students who committed suicide due to NEET leak in 2024 and re-exam in 2026 around half were girls.

Among those documented from various sources are Akanksha Chaturvedi, (Nagpur), Riya Kumari (23) Dehradun, Sheikh Sana (19), Hyderabad), Anika Pande (17) Delhi, Ruchi



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The writer is a political and social activist

Kumari ((Jharkhand) Bhagyashree (Karnataka) one each from Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Does this government understand what compensation for suicides of young girls means in India where girls continue to be unwelcome even before they are born.

Not for nothing has the Government banned ultrasound tests for pregnancy to check female foeticide, though some clinics continue to perform these tests because even if arrested they have earned enough to last two generations.

Once the girl child is born the first priority of the parents whether rich or poor is arranging for their dowry not education, because even in the year 2026 it's the arranged marriage that gets social acceptance even if it ends with dowry killings showed as suicides.

By the way, the West terms arranged marriages as 'human trafficking' because they cannot understand how two total strangers can decide to spend their entire lives together without dating or knowing each other.

For a girl child in India and more so in 'Bharat' it's always a fight for survival for a girl.

If she does not do well in studies (which means she must take up science and beat the much pampered boys) she should be married off.

But girls have been doing well in sciences for some time.

The percentage of girls joining the Police and IAS may be dismal (less than 13 per cent as mentioned in these columns earlier) but they are competing with boys as far as admissions to engineering courses is concerned (20 per cent). Similarly they have also started excelling in management courses as the results of entrance to IITs and IIMs shows(30/40%).

For medical education for which NEET is held the percentage of girls is as high as 57 per cent.

For the remaining girls who take up Arts or Humanities it's a double whammy. They are looked down upon by their peers and are put up in the marriage market because they are not good enough to become an engineer or a doctor.

Under these circumstances imagine the shock of the grieving parents who had pinned all their hopes and dreams on their daughters because they themselves were either too lazy or incompetent to compete themselves.

When this government talks of compensating for the deaths of these girls it's a huge insult to these parents and the departed souls.

Let's stop this talk before the bargaining begins!

Rage bait: When anger becomes the product



SAKSHI SETHI

2ND
OPINION

Some social media posts are designed neither to inform, entertain nor inspire, but simply to provoke anger.

They are easy to recognise: the sudden surge of indignation, the tightening of the jaw, the thumb already hovering over the reply button.

What often escapes notice in that moment is that the outrage was never accidental. It was the intended outcome, carefully engineered and delivered. The individual's anger was the product.

Rage baiting, the deliberate fabrication of provocative, false or upsetting content to elicit outrage has become one of the internet's quietest yet most potent motors.

The creator may not even believe what has been

posted. What matters is not the belief behind the content, but the reaction it produces: comments, reposts, quote-shares and ultimately, the algorithmic reward that follows.

Young people are especially vulnerable to this economy of outrage. As an educator, I often see students arrive at school already disturbed by something they encountered while scrolling through their phones. They carry a borrowed anger that they cannot fully explain, directed at people or issues they barely understand.

Their vision of the world is increasingly moulded not by what is real, but by what is incendiary. When fury is rewarded online, discipline begins to appear weak and brutality starts disguising as heroism. That is a dangerous curriculum for any child.

The consequences are not merely personal. A society trained to react rather than reflect becomes easier to manipulate and harder to govern.

Rage bait reduces complex questions involving education, faith, gender and public policy to shouting matches in which the loudest voice appears to win. Genuine disagreement is essential to democracy, but meaningful debate is increasingly drowned out by conflict designed merely to attract attention.

We begin to mistake digital noise for national conversation.

What makes rage baiting especially insidious is that

it hides behind our virtues. The instinct to challenge falsehood, defend the vulnerable and speak against injustice is precisely what the rage baiter exploits.

The angrier and more righteous we feel, the more useful we become to someone quietly monetising our attention. The defence is not indifference, but discernment. Before sharing or replying, one should ask: who benefits if I amplify this?

Often, the answer is not the cause we imagine we are supporting, but the person who provoked us.

This is a sort of digital literacy that must be taught purposefully, both in classrooms and at kitchen tables. Children should learn to evaluate the emotional architecture of a post as thoroughly as they examine its words. They must be taught to understand when content is aiming to control their feelings rather than educate their judgment.

We already teach children not to trust a stranger who tries to frighten them on the street. We must now teach them to recognise the stranger who tries to terrify them through a screen.

Anger can drive good social change, but anger that is fake, sold for money and controlled by computers is not true belief. It is a trap used to control us and the first step to freedom is seeing it.

The writer is an educator and councillor

PIC
TALK



Painted storks seen inside an enclosure at Alipore Zoological Garden, in Kolkata. PHOTO: PTI

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INDIA MUST PREPARE FOR
TARIFF HEADWINDS

Reports of a proposed 500 per cent tariff bill in the United States have understandably caused anxiety among Indian exporters and policy observers. If such a measure receives bipartisan backing in the US Congress, its implications could be far more serious than earlier tariff actions imposed through presidential executive authority, which had faced legal challenges.

A congressional statute would enjoy stronger legal standing and would be considerably harder to overturn through judicial review. For India, the concern is not merely the headline tariff rate but the uncertainty it could create for trade, investment and supply-chain planning. Sectors ranging from pharmaceuticals and engineering goods to textiles

and IT-linked services could feel indirect pressure if bilateral economic relations deteriorate.

The possibility of securing relief through a comprehensive India-US free trade agreement or a country-specific waiver appears uncertain in the current political climate.

Given that the present US administration has several years remaining in office, New Delhi must prepare for a prolonged period of strategic economic negotiation. Diversifying export markets, strengthening domestic manufacturing competitiveness and maintaining steady diplomatic engagement with Washington will be essential to navigating this difficult phase. India has the mettle to take on these tariffs, what is required is right policy and execution.

YASHASWI BAIRAGI | UJJAIN

Please send your letter to the info@dailypioneer.com. In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback.

Parliament debates must not be frivolous

Political debate in a democracy is expected to be sharp, even sarcastic, but it should not descend into needless personal ridicule. Citizens are increasingly disillusioned when parliamentary time is consumed by comments aimed at individuals rather than by serious discussion of unemployment, education, healthcare, economic growth and other pressing national concerns. The recent exchange involving remarks about IT Madras Director V Kamakoti illustrates how quickly public discourse can be reduced to mockery instead of substantive engagement.

Kamakoti is not merely a public personality who made a controversial statement; he is also a distinguished computer scientist who has spent decades working on computer architecture, cybersecurity and indigenous processor design. Disagreeing with any of his views is entirely legitimate, but dismissing his academic and professional contributions through laughter or caricature does little to elevate the quality of debate.

Whether criticism is directed at a former prime minister, an opposition leader or a technocrat, arguments should be grounded in facts and reasoned analysis rather than in personal insinuation.

CK SUBRAMANIAM | MUMBAI

Urgent need to preserve indigenous languages

English, Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, Spanish, French and Arabic are the common globally spoken languages. It is estimated that there are about 7500 such languages.

These include both the mother tongue and the second language. While Mandarin Chinese has a large number of native speakers, speaking English is a global imperative.

However, the general consensus, stemmed by researches and studies, is that 90 percent of more than 7000 languages will become extinct by 2050. Globalisation, urbanisation and history have pushed plenty of mother tongues to the wall. When parents tend to shift their focus on dominant or non--native languages, native languages tend to suffer.

Compulsion to speak in a particular language at workplace and migration, of course, are huge factors that determine the longevity of a language: native or non-native. When all this happens, the culture and knowledge deeply embedded in these rare languages take a massive hit.

Governments of the day have the onerous task of buffering and developing an indigenous language without disrespecting the second language.

GANAPATHI BHAT | AKOLA

Ajinkya Rahane leaves a lasting legacy

The retirement of Ajinkya Rahane marks the close of a remarkable chapter in Indian cricket. In an era often dominated by flamboyant personalities and relentless self-promotion, Rahane stood out for his quiet determination, humility and unwavering commitment to the team. Across 85 Tests, 90 One-Day Internationals and 20 T20 Internationals, he scored more than 8,000 international runs and established himself as one of India's most dependable performers in challenging overseas conditions. His 5,077 Test runs and 12 centuries reflect technical excellence, but statistics alone cannot capture his true impact. Rahane's defining moment came during the 2020-21 Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia. Taking over the captaincy under difficult circumstances after India's Adelaide collapse, he led an injury-ravaged side with exceptional composure.

His superb century in Melbourne and his calm, understated leadership were central to India's historic 2-1 series triumph, widely regarded as one of the country's greatest Test achievements abroad. Although his international career concluded in 2023, Rahane's influence will endure. His flawless slip catching, dignified conduct on and off the field, and reassuring presence in the dressing room offered a model of professionalism for younger cricketers.

M PRADYU | KANNUR

From Khadi to fast fashion: The changing face of Indian textiles

As synthetic fibres, chemical pollution and textile waste threaten sustainability, India now faces a crucial choice: preserve its rich textile traditions while embracing innovation, or allow the pursuit of cheap, fast fashion to undermine the ecosystems and livelihoods that have sustained its textile heritage for centuries



BKP SINHA | ARVIND KUMAR JHA

The evolution of Indian textiles, from ancient civilisation to modern times, mirrors the profound political, economic and social transformations that India has undergone—from colonialism and nationalism to industrialisation, economic liberalisation, globalisation and consumerism. Each of these periods has influenced the way textiles are produced, garments are designed and clothing is consumed.

The textile industry has been one of the oldest pillars of India's economy and an enduring symbol of its rich cultural heritage, regional diversity and artisanal craftsmanship. Its origins date back to the Indus Valley Civilisation.

During the Mauryan period, textile production expanded considerably under a more organised administrative system. Cotton remained the dominant raw material for textile production, while linen, silk and woollen fabrics were also produced in different regions of the empire. These textiles were traded extensively within the Indian subcontinent and exported through well-established overland and maritime trade routes to Central Asia, Persia, Egypt and the Mediterranean.

The Gupta Empire further strengthened textile production through improvements in weaving, embroidery, dyeing and decorative techniques. Textile centres in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Kashmir developed distinctive weaving, dyeing, embroidery and printing techniques. Block printing, resist dyeing, ikat, brocade, bandhani and fine silk weaving flourished under royal patronage, and these textiles were exported to Southeast Asia, the Middle East, East Africa and China through maritime trade.

The Mughal Empire marked the golden age of Indian textiles. Royal patronage encouraged the production of luxurious muslin, jamdani, brocade, velvet, silk, pashmina, chintz and richly embroidered fabrics. Textile centres such as Dhaka, Banaras, Ahmedabad, Surat and Kashmir earned global recognition for their textile craftsmanship. Techniques including zari embroidery, gold and silver thread work, block printing, floral motifs and intricate weaving reached exceptional levels of refinement.

The arrival of European trading companies, particularly the Portuguese, Dutch, French and British, further expanded international demand for Indian textiles. By the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Indian cotton, silk fabrics, calicoes, muslins and printed chintz had become some of the most sought-after commodities in global trade. However, the fortunes of India's textile industry changed significantly under British colonial rule. India was gradually reduced from being a leading exporter of finished textiles to a supplier of raw cotton for British industries.

During India's struggle for independence, textiles became powerful symbols of nationalism and self-reliance. The Swadeshi Movement encouraged the use of indigenous products while boycotting imported British textiles. Mahatma Gandhi's emphasis on the spinning wheel (charkha) sought not only to revive rural employment but also to challenge Britain's economic dominance over India's textile trade. Following independence, the Government of India formulated successive Five-Year Plans to promote the expansion and modernisation of textile mills and introduced a range of policies, institutions and development programmes to support and protect the handloom and handicraft sectors.

The opening of the economy in 1991 brought greater exposure to international fashion through global media, organised retail and multinational brands, leading to significant changes in consumer preferences. In the following years, the growth of e-commerce further expanded access to fashionable clothing across different income groups and geographical regions.

As competition intensified, both international and domestic fashion brands adopted shorter production cycles, giving rise to the fast fashion business model. This model significantly increased clothing production and consumption, resulting in greater textile waste and a higher demand for raw materials, water and energy. Today, synthetic fibres such as polyester, nylon and acrylic dominate the fashion industry because they are inexpensive,



durable, wrinkle-resistant and well suited to mass production. However, most synthetic fibres are derived from petroleum, making them dependent on fossil fuels and energy-intensive manufacturing processes that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Unlike natural fibres, they are non-biodegradable and can persist in landfills and the environment for hundreds of years.

In addition, the washing of synthetic garments releases microscopic plastic fibres into rivers, lakes and oceans, where they accumulate in aquatic ecosystems, harm marine life and eventually enter the human food chain.

The textile industry contributes about one-fifth of global water pollution and around one-tenth of global greenhouse gas emissions. If current trends continue, these emissions are expected to rise by more than 50 per cent by 2030. The sector also generates approximately 7,793 kilotonnes of waste annually, of which 3,944 kilotonnes consist of post-consumer textile waste. Although a significant proportion is recovered through reuse and recycling, nearly 34 per cent is still disposed of in landfills.

Several chemicals used in textile dyeing, printing, bleaching, finishing and fabric treatment have been identified as carcinogenic. Prolonged occupational exposure to these hazardous substances through inhalation of chemical vapours and aerosols, or direct skin contact during handling and processing, increases the risk of certain cancers, respiratory diseases, skin disorders and allergic dermatitis, particularly in workplaces where occupational safety measures are inadequate. In several textile-producing regions of India, inadequate treatment or improper disposal of textile effluents has contaminated water, soil and, in some cases, the surrounding air, posing risks to ecosystems and nearby communities.

The industry's water footprint is equally alarming. Producing a single cotton T-shirt requires approximately 2,700 litres of water, while a pair of cotton jeans requires about 9,000-10,000 litres. Cotton cultivation consumes nearly 25,000 litres of water per kilogram of fibre, and textile dyeing and finishing require an additional 125-150 litres per kilogram of fabric.

Today, nearly 95 per cent of cotton cultivated in India is genetically modified Bt cotton. However, its widespread cultivation has raised concerns about pest resistance, rising input costs, increased reliance on chemical inputs to manage secondary pests, biodiversity loss and the growing economic vulnerability of smallholder farmers, particularly in rain-fed regions.

Addressing these challenges requires rethinking the way textiles are produced, consumed and discarded. A shift towards resource-efficient production, cleaner technologies and circular economy principles is essential to reducing the industry's environmental footprint. Equally important is encouraging consumers to make more informed and responsible purchasing choices. Extending the lifespan of garments through repair, reuse and recycling can further minimise waste and conserve natural resources.

Innovation in sustainable materials, cleaner production technologies and effective waste management will also play a vital role in reducing the industry's environmental footprint. Stronger environmental regulations and their effective enforcement are equally essential to ensure compliance with sustainable production practices. Alongside these environmental measures, preserving traditional textile crafts and supporting artisans is important for safeguarding India's cultural heritage and sustaining rural livelihoods. Ultimately, achieving a more sustainable and equitable future depends on the collective commitment of all stakeholders. The question is not whether fashion will continue to evolve, but whether that evolution will be guided by sustainability or driven by folly.

BKP Sinha & Arvind Kumar Jha are Former PCCFs, UP and Maharashtra

A SHIFT TOWARDS RESOURCE-EFFICIENT PRODUCTION, CLEANER TECHNOLOGIES AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRINCIPLES IS ESSENTIAL TO REDUCING THE INDUSTRY'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT. EQUALLY IMPORTANT IS ENCOURAGING CONSUMERS TO MAKE MORE INFORMED AND RESPONSIBLE PURCHASING CHOICES

Animal cruelty: Who deserves mercy, and who doesn't?



ACHARYA PRASHANT

Where does the violence actually lie? This summer in London, I discussed the genesis of violence with Professor Jonathan Birch at the London School of Economics, with Mimi Bekhechi and Poorva Joshipura of PETA, and with Psychologist Melanie Joy.

On the twenty-sixth of June, I spoke at the London School of Economics, in conversation with Professor Jonathan Birch, as part of London Climate Action Week. Professor Birch directs the Jeremy Collier Centre for Animal Sentience there. In 2021 he led the review of the evidence for sentience in invertebrates that shaped the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act, and octopuses, squid, cuttlefish, crabs, lobsters and shrimps are recognised in British law today because of his work. I congratulated him on his work, and I meant it. Then I asked him about the 'dividing line'.

I meant that a line that is drawn to include is, at the same instant and with exactly the same precision, a line that excludes. Once it has been established with academic confidence and legislative authority which beings are sentient, it has been established with equal confidence which beings are not. Those on the far side are no longer merely neglected. They have been formally released for use, and the release carries a scientific signature.

Jeremy Bentham asked the question that has organised this entire field: not whether they can reason or talk, but whether they can suffer. Why is the ego so interested in whether they suffer? By ego I do not mean pride or arrogance. I mean the continuous feeling of I-am-ness, the one who says 'I'. The default position is denial of sentience, and proof is demanded before the default will change, because denial is profitable. Yet no owner of a dog asks for evidence that the animal on the sofa has an inner life. So it is not proof that sets the boundary. Intent sets the boundary, and proof is fetched afterwards to hold it in place.

Protection is currently extended based on kinship: find in that creature a self resembling the self inside you, and consideration follows. But the ego in here, the one performing all this measurement, has never been put to the test. If that self should turn out to be a claim rather than a fact, the entire basis of protection collapses, because the reason for kindness was resemblance to something that was never there.

Bull-baiting and bear-baiting were made illegal in Britain by the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1835. Suppression had first been put to the Commons in 1802 and lost by thirteen votes. The bulls and bears of England died for another thirty-three years while the question sat in Parliament. The objectors did not argue that baiting was painless.

They conceded the cruelty and refused the bill anyway, on the ground that baiting was the entertainment of labourers and factory hands, while fox hunting was the entertainment of gentlemen and was not being touched. So for three decades the bulls were held in the ring by a quarrel between men about which men could keep their pleasures. The animal was never what the quarrel was about.

Nothing in the two centuries since suggests the pattern has broken. Animal welfare legislation has multiplied across the world, and across the same period the rate at which species go extinct has risen to something like a hundred times the natural rate, while meat consumed per person stands many times higher than it did before any of these laws existed. A law is drafted where love has already failed. And the ego that raises a regulatory wall in the morning knows better than anyone where that wall can be climbed at night, having built it.

At the PETA offices, a woman asked how to reconcile the kindness of her friends and family with the fact that they eat animals. Do not grant them the kindness. To say that a person is good in nine areas of life and unfortunate in the tenth is to hand him a score he will happily accept and never revisit. He will keep the goat as his one permitted exception and consider the account settled. What has actually been practised, at the table, three times a day for a lifetime, is not cruelty; it is inattention. And inattention is never object-specific. Whoever does not see what is on his plate does not see what is in the rest of his life either.

Speaking with Melanie Joy, I put it as a matter of geometry. Compassion is generally imagined as a circle to be widened. The radius grows. The centre never moves. The circle is not there to include; the one sitting at its centre is the violent one, and the circle exists to defend him. To care for everybody, you must be nobody. And the ego has no intention of being nobody.

I do not talk about being kind to animals. I talk about where violence actually lies. It is not in the knife, nor in the slaughterhouse, nor on the plate. Those are the last stages of something that began much earlier, somewhere quieter, in a person who had already stopped looking at himself and found that the practice served him. Around 2012, I was keeping a rabbit in my study. She had come from a rescue with insufficient fur on her hind legs, so the skin would open and bleed if she tried to play with the others. She stayed with me. When the doctors advised euthanasia, I declined. She lived some years more and died in my arms. If a relationship of mine ever required me to give that rabbit up, I would give up the relationship. A relationship that could ask that of me was never worth what I had taken it for, and the rabbit is simply what made the fact visible.

The food plate is available three times a day, every day, which makes it the most frequent examination a human being is ever offered, and the one most reliably declined. When the one at the table sees where the violence actually lies, the plate cleans itself. He does not have to repair the world; he has only to stop being the one who breaks it.



Acharya Prashant is a philosopher and author whose work centres on self-inquiry and its application to contemporary life

A political assault on faith



ASHISH KUMAR PATHAK

On 31 July 2026, the scene that unfolded in the Parliament complex involving Independent MP Pappu Yadav, Rahul Gandhi, and other opposition leaders marked a low point in political discourse. Dressed in saffron robes as a sadhu-priest and seated with a donation box, Pappu Yadav enacted a theatrical skit in which Rahul Gandhi and others symbolically offered donations while he pocketed the money and pretended to flee. Slogans such as "Chadhawa Chor, Gaddi Chhod" were raised. What was presented as a protest crossed into a deliberate attempt to target the priest, the saffron symbol, and the Ram Mandir itself. This was not a mere political protest—it was a calculated political gimmick that amounted to a direct assault on Sanatan Dharma.

The Ram Mandir donation theft is a serious matter. A few lower-level employees allegedly engaged in embezzlement during the counting process. The SIT investigation was initiated on the complaint of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust itself. Eight people have been arrested, around ₹80 lakh has been recovered, and the probe continues. The guilty must

face the full force of the law—there can be no disagreement on this. Yet Pappu Yadav, Rahul Gandhi, and SP leaders converted the incident into an opportunity to attack the temple, its priests, and the larger Sanatan tradition. Staging a street-theatre-style skit inside the Parliament complex by dressing as a priest and enacting a theft represented the height of political vulgarity and cheap theatrics.

Faith, saffron and the dignity of the temple

In the Sanatan tradition, sadhus and priests are regarded as representatives of the divine. The saffron colour stands for renunciation, austerity, and spiritual purity. The Ram Mandir itself is the culmination of five centuries of struggle and sacrifice. Crores of devotees have offered their savings as chadhawa with deep devotion. When Pappu Yadav enacted a thieving priest and Rahul Gandhi joined the skit, they insulted the sentiments of millions of Ram Bhakts. By dressing as a priest and enacting theft, the leaders crossed the Lakshman Rekha of political propriety.

This episode reveals a deeper mindset. Sections of the opposition have never fully reconciled themselves to the construction of the Ram Mandir. Using the theft case as a pretext, they appear determined to cast aspersions on the temple, the Trust, and the saffron symbol. The viral visual of Rahul Gandhi offering a donation and Pappu Yadav pocketing it has caused widespread hurt. Was it necessary to mock faith in



the name of accountability? Was dressing as a saffron-clad priest the only way to demand answers on the alleged embezzlement? The real target, it is increasingly clear, was never the individual wrongdoers but the institution of the Ram Mandir and the faith it represents. Using a genuine case of embezzlement to target the Ram Mandir and saffron amounts to hitting below the belt.

As actor Anupam Kher rightly observed, thieves exist everywhere, yet that does not diminish the dignity of a temple. One punishes the culprit; one does not indict the faith. The opposition, however, has chosen the opposite path—

projecting the crime of a few staff members onto the priestly class and the saffron flag itself. In doing so, it has insulted the core values of service, devotion, and sacrifice that Sanatan Dharma upholds.

Parliament as a stage for cheap theatrics

The July 31 episode also raises serious questions about the dignity of Parliament. Turning the complex into a circus for political point-scoring diminishes the dignity of the institution. A serious discussion inside the House, a demand for the SIT report, and insistence on accountability

ity would have been the appropriate course. Instead, the preference for gimmicks suggests that the objective was less about justice and more about targeting the Ram Mandir. The viral visual of the skit may ultimately prove to be a political self-goal.

The larger message for the opposition

Sanatan faith does not get shaken by such insults. The Ram Mandir remains a powerful cultural and spiritual identity of India. When political leaders choose to mock symbols of faith, they are playing with fire. Faith cannot be reduced to a political football for short-term gains. The 31 July drama by Pappu Yadav, Rahul Gandhi, and the Samajwadi Party has exposed the true colours of a section of the opposition on matters of faith.

The time has come for the opposition to recognise its limits. Respect for faith and the separation of politics from sacred symbols are essential. Those who target the Ram Mandir risk pushing themselves to the margins of public sentiment. Sanatan is eternal; those who repeatedly insult it will eventually have to answer to the people.

The issue was theft. The response, however, turned into an assault on the priest, saffron, and the faith itself. That is the real takeaway from the events of July 31.

The writer is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Banaras Hindu University and writes on current affairs and social issues



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Order Order

Govt rejects legal changes for CAG recommendations



The Government on Friday told the Lok Sabha that there is no proposal to amend the law to effectively implement recommendations of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) across ministries and States.

In a written reply, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal also said measures have been taken to improve legal compliance and accountability regarding the audit findings of the principal auditor.

He said in the last five years, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered one case on the basis of CAG Report No 7 of 2012-2013 regarding performance audit of allocation of coal blocks and augmentation of coal production. "Upon completion of investigation, a closure report was filed on March 31, 2025, in the competent court," he noted. (PTI)

Supreme Court stays CIC order on NSEI RTI status



The Supreme Court on Friday stayed an order of the Central Information Commission which held that the National Stock Exchange of India (NSEI) is a 'public authority' under the Right to Information Act.

A bench of justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta agreed to hear a petition filed by the NSEI and sought responses from the Central Information Commission and others within four weeks.

The NSEI challenged the July 1 verdict of a division bench of the Delhi High Court.

The high court's division bench had dismissed the NSEI's appeal against its single judge's April 2010 decision which ruled that NSEI qualified as a 'public authority' under section 2(h) of the RTI Act.

The stock exchange had challenged the June 2007 CIC order before the single judge and asserted that it was not a 'public authority' under the RTI Act.

Citizens can enforce their right to ask for information only from a 'public authority' under the RTI Act.

The high court's division bench had observed that if the body is owned, controlled or substantially financed by the appropriate Government, it would qualify as a 'public authority'.

"The single judge holds, in the impugned judgment, that the NSEI is controlled by the appropriate Government, and we agree," the division bench had said. (PTI)

Muslims offer *namaz* at site near Bhojshala complex

A day after the Supreme Court granted permission, Muslims offered prayers on Friday at a site near the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula complex in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh amid heavy deployment of police personnel.

The arrangements for the *namaz* at the site, survey number 612, near Bhojshala was selected by the Muslim community leaders during a meeting with the district administration.

A good number of devotees turned up for the Friday *namaz* for the first time after the Madhya Pradesh High Court ruled in May that the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Mosque complex was a temple dedicated to Goddess Saraswati. The Supreme Court on Thursday permitted Muslims to offer Friday prayers at the premises of a *dargah* adjacent to the disput-

SC stays arrest of DMK leader Senthil Balaji

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

In a major relief to DMK leader and former minister V Senthil Balaji, the Supreme Court on Friday granted him anticipatory bail till further orders in a fresh corruption case lodged against him by the Tamil Nadu Government.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi stayed his arrest with certain conditions — that he will cooperate with the investigation, deposit his passport and not influence any witnesses and tamper with evidence.

"You immediately come to us even if there is slightest breach in bail conditions. We will modify or cancel our orders," Justice Bagchi told senior advocate Guru Krishnakumar, appearing for the Tamil Nadu Government.

The case, pertaining to alleged irregularities in the Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAC) saw fast paced twist and turns in last couple of days.

On Thursday, the Madras High Court dismissed his pre-arrest bail plea saying his custodial interrogation was needed. Within a couple of hours, a battery of senior lawyers led by Kapil Sibal mentioned the appeal against the denial of bail before the apex court for urgent hearing.

The top court took the plea and listed it for hearing on Friday, when Justice Mohana recused herself from hearing. The petition was taken up for hearing during the day by a bench headed by CJI owing to the urgency. During the hearing, the Chief Justice asked Krishnkumar, why Balaji's custodial interrogation was needed as the case was largely based on documentary evidence.

The senior counsel replied that the allegations pertain to the incident of 2021-25 and Balaji prevented the registration of the FIR as he was then a minister and therefore he cannot get a blanket protection from the court.

Sibal along with senior



counsels Mukul Rohatgi and Amit Anand Tiwari, appearing for Balaji submitted that it was a "strange case" as the FIR was filed on July 28 after the new TVK Government led by Chief Minister Joseph Vijay came to power, based on an affidavit filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in another case.

"The events they say are of 2021-25. There's an affidavit filed by ED in 2025 in this court. The person who filed the affidavit has now turned as the Government has come into existence. FIR filed on July 28 relying on that affidavit," he submitted.

Justice Bagchi then pointed out that he was no longer a minister and the state Government was not under his influence and the court will ensure that he does not run away from the investigation and influence the witnesses.

Krishnakumar further submitted that it was a case of grave corruption and anticipatory bail was not warranted.

He pointed out Balaji's antecedents, saying that the top court has also earlier adversely commented on his conduct in the case.

The top court issued notice

to Tamil Nadu Government on the plea and said the Government can approach the court, if his custodial interrogation was needed in the case. The bench observed that these are all political matters and ordered that subject to Balaji joining the investigation in the case, his arrest shall be stayed till further orders in the FIR registered on July 28.

It posted the matter for further hearing after three weeks. The high court had dismissed the anticipatory bail petition of Balaji in the FIR lodged by the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) in the TASMAC scam case, Balaji represents Coimbatore South in the Tamil Nadu assembly.

According to the FIR, a large-scale scam took place in TASMAC in the allotment of shops and bars.

Balaji alleged that the FIR quoted verbatim the ED's affidavit and the petition the agency filed before the Supreme Court.

In fact, the FIR itself at

various places says that it is from the counter affidavit and petition of the ED, the plea said.

The FIR details a systematic cash-kickback scheme involving tens of crores, where bottle supply companies generated bogus or inflated invoices for distilleries. The DVAC in its FIR said that Balaji entered into a criminal conspiracy to manipulate TASMAC's functioning by rigging bar and transport tenders, favouring a few select liquor manufacturers, resulting in overpricing of liquor, and causing financial loss to the public exchequer. The DVAC registered an FIR against seven accused.

The FIR against Balaji, former TASMAC managing director S Visakan and five others was for alleged misappropriation, manipulation of procurement and tender processes in allotting bar licences, transport tenders, and bogus and inflated transactions by certain distilleries and bottling firms.

SC orders aid for Indian families affected by Russia-Ukraine war

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Centre to appoint a nodal officer in the external affairs ministry to coordinate with the families of those who have died, gone missing, or suffered injuries while fighting in the Russia-Ukraine war.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana also directed the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to facilitate DNA matching of family members with the mortal remains.

The bench was hearing a plea pertaining to Indian nationals recruited into the Russian military after being allegedly duped by travel agents. The plea seeks return of mortal remains, compensation and a coordinated mechanism for affected families.

The bench heard submissions of the counsel for the petitioner and Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya



Bhati, on behalf of the Centre and passed a slew of directions. "The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) shall notify an official as the nodal officer whose details and contact number be shared with the family members of Indian nationals who had gone to Russia... and died or injured," the bench said.

It asked the MEA to arrange for the DNA tests of family members of the dead and upon matching, ensure handing over of the mortal remains. It also asked the ministry to ensure that bereaved families are provided with the details of documents

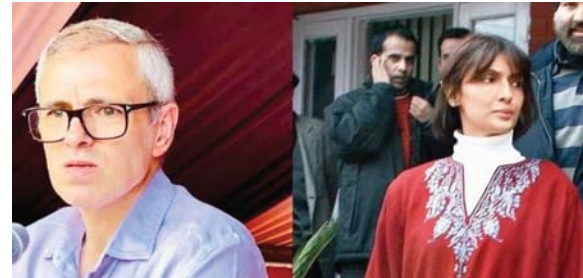
needed for claiming compensation from the Russian Government. It directed the MEA to provide all relevant information and updates in vernacular language. The bench asked the ministry to deal expeditiously with the cases pertaining to handing over the mortal remains to the families for conducting last rites.

It also directed the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and state legal services to extend assistance to the families in securing the mortal remains of their relatives and pursuing compensation claims.

SC agrees to dissolve J&K CM marriage with estranged wife

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to dissolve the marriage of Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah with his estranged wife Payal Abdullah after taking note of their submissions that they have "embraced freedom".



The apex court took note of the submissions of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the National Conference leader, that an application has been filed under Article 142 of the Constitution seeking dissolution of marriage as the parties have settled the matter. "We will make it a part of our order and will dispose of it in terms of that," a bench of justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe said. The bench will pass a formal order.

"Both of them have embraced freedom. It's all settled. (Article) 142 filed.

Your lordships may grant divorce," Sibal told the bench. "When did this application come on record?" the bench asked. It was informed that the application was filed on July 22.

"All other matters will be withdrawn. It is all set out (in the application)," Sibal said. The bench was hearing two pleas, including the one filed by Omar Abdullah seeking divorce on the grounds of cruelty.

In July 2024, the apex court had sought response from Payal Abdullah on Omar Abdullah's plea challenging an order of the

Delhi High Court. On December 12, 2023, the high court dismissed Omar Abdullah's plea seeking a divorce, saying there was no merit in his appeal. The high court upheld the 2016 family court order refusing to grant a decree of divorce to him.

On August 30, 2016, the family court dismissed Omar Abdullah's plea, holding that he could not prove his claims of "cruelty" or "desertion" which were the grounds alleged by him for seeking a decree of divorce.

Recruitment irregularities hit constitutional mandate: Karnataka HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bengaluru

The Karnataka High Court has observed that allegations of large-scale irregularities in the KPSC recruitment of 400 Veterinary Officers, if ultimately established, would amount to "not sporadic irregularities, but a systematic assault upon the constitutional mandate governing public employment."

The bench sought the Karnataka Government's response on a plea to transfer the probe to the CBI during the hearing on July 29.

Hearing a petition filed by Manjunath, Justice M Nagaprasanna observed that recruitment to public office is the gateway through which the constitutional promise of equality of opportunity under Article 16 finds practical expression and that if the process becomes susceptible to "manipulation, favouritism or

pecuniary influence", the casualty is not merely the unsuccessful candidate but also the credibility of every public institution entrusted with selecting the best candidates.

Appearing for the petitioner, advocate Girish Bharadwaj contended that permitting the investigation to remain with the Crime Investigation Department (CID) would be futile in view of the magnitude of the alleged recruitment scam and argued that public confidence could be restored only if the investigation was entrusted to the CBI. The court noted that the complaint alleged the recruitment process was not merely marred by isolated irregularities but was "thoroughly contaminated by an organised design to subvert merit itself".

It referred to allegations that candidates with outstanding academic credentials were left out of the select list while several others with comparatively weaker academic



records secured unusually high marks, raising grave suspicion over the fairness of the selection process.

The order further recorded allegations that certain candidates had access to confidential examination material before the test, that OMR answer sheets were subsequently manipulated, and that middlemen had promised appointments in exchange for large sums of money.

It observed that, if the allegations

withstand judicial scrutiny, they would disclose a systematic attack on the integrity of public recruitment rather than isolated irregularities. The High Court directed the Special Public Prosecutor to explain why the investigation, presently entrusted to the CID, should not instead be transferred to the CBI, particularly in the backdrop of the petitioner's allegation that previous CID investigations in matters of con-

siderable public importance had failed to inspire confidence in the fairness and completeness of the investigative process.

The court directed the respondents to file their objections by August 7 and ordered that the entire investigation record and all material collected so far be placed before it on the next date of hearing. It also directed that no coercive action be taken against the petitioner in connection with the subject crime until then.

The matter has been posted for further hearing on August 7.

The Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) has been in turmoil following Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot suspending its Chairman Shivashankarappa S Sahukar on July 13, following allegations that he allegedly facilitated the illegal selection of his two daughters as Industrial Extension Officers.

SC seeks Centre's response on plea to declare polygamy among Muslims as unconstitutional

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday sought the Centre's response on a plea to declare the practice of polygamy among Muslims as unconstitutional for being violative of constitutional provisions.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana issued notice to the Centre on a petition filed by women's rights activists Zakia Soman and Noorjehan Safia Niaz and others. The bench tagged the plea with pending matters.

The plea sought direction for applying Section 82 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) which punishes bigamy uniformly and by removing any exemptions under the Muslim Personal Law. It sought directions to the Centre to take legislative



steps to abolish the practice of polygamy and ensure it is treated as void ab initio (invalid from the outset) for all citizens regardless of religion. Besides seeking several other directions for the legal rights and protection of Muslim women, the plea also sought directions for the compulsory registration of all Muslim marriages and divorces with the State authorities to prevent secret subsequent marriages.

The petition also seeks an immediate right to the matrimonial home for the first wife and children and a fast-track mechanism for maintenance in cases involving polygamous marriages.

"The present writ petition is filed under Article 32 of the Constitution of India in the public interest to protect the fundamental rights of Muslim women," it said.

The plea filed through advocate Shriya Maini challenged the constitutional validity of Section 2 of the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, as it recognises and validates the practice of polygamy, creating a legal vacuum where Muslim women are denied the protection against bigamy available to all other citizens under Section 82 of the BNS.

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BUSINESS11

Gold rises on retail buying by ₹300, silver remains flat

Gold prices rose by ₹300 to ₹1,48,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday due to buying from retailers and jewellers, local traders said.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at ₹1,48,000 per 10 grams in the preceding session.

Silver remained flat at ₹2,24,700 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes). Traders said continuous purchases by retailers and jewellers supported domestic gold prices despite weak global prices, while silver traded in a narrow range. In the international markets, spot gold slipped \$48.28, or 1.18 per cent, to \$4,055.56 per ounce and silver dropped nearly 2 per cent to \$57.98 an ounce. "Spot gold is easing back from Thursday's highs, slipping below \$4,060 per ounce as the dollar claws back ground, while silver has cooled too, hovering near \$58," said Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research, Kotak Securities. According to analysts, the rebound in the crude oil prices, also curbed investors' appetite for precious metals in the overseas markets.

(PTI)

Major transformation in ESIC soon: Mandaviya

Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday said that good hospitals in the private sector will be designated as ESIC hospitals as the Government plans to bring a major transformation in the Employees' State Insurance Corporation. ESIC provides health insurance as well as medical facilities at its hospitals and dispensaries across the country to insured persons and their dependents.

"We are going to bring a major transformation in the ESIC. If there are good hospitals in the private sector, I will designate them as ESIC hospitals," Union Minister for Labour and Employment Mansukh Mandaviya said on Friday. The minister was speaking at the FICCI-AIOE Global Industrial Relations Summit in the national capital.

Mandaviya said the Government will consider any suggestions offered by stakeholders in this direction.

Addressing the participants, the minister further said that India's social protection systems now cover about 101 crore people, or 68.8 per cent of the population. This number will increase in the times to come, Mandaviya added.

(PTI)

Cabinet approves offshore exploration scheme

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Friday approved the ₹84,084-crore "Samudra Manthan" National Offshore Exploration Scheme to partly fund the high cost of finding oil and gas in deepwater areas, drilling exploratory wells and building common infrastructure to bring new discoveries into production.

Under the scheme, the Government will provide support of up to ₹650 crore for each well drilled in deepsea and ultra-deepsea areas, officials said, as part of efforts to boost domestic oil and gas output and reduce reliance on imports.

More than half of the scheme's total outlay, or ₹43,200 crore, will be allocated over five years through 2031 to support deepsea drilling, an activity involving high costs and significant geological risks as not every exploratory well results in a commercial discovery.

Another ₹10,000 crore has been earmarked to partially fund common infrastructure needed to bring discovered oil and gas reserves into production. The scheme also provides ₹28,534 crore for offshore data acquisition and ₹2,000 crore for developing oil and gas manufacturing and services zones.

Drilling in ultra-deepwater areas, where water depths exceed 1,500 metres, can cost between \$100 million (about ₹950 crore) and \$250 million (around ₹2,400 crore) per well, with no certainty that the investment will result in a discovery or contribute to higher domestic production.

The Government expects the scheme to accelerate exploration in offshore basins, attract investment and help unlock India's offshore hydrocarbon potential, according to an official statement.

India's reliance on imported crude oil, the key raw material used to produce fuels such as petrol and diesel, has increased over the past decade from 77 per cent to 88 per cent. The country also imports around half of its natural gas requirements, which is used in sectors including fertiliser production, power generation, compressed natural gas (CNG) for vehicles and piped cooking gas supplies to households.

The recent conflict in West Asia, which disrupted energy supplies, highlighted the vulnerability of import-dependent economies and renewed focus on strengthening domestic production capacity. "The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved 'Samudra Manthan' - the National Offshore Exploration Scheme, a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas with an approved outlay of ₹84,084 crore for implementation up to FY 2030-31," the statement said.

The scheme aims to step up exploration in deepwater and ultra-deepwater areas through large-scale seismic surveys, exploratory drilling, scientific drilling in frontier basins and the development of common offshore production and evacuation infrastructure.

The programme also provides for the creation of an integrated oil and gas manufacturing and services zone, along with investments in digital programme management, technology adoption, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and international collaboration to support offshore exploration and production, it said.

India's oil and gas output has been under pressure due to the natural decline of ageing fields, while limited investment in frontier basins with potential for fresh discoveries has constrained production growth. Against this backdrop, the Government has allocated funds for a five-year programme through FY2030-31 to accelerate offshore exploration and develop supporting infrastructure. The scheme is aimed at supporting seismic surveys, deepwater and ultra-

deeper drilling, exploration in frontier basins and the creation of common offshore production and evacuation facilities.

The Government expects the scheme to help discover more than 600 million tonnes of oil equivalent (MMTOE) of hydrocarbon reserves, increase domestic oil and gas production, generate employment, strengthen domestic manufacturing and attract investments across the exploration and production value chain.

The approval builds on a series of upstream sector reforms undertaken over the past decade, including opening almost the entire offshore acreage for exploration, modernising the legislative and contractual framework and strengthening the

National Data Repository.

The Government said the scheme would accelerate offshore exploration through strategic public investment, advanced technologies and common infrastructure as India seeks to reduce its reliance on imported oil and gas and improve long-term energy security.

The scheme was first outlined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address in 2025, when he called for a modern-day 'Samudra Manthan' to unlock India's offshore energy resources.

India has overhauled its oil and gas exploration policy three times since 1997, moving away from Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) that let companies recover costs before

splitting profits with the Government, toward a system based on revenue sharing and exploration commitments.

The Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP), adopted in 2016, replaced PSCs with Revenue Sharing Contracts (RSCs), under which the Government's take is based on gross revenue rather than costs, eliminating cost-recovery disputes. HELP also introduced the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), letting companies propose blocks year-round instead of waiting for bid rounds, along with a uniform licence, and marketing and pricing freedom.

The Government later introduced a hybrid model to boost exploration in under-commercialised basins: unexplored areas within producing basins are still bid out on a revenue-sharing basis but with greater weight given to companies' proposed work programmes, while blocks in basins with no commercial production are awarded purely on work commitments, with no revenue share to the Government beyond royalties.

The framework was consolidated under the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025, which took effect in April, delinking petroleum operations from mining law and introducing a single petroleum lease, graded royalties and legal stability provisions — underpinning the 50 new exploration blocks the Government put up for bidding across OALP, small-field and coal-bed-methane rounds in December 2025.

PMSSY scheme for floating solar projects with storage systems gets Cabinet nod

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Government on Friday approved Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY) for development of floating solar photovoltaic projects with energy storage systems with a total outlay of ₹5,070 crore, an official statement said.

The scheme envisages the development of 5,000 MW of Floating Solar Photovoltaic projects with co-located Energy Storage Systems having a minimum storage capacity of two hours, i.e., 10,000 MWh, the statement said.

The projects will be sanctioned during FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, with disbursement of financial support continuing up to FY 2032-33.

"The Union Cabinet

chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi today approved the 'Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY)', a Scheme for the development of Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) Projects with Energy Storage Systems (ESS) with a total outlay of ₹5,070 crore," the official statement said.

The approval follows the recent assessment under-

taken by the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), which has estimated a floating solar potential of approximately 102.18 GWp across reservoirs and other suitable inland water bodies in the country.

Under the scheme, Central Financial Assistance (CFA) of ₹1 crore per MW will be provided for eligible Floating Solar Photovoltaic

projects after successful commissioning.

In addition, CFA of up to ₹50 lakh per project will be available for undertaking feasibility studies, including bathymetry and hydrography assessments, environmental studies, and other preparatory activities required for de-risking the project development.

All States and Union Territories will benefit through this scheme. The scheme would enhance the floating Solar PV capacity in the country by 5,000 MW, which is presently around 700 MW only.

These projects would provide an opportunity to gainfully utilise existing reservoirs & industrial ponds, and eliminate competition for scarce land resources.

RBI asks banks to install fake currency detection machines

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Reserve Bank on Friday directed banks to ensure that their branches in the districts with international borders are equipped with note authentication/sorting machines, as it found that efforts of some of the lenders were not adequate for the detection of counterfeit currency. The central bank, through a master direction issued in April, prescribed comprehensive instructions to the banks on detection, reporting, and monitoring of counterfeit notes.

The banks are mandated to train all their employees handling cash about the security features of genuine banknotes to enable them for detecting counterfeit notes.

Further, all banknotes received by the bank shall be examined for authenticity through machines, counterfeit notes should be

impounded in all cases, and in no case the counterfeit note shall be returned to the tenderer or destroyed at the bank. All detected Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICNs) has also to be reported, as per prescribed guidelines.

"However, an analysis by

Small aluminium manufacturers hit by high cost of raw materials

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Import parity pricing of primary metal raises raw material costs for entrepreneurs in the domestic downstream aluminium sector, squeezing their margins and hurting manufacturing competitiveness, according to a report.

Despite being the world's second-largest producer of primary aluminium with an installed capacity of over 4.16 million tonnes annually, the country's nearly 3,500 downstream and secondary aluminium units — mostly micro,

small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) — face significant structural disadvantages, said the report by public policy think tank Policy Consensus Centre.

The report said these enterprises provide almost 90 per cent of employment across the aluminium value chain and supply critical inputs to sectors, including power transmission, renewable energy, railways, electric vehicles, construction and engineering.

One of the most significant challenges for MSMEs, the study said, is 7.5 per cent basic customs duty (BCD), along with the applicable

social welfare surcharge, on primary aluminium.

"Domestic primary producers

price aluminium on an import parity basis by incorporating customs duties into domestic prices, resulting in downstream manufacturers paying import-equivalent prices even when sourcing metal produced within India," it said.

This pricing mechanism, it said, substantially raises raw material costs, compresses already-thin operating margins, and weakens the competitiveness of India's value-added manufacturing sector.

The report also pointed to an inverted duty structure that places

a higher tariff burden on primary aluminium than on several finished aluminium products. Simultaneously, free trade agreements with ASEAN, Japan and South Korea allow many finished aluminium products to enter India at concessional or zero duty rates, intensifying competitive pressure on domestic MSMEs.

The report suggested a phased, time-bound reduction of the BCD on primary aluminium to zero, supported by targeted energy cost compensation measures for primary producers to ensure a balanced transition.

Stock markets extend rally to 3rd day; Bajaj Finance surges over 8%

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rose for the third consecutive day on Friday to close at a more than three-week high, tracking a sharp rally in Bajaj Finance and foreign fund inflows. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 166.49 points, or 0.21 per cent, to settle at over three-week high of 78,094.64 with 16 of its constituents closing higher and 14 with losses. During the day, it jumped 344.1 points, or 0.44 per cent, to 78,272.25.

The 50-share NSE Nifty gained 66.45 points, or 0.27 per cent, to end at a three-week high of 24,383.60.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj

Finance jumped 8.11 per cent after the firm on Thursday reported a 28 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to ₹6,081 crore for the June quarter of FY27, driven by growth in core income and improvement in asset quality.

Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Reliance Industries, Bharat Electronics and Titan were also among the winners.

Tata Consultancy Services, Eternal, Infosys, ITC and InterGlobe Aviation were among the major laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹3,623.51 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

"Positive momentum contin-

ued, although some profit booking emerged at higher levels as caution persisted amid elevated yields and potential rate-hike concerns. The sustainability of the recovery will depend largely on the ongoing earnings season, which is currently outperforming forecasts, and on a reduction in global risks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The domestic IT index witnessed profit booking following its recent rally, he added.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, climbed 0.45 per cent to \$89.43 per barrel.

"Indian equity markets ended higher on a resilient note, brushing aside geopolitical concerns as strong corporate earnings and

Index	Open	High	Low	Previous Close	Close
NSE NIFTY	24,361.45	24,429.40	24,299.70	24,317.15	24,383.60
BSE SENSEX	77,998.66	78,272.25	77,809.93	77,928.15	78,094.64

sector-specific buying offset worries over renewed US-Iran hostilities. The Nifty opened mar-

ginally higher, extending the previous session's gains, and remained supported by earnings-

driven optimism and a temporary revival in foreign institutional inflows," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

The BSE MidCap Select index climbed 0.66 per cent and SmallCap Select index went up by 0.48 per cent.

Among sectors, Auto jumped 1.99 per cent, followed by Capital Goods (1.78 per cent), Power (1.26 per cent), Oil & Gas (1.01 per cent), Telecommunication (0.83 per cent), Utilities (0.67 per cent) and Services (0.66 per cent).

IT tanked 1.39 per cent, Focused IT dropped 1.21 per cent, FMCG (0.90 per cent), Hospitals (0.78 per cent) and Private Banks index (0.20 per cent).

A total of 2,568 stocks advanced,

while 1,653 declined and 204 remained unchanged on the BSE.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark climbed 2,034.87 points, or 2.67 per cent, and the Nifty surged 616.15 points, or 2.59 per cent.

In Asian markets, South Korea's KOSPI rebounded sharply and jumped 17.91 per cent. Japan's Nikkei 225, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also ended in the positive territory.

Markets in Europe were trading in the green. US markets ended significantly higher on Thursday.

On Thursday, the Sensex ended 273.55 points, or 0.35 per cent, higher at 77,928.15. The Nifty went up by 66.95 points, or 0.28 per cent, to settle at 24,317.15.

FROM THE WORLD

AUSTRALIA

Filly found guilty of assault

An Australian jury convicted the British social media celebrity and rapper Yung Filly on Friday of assaulting a fan following a music performance two years ago, but did not find him guilty of allegations that he raped and choked her.

The 30-year-old entertainer, whose real name is Andres Felipe Valencia Barrientos, wept after the verdicts were delivered in the District Court of Western Australia state in Perth. He had pleaded not guilty to six charges of rape, three charges of assault occasioning bodily harm and one count of choking in a Perth hotel room in September 2024.

The accuser cannot legally be named. She was 20 at the time. Three days after the jury began deliberating, they found him guilty of only two of the assault charges, which relate to him biting the woman. (AP)

UK

Funeral director jailed 20 years

A British funeral director was sentenced to 20 years in prison Friday after the judge heard emotional testimony about how he gave families the wrong ashes for their cremated loved ones, improperly retained corpses for months and stole charity donations collected at memorial services.

Robert Bush was sentenced at Hull Crown Court in northeastern England after a five-day hearing in which more than 200 victims described the devastating impact of his crimes. He previously pleaded guilty to 67 charges related to crimes that took place over 12 years. Among those who spoke in court was Jasmine, whose son Sunny was stillborn on May 13, 2022.

Investigators found his ashes in a brown paper bag on the floor of the funeral director's premises more than a year after Bush handed her a little blue coffin and told her Sunny's ashes were inside. (AP)

60,000 migrants enter Spain's border; 34 dead in clashes

SERGIO RODRIGO RUIZ/ RENATA BRITO/ SUMAN NAISHADHAM

■ Ceuta

Some 60,000 migrants have entered Spain's Ceuta from Morocco in the past 24 hours, Ceuta's president says. That is equivalent to 70 per cent of the city's regular population.

At least 34 migrants have died in the process. "The situation that Ceuta is going through is absolutely unsustainable," said Juan Jesus Vivas on Friday.

The border crisis boiled over Thursday and continued on Friday with security forces clashing with migrants on the Moroccan side of the border.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez condemned the breach of the border on Friday speaking in Ceuta, describing the events as "a



Spanish police officers respond as migrants cross from Morocco into the Spanish enclave of Ceuta

violation of Spain's territorial integrity." The Spanish leader cast blame on human smugglers, saying they "deceive so many

young people, and ultimately lead many of them to their deaths - whether in the ocean or, as in this case, at Spain's border in the

autonomous city of Ceuta." Live footage of the border showed hundreds of migrants gathered on a hill overlooking Ceuta being dispersed with tear gas by Moroccan forces, while others continued to swim to the Spanish territory.

At the same time, large groups of migrants walked back from Ceuta toward Morocco to return home. Rachid Sbihi, who leads a local workers association representing Civil Guard officers, called the situation a "serious humanitarian crisis," saying thousands of migrants, including unaccompanied children, were left sleeping in parks and on sidewalks, while others roamed the streets aimlessly.

"People are still entering. The reinforcements, including Spanish military troops, that have arrived are only helping the injured and other humanitarian efforts," he

said. "It's chaotic." Among the 18 who died, many drowned, Sbihi said, but some were also killed in a stampede to cross the breakwater fence at Tarajal beach, an urban beach near a border checkpoint with Morocco.

Ahmed Karim, a 33-year old Moroccan, said he had crossed into Ceuta because of the lack of jobs in his country.

"Many people want to go to Europe, America, but they don't have the opportunity," Karim said.

On Friday morning, the waters near the border fence were littered with buoys, shoes and other belongings left behind.

Moroccan police deployed additional personnel, used water cannons and fired warning shots into the air to prevent migrants from crossing into Ceuta, according to rights groups in Morocco.

"Despite the heavy police presence, people crossed through the waterway, while the land border remained closed," said Achraf Maimouni, a human rights activist in Fnideq, the Moroccan city bordering Ceuta.

Migrants arrested at the border were taken farther into Morocco, away from Ceuta, "but people are still coming," he said.

Morocco's ambassador to Spain expressed hope that those who crossed from Morocco into the Spanish exclave would return. Karima Benyaich described the situation in Ceuta as difficult, saying it had unfolded against Morocco's wishes. "We have always prioritised legal, orderly and safe migration for all," she said. Benyaich did not comment on what prompted the migrants to cross into Ceuta. (AP)

Out-of-control SpaceX rocket stage set to crash into moon

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Cape Canaveral

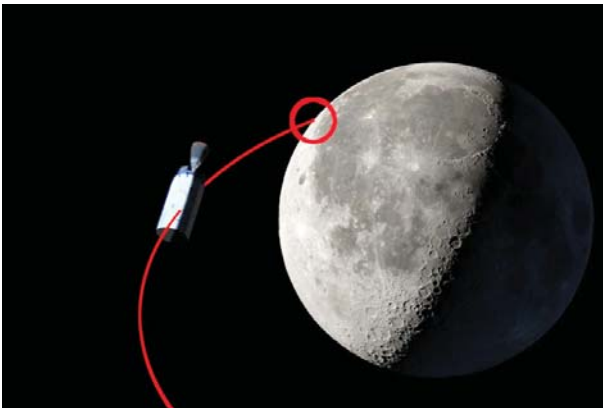
A drifting SpaceX rocket is on a collision course with the moon after launching a pair of lunar landers more than a year ago.

The rocket's upper stage will unintentionally slam into the moon on Wednesday, carving out a crater and sending up a plume of dust and rubble that scientists - and skygazers — are eager to observe. Space tracking expert Bill Gray predicts an impact of 5,400 mph (8,700 kph) - seven times the speed of sound — near Einstein Crater on the moon's sunlit western limb. With the action unfolding in the wee hours, the eastern portions of the US and Canada, and much of South America should have the best views.

While scientists are not too concerned about this particular piece of space junk, it highlights the growing threat as more and more items cram into orbit.

"Things are getting crowded up there," said Gray, who plans to view the aftermath from New Brunswick, Canada. It was never SpaceX's intent to hit the moon. But space experts said the crash could have been avoided if the upper stage had been nudged into orbit around the sun.

It will be the second dead rocket known to crash into the moon accidentally. A Chinese rocket segment dug out a pair of craters on the lunar far side in 2022. Lucky for astronomers, the upcom-



ing smashup will occur on the moon's near side, packing the equivalent energy of three tons of TNT.

The impact flash, lasting less than a second, will probably be too dim to see, according to experts. But the stream of ejected material could stretch for several miles (kilometres) into space and remain visible to telescopes for tens of minutes.

"The gravity on the moon is low and there is no wind to blow the dust away," said Los Alamos National Laboratory's Benjamin Fernando, who's encouraging observations by professionals and amateurs alike. "Part of the reason for our interest in this event is to figure out how much of a hazard debris impacts pose to future astronauts," he added in an email.

Fernando anticipates an impact crater nearly 90 feet across and 16 feet deep (27 metres across and 5 metres deep), too small to see from Earth but visible to spacecraft. NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter and South Korea's

Danuri lunar orbiter will gather before-and-after shots of the crash scene. Danuri will stray within a mile or two (a few kilometres) of the SpaceX rocket just two minutes before impact, according to Fernando and his team.

The abandoned rocket segment - measuring some 40 feet (12 metres) and weighing around 10,000 pounds (4,500 kilograms) - hoisted two private lunar landers on January 15, 2025.

One of them — Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost - became the first private spacecraft to pull off a fully successful lunar touchdown. The other, Japan-based ispace's lander, wrecked.

With meteoroids and other natural objects offering little if any warning before walloping the moon, scientists said there's much to learn by observing well-tracked strikes by human-made objects like the one coming up. NASA hurled rocket sections and lunar modules into the moon during the Apollo era for seismic measurements.

US-Iran conflict drives oil majors toward record profits

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ New York

Analysts are expecting major oil companies to report raking in large spring profits while fighting between Iran and the US impeded petroleum shipments and consumers around the world paid more for fuel and confronted shortages.

The conflict, now in its sixth month, halted most shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway that previously served as a delivery route for a fifth of the world's oil and natural gas. With global supplies constrained, prices for Brent crude, the international stan-



dard, soared from about \$70 to above \$100 a barrel for much of March, April and May, and at one point reached \$126.

That likely resulted in elevated profits for some of the biggest publicly traded oil companies as they sold

their goods for higher prices. American oil and gas giants Exxon Mobil and Chevron announced their second-quarter earnings on Friday.

The money oil companies accrued between the beginning of April and the end of June could receive extra scrutiny this year. Gasoline, diesel and jet fuel prices climbed during that period, increasing costs for drivers and airline passengers. Supplies ran low in some countries, leading to sporadic fuel rationing in Australia and government office closures in Nepal and Sri Lanka. Six of Europe's largest oil companies posted first-quarter profits of USD 22 billion altogether, a total which was

43 per cent higher than the same time last year, according to Global Witness.

"There are constituencies around the world who are having a very good crisis, and the oil producers are one of them," said Patrick Galey, fossil fuels lead at Global Witness. "When you compare that to the hundreds of millions of people who are struggling with rolling blackouts, with electricity curbs, rationing, waiting in line for food queues, or the disruption to fertilisers and the potential impact that that has on food prices, we don't think that it's a justifiable price for the rest of the world to be paying."

China's super embassy plan clears High Court hurdle in UK

ADITI KHANNA ■ London

The construction of a controversial new Chinese "super embassy" near the Tower of London is expected to go ahead after clearing a legal hurdle in the High Court of England on Friday.

An association of residents living on the China-owned Royal Mint Court site in the UK capital had crowdfunded thousands of pounds to legally challenge the UK government's decision to grant planning permission for the contentious project.

The Royal Mint Court Residents Association (RMCRA), representing families and businesses in the area, sought a judicial review of the decision of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets earlier this year.

According to court reports, Justice Nathalie Lieven and Lord Justice James Dingemans concluded there was "no doubt" that the government had taken into



account that the planning permission was sought by the Chinese government. They ruled that there had been "no unfairness" towards the residents association during the process.

The RMCRA said it will fight on and continue crowdfunding to add to the over 220,000 pounds raised to appeal against this week's High Court verdict. "The Royal Mint Court Residents Association (RMCRA) has always been prepared to take this all the way to the Supreme Court," a spokesperson said. (PTI)

Man arrested on suspicion of spying on UK military base for Iran

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ London

A London man has been arrested in Cyprus on suspicion of spying on a UK air force base on the Mediterranean island on behalf of Iran, British police said on Friday.

London's Metropolitan Police force said 44-year-old Rashad Sultanov, a UK-Azerbaijani national, is alleged to have conducted "hostile surveillance" of RAF Akrotiri and shared information with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. He was arrested on July 17, and British police are seeking his extradition.

Police said Sultanov lives in London, and British media said he works as a taxi driver.

Akrotiri is the UK's main air base for operations in the Middle East and in recent years has been used by British warplanes on missions against the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq and to strike Houthi targets in Yemen. It was struck by an Iranian-made drone in March, early in the US-Israeli war with Iran. British prosecutors have authorised charges under the National Security Act.

Sri Lanka's ex-police chief, official get death over Easter attacks



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Colombo

Sri Lanka's former police chief Pujiith Jayasundera and the then top bureaucrat in the Ministry of Defence, Hemasiri Fernando, were sentenced to death on Friday over the 2019 Easter Sunday attack, which killed more than 270 people.

The High Court here found both of them guilty of criminal dereliction of duty for failing to act on prior intelligence that could have prevented the attacks.

The bombings were a series of coordinated suicide attacks on churches and luxury hotels which killed 279 people, including 45 foreigners, on April 19, 2019.

Jayasundera and Fernando were arrested in 2019 and held in custody for four months before being released on bail.

They were indicted in November 2021 for their negligence of prior intelligence from Indian agencies that local jihadists were planning an attack.

However, in February 2022,

the High Court acquitted the duo and dismissed all 855 charges against them.

In November 2024, the case was revived after a Supreme Court order, following an appeal by the attorney general against the High Court acquittal ruling. The attorney general said no defence witnesses were called at the previous hearing.

Reading the majority decision to convict Jayasundera, Justices Priyantha Lijanage and Thilakaratne Bandara said that due to negligence of intelligence information, 268 people died while 586 were left injured.

Jayasundera had failed in his duty to protect the lives of citizens and ensure public security, they said Justice Viraj Weerasuriya of the three-member bench gave a dissenting ruling, acquitting both.

The then government under President Maithripala Sirisena was blamed for its inaction to prevent the attacks despite prior intelligence from India on the impending attack.

Milei empowers Argentina to bar or deport foreigners

ISABEL DEBRE ■ Buenos Aires

After a bruising World Cup defeat gave way to what many Argentines saw as a sweeping wave of hatred against their country, Argentine President Javier Milei signed an emergency decree empowering the government to deny entry to or expel foreigners who incite discrimination or violence against Argentines because of their nationality.

Milei's office cast the decree as a response to weeks of criticism from celebrities, opposing fans and social media users after controversial refereeing decisions fuelled speculation that FIFA had tilted the soccer tournament in favour of the Argentina team and superstar Lionel Messi. Detractors directed their anger about occasionally aggressive Argentine fans and the team's roughhousing on the pitch not only at players but increasingly at



Argentine society as a whole.

The measure adds new grounds to Argentina's immigration law, allowing authorities to bar, deport and revoke visas of people found to have promoted hatred against Argentines in spoken or written statements or who have desecrated national symbols.

"In light of recent displays of hostility toward the Argentine Republic and Argentines, the national government reaffirms that the

defence of the nation, its citizens and its symbols is non-negotiable," the president's office said. "Anyone who attacks the Argentine Republic is not welcome in our country."

It's a shift for a country that has long prided itself on welcoming immigrants. Argentina's Constitution explicitly encourages immigration, and for decades the country has offered foreigners broad civil rights and relatively easy access to legal residency, public education and health care.

Milei, however, has introduced tougher immigration measures that have raised the bar for permanent residency and expanded government powers to deport foreigners accused of crimes, often publicizing the moves with rhetoric similar to that of the Trump administration.

The widespread scorn for Argentina has played on long-standing stereotypes, particularly in Latin

America, that Argentines view themselves as culturally and economically superior to their neighbours, in part due to the large share of the population descended from European immigrants.

The backlash intensified when Argentina players and staff attacked their Spanish opponents in a post-match brawl after the World Cup final. Online petitions to expel Argentina from the World Cup drew hundreds of thousands of signatures. FIFA, global soccer's governing body, on Wednesday opened disciplinary proceedings against the Argentine Football Association over the scuffle, as well as over alleged racist abuse and fan misconduct.

Players also faced a FIFA investigation into their parading of a banner that asserted Argentina's claim to the British-controlled Falkland Islands after the team's semifinal victory over England. (AP)



Grynspan emerges frontrunner in first informal UNSC poll for next UN chief

YOSHITA SINGH

■ United Nations

Former Costa Rican Vice President Rebeca Grynspan has emerged as the frontrunner to succeed Antonio Guterres as the next United Nations Secretary-General after securing the highest support in the first informal "straw poll" conducted by the Security Council, sources said.

The 15-nation UN Security Council on Thursday held its first closed door "straw poll", in which members cast a non-binding vote to indicate their support for the candidates in fray for the position of the world's top diplomat. According to



Former Costa Rican Vice President Rebeca Grynspan

sources, Grynspan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), received 10 "encourage" votes, one "discourage" vote and four "no

opinion" votes.

Guyana's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett, was a close second with nine "encourage", two "discourage" and

four "no opinion" votes.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi ranked third with seven "encourage", two "discourage" and six "no opinion" votes. The other candidates in the race are former Chilean President and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, former President of the UN General Assembly Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces, former UN Under Secretary General Virginia Gamba, former Senegalese President Macky Sall and Ugandan politician Olara Otunnu.

Guterres, the former Portuguese prime minister,

will complete his second five-year term as the ninth UN chief in December 2026.

Speaking to reporters after the conclusion of the straw poll, the Security Council president for July, Congo's Permanent Representative Ambassador Zenon Mukongo Ngay, said candidates would be informed of the results through the permanent representatives of the member states that nominated them.

He said the Council had not decided when the next straw poll would be held, adding that the decision would be taken under Denmark's presidency of the Security Council in August.

Responding to a question on why the results were not being officially released, Ngay said, "The thinking behind it is to keep everything close, and we want transparency at the same time, efficiency, but we don't want speculations on that."

US Ambassador to the UN Mike Waltz told reporters that the Security Council would reach its conclusions "in the coming months" and stressed the need for a Secretary-General who would reform the organisation, make it "leaner and more fit for purpose", and "more relevant on the international stage". (PTI)

Hamis agrees to a roadmap to disarm, faces challenges in deal

SAMY MAGDY/SAM MEDNICK/
JONATHAN J COOPER/
MATTHEW LEE ■ Cairo

Hamis reached an agreement to disarm, officials told on Friday, a significant move that could help end the war in Gaza — but one that will face many hurdles and could take a long time to achieve, if at all.

The group agreed to a road map as long as Israel also makes concessions, including ending hostilities and withdrawing its troops from the Palestinian territory, according to a Hamas official and a regional official.

Israel has not commented on the deal, which US President Donald Trump announced hours earlier.

It comes nine months after a US-brokered ceasefire to end the fighting between Israel and the group was signed. That 20-point ceasefire plan calls on the militant group to surrender its weapons and destroy its vast network of tunnels. It also envisions Israeli forces with-



drawing from Gaza, the arrival of a new technocratic Palestinian Government, the deployment of a security force known as the International Stabilization Force and the rebuilding of the battered Palestinian enclave. But negotiations between Israel and Hamas over the implementation of the next phase of the ceasefire deal had largely deadlocked — and disarmament was a major sticking point.

Disarming would represent a sea change for Hamas, whose founding charter calls for armed resistance against

Israel, and which sees its arsenal, including rockets, anti-tank missiles and explosives, as lying at the heart of its identity.

“The agreement will be carried out in carefully structured phases,” Trump said on social media. “As disarmament is completed, Israeli forces will withdraw, and the International Stabilization Force will work with a new Palestinian police force to take responsibility for Gaza being safe for its residents and its neighbours.”

A copy of the agreement obtained and verified by *The*

Associated Press said that all police weapons will be transferred to the US-backed Palestinian technocratic committee, known as the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, upon its arrival in the enclave. It's not clear when that would happen since it is contingent on other steps.

A process to decommission and store heavy weapons, military production sites and tunnels will begin after the arrival of the Palestinian committee and the deployment of the ISF. The process will be linked to an Israeli withdrawal, in phases, from the areas under its control in Gaza, according to the agreement.

In a statement Thursday, an Israeli official said that there will be no Israeli withdrawal from the areas it holds in Gaza - which account for about 60 per cent of the territory - before the militant group is disarmed and the strip demilitarised. The statement was made on condition of anonymity in line with Government protocol. (AP)

Myanmar’s president outlines policy road map, criticises ASEAN peace plan

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Bangkok

The head of Myanmar's military-backed Government on Friday marked his Government's first 100 days in office with a speech defending his record and outlining a five-year road map for his administration, which faces ongoing conflict and international criticism.

President Min Aung Hlaing, the former army chief who had originally seized power in 2021 from a civilian Government, was sworn in as president in April following an election that critics said was designed to entrench the military's grip on power.

Addressing more than 900 lawmakers, officials and military representatives at Parliament in the Capital, Naypyitaw, he said his Government had laid “important foundations” since taking office by pursuing two priorities - restoring peace and stability and promoting national development.

Min Aung Hlaing said he would spend two years accelerating efforts to build a modern and developed nation based on democracy and a federal system, followed by another three years carrying out build-up at full speed. He also said special elections would be held in 2027 in constituencies across 102 townships that were unable to vote during the three-phase election held late last year



Min Aung Hlaing

because of armed conflict. He said the Government would continue implementing the military's conscription law while strengthening the armed forces and police as they fight pro democracy activists and ethnic minority rebels throughout much of the country. He noted that his administration had invited armed groups fighting the military to lay down their weapons and had held talks with 13 ethnic armed groups.

Russia-linked airstrike in Mali killed 8 civilians last month, says rights group

MARK BANCHEREAU ■ Dakar

Human Rights Watch said on Friday that Russian Government-controlled Africa Corps aircraft killed eight civilians, including three children, in an airstrike on a village in central Mali last month.

The rights group said an attack aircraft identified as a Russian Sukhoi Su-24 dropped two munitions on Kyrnia village in the Mopti region on June 15. One strike hit near the home of the village chief, killing his wife and three children. The second hit a nearby cattle market, killing four men. No fighters from the Islamic militant group JNIM, which has controlled the village for six years, were reported among the casualties.

The *Associated Press* was not able to independently verify the claims by Human Rights Watch.

Mali has been plagued for over a decade by militants affiliated with al-Qaida and

the Islamic State group, including JNIM, as well as a Tuareg separatist rebellion in the north. Violence escalated in recent months after an alliance of JNIM and Tuareg separatists carried out the largest coordinated attack in over a decade, targeting the airport of the country's capital, Bamako, the nearby garrison town of Kati, and several northern and central cities.

April's attacks exposed the weaknesses of Mali's strategy to combat the rebellion, including relying on Russia, which has partnered with the military-led Government after it distanced itself from former allies such as France.

Russian mercenaries have been present in Mali since late 2021 to help its military junta fight militants and separatists. Last year, Africa Corps, which reports to Russia's Defence Ministry, replaced the private mercenary Wagner Group in the country.

Name change

I, Rahul Ahirwar, age 23, son of Shri Gad Ahirwar, My current name is Rahul Ahirwar, as recorded in my educational and other documents. That I voluntarily wish to change my name to Rahul Jekar. After this publication I should be known, written and read as Rahul Jekar, and addressed as Rahul Jekar in all my government and non-government records, Rahul Ahirwar and Rahul Jekar the name of the same person. Rahul Ahirwar, son of Shri Guddu Ahirwar Address : Gandhi Ward, Hata, Tehsil Hata, District Damoh, Madhya Pradesh.

The Pioneer Classified

CHANGE OF NAME

I, hitherto known as Arun S/o Rajjan Basor R/o Ward Number 02, Harpalpur, District Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh-471111, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as **Arun Basor**.
I, SHEFALI LIKHAR alias SHEFALI BAGWALE D/O KAMAL LIKHAR W/O SHASHANK BAGWALE R/O 40 Satyadev Nagar Pani Ki Tanki Indore Sudama Madhya Pradesh-452009, have changed my name to SHEFALI BAGWALE.



कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, भोपाल

केन्द्रीय कर्मशाला (मेके. शाखा)

क.561/ के. कर्म./2026

द्वितीय निविदा सूचना

भोपाल, दिनांक. 31/7/26

नगर निगम भोपाल केन्द्रीय कर्मशाला के द्वारा विभिन्न प्रकार के इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन क्रियाये पर लिये जाने हेतु ऑनलाईन निविदा निम्नानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.	निविदा क्र.	सामान का विवरण	अनुमानित लागत	सरोहर राशि	निविदा फार्म का मूल्य	प्रदाय अवधि
1.	2026_UAD_516203_2	Annual Rate Contract For Supply Of Electric Taxi Vehicles On Rental Basis at BMC Second call	28022520/-	140113/-	15000/-	आवश्यकानुसार

BID SUBMISSION END DATE- 17/08/2026 TIME-05:30 PM

BID OPENING DATE- 18/08/2026 TIME-05:30 PM

निविदा से संबंधित अन्य विस्तृत जानकारी वेबसाईट mptenders.gov.in पर देखी एवं केन्द्रीय कर्मशाला (मेकेनिकल) से कार्यालयीन समय में प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

अवर आयुक्त

परिवहन शाखा नगर निगम भोपाल

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बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र

Bank of Maharashtra

भारत सरकार का उपक्रम

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PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Bank of Maharashtra, the possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Maharashtra, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" and "WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" on **18.08.2026**, for recovery of the balance due to the Bank of Maharashtra from the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned in the table. Details of the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, amount due, Short description of the immovable property and encumbrances known thereon, possession type, reserve price and the earnest money deposit are also given as under-

Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor	Outstanding Dues for Recovery of which Property are being sold	Description of properties	Type of Possession	Reserve Price EMD Amount Bid Increase Amount
1) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrowers Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay, Add:- H.No.2014, Kiran Kutli, Vijaynagar, Jabalpur - 482001	Rs.18618136/- (Rupees One Crore Eighty Six Lakh Eighteen Thousand One hundred Thirty Six only plus applicable interest and penal interest thereon+ Others Charge w.e.f. 30.05.2024	(A) Residential plot bearing plot no 25-A on Diverted Khasara No. 17/3 situated at Amkhhera S.No. PC No. 22/24, PH no.80(new), Ward no.74, RI Circle Maharajpur Tehsil Panagar and Dist Jabalpur owned by Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay Area 1250 Sqft. (B) Freehold residential plot bearing plot no 25 on Diverted Khasara No. 17/3 situated at Amkhhera S.No.4 P C No. 22/24, PH no.80(new), Ward no.74, RI Circle Maharajpur Tehsil Panagar and Dist Jabalpur owned by Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay Area 1150 Sqft. (C) Freehold residential plot bearing plot no 24 on Diverted Khasara No. 17/3 situated at Amkhhera S.No.4 PC No. 22/24, PH no.80(new), Ward no.74, R I Circle Maharajpur Tehsil Panagar and Dist Jabalpur owned by Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay Area 1000 Sqft.	Physical	Rs. 20,81,000/- Rs. 2,08,100/- Rs. 10000/-
2) Branch: Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur 1. M/s. Nava Bharat Press (Bhopal) Pvt. Ltd. Add.- 3, Indira Press Complex, Ramgopal Maheshwari Marg, M.P. Nagar Zone -1, Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462011 2. Smt. Brij Maheshwari w/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari , 3. Shri. Sumit Maheshwari s/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari, 4. Shri. Sanjeev Maheshwari s/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari 5. Shri. Sandeep Maheshwari s/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari All Reside at - E- 3/22, Arera Colony Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462016 6. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari s/o Shri. Ramgopal Maheshwari (Deceased) – Through his Legal Heirs (LR's): LR's: (A) Shri. Sumit Maheshwari s/o Late. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari (B) Shri. Sandeep Maheshwari s/o Late. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari (C) Shri. Sanjeev Maheshwari s/o Late. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari, (D) Smt. Brij Maheshwari w/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari All Reside at - E- 3/22, Arera Colony Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462016 7. P.K. Maheshwari (HUF) – Through his Coparceners: Residing at - E- 3/22, Arera Colony Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462016	Rs.18,04,26,202.73 + Interest @ BPLR +2% (@14%) per annum with quarterly/ Monthly rests with effect from 01.02.2007 & Other Charges etc thereon	Plot 118 to 124, on Plot No 785 (Old no 42) in Mouja Shubhas Nagar, N.B. 773, Area 14035 Sq feet and construction thereon, Diversion Sheet no 155-C (Marhatal), Near Motor Stand (OLD) Teen Patti Road, Napier town, Ward No 28 (City), Swami Dayanand Saraswati Marg, Jabalpur (M.P) Pin 482002	Physical	Rs.22,49,10,000/- Rs.2,24,91,000/- Rs.10000.00
3) Branch: Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur 1. Smt. Poonam Jat Shri Sanjay Jat Shri. Sanjay Jat s/o Shri. Subhash Chandra Jat H.No. 1313, Maharshi Arvind ward, Kanjar Mohalla, Near Bai ka Bagicha, Jabalpur (M.P) Pin 482002, Guarantor: Smt. Poonam Jat w/o Shri. Sanjay Jat H.No. 1313, Maharshi Arvind ward, Kanjar Mohalla, Near Bai ka Bagicha, Jabalpur (M.P) Pin 482002	Rs.69,65,478/- (Rupees Sixty Nine Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Eight only + unapplied interest + penal interest @ 2.00% p.a. + other charges / expenses w.e.f. 30.07.2021	All piece and parcel of property at Mouza Bhartipur, N.B 130, PC No.29, Div Sheet No.96, House no.58/4, Plot no.120/1, Maharshi Arvind Ward no.53, The & Dist.Jabalpur.	Physical	Rs. 5771000/- Rs. 577100/- Rs.10000.00
4) Branch: Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Shri Amit Khampariya Shri Amit Khampariya,234/4 Durga colony, Sanjeevni Nagar, Garha, Jabalpur	Rs.30651458/- (Rupees Three Crore Six Lakh Fifty One Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Eight only)(Ledger Bal: Rs.29652141.62/- + unapplied interest Rs.943821/-+penalty of Rs.55495/-) + Unapplied Interest @ 11.95% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 31.07.2024 + penal interest and other charges / expenses till realization	Diverted open plot situated at Khamariya N.B 581 (New), PH no.74 (New 50), at present P.H.No. 00137, R.N.M, Khamariya, Div. Kh. No.527, 528,529,530,531,532/1, Tehsil & Dist. Jabalpur area admeasuring 3.269 Hect.	Physical	Rs. 23160000/- Rs. 2316000/- Rs.10000.00
5) Branch: Katni Shri Roshan Pyasi Roshan Kumar Pyasi S/o Shri Rameshwar Prasad Pyasi MES Colony, Hemu Kalani Ward, Murwara, Katni- 483442	Rs.1862695.00 /- + unapplied interest Rs. 53230 /- +penalty of Rs.74.00/-+ Charges Rs 354/-Total dues: Rs.19,16,353.00 /- (Rupees. Nineteen Lakhs Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred fifty three only) + Unapplied interest @ 8.70% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 17/06/2025 + penal interest and other charges / expenses till realization	All those piece and parcel of property situated at Khasra No-71/1, PH No-34, Plot No-B-44, at RNM-Pahadi,Village- Imlaiya, Tehsil- Katni , District – Katni. Plot Area admeasuring 1000 Sq.ft(92.93 Sq.Mtrs),Built up area Ground Floor 900 Sq.ft	Physical	Rs. 1122000/- Rs. 112200/- Rs.10000.00
6) Branch: Katni Shri Gopendra Pyasi Gopendra Pyasi S/o Shri Rameshwar Prasad Pyasi MES Colony, Hemu Kalani Ward, Murwara, Katni- 483442	Rs. 18,47,043.00 /- + unapplied interest Rs. 62259 /-+ penalty of Rs.96.00/- +Charges Rs 354/-Total dues:Rs. 19,09,752.00 /-(Rupees. Nineteen Lakhs Nine Thousand Seven Hundred fifty two only) + Unapplied Interest @ 8.35% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 17/06/2025 + penal interest and other charges / expenses till realization	All those piece and parcel of property situated at Khasra No-71/1, PH No-34, Plot No-B-43, at RNM-Pahadi,Village- Imlaiya, Tehsil- Katni , District – Katni. Plot Area admeasuring 1000 Sq.ft(92.93 Sq.Mtrs),Built up area Ground Floor 900 Sq.ft	Physical	Rs. 1122000/- Rs. 112200/- Rs.10000.00
7) Branch: Panna Road Satna M/s Deepak Oil Mill Proprietor –Shri Deepak Agrawal Katra Bazar, Galla Mandi, Maihar	Rs.4592351/-(Fourty five Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Three Hundred Fifty One only)(Ledger Balance Rs.4445609/-+unapplied interest Rs.131196/- @ 11.55% p.a at monthly rest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 27.02.2025)	All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixture there being & lying at Maouza Hardua Kala PHN No. 42, Dist. Maihar. Arzi No. 75/1/2/1 Area 0.0940 Hect, Arzi No. 77/1/2/2/1 Area0.0170 Hec, Arzi No. 76/1/3/2 Area0.0650 Hec, Arzi No.76/1/2/1 Area0.0300 Hec, Arzi No. 76/1/1/1 0.056 Hect. situated at Gram Harduakala, Patwari Halka Hardua Kala, Sardar V B Patel, Ward No. 04, Maihar, District, M.P.Total Area = 28192 Sq.ft	Symbolic	Rs. 65100000/- Rs. 6510000/- Rs.10000.00

Inspection of Properties by bidder: 13.08.2026 & 14.08.2026 between 11:00 am. and 4:00 pm

Last Date & Time for Submission of Bid application/KYC documents/EMD etc. 18.08.2026 up to 11.00 a.m.

Date & time of E-auction with auto extension for 10 minutes- 18.08.2026 between 12.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

The auction sale will be On-line E-Auction / Bidding through website <https://baanknet.com>, email: support.baanknet@psballiance.com. Mob.- 8291220220 The intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to register on portal using their mobile number and email id. Please take note that the registration and KYC approval etc take 2-3 working days. For detail terms and conditions of sale please refer to the link provided in <https://bankofmaharashtra.bank.in/asset-for-sales-search> and <https://baanknet.com>. Also prospective bidders may contact the authorized officials **Contact details: Incharge Recovery Jabalpur Shri Onkar Kumar (Zonal Manager) - 9823296164, Shri Nikhil S Patil (DZM) - 7387211200, Shri Bhushan Mohite (CM Recovery - Z.O.) - 9923257090, Dr. Ravikumar Verma (Sr. Manager) (9300955688) & Shri Hariom Trivedi (CM & Authorised Officer) - 9405719723** Note - The sales are subject to the order/outcome of any case pending/titled if any before Court/Tribunal

Date: 01/08/2026

Sale Notice to Borrower/Guarantors/Legal Heirs(LR's)/Coparceners

The above shall be treated as Notice of 15days u/r 9(1) of security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002

Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

European Union to crack down on AI deepfakes

SAM MCNEIL ■ Brussels

The European Union rolled out a new team on Friday to rein in AI companies across the world, in one of the most aggressive regulations the high-tech sector has so far faced as fears rise over the risks the rapidly advancing technology poses to people, politics and prosperity.

Brussels aims to track the use of AI models for violations of its new regulations, like the publishing of sexually explicit material, fake photos and videos, and cyber threats to public infrastructure. When the bloc's AI Act comes into force on Sunday, AI companies will be required to make clear to consumers with labels or digital watermarks that chatbots or imagery are generated with AI.

"As enforcement begins, we are taking an important step towards AI that people and businesses can understand and trust, and whose benefits are shared widely across our society," said Henna Virkkunen, the EU chief for tech sovereignty, on Friday. The European Commission said in a statement that new regulations also include "systemic risks" posed by AI like "chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents, loss of control, cyber offence, harmful manipulation and threats to fundamental

rights." The team is the latest move in the 27-nation EU's "tech sovereignty" strategy that welds landmark digital regulations with economic ambition that has seen over the past week billions of euros in fines on Big Tech companies as well as record investment in AI infrastructure inside the bloc.

The rollout comes on the heels of shocking AI safety failures that rattled the nascent industry. Political leaders worldwide are now weighing control of the technology with market leadership. Anthropic said on Friday its artificial intelligence models hacked into three other organisations during testing, just days after ChatGPT maker OpenAI raised concerns over AI controls after it disclosed its

another company. The EU is now expanding its AI Office in Brussels with an additional 38 people who will begin monitoring AI companies, from the new firms to the American and Chinese tech titans like OpenAI and DeepSeek. Those companies must "document certain information," said the European Commission, the bloc's tech enforcer, which reserves the right to interview AI company staff during investigations. It has also launched a Whistleblower Tool for tech workers and a Compliance Tool for tech users to confidentially alert authorities to illegal conduct.

If models or other products break the EU's sector regulations, called the AI Act, Brussels can fine the firms or cut off their access to the EU market. Recent

gigantic antitrust fines on US tech companies have irked US President Donald Trump.

The EU now clearly sees systemic vulnerability in its deep reliance on American software companies like Amazon, Google and Microsoft as well as imports of Chinese industrial goods and critical minerals. While it is seeking protections from AI, it is also keen to catch up in the AI arms race, where it is a distant third behind the US and China. More broadly, the EU is seeking more independence from both Washington and Beijing by reinvigorating specific domestic industries like manufacturing and defence and forging new trade deals from Brazil to Australia to meet the global rise in economic nationalism spearheaded by Trump.

The architecture of ambition: Industrial clusters as the digital spine of economic transformation



As India accelerates its manufacturing ambitions, the fusion of intelligent infrastructure and spatial planning is forging a new era of globally competitive industrial corridors. Industrial clusters, defined by co-located firms, specialised suppliers, knowledge networks, and supporting institutions, have long been recognised as powerful drivers of economic transformation. From the Pearl River Delta to Germany's Baden-Württemberg, the evidence is consistent: geographic concentration of related industries produces productivity gains that dispersed industrial development simply cannot replicate.

For India, this logic is not new. What is unprecedented is the scale of ambition. Manufacturing currently contributes approximately 16 to 17 per cent of GDP and employs over 27 million workers, yet official policy targets a 25 per cent share as the country moves toward a developed-economy horizon. The Government's push through the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme, PM MITRA textile parks, and DMIC nodes represents a generational bet on clusters as the structural backbone of manufacturing-led growth.

Whether that ambition is realised depends on whether these clusters can be built, operationalised, and governed at the pace and quality the economy demands. The answer is increasingly technological.

The Present State: Potential Meets Friction

India's industrial cluster landscape is defined by a paradox. The country hosts over 350 notified Special Economic Zones, hundreds of industrial estates, and a growing network of planned corridors. Yet productivity within these clusters frequently falls short of international benchmarks. Logistics costs consume approximately 13 to 14 per cent of GDP, nearly double the share in advanced economies.

Land aggregation is slower than anticipated, utility reliability varies sharply across regions, and environmental clearances, local coordination, and trunk infrastructure provisioning rarely move in sequence. MSME integration compounds the challenge further. While large anchor industries access modern systems and global value chains, small and medium enterprises, which account for over 45 per cent of India's exports and nearly 30 per cent of GDP,

operate with limited digital capability and insufficient linkages to available productivity tools.

Understanding Industrial Clusters' Impacts

Cluster performance is inseparable from infrastructure quality and human liveability. When commercial, residential, and social infrastructures are co-planned alongside industrial zones, workforce productivity improves, attrition falls, and the cluster's ability to attract skilled talent strengthens. This live-work-play model reduces long-term maintenance costs and supports urban viability that sustains industrial activity across decades.

The transition from isolated manufacturing units to integrated industrial hubs alters the economic geography of a nation. Clusters reduce transaction costs, foster rapid skill transfer, and create a critical mass of demand that justifies high-quality shared infrastructure. This spatial agglomeration is particularly vital for MSMEs. When smaller firms are integrated into well-planned corridors, they gain access to the same reliable power, water, and logistics networks that anchor industries enjoy, catalysing a nationwide uplift in productivity.

The results are already visible. Completed Phase-I cities including Dholera, Shendra-Bidkin, IIT Greater Noida, and Vikram Udyogpuri have together allotted 350 industrial plots and attracted approximately ₹2.02 lakh crore in investments. That is credible evidence that corridor-led industrialisation can move from blueprint to balance sheet when execution is consistent.

The policy framework backing this transition reflects serious financial commitment. Public capital expenditure has grown from ₹2 lakh crore in FY2014-15 to an estimated ₹12.2 lakh crore in FY2026-27, funding a shift toward plug-and-play and walk-to-work urban-industrial models. In August 2024, the government approved 12 new NICDP projects worth ₹28,602 crore, expected to generate 1 million direct and up to 3 million indirect jobs. The BHAVYA scheme followed with ₹33,660 crore to develop 100 plug-and-play industrial parks covering utilities, value-added facilities, and worker housing.

Together with PM Gati Shakti, PM MITRA parks, and corridor-linked nodes, Indian industrial policy is moving decisively away from fragmented estate development toward integrated, infrastructure-led competitiveness. The encouraging shift is that the Centre has begun to build digital coordination into the infrastructure state. Under PM GatiShakti, more than 44 Central Ministries and 36 States/UTs have been onboarded, with over 1,600

data layers integrated on the platform, and 293 infrastructure projects worth ₹13.59 lakh crore evaluated through the Network Planning Group mechanism. This matters because industrial competitiveness is no longer determined only by how much is spent, but by whether transport, utilities, land, environment, and logistics data are planned together.

Technology and AI: The Nervous System of the Cluster

If infrastructure is the body of a well-functioning cluster, technology is its nervous system. Industry 4.0 tools, including IoT-enabled utilities, AI-driven logistics optimisation, digital twins, and GIS-based planning platforms, are no longer frontier ambitions. They are practical requirements for competitive cluster management.

The numbers are persuasive. Industrial parks deploying smart utility systems have reported energy savings of 20 to 30 per cent. Digital twin platforms have reduced design iteration time by up to 40 per cent in documented international deployments. Real-time sensor networks have cut reactive maintenance costs while improving service reliability.

Within India's cluster context, the most immediate opportunities lie in three areas: digital platforms providing real-time visibility into power availability, water pressure, and road conditions; GIS-integrated planning tools that overlay land use, utility networks, and environmental constraints for more defensible decisions; and AI-assisted compliance systems that reduce administrative burden without compromising regulatory oversight.

The technology diffusion challenge is real, particularly for MSMEs. Cost, capability, and awareness barriers mean smaller enterprises frequently cannot access what their anchor neighbours use. Shared digital infrastructure, subsidised platforms, and cluster-level data utilities are essential to prevent productivity gains from concentrating only at the top of the value chain.

The IndiaAI Mission, backed by ₹10,372 crore, is building common compute, trusted datasets, and governance architecture. Applied to industrial corridors, that logic could be decisive across six fronts: land-use intelligence that identifies optimal parcels and flags zoning conflicts before they cause delays; live project monitoring through satellite imagery, drone feeds, and digital twins that surface cost overruns early; predictive maintenance that upgrades SCADA systems with machine learning to anticipate pump failures, transformer stress, and peak-load events; logistics optimisation through ULIP's API

environment to dynamically route freight and reduce warehouse dwell time; MSME inclusion through multilingual compliance interfaces and cluster-level advisory tools; and continuous environmental governance that shifts corridor authorities from episodic inspections to real-time, risk-based enforcement.

But AI will only deliver if embedded within credible governance: interoperable data standards, secure access, clear accountability for automated decisions, and genuine public-purpose data sharing. In corridor development, the real question is not whether AI can be used, but whether institutions are willing to use it to improve execution rather than merely decorate policy language.

The deeper promise of industrial clusters lies in compounding effects. Well-governed corridors lower the cost of doing business, increase formal employment, deepen supplier ecosystems, improve export readiness, and widen the manufacturing footprint beyond established metros. They allow India to move from opportunistic assembly to durable ecosystem-building, where design, testing, component manufacturing, logistics, and services grow together. NICDP now spans 32 projects across 4 phases and 11 corridors, with 4 already completed and 4 near completion. If these mature into reliable industrial ecosystems, India can produce not merely more, but better: shorter lead times, stronger domestic value addition, and deeper integration into global value chains.

The Way Forward
Industrial clusters will define the next phase of India's manufacturing trajectory. But their transformative potential will be realised only if the physical and the digital are built together, not sequentially. For policymakers and planners, the priority is to treat technology integration not as a future upgrade but as a foundational design requirement.

Cluster development authorities that embed digital infrastructure at the planning stage rather than retrofiting it after construction will deliver facilities that are genuinely competitive on the global stage. The countries that dominated the last industrial era built better roads and ports. The countries that will lead the next one will build smarter clusters.

If India does that well, it will not merely develop industrial corridors more efficiently. It will build a new model of state capacity, one in which infrastructure, data, and intelligence work together to make industrial ambition executable.

The writer is Deputy BU Head – Water, Urban & Hydropower, Rodic Consultants

Assam Minister Pijush Hazarika reviews flood situation in Nazira

TONY DAS ■ Guwahati

Assam Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation and Parliamentary Affairs, Pijush Hazarika, on Friday visited the flood-affected Demow and Nazira Legislative Assembly Constituencies (LACs) of Sivasagar district to review the relief and rehabilitation measures being undertaken by the district administration. He also reviewed the initiatives taken by the Agriculture Department to assist flood-affected farmers.

Earlier in the day, the Minister, accompanied by Cabinet Minister Sushanta Borgohain, visited 2 no Bhatgaj Gaon under Demow LAC and inaugurated a community paddy seedling nursery established for flood-affected farmers.

The nursery has been set up to ensure the timely availability of quality paddy seedlings to farmers whose crops have been damaged by the recent floods. Later, the Minister, along with Guardian Minister of Sivasagar Bimal Borah, visited Nazira and chaired a review meeting on the prevailing flood situation at the office of the co-district commissioner.



The meeting was attended by MLA of Nazira LAC Shri Mayur Borgohain, the Director of Agriculture, Assam, the District Commissioner of Sivasagar, officials of the Nazira Co-District Administration, senior officers of the Agriculture Department and other line departments.

During the meeting, Hazarika reviewed the overall flood situation, the progress of rescue and relief operations, and the measures being taken for the rehabilitation of flood-affected people. Stressing that rehabilitation is now the Government's highest priority, he directed the officials

concerned to immediately initiate the reconstruction of houses that had been damaged or completely destroyed in the floods.

Hazarika observed that Nazira Legislative Assembly Constituency has been the worst affected by the recent floods. He said that rehabilitation efforts in the constituency would receive the highest priority.

The minister will remain in Sivasagar district for the next one week to closely monitor the Agriculture Department's initiatives and the progress of rehabilitation measures to ensure that all flood-affected families receive timely assistance.

GFN to boost investments in low-carbon buildings



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

As India continues to witness rapid urban growth, the demand for environmentally sustainable and energy-efficient buildings is becoming increasingly significant.

With more than half of the country's projected infrastructure for 2050 yet to be constructed, experts believe that integrating climate-resilient and low-carbon construction

practices into major housing programmes such as the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) offers a crucial opportunity to promote sustainable development.

Although the Government has introduced several policy measures, including the India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP) and the Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code (ECSBC), inadequate access to finance remains one of the biggest obstacles to scaling up

green building projects across the country.

To bridge this financing gap, the Green Finance Network (GFN) has been launched as a collaborative platform aimed at strengthening the ecosystem for sustainable construction. The initiative brings together financial institutions, real estate developers, technology providers, policymakers and technical experts to facilitate investments in low-carbon buildings.

IACCIA, ASSOCHAM sign MoU to strengthen India-Arab ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

In a significant step towards advancing India-Arab economic relations, the India & Arab Countries Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture (IACCIA) and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) on 30 July 2026 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote bilateral trade, investment, industrial collaboration, and business partnerships between India and the 22 Arab countries.

The MoU was signed by Saurabh Sanyal, Secretary General, ASSOCHAM, and Dr Wael Awwad, Secretary General, India & Arab Countries Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture (IACCIA).

The MoU establishes a strategic framework for cooperation between the two organisations aimed at facilitating Business-to-Business (B2B) engagement,



investment promotion, trade missions, policy dialogue, sector-specific partnerships, and market access initiatives that will benefit businesses in India and across the Arab world. The agreement reflects a shared commitment to leveraging India's expanding network of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and comprehensive economic partnerships to unlock new commercial opportunities for Indian and Arab companies.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Dr Wael Awwad, Acting Secretary General of IACCIA, emphasised that the partnership marks an important milestone in strengthening institutional cooperation between India's business community and the Arab world.

"The future of India-Arab relations must move beyond traditional trade towards long-term investment partnerships, integrated value chains, technology transfer,

innovation, and sustainable economic cooperation. This MoU is not merely an agreement between two institutions; it is a commitment to creating practical business opportunities that connect Indian enterprises with the dynamic markets of the Arab world," Dr Awwad said.

The partnership also aims to enhance awareness of investment opportunities created by India's growing network of trade agreements and strengthen engagement with sovereign wealth funds, financial institutions, investment agencies, chambers of commerce, and private-sector organisations across the Arab region.

The MoU underscores the shared vision of IACCIA and ASSOCHAM to build a stronger institutional bridge between India and the Arab world by fostering sustainable partnerships, encouraging cross-border investment, and creating long-term value for businesses and entrepreneurs on both sides.

Hindustan Zinc reports record Q1 profit of ₹5,469 crore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Hindustan Zinc Limited, the world's largest integrated zinc producer and among the top 10 silver producers globally, appointed Amarendra Prakash as the chief executive officer and whole-time director of the company effective August 1.

With over three decades of experience in India's steel sector, he had previ-



ously served as the Chairman & Managing

Director of SAIL from 2023 to 2026. During his tenure,

he led transformative initiatives spanning operational excellence, capacity expansion, digital transformation, and organisational performance across one of India's largest steel producers.

Hindustan Zinc contributed ₹6, 450 crore to the national exchequer (including royalties), riding on its strongest-ever first-quarter performance in FY 27 with ₹13,747 crore revenue and a net profit of ₹5, 469 crore.

DAILY SUDOKU

1 6 9 7 6 1

5 4 9 1 4 6

7 8 4 3 7

2 3 9 8 1 5

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

HOW TO SOLVE IT

Sudoku is a logic puzzle where you fill a 9x9 grid so that numbers 1 to 9 appear once in every row, column, and 3x3 box, using elimination and logical deduction—no maths involved.

SOLUTION (31.7.26)

1 8 6 5 7 4 9 2 3

9 4 2 6 3 1 8 5 7

7 5 3 8 2 9 4 1 6

6 7 8 4 5 2 3 9 1

2 9 4 1 6 3 5 7 8

5 3 1 7 9 8 6 4 2

8 2 9 3 1 5 7 6 4

3 6 5 2 4 7 1 8 9

4 1 7 9 8 6 2 3 5

DOUBLE CROSSWORD

SATURDAY | AUGUST 1, 2026

1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

SOLUTION (31.7.26)

ACROSS

4 They're spent making a bit of love amid the trees (6)

7 It has a steady influence in revolution

8 Issue a note to me and Reg, possibly (6)

10 Active soldier taking the beer round (5)

13 Alarm seeming loud to a listener (4)

14 Strengthen a delicate fabric (4)

15 Spinster in a state? (4)

16 To finish up as champions (3)

17 One fled from the Islands (4)

19 Double top to start, then it's victory! (4)

21 It can be auctioned for students' benefit

DOWN

1 Non-vegetarian food the old king left (5)

2 Misanthrope seeming not quite nice to little Cyrus (5)

3 One going on foot (4)

4 Feels panicky and runs away (5)

5 Swing round, not back (4)

6 It could, of course, be a foreign part (6)

9 Such varnish seems a bit sticky to mum

11 Either way, a silencer (3)

12 Wires that make the French terribly sad (5)

13 How to serve a friend with the last portion of fish (7)

15 The garment for many a company head

18 R-us-hed

20 Woken

21 Exit

22 T-jay

23 Bo-L-E-R-o

25 Air

28 O-air

30 M-Otto

31 Tense

32 Vale

33 Sims

21 Education

23 B-ass

24 Lac-k

26 Rot

27 Holy

29 Emit

32 Very

33 Snore

34 Nev-Ada

35 Termites

36 Popeye

1 Off-L

2 Cyrilic

4 Flies

5 Veer

6 Region

9 Ma-stic

11 Gag (rev.)

12 Lie-ads

13 Fin-ally

15 Ma-c

16 Tin

BRIEFLY

AM Green IGPL, Asian Tour to strengthen partnership



The AM Green Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) and the Asian Tour have reaffirmed their partnership following the successful staging of back-to-back tournaments in Morocco earlier this season, with both organisations committing to expand playing opportunities and player development initiatives. The collaboration was showcased at the Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort, where the \$160,000 AM Green IGPL Morocco Rising Stars 2026 was held on the Asian Development Tour (ADT) from May 28-31, followed by the \$500,000 AM Green IGPL Bharath Classic on the Asian Tour from June 4-7. More than 40 IGPL players earned places in the Bharath Classic, the league's flagship event which was staged outside India for the first time. Building on the success of the Morocco leg, the two bodies will continue to work together on scheduling, competitive opportunities and player development programmes aimed at strengthening the pathway for Indian golfers to compete on the international circuit. Asian Tour Commissioner and CEO Cho Minn Thant said the partnership had added a new dimension to Indian golf. "Working together with IGPL is important to us, and we look forward to continuing our association. IGPL has made some bold moves which benefit both players and golf fans. I have no doubt we will see exciting golf in the second half of the season," he said. IGPL CEO Uttam Singh Mundy said the partnership with the Asian Tour would continue to grow. "We have a strong collaboration with the Asian Tour, and we will continue to strengthen that relationship. I'm confident the partnership between IGPL and the Asian Tour will become even stronger in the future," he said.

Cabinet approves ₹29,000 crore for Khelo India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Calling it the most ambitious sports development programme since independence, the Union Cabinet on Friday approved an expanded Khelo India Scheme and enhanced the budget for Assistance to the National Sports Federations (ANSFs) with a combined outlay of ₹36,441 crore covering the next five years. The Government has allocated ₹29,054 crore to the Khelo India Scheme that aims to build a pool of talented athletes at the grass-roots level as India bids to become a global sporting hub by hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games and bidding for the 2036 Olympics.

The assistance to NSFs has been pegged at ₹7387 crore over the next five years. The existing budgetary allocation for the Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) for the year 2026-27 stood at ₹425 crore.

"The approved outlay is nearly eight times that of the previous Khelo India Scheme, reflecting the Government's commitment to making sports a cornerstone of youth development, nation-building and India's emergence as a global sporting powerhouse," read a statement from the Government. Khelo India was launched in 2017 and has been receiving the lion's share of allocation from the Union sports budget annually. The scheme currently has close to 2800 athletes on its roster, and they are provided Government funding for nutritional and training needs through



scholarships. A nationwide network of Khelo India Centres of Excellence (KICoEs), Khelo India Accredited Academies (KIAAs), Khelo India Centres (KICs) and Youth Sports Companies (YSCs) of the Armed Forces is currently in operation to train athletes. To strengthen the school sports ecosystem, the Government has introduced two new initiatives — Khelo India Feeder Schools (KIFS) and Khelo India Utkrisha Vidyalayas (KIUV) — which will "integrate sports with

mainstream education and enable early identification and systematic nurturing of talented children." The Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) Scheme for the period 2026-31 will financially support athletes' coaching, modern equipment, international exposure, engagement of foreign experts and participation in major international competitions. The scheme is designed to help NSFs conduct camps and tournaments. "It will also support sports coop-

eration with countries of the Global South and promote India's indigenous sports internationally," the Government stated. "Special emphasis has been placed on expanding opportunities for women athletes, para-athletes, indigenous sports, and sports as a tool for peace, inclusion and community development. "The scheme also provides support for organising the National Games and hosting major international sporting events in India," it added. The scheme also envisages a unified digital sports platform on which athlete databases, infrastructure, competitions, coaching resources, talent assessments, funding and Fit India participation would be integrated. The platform will enable data-driven planning, "transparent governance and personalised athlete development." The Government said it is hopeful that the revamp would lay a "strong foundation" for India's long-term ambitions, including the country's bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Another reform under the scheme is the creation of the Emerging Khelo India Athletes (E-KIAs) category alongside the existing Khelo India Athletes programme.

Real Madrid signs Spanish striker Carlos Espi

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Madrid

Real Madrid has signed 21-year-old striker Carlos Espi from fellow Spanish club Levante, the powerhouse said on Friday. Madrid reportedly paid 25 million euros (\$28 million) for one of the sensations of La Liga last season. Levante said the transfer was a club record for a homegrown player without confirming the fee mentioned in local media. Espi's team-high 11 goals in 25 appearances

last season for Levante helped it avoid relegation. He has also played for Spain's youth sides. He could fill the rotation spot currently occupied by Gonzalo Garcia, a backup striker who is reportedly close to a move to Fulham in the Premier League. Madrid has been busy in the transfer market after not winning any titles last campaign. In addition to bringing back coach Jose Mourinho, it has also signed Marc Cucurella, Bernardo Silva, Ibrahima Konate and Denzel Dumfries.

बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम

JABALPUR ZONAL OFFICE, WRIGHT TOWN, JABALPUR PH: 0761-2480065,67,68

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Bank of Maharashtra, the possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Maharashtra, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" & "WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" on **18.08.2026**, for recovery of the balance due to the Bank of Maharashtra from the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned in the table. Details of the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, amount due, Short description of the immovable property and encumbrances known thereon, possession type, reserve price and the earnest money deposit are also given as under-

Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor	Outstanding Dues for Recovery of which Property are being sold	Description of properties	Type of Possession	Reserve Price EMD Amount Bid Increase Amount
1) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur M/s Shree Nakoda Ginning and Pressing Factory Through its Directors/Guarantors/ LRs 1. Mr. Sushil Doshi 2. Mr. Premchand Doshi 3. Mr. Sawan Doshi 4. Mr. Anand Doshi (Deceased) Through its LRs Mrs. Puja Jain & Pahal Jain 5. Mr. Mridul Doshi Guarantors - 1. Mr. Sushil S/o Mr. Amolachand Doshi 2. Mr. Premchand S/o Amolachand Doshi 3. Mr. Sawan S/o Praveen Doshi 4. Mr. Anand S/o Prakash Jain (Deceased) through its LRs Mrs. Puja Jain & Pahal Jain (Natural Gurdian - Puja Jain) 5. Mr. Mridul S/o Sushil Doshi 6. Mr. Amolachand S/o Gulabchand Doshi (Deceased) through its LRs Mr. SusilKumar, Prakash Chand & Premchand 7. Mrs. Hukumbai W/o Mr. Amolachand Doshi (Deceased)Through its LRs Mr. SusilKumar, Prakash Chand & Premchand 8. Mrs. Chandrakanta W/o Late Mr. Praveen Kumar 9. Mr. Prakash S/o Mr. Amolachand Doshi 10. Mrs. Pankunwar Bai W/o Mr. Sushilkumar Doshi 11. Mrs. Mamtabai W/o Mr. Premchand Doshi 12. Mr. Praveen S/o Amolachand Doshi All R/o- Gram: Padliya, Near Karahi, Tehsil: Maheshwar, Dist. Khargone (M. P.)	Rs.18,77,43,542/- (Rupees Eighteen crores Seventy seven lakhs fourty three thousands five hundred forty two only) + Unapplied interest on contractual rate w.e.f. 01.11.2019 + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses	PH no.56, Survey No. 56/1/1, village Padliya Khurd, Tehsil Maheshwar Dist. Khargone area 0.30 hect. Owner: Mrs. Chandrakanta W/o Praveen Kumar Doshi, Mr. Sawan S/o Prveen kumar Doshi and Mrs. Sonam W/o Piyush Kumar Doshi All the pieces of land and building constructed on plot (House)no. 270, Padliya Khurd, Tehsil Maheshwar Dist. Khargone admeasuring 235.79 sq.mtr. Owner: Mr. Prakash Chandra, Mr. Sushil, Mr. Premchand, Ms. Vijaya, Mrs. Chandrakanta, Mr. Gaurav, aman and Ms. Priyal PH. no. 57,(Old PH N. 56) S.No. 3/11 and S.No. 3/10 village Aakhpura, Tehsil Maheshwar Dist. Khargone,area admeasuring 0.675 + 0.659 hect. Total area - 1.334 Hectare @ 13340.00 Sqm. Owner: Mr. Prakash Chandra, Mr. Sushil, Mr. Premchand, Ms. Vijaya, Mrs. Chandrakanta, Mr. Gaurav, aman and Ms. Priyal	Symbolic Symbolic Symbolic	Rs.9690000/- Rs.969000/- Rs.10000/- Rs.5227000/- Rs.522700/- Rs.10000/- Rs.14174000/- Rs.1417400/- Rs.10000/-
2) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s Gurukripa Dehydrated Vegetables Through its Proprietor Mr. Narendra Hammad (Deceased) s/o Shri. Laxman Hammad Through its Lrs (1) Mrs. Pooja Hammad w/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad (2) Master Poorvansh Hammad (minor) s/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad (Through its Natural Guardian Mrs. Pooja Hammad w/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad) Address - Plot no.7 to 11, Industrial Area, Segaon, Badwani, Tehsil and Dist. Badwani. Guarantor: Shri. Laxman Hammad s/o Shri. Dhanaji Hammad Address - House no. 401, village: balkuan, Tehsil and Dist: Badwani	Rs.2,43,79,247/- (Rupees Two Crore Fourty Three Lakh Seventy Nine thousand Two Hundred Fourty Seven only) (Ledger Bal: Rs.2,43,79,247/- + Unapplied Interest @ 13.45% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 07.10.2016 + penal interest and other charges / expenses	Diverted land and construction thereon bearing Survey No. 105/3 PH no 09 (New no 23), situated at gram Balkunwan, Tehsil and district Barwani M.P. Total area - 0.089 hectare (890 sq.mtr.) Owned by : Shri. Laxman Hammad s/o Shri. Dhanaji Hammad	Symbolic	Rs.1755000 Rs. 175500/- Rs.10000/-
3) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s. Ruchi Traders Proprietor: Mr. Suraj Singh s/o Mr. Fateh Singh Address1: Imaliya Swaroop, Berasia, Laxminarayan Krishi Upaj Mandi, 80 feet road, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 463106, Address2: Village Ramgada, Tehsil Berasia, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 463106	Rs.1,26,05,017.70/- (Rupees One Crore Twenty Six Lakh Five thousand Seventeen rupees and Seventy Paise only) + Unapplied Interest Rs. 3,09,621.88/- upto 24/01/2024 + penal interest @ 2% and other expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2024	(A) All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixtures there being & lying at diverted commercial land & Building on Khasra No. 3/1/1/3/kha/2/ka (Re no Kh No. 3/1/1/3/2/2/1 area 0.40 Hect or 1.00 Acre situated at village Imaliya Swaroop, patwari Hika No. 53/25, adjacent to main Berasia to Narsingh Garh Road, R.N.M. 02, Tehsil Berasia, Distt - Bhopal (M.P.) (Owned by Mr. Suraj Singh) (B)All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixtures there being & lying at diverted commercial land & Building on Khasra No. 3/1/1/3/kha/2/kha (Re no Kh No. 3/1/1/3/2/2 area 0.405 Hect or 1.00 Acre situated at village Imaliya Swaroop, patwari Hika No. 53/25, adjacent to main Berasia to Narsingh Garh Road, R.N.M. 02, Tehsil Berasia, Distt - Bhopal (M.P.) Owned by - Mr. Suraj Singh	Physical	Rs. 12441000/- Rs. 1244100/- Rs.10000/-
4) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s. LKT Hi Tech Hospital Proprietor: Dr. Kunj Lata Richhariya D/o Shri. Ramesh Chandra Richhariya, Address1: LKT Hi Tech Hospital, Mugaliya Hat, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 462024, Address2: LKT Hi Tech Hospital, ward No 8, Vidisha By-Pass road, Near Police station, Ashok Nagar (M.P) Pin - 473331	Rs.71,95,005.70/- (Rupees Seventy One Lakh Five thousand Seventeen rupees and Seventy Paise only) + Unapplied Interest Rs. 3,09,621.88/- upto 24/01/2024 + penal interest @ 2% and other expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2024	All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixture there being & lying at Flat No. MIG G 001, Ground floor, Silver Inn Homes, Old Ashoka Garden, Northern part of plot no 95,96,97, ward No. 69, Distt - Bhopal (M.P.) admeasuring area 436 Sq. ft./ 40.52 Sqm.	Physical	Rs.990000/- Rs.1244100/- Rs.10000/-
5) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s Sharmila Singhai B-16, Manisha Market, Shahpura, Bhopal- 462016 Guarantor: 1. Smt. Sharmila, W/o: Shri Prashant Singhai 2. Shri Prashant Singhai, S/o: Shri M. M Singhai All - R/o.- B-16, Manisha Market, Shahpura, Bhopal- 462016	Rs.2,01,27,048/- + Unapplied interest on contractual rate w.e.f. 01.01.2019+ penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses	1. Open land/plot situated at Khasra no. 309 admeasuring 0.10 hect (1000 Sq. Mt.). At Nayapura, Kolar Road, PH no. 38/28 R.N.M -03 ,Vikas Khand Fanda Tahsil Huzur, Bhopal 2. Open land/plot situated at Khasra No. 307 admeasuring 0.10 hect (1000 Sq. Mt.). At Nayapura, Kolar Road, PH no. 38/28 R.N.M -03 ,Vikas Khand Fanda Tahsil Huzur, Bhopal Total Plot area 1000 + 1000 = 2000sq.mtr. Owner: Ms.Sharmila Singhai, Shri Prashant Singhai	Symbolic	Rs.3,24,00,000/- Rs.32,40,000/- Rs.10000/-

Inspection of Properties by bidder: 13.08.2026 & 14.08.2026 between 11:00 am. and 4:00 pm
Last Date & Time for Submission of Bid application/KYC documents/EMD etc. 18.08.2026 up to 11.00 a.m.
Date & time of E-auction with auto extention for 10 minutes- 18.08.2026 between 12.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

The auction sale will be On-line E-Auction / Bidding through website <https://baanet.com>, email: support.baanet@psballiance.com. Mob.- 8291220220 The intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to register on portal using their mobile number and email id. Please take note that the registration and KYC approval etc take 2-3 working days. For detail terms and conditions of sale please refer to the link provided in <https://bankofmaharashtra.bank.in/asset-for-sales-search> and <https://baanet.com>. Also prospective bidders may contact the authorized officials **Contact details: Incharge Recovery Jabalpur Shri Onkar Kumar (Zonal Manager) - 9823296164, Shri Nikhil S Patil (DZM) - 7387211200, Shri Bhushan Mohite (CM Recovery - Z.O.) - 9923257090, Dr. Ravikumar Verma (Sr. Manager) (9300955688) & Shri Hariom Trivedi (CM & Authorised Officer) - 9405719723**
Note - The sales are subject to the order/outcome of any case pending/ filed if any before Court/Tribunal

Sale Notice to Borrower/Guarantors/Legal Heirs(LRs)/Coparceners

Date: 01/08/2026

The above shall be treated as Notice of 15days u/r 9(1) of security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002

Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

M.P. HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE DEV. BOARD

NOTICE INVITING BID (2nd Call) 1328

Tender No. 2026_MPHID_525822 Dated : 30.07.2026

Request for Proposal for selection of Developer for "Construction of Collectorate, Divisional Commissioner office, I.G. Office & Multilevel Parking at Existing Collectorate campus Bhopal under re-densification policy of GoMP".

Government of Madhya Pradesh through M.P. Housing & Infrastructure Development Board (MPHIDB) intends to carry out "Construction of Collectorate, Divisional Commissioner office, I.G. Office & Multilevel Parking at Existing Collectorate campus Bhopal under re-densification policy of GoMP" ("the Project/Government Facilities"). MPHIDB intends to appoint a Developer as per the terms and condition mentioned in RFP document for Construction and Development of above-mentioned Government Facilities.

The selected Developer will be provided the "Land-Ownership Rights" on Compensatory Land Parcels (CLP) mentioned in RFP admeasuring 3.36 Hectare (CLP 1 – 2.15 Hectare, CLP 2 – 0.63 Hectare and CLP 3 – 0.58 Hectare at old secretariat Bhopal). The prospective bidders have to quote the Premium for "Land-Ownership Rights" on the CLP. The Bidder quoting Highest Premium shall be selected as Developer for the Project. The selected Developer has to pay the quoted Premium partly in monetary terms and partly in kind in the form of cost of construction of the Government Facilities as per provisions of the RFP Document. The MPHIDB invites bids from reputed & experienced entities for Selection of a Developer for the Project, through transparent online bidding process. RFP documents can be downloaded and purchased from GoMP online e-tender portal <https://mptenders.gov.in/>

RFP Document Cost	Rs. 0.50 Lacs + GST
Online sale of RFP Document	01.08.2026
Bid Security	Rs. 1.29 Crore
Estimated Cost of Government Facilities	Rs. 217.96 Crore (Excluding GST)
Reserve Price of CLP	Rs. 256.92 Crore
Pre-bid meeting	06.08.2026

Complete bids can be submitted online from 01.08.2026 to 20.08.2026 up to 17.30 Hrs. through the online e-tender portal <https://mptenders.gov.in>.
Visit us : www.mphousing.in Deputy Housing Commissioner
E- mail : dhc2hbbl@mp.gov.in [f3/mphidb](https://t.me/mphidb) Circle-2, Bhopal
M.P. Madhyam/127303/2026 [f3/mphidb](https://t.me/mphidb) Official Contact No. : 9425148302

HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Corporate Office: 167-169, 2nd floor, Near Little Mount Metro Station, Saipet, Chennai - 600015
Regional Office - Office No.153, 1st Floor, Orbit Mall, Vijay Nagar, Indore, MP - 452010
Email - auction@hindujahousingfinance.com

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION CUM SALE (APPENDIX – IV A) (RULE 8(6))

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to Hinduja Housing Finance Ltd. Corporate Office at Hinduja Housing Finance Limited, 167-169, 2nd floor, Anna Salai, Saidapet, Chennai, 600015 and Regional Office - Office No.153, 1st Floor, Orbit Mall, Vijay Nagar, Indore, MP - 452010. Under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter "Act"). Whereas the Authorized Officer of Sameer Singh had taken the possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued U/S 13(2) of the Act in the following loan accounts/prospect nos., with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS & AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for realization of dues. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website: www.bankeauctions.com

Loan Account No. Borrower (s) / Co-Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s)	Demand Notice Date Amount due as on date Bid Increase Amount	Description of the Immovable property/ Secured Asset	Date of Possession Reserved Price (in Rs.) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)
MP/IDR/UJUN/A0000000553 Mr. Shambhu Singh Mrs. Santosh Kunwar	11-08-2025 Rs. 599517/-	Property Situated at, Bhawan Kramank 26 Gram Bhundkhedi, Thesil Makdon District Ujjain -456688 M.P.	08-07-2026 Rs. 900000/- Rs. 900000/-
MP/GUN/AKNR/A000000448 Mr. BHASKAR SINGH YADAV Mrs. MANA BAI BAI Mr. RAJODHAR SINGH YADAV Mr. GIRRAJ SINGH YADAV	12-01-2026 Rs. 10,66,814/-	Survey No. 61/4/1(S), Gram PadamaKhedi, PH No. 24, Tehsil & Dist. Guna, (M.P.) 473001. Total Area 7500 Sqft. Boundaries - East - Road, West - Self land of Downter Rajdhar Singh Yadav, North - House of Ashok Yadav, South - House of Saadhan Lal Singh Yadav	30-07-2026 Rs. 1780000/- Rs. 1780000/-
MP/SGR/SAGR/A000000400 Mrs. Kirti Vishwakarma Mr. Vijay Vishwakarma	12/02/2026 Rs. 4,64,127/-	Khasra No 63/8, Gram Rajakhedi, Makroniya, Patwari Halka No. 71, Urban, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, India, 470004. Total Area 565.5 Sqft. Or 52.27 Samtr. Bounded As - East - Plot of Rajkumar, West - Plot of Others, North - 20 Ft. Road, South - Plot of Vijay Tiwari	10-06-2026 Rs. 1290000/- Rs. 1290000/-
MP/MAN/MASR/A000002325 Mr. Tughan Singh Chavada S/o Shyam Singh Chavada Mrs. Radha Bai Chavada	14/01/2026 Rs.659558 -/-	Plot No 217 of Survey 259, PHNo 53, Gram Kundaliya , Near By Govt School , Rural , Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh , India - 458118 Total Area = 5000 Sqft Bounded As - East - House Of Mr. Prem Singh Chavda And Mr Vijay Singh, West - Road, North - House Of Mr. Indar Singh S/o Mr Bihari (dspn 215), South - Agriland Of Mr. Vikram S/o Mr Motilal	01-07-2026 Rs. 1650000/- Rs. 1650000/-
MP/BPL/VDSA/A000000327 MP/BPL/VDSA/A000000782 Mr. AJAY SINGH Mrs. KALA BAI	10/02/2026 Rs. 17,28,184/-	All that Property i.e House of Self Construction Situated at Gram Behlot PH No. 42 Plot No. 133, Survey No. 510/2 Tehsil Basoda District Vidisha Total Area – 600 Sqft Bounded As - East - Road, West - Plot No. 116, North - Plot No. 132, South - Road	29-07-2026 Rs. 2060000/- Rs. 2060000/-

Terms & Conditions - 1. Last Date of Submission of DD of Earnest Money Deposit along with KYC. Tender Form and Accepted terms and conditions (Tender Documents) is **01.09.2026 within 3:00 PM** at the Branch Office address mentioned herein above or uploaded on <https://www.bankeauctions.com> Tenders documents received beyond last date will be considered as invalid tender (and shall accordingly be rejected. No interest shall be paid on the EMD. 2. Date of Opening of the Bid/ Offer (Auction Date) for Property is **02.09.2026** on <https://www.bankeauctions.com> at **03:00 PM to 05:00 PM**. 3. HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED (HHFL) is not responsible for any liabilities whatsoever pending upon the property as mentioned above. The Property shall be auctioned on "As is Where Is Basis" "As is what Is Basis" and "Whatever is There Is Basis" 4. The Demand Draft Should be made in favor of Hinduja Housing Finance Limited only. 5. Auction/Bidding shall be only through "Online Electronic Bidding through the website <https://www.bankeauctions.com> Bidders are advised to go through the website for detailed terms before taking part in the auction sale proceedings. 6. The intending bidders should register their names at portal M/s C1 India Private Limited through the link <https://www.bankeauctions.com> and get their User ID and password free of cost. Prospective bidder may avail online training on E-auction from the service provider M/S C1 India Pvt Ltd., Plot No- 68, 3rd floor Sector 44 Gurgaon Haryana -122003 (Contact no. 7291981124,25,26) Support Email - Support@bankeauctions.com , Mr. Mithlesh Kumar, Mob. +91 70808 04466. Email: delhi@c1india.com and support@bankeauctions.com 7. For further details contact Authorised Officer of Hinduja Housing Finance Limited, Vaibhav Shrivastava - 7987969803, Rajesh Chakotiya (RRM) - 84355 71111, Sachin Bhalekar (ZRM)- 8779984037, Dharamveer Yadav - 8269420174, or the service provider M/S C1 India Pvt Ltd., Plot No- 68, 3rd floor Sector 44 Gurgaon Haryana -122003 (Contact no. 7291981124,25,26) Support Email - Support@bankeauctions.com , Mr. Mithlesh Kumar, Mob. +91 70808 04466. Email: delhi@c1india.com and support@bankeauctions.com As on date, there is no order restraining and/or court injunction HHFL the authorized Officer of HHFL from selling alienating and/or disposing of the above immovable properties / secured assets 8. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link website i.e. <https://www.bankeauctions.com>
Date-01.08.2026

Authorised Officer



बलराम कृषि महोत्सव

15 जुलाई से 13 नवंबर 2026

अन्नदाता का सम्मान, आधुनिक कृषि के नवाचार और
प्रदेश की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक विरासत का एक ही मंच पर समागम



नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री



नर्मदापुरम संभाग में महोत्सव

हरदा

1 अगस्त 2026

बैतूल

3 अगस्त

इटारसी (नर्मदापुरम)

5 अगस्त



किसान संवाद

सुझावों का आदान-प्रदान



सम्मान का गौरवपूर्ण मंच

उत्कृष्ट किसान, विद्यार्थी एवं सोशल मीडिया
इन्फ्लुएंसर्स का सम्मान



आधुनिक कृषि का प्रदर्शन

उन्नत कृषि तकनीकों की
नवीनतम जानकारी



कृषि और संस्कृति का अनुपम संगम

देशभक्ति गीत, लोकनृत्य
और सांस्कृतिक प्रस्तुतियां

किसानों के हित में विभागों द्वारा कार्य

उद्यानिकी तथा खाद्य प्रसंस्करण

उद्यानिकी का रकबा 30 लाख हेक्टेयर एवं
उत्पादन 490 लाख मीट्रिक टन बढ़ाने का लक्ष्य

राजस्व

कृषि भूमि के भू-अर्जन पर बाजार दर से
4 गुना मुआवजा देने का निर्णय
पीएम किसान सम्मान, मुख्यमंत्री किसान
कल्याण में सालाना ₹12000 की सहायता

ऊर्जा

किसानों को ₹5 में बिजली के स्थाई कनेक्शन
एवं 10 हॉर्सपावर तक ऊर्जा प्रभार पर सब्सिडी

सूक्ष्म, लघु एवं मध्यम उद्यम

खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योगों को बढ़ावा देने हेतु
60% तक प्रोत्साहन

नवीन एवं नवकरणीय ऊर्जा

पीएम कुसुम योजना में 32 लाख
किसानों को सोलर पंप देने का लक्ष्य

कुटीर एवं ग्रामोद्योग

महिला एवं ग्रामीण युवाओं को कुटीर उद्योग
से जोड़कर स्वरोज़गार को बढ़ावा

मध्यप्रदेश पर्यटन

ग्रामीण पर्यटन को प्रोत्साहन
1000 होम-स्टे बनाने का लक्ष्य

जनसम्पर्क

कृषक कल्याणकारी योजनाओं एवं
कार्यक्रमों का व्यापक प्रचार-प्रसार

पशुपालन एवं डेयरी

दुग्ध संकलन प्रतिदिन 12 लाख लीटर से
बढ़ाकर 50 लाख लीटर करने का लक्ष्य

सहकारिता

5,562 दुग्ध समितियों का
वित्तीय समावेशन कर 83 हजार सदस्यों के
जिला सहकारी बैंकों में खाते खोले गए
0% ब्याज दर पर फसल ऋण,
भुगतान के लिए साल भर का समय

औद्योगिक नीति एवं निवेश प्रोत्साहन

कृषि आधारित उद्योगों की स्थापना पर
50% तक सब्सिडी

मछुआ कल्याण तथा मत्स्य विकास

₹6000 करोड़ के मत्स्य निर्यात का लक्ष्य,
₹12,400 करोड़+ का आ रहा निवेश

जल संसाधन

55 लाख हेक्टेयर में सिंचाई को वर्ष 2028-29
तक 100 लाख हेक्टेयर करने का लक्ष्य

नर्मदा घाटी विकास

नर्मदा बेसिन प्रोजेक्ट्स के माध्यम से
सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को वित्त पोषण

संस्कृति

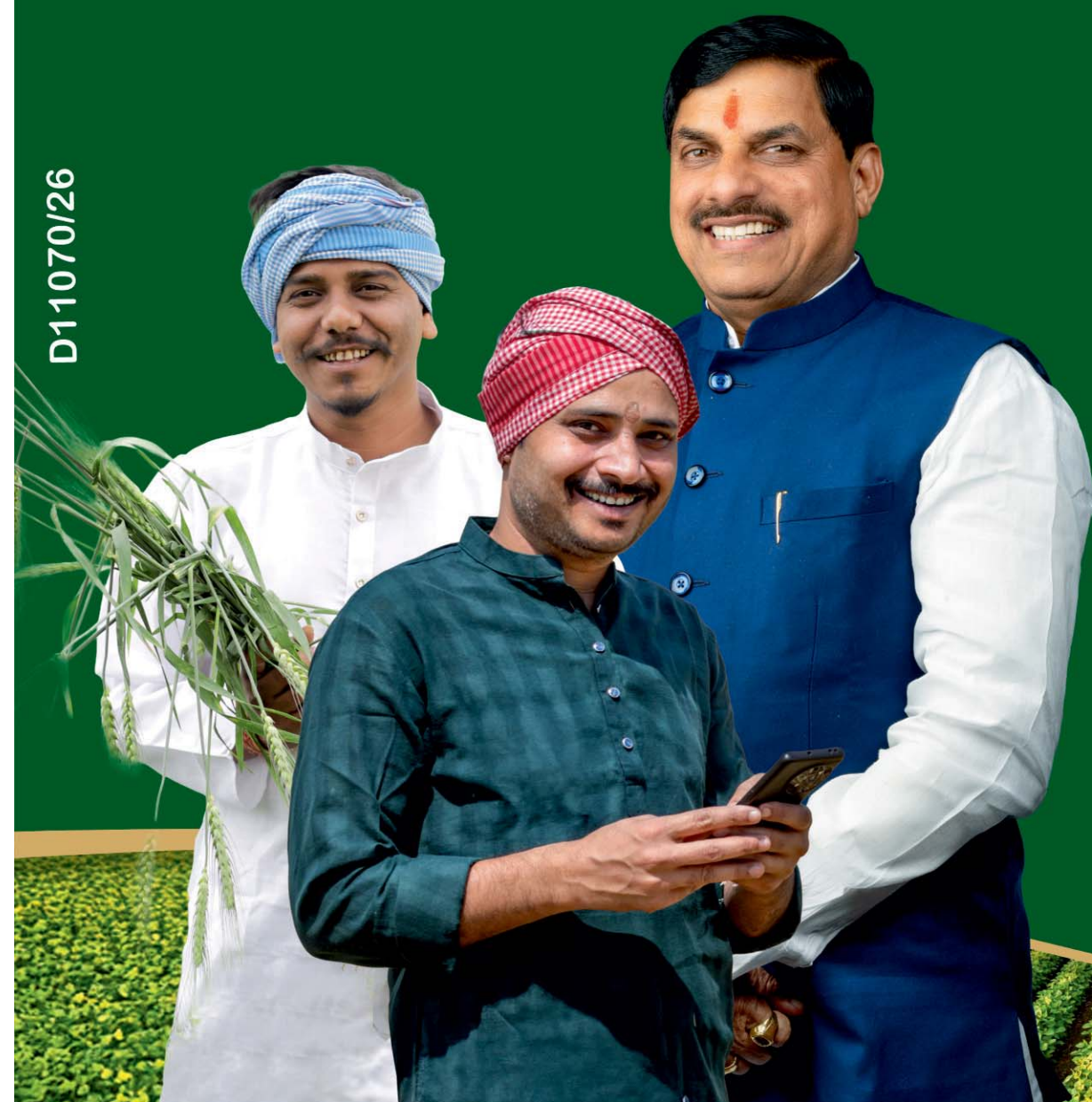
श्री अन्न, ग्रामीण व्यंजन एवं
स्थानीय परम्पराओं को प्रोत्साहन

मुख्य अतिथि

डॉ. मोहन यादव

मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

D11070/26



सीधा प्रसारण



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