

# TOP STORY



Gill outlines role, his "hallmark" batting approach, expectations from Dubai surface



South Korea's impeached President Yoon released from prison

"Shows struggle of father to fulfill his daughter's dream" Abhishek Bachchan



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India looks for good trade agreement with US: Sitharaman



WEATHER	
Sunrise	6:39 AM
Sunset	6:26 PM
Moonrise	1:49 PM
Moonset	4:19 AM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	31°C
Minimum	18°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
Maximum	32°C
Minimum	19°C

## 'Premature to talk about details,' says India after Trump's claim of New Delhi agreeing to cut tariffs

Government sources claimed that the negotiations for a trade deal had just begun | Trump's announcement that India agreed to bring tariffs "way down" was largely viewed by New Delhi as premature.

New Delhi: Negotiations between India and the US for a trade deal have just begun and it would be premature to talk about its details like tariff cuts, government sources said on Saturday, hours after US President Donald Trump said India agreed to slash levies "way down" on American products.



India agreed to bring tariffs "way down" was largely viewed by New Delhi as premature.

"India charges us massive tariffs, you can't even sell anything in India, it's almost restrictive...By the way, they have agreed to cut their tariffs way down now because somebody is finally exposing them for what they have done," the US president told reporters in the White House.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, when asked at a media briefing on Saturday about

Trump's remarks on tariffs and the negotiations for the proposed trade deal, declined to provide details.

"I will not get into that at this point of time because these are ongoing discussions, so it would not be right to get into it," he said.

At the same time, Misri pointed out that trade liberalisation was the basis for several bilateral trade agreements finalised by India in recent years.

"There are ongoing discussions with several other partners on these

issues now, and I think the ongoing discussions should be seen in that context as well," he said.

In line with his "America First" policy, Trump this week announced reciprocal tariffs from April 2 on its partners and other nations that impose higher levies on imports from the US.

The US president's tariff tussle has stoked fears of a global trade war with many countries already announcing counter-measures to deal with it.

The Indian government sources said dis-

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## One killed, over a dozen injured as clashes erupt in Manipur



Imphal: One protester was killed while 25 others, including women, were injured in clashes between Kuki demonstrators and security forces in different parts of Manipur's Kangpokpi district on Saturday, officials said.

The deceased has been identified as Lalgothang Singit. The 30-year-old received bullet injuries during the clashes at Keithelmanbi and died on the way to hospital, police said.

At least 25 protesters sustained different types of injuries during the negotiation, the sources said in what is being seen as New Delhi's tacit response to the US president's claim.

"Since the discussions have just begun, it would be premature to talk about its details. There is also a context for each dimension, that would reflect the interests of both sides," said a source. Agency

Clashes erupted between demonstrators and security forces in the Kuki-dominated district after police fired tear gas to disperse them, as they opposed Union Home Minister

Amit Shah's directive allowing free movement across the state.

The situation worsened when protesters set fire to private vehicles and attempted to stop a state transport bus traveling from Imphal to Senapati district.

Protesters also blocked NH-2 (Imphal-Dimapur highway) and burned tyres to obstruct movement of government vehicles.

The protest was also directed against the Federation of Civil Society (FOCS), a Meitei organisation. Agency

## GST rates will come down further: Nirmala Sitharaman

Mumbai: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the GST rates will come down further and the work on rationalising tax rates and slabs has "almost reached a finale".

She said that the revenue neutral rate (RNR) has come down from 15.8 per cent at the time of the launch of GST on July 1, 2017, to 11.4 per cent in 2023.

"It will come down even further down," the minister added.

The GST Council, headed by Sitharaman and comprising her state counterparts, in September 2021, set up a group of ministers (GoM) to rationalise GST rates and suggest changes in slabs. The GoM comprises finance ministers of 6 states.



tion at 'The Economic Times Awards' on whether it is time to rationalise GST rates and slabs, Sitharaman said "that work has almost reached a finale".

"Now, at this stage, there is one more look that I would (take) the groups (GoM) have done excellent work, but I still have taken it upon myself to, once more, completely review each of the groups' works, and then probably take it to

take it to the Council to see if we can come to a final conclusion on this," she said.

Sitharaman said some more work is required on rate rationalisation. "We'll take it to the next council (meeting). We are very close to coming to a final call on some of the very critical issues, reduction, rationalisation of rates, looking at the number of slabs and so on," she said.

Agency

## Delhi Cabinet approves scheme to provide Rs. 2,500 per month to women

New Delhi: The announcement of the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana, ensuring a monthly allowance of Rs 2,500, turned the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium into a hub of celebration.

The rhythmic beats of dhol and nagara filling the air as the International Women's Day programme unfolded in a spectacle of joy and celebration as women welcomed the Rs 2,500 monthly allowance initiative as a vital support with some planned to save it for future while others intended to use it for their children and families.

Adding to the festive spirit, women showered flowers on each other as a gesture of warmth and celebration, dancing with joy and singing songs. Slogans of "Mahila Morcha" echoed



through the air. Addressing the gathering, BJP National President JP Nadra announced that the Delhi Cabinet had approved an allocation of Rs 5,100 crore for implementing the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana and congratulated Chief Minister Rekha Gupta for the initiative.

As he concluded his speech, the stadium erupted with cheers of joy and the attendees hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Many

huri Yadav, expressed her excitement, saying, "When the scheme was announced, we were all so happy. I just hope we start receiving the money soon. I plan to use the first installment for donation and bhandara as a thanksgiving to God. From the next installments, I will use the money for my personal needs."

At the venue, women cheered and shared their thoughts. Many emphasised that this initiative was particularly empowering for those without an independent source of income.

"For those of us who rely entirely on our families for even a single penny, this money is a huge relief," one woman shared. Others echoed similar sentiments, highlighting the necessity of financial support for economic independence. Agency

## Gautam Buddha Nagar emerging as a health tourism hub: CM Yogi

Gautam Buddha Nagar: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Saturday, said that Gautam Buddha Nagar is emerging fast as a hub of health tourism. During his one-day visit, he inaugurated the newly developed "Sharda Care-Health City" in Greater Noida, praising it as a unique blend of service and investment.



Emphasizing the importance of quality education and healthcare, he underscored their role in building a civilized society. He further appreciated the private sector's con-

tribution, noting that the government has taken several steps to encourage investment in the health sector.

CM Yogi also highlighted Sharda University as an important center for

The Chief Minister pointed out that while only six AIIMS were established in India over 70 years, their number surged to 22 in the last 10 years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. In Uttar Pradesh, the number of medical colleges has surged from just 12 in 2017 to 40 new institutions in the past eight years. Additionally, 37 private medical colleges have been established, including those in Maharajganj, Sambhal, and Shamli, along with three more through the pub-

lic-private partnership model.

The budget already includes provisions for establishing medical colleges in Ballia and Balrampur, with plans to set up institutions in the remaining six districts in the near future.

Highlighting the strengthening of health infrastructure in rural areas, the Chief Minister noted that Uttar Pradesh now hosts two AIIMS in Gorakhpur and Rae Bareilly, as well as the Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS) of BHU. Agency

## Israeli tourist among 2 women gang-raped near Hampi



Hampi: Assaults gang raped a 27-year-old Israeli tourist and a 29-year-old homestay operator near the Hampi heritage site in Karnataka and killed a male tourist from Odisha by attacking him

and pushing him into Tungbhadra canal late on Thursday night for not paying Rs 100 for petrol.

The Israeli tourist and the homestay owner were sitting near the Tungbhadra Left Bank Canal and listening to

music when they were attacked by three men.

The gang also attacked three male tourists who were present at the scene.

On Saturday the police arrested Mallesh alias Handimalla (22) and Chetan Sai (21), residents of Gangavathi in connection with the gang-rape and murder. The Gangavathi police had formed special teams to crack the case. Agency

'Premature to talk about details,' says India after Trump's claim of New Delhi agreeing to cut tariffs

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The sources also pointed out how discussions had taken place between India and the US for a limited trade deal during the first Trump administration.

For various reasons, it did not produce an outcome, they said.

India has reduced its average applied tariffs significantly for key developed countries like Australia, the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland and Norway under recently concluded mutually beneficial bilateral trade agreements.

Similar negotiations are currently underway with the European Union and the UK, among other partners.

The ongoing discussions with the US should be seen in this context, the sources said.

India has not yet directly commented on Trump's announcement on reciprocal tariffs but said it is looking at deepening trade ties with the US including by reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers under a bilateral trade agreement.

Agency

# Women's Day President Murmu calls for greater workforce participation of women

New Delhi:

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday underscored the need for increased participation of women in the workforce as the country moves towards becoming the world's third-largest economy.

Speaking on the occasion of International Women's Day at a national consultation organised by the Women and Child Development Ministry, Murmu emphasised that providing equal opportunities in education and employment is crucial for achieving this goal.

"As India progresses towards becoming the world's third-largest economy, the participation of women in the workforce must increase at the same pace," she said.

She stressed that a "self-reliant, independent and empowered woman" is key to building a 'Viksit Bharat'.

"The vision of a Viksit Bharat is our collective aspiration and we must work together to achieve it," she said, urging everyone to support



President Droupadi Murmu speaking at a podium during the International Women's Day event.

women at every step towards self-reliance and success. Highlighting the contributions of Indian women, Murmu said, "Our daughters are making immense contributions in realising the dream of a Viksit Bharat. It is imperative that society provides them with an even better environment to progress."

She called for creating

a society where every girl and boy feels safe and is free to make independent life choices without fear. "We must build an ideal society where no child, be it a son or daughter, hesitates to travel alone or live independently at any time," she said, adding that a culture of respect for women will foster a progressive and social

empowerment. Women are bringing multifold changes in the society, the mindset that women can't ride a bike is now a past story. We are happy to contribute towards the Inclusive India Mission"

Under this training initiative expert bikers will teach women how to ride bikes so they can make their way to jobs and salaries. Women Biking team will train more than 1000 women to ride bike and become employed as there is a rush to hire women riders by companies such as Zomato, Swiggy, Ecom Express and

others.

The rally symbolized women's empowerment and highlighted the importance of education and equality for girls. Women from different walks of life enthusiastically participated, showcasing their strength and determination.

The head of bikers group Amit Saini said that "Through our ride we celebrate resilience of women and call for collective efforts to ensure that every girl has the opportunity to thrive and succeed. We aim to train more than 1000 women learn to ride bike enabling their

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She emphasised that a mother's effort in raising responsible citizens should be recognised and respected rather than seen as a limitation. "A mother, through her dedication, can shape her children into ideal citizens," she said. President Murmu marked 50 years of International Women's Day celebrations, acknowledging the remarkable progress of women in this period.

"There is no doubt that women have made unprecedented strides over the last five decades. My own journey -- from a modest background in Odisha to Rashtrapati Bhavan -- is a testament to the opportunities for equality and social justice available to women in India," she said.

She expressed confidence that examples of successful women would continue to multiply.

She commended the government's continued efforts toward women's empowerment, highlighting initiatives like the 'Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam', which provides reservation for women in Parliament and state assemblies.

"This is a historic step towards women's political empowerment," she said.

The President also spoke about economic empowerment schemes such as self-help groups and the 'Lakshmi' programme that aim to enhance financial independence among women.

"The Nammo Drone Didi scheme is another example of how women are being equipped with technical skills and financial stability," she said.

Murmu called for a collective shift in mindset, emphasising that women and men are equal partners in progress.

Agency

## Throttle Up for Women Power: Park Hospital's Super Women Ride Takes Off

New Delhi:

A ride for women, by women, celebrating women's day, this was first-of-its-kind event for Gurgaon, organised by Park Group of Hospitals to encourage women to come forward and take control of their health and work.

On International Women's Day, bike ride was organised in the city by more than 100+ all women bikers , this motorcycle ride was organised to celebrate empowerment and togetherness. More than 100 women bikers attended the ride, that started from Park hospital and culminated at Park Plaza at Connaught Place New Delhi.

Elaborating further on the event, which aimed to bring together female riders in the city, Dr. (Maj.) Nitika Poonia, Chief Operating Operations, Park Hospital said "Park Group of Hospitals Organized this all women Bike Rally to spread awareness about women health and promote women



A group of women riding bicycles together during the 'Super Women Ride' event.

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## Judicial Delay in Telangana High Court on Crucial Constitutional Matter

Hyderabad:

The Telangana High Court, in a significant case concerning the violation of India's anti-defection law under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, has once again adjourned the matter despite extensive arguments made by the petitioner, Dr. K.A. Paul, appearing in person. This marks the seventh time the petitioner has argued before the court, yet no decisive order has been passed, further delaying justice.

The petitioner has been consistently raising the issue of illegal defections by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) who contested from the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) and later defected to the Indian National Congress (INC) without facing disqualification—a blatant violation of constitutional and democratic principles. The anti-defection law, upheld by the Supreme Court in multiple landmark cases, man-



Dr. K.A. Paul, the petitioner, speaking at a podium during the court proceedings.

dates that defecting legislators should be immediately disqualified. "The continued adjournment of this critical case raises serious concerns about judicial accountability and the rule of law in India. The delay directly contradicts the fundamental principle that 'Justice delayed is justice denied.' The petitioner cited past rulings, including the 1975 Allahabad High Court decision disqualifying

switch parties post-election without immediate consequences. However, in India, judicial inaction has allowed defecting legislators to continue holding office unlawfully for over a year in this matter and other matters for many years.

Dr. K.A. Paul has called upon the international legal community, democratic institutions, and human rights organizations to take note of this serious crisis in Indian democracy. He urges the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India Dr. Khanna and the Supreme Court to intervene and ensure that the judiciary fulfills its duty to uphold constitutional principles without further delay.

The petitioner warns that continued judicial inaction will have long-term consequences for India's democratic integrity and governance. He appeals to the people of India and the world to stand for justice, democ-

## Over 6 lakh cases notified under 100-day TB elimination campaign so far

New Delhi:

Over six lakh tuberculosis cases have been detected so far under an ongoing pan-India 100-day intensified campaign to eliminate TB and of them, 4.3 lakh patients were diagnosed from the 455 intervention districts, officials said on Saturday.

This is an outcome of a new strategy for early TB identification involving offering X-ray screening to high-risk populations, such as individuals with diabetes, smokers, those who are malnourished and people living with HIV adopted under the TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, they stated.

By deploying AI-enabled handheld X-ray machines, portable X-ray units and conducting door-to-door screenings in congregate settings, both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals were tested. Positive X-ray results were then

confirmed with NAAT (an advanced diagnostic test), leading to the identification of multiple asymptomatic TB patients.

"As a result of the intensified case finding approach adopted by the 100-day intensified TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, the TB programme has notified over 6.1 lakh TB patients across the country, of which 4.3 lakh patients were diagnosed from the 455 intervention districts," an official said.

"Jan Bhagidari approach helps over 11 crore persons get screened for TB. Since the launch of the campaign close to 12 lakh ni-kshay shivirs (TB screening camps) have been held across the country and over 11 crore people who are vulnerable to being affected by TB have been screened across the country." "Such mass mobilisa-

increase awareness, participate in ni-kshay shivirs and provide nutrition support to TB patients and their families through the Ni-kshay Mitra programme.



tion has been possible through different levers the National TB Elimination Programme has tapped into to combat ni-kshay shivirs (TB screening camps) and encourage early testing and screening," the official stated.

focus on 347 intervention districts, which was subsequently scaled up to 455 districts across the country. Through the course of the campaign, over 27,000 elected representatives across different levels (union and state ministers, MPs, MLAs, MLCS, and gram pradhans), have been engaged to

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## Rahul should first understand that he's responsible for Cong's poll defeats: BJP

New Delhi:

The BJP on Saturday took a swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his remarks about his own party leaders and said he should first understand that he is responsible for his party's defeat in elections and stop blaming others for his "failures".

Poonawalla asked Gandhi to first evaluate himself to "realise" why he has become a "non performing asset" for the party, instead putting blame on "electronic voting machines, the election commission, electoral rolls, his party workers and people".

"If getting the party defeated in the election is an art, the artist is Rahul Gandhi," he charged. The BJP spokesperson also questioned Gandhi for putting his party workers under "race ka ghoda" and "barati ka ghoda" categories and asked him to at least consider them human. Agency

in cohorts with the BJP while he got his party defeated in more than 90 elections. In this sense, he is the biggest asset of the BJP," Poonawalla said, taking dig at Gandhi.

"Are you in cohorts with the BJP," the BJP spokesperson asked Gandhi in a video clip posted on X.

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"If getting the party defeated in the election is an art, the artist is Rahul Gandhi," he charged. The BJP spokesperson also questioned Gandhi for putting his party workers under "race ka ghoda" and "barati ka ghoda" categories and asked him to at least consider them human. Agency

## At Women's Day event Rabri Devi tears into Nitish



Rabri Devi speaking at a podium during the Women's Day event.

Former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi on Saturday criticised her successor Nitish Kumar over bizarre remarks made by him while claiming credit for women's empowerment.

The RJD leader attended a function organised here by the party on International Women's Day, which was also attended by her son Tejashwi Yadav.

"Nitish Kumar boasts that all that is good in Bihar has been achieved since 2005, when he came to power. Was he born the same year?", asked the honemaker-turned-politician. She added, "He has the temerity to say girls and women did not wear clothes until he came to power in Bihar. Is it true for females in his own family?"

The 74-year-old JDU chief has of late been accused of getting carried away while speaking in public, the latest example being his outbursts inside the legislative council a day ago.

The longest-serving CM had engaged in a spat with some RJD MLAs, and, pointing towards Rabri Devi, the leader of the opposition, said, "her husband got her installed when he ran into trouble". The use of the Hindi word "iskae" (her) by Kumar was protested by the RJD, including Tejashwi Yadav who pointed out "my mother became the CM before he did. Is she older than he is. She headed the government of undivided Bihar and even in terms of personal relationships she is the senior".

Notably, Rabri Devi's husband Lalu Prasad, the RJD president, often refers to Kumar, his arch rival, as a "Chhota bhai" (little brother).

Rabri Devi pulled no punches in her speech, accusing Narendra Modi government at the Centre of "framing" her husband in "false cases" with the help of investigating agencies.

However, when her comments were sought on the language used by Kumar on Friday, she quipped, with disgust writ large on her face "I don't wish to get into this muck". Tejashwi Yadav, though, spoke of Kumar's behaviour while holding forth on "failures" of the government headed by the JD(U) supreme with whom he has allied on two occasions. "Whenever he has needed our support to stay in power, he has come to us addressing my mother as bhabhi (sister in law). And now just look at the offensive manner in which he spoke about her. It shows that he is not of sound mental health and not fit to govern," said the former Deputy CM.

# Delhi govt approves Mahila Samridhhi Yojana allocates Rs 5 100 crore for scheme

■ Gupta said a Group of Ministers headed by her has been formed to oversee the implementation of the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana, with Ashish Sood, Parvesh Verma and Kapil Mishra being the other members of the panel.

**New Delhi**  
The BJP government in Delhi approved the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana on Saturday to provide a monthly assistance of Rs 2,500 each to eligible women and allocated Rs 5,100 crore for the implementation of the scheme.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta.

Although the government has not officially issued any guidelines or said anything about the eligibility criteria, sources claimed that the age and income criteria of 21-60 years and an annual income of not more than Rs 2.5 lakh were deliberated upon at the Cabinet meeting.

A portal will be launched through which women can apply to avail the benefits of the scheme.

Talking to reporters, Gupta said a Group of Ministers headed by her has been formed to oversee the implementation of the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana, with Ashish Sood, Parvesh Verma and Kapil Mishra being the other members of the panel.

"We have made a provision of Rs 5,100 crore in the budget to start distributing the benefits of the scheme. A



committee headed by me has been formed for this work. "This work will start immediately with the development of a portal for the registrations and intensive deliberations over the terms and conditions," the chief minister said.

She said at the meeting, the Delhi Cabinet approved the "Sankalp Patra" (the BJP's manifesto for the Delhi Assembly polls) promise to provide Rs 2,500 each to poor women.

Speaking at a party event, which was attended by Gupta and her Cabinet colleagues at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, BJP president J P Nadda

congratulated the chief minister on the approval of the scheme.

Meanwhile, the opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) launched a scathing attack on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), accusing it of failing to deliver on its election promise of giving Rs 2,500 per month to women before International Women's Day.

Addressing a press conference here, Leader of Opposition Atishi called Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee a "jumla" and accused the saffron party of misleading voters.

"The women of Delhi are

Monica Delhi's lone female traffic inspector leads with compassion and strength

**New Delhi**  
Monica stands tall as the only woman traffic inspector among her 49 other male peers in Delhi Police, ready to take up challenges that come her way while discharging her duty on the streets of the national capital.

Monica believes that the emotional quotient that women bring to the table helps them solve people's queries and problems more efficiently. "Men are brought up to act tough, and hence, when people reach out to male officers, a lot of them do not consider it a problem, saying it is a problem everyone faces. However, women officers listen to them carefully and try to resolve it as soon as possible," she said.

Five years into her service, a colleague allegedly slammed her for asking for leave because her daughter was sick. "Why do you want equality when you can sit at home and cook for the family?" he said. However, she made it her mission to not let these things get to her and took up many challenging roles, including that of an inspecting officer (IO) in northeast Delhi, where she handled more than 250 cases of POCSO and rape.

She claimed she was pregnant when she was handling these cases and had to visit court regularly. "Some would be generous enough to offer me to sit. However, many times I used to stand throughout the day while handling such sensitive cases. But I did it because becoming a mother made me realise how important the work that I am doing is. If I can't bear the thought of my child or daughter being in pain, how can I let anyone else's children go through the same," she added.

Monica also added that she owed her career to the support of the three men in her life -- her husband, father and younger brother - who helped her become financially independent and empowered.

that her government will work for the safety and prosperity of women.

She said the Delhi government will set up "one-stop centres" in all the districts to strengthen women safety by providing them with assistance, including police help and legal counselling.

The BJP, in its "Visit Delhi Sankalp Patra" for the Assembly polls held in February, had promised to provide Rs 2,500 per month under the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana to women from poor families.

A statement issued by the Delhi government said the scheme will leverage advanced technology to ensure transparency, efficiency and seamless disbursement of the financial benefits.

An Aadhaar-based e-KYC authentication process will be employed to screen the applicants, the statement said.

Gupta said the BJP has risen above symbolism under Modi's leadership and em-

powered women through various initiatives.

"On one hand, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the budget of the country and on the other hand, Rekha Gupta will present the budget of Delhi," she said, asserting that the BJP has worked to ensure that women leaders in the party rise to the highest decision-making positions.

"The courage to take this significant decision could only be exhibited by the BJP. There could be no bigger honour for women," she said, citing her appointment as the chief minister.

Gupta asserted that her government will work for a holistic empowerment of women and their well-being and the safety and prosperity of the women in Delhi," she said.

She asserted that the BJP will fulfil all the promises it has made to people in the "Sankalp Patra".

# Drug addict missing since 2018 from Delhi slum found



**New Delhi**

A 22-year-old woman fled her adoptive uncle's home and later escaped a children's shelter as found in southwest Delhi's Barapala Vihar, police said on Saturday.

The woman, who was 16 at the time of her disappearance in 2018, had studied up to class 4. Her parents died about 10 years ago, and his uncle (Tau) adopted her, an officer said. The family lived in a slum. The officer said that the woman missed her parents and also fell into bad company, leading to an addiction to marijuana.

"The victim had gone missing on December 12, 2018, and a kidnapping case under Section 363 of the IPC was registered at the Dabri Police Station," a police officer said.

A reward of Rs 20,000 had been declared for information leading to her whereabouts, he said.

She was discovered but later again disappeared, this time with a minor, from a children's home.

The officer said the girl worked as a housemaid in various parts of Delhi while she was missing. On January 8, the police traced the second missing girl.

## BJP govt in Delhi wouldn't be possible without support and blessings of women: Nadda



**New Delhi**  
BJP chief J P Nadda on Saturday thanked women for the victory of the saffron party in the Delhi Assembly polls, saying it would have been impossible without their blessings and support.

Addressing a Mahila Diwas program hosted by the Mahila Morcha of the party at JLN Stadium, Nadda said the BJP, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has ensured women's empowerment in various fields.

"I thank the women of Delhi for playing a big role in forming BJP's government in Delhi. This victory was not possible without their support and blessings," Nadda said, greeting the women on International Women's Day.

The Delhi Cabinet has approved an allocation of Rs 5,100 crore for implementing the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana, under which women in the national capital will receive Rs 2,500 each per month, he announced at the event.

He congratulated the women of Delhi over the approval of the scheme and asserted that the work for women's empowerment has now begun in the national capital.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and other senior leaders were also present at the event.

"It has been BJP's policy to promote women and their empowerment. We are marching ahead with the aim of women-led development."

"The vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat is not possible until we create self-confidence among the women of the country," Nadda said.

The BJP national presi-

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- Resident Senior Citizen not having income from business/ profession are not liable to pay.

### Mode of Payment

- e-payment is mandatory for all Corporates and also those assessees whose accounts are required to be audited u/s 44 AB of the Income-tax Act, 1961.
- e-payment is convenient for other taxpayers also as it ensures correct credit.

### Schedule

Due Date	Amount
On or before 15 <sup>th</sup> of March, 2025	100% of the Advance Tax payable.

Short/Non-payment or deferment of payment of Advance Tax will result in levy of interest.



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Income Tax Department  
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By Prof. Ripudaman Singh

# Employment Scenario in India

Unemployment is an important macro-economic indicator of any economy, which indicates how much percentage of the population is employable and is actively looking for jobs, but is not getting any job opportunities. Unemployment usually exists in every economy, and is affected by multiple macro-economic factors of the economy. India has also seen many phases of high unemployment due to international and domestic reasons. The global financial crisis in 2007-08, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia Ukraine war and the US-China trade war are some of the global economic factors that have greatly affected the Indian economy, in the last few decades. Unemployment has been one of the most common issues for countries around the world.

According to the India Employment Report 2024 released by the International Labour Organization (I.L.O.) and Institute of Human Development (I.H.D.), the employment situation in India is grim. About 90 percent of the workers in the country are working in the informal sector. There is a need to implement employment-oriented schemes to reduce unemployment. The culture of distributing free perks will not help in reducing unemployment.

According to the India Employment Report 2024, released by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Institute of Human Development (IHD), 83% of India's unemployed work force are youths, and the percentage of youths with secondary or higher education among the total unemployed youth is set to almost double from 35.2% in 2000 to 65.7% by 2022. A study by Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran states, that youth employment and underemployment have increased between 2000 and 2019, but employment has decreased during the pandemic. According to him, educated youths in the country have faced much higher levels of unemployment during this period.

According to the India Employment Report 2024, India's employment scenario has seen some contradictory developments in labour market indicators over the past two decades, while the basic long-term feature of the em-



ployment situation in the country, continued to be insufficient growth of non-agricultural sectors, and the ability of these sectors to provide employment, and labour workers out of agriculture has emerged. It is also true that before 2018, non-farm employment has grown at a higher rate than farm employment, and labour from agriculture has been absorbed mainly by the construction and service sectors.

Additionally, about 90% of workers in India work in the informal sector, while the share of the regular sector which was increasing continuously since 2000, has been declining since 2018. People working in the informal sector have insecure livelihoods and no wage protection.

What is worse is that contractualisation has increased in the country. Only a small percentage is employed in the regular sector, and only those workers are covered by long-term contracts.

The question is how to create productive and sustainable employment opportunities in India. Despite various employment schemes of the government, till now, adequate measures do not seem to be taken

for sustainable development and removal of unemployment in rural India. The academic community is primarily busy in projecting the employment-unemployment scenario on the basis of published data. Therefore, the educated youth is extremely worried about his uncertain future. In India seeing the indifference of capitalists in investing in rural areas and the limitations of capital investment by the government, only a low capital-intensive but efficient local process can create respectable job opportunities on a permanent basis for the educated unemployed youth in the rural economy. Permanent employment opportunities can be created through collective entrepreneurship.

Unemployment is increasing among the highly educated youth in urban areas. Most of the unemployed educated youth do not want to work below their level and are getting depressed in anticipation of a quality job. Young educated women are also struggling with unemployment and are forced to work in temporary jobs at very low salaries to earn a livelihood. The informal sector does

not guarantee safety of women at the workplace. That is why most of the working women suffer from a feeling of insecurity. Due to increasing social inequalities, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are still not able to make their mark in better jobs. Due to economic need, these castes participate more in work but are engaged in more low paid, temporary casual wage work, and informal employment.

The unemployment rate in the country has been a cause of concern over the years, and the quality of jobs and average wages have declined for most of the people. Currently only 7% - 8% of the work force is employed in the organized sector, the rest, who are employed in the unorganized sector, have no security of the service, pension benefits, and additional retirement perks. In addition, the upper class has become many times richer and the lower class is reduced to receive free ration only. 1% of the population earns 12% of the national income (not wealth which is far more skewed) and the bottom 50% earns only 22%.

Between 2008 and 2019, the unemployment rate in India was

stable and remained between 5.3% - 5.4%. But the onset of COVID-19 increased the unemployment rate to 8%. Due to high inflation, the unemployment rate in the country has increased from 6% in 2021 to 9.2% in June 2024. To deal with the rising unemployment rate, the government needs policy reforms and incentives that can increase the level of employment. Distributing free ration and providing money to people through other attractive schemes will not help in reducing unemployment.

In fact, given the challenge of unemployment, there is a need to consider the demand and supply drivers of the labour market. However, in the last budget presented by the government in 2024, employment and skill development were given priority to increase employment opportunities. The Finance Minister had announced the Prime Minister's package of five schemes to provide employment and internship opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over a period of five years with a central outlay of two lakh crores. But surprisingly, the Finance Minister has not made any mention of the said packages of the Prime Minister in the budget speech presented on February 1, 2025. It is expected that soon the government will take other important measures to reduce unemployment along with the said packages.

**About the Author**

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**Breaking Time Sudoku**

What to do

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only correct solution.

		8		1				
					9			6
1					5	3		2
7				3				2
9				8				4
	1			4				3
4	5	2						8
6				1				
					6		5	

**Solution, Sudoku**

6	7	1	4	3	8	2	9	5
4	2	8	7	5	9	3	1	6
3	9	5	2	6	1	8	4	7
2	6	4	9	1	3	5	7	8
7	8	3	5	4	2	9	6	1
5	1	9	8	7	6	4	2	3
1	5	2	3	9	7	6	8	4
8	4	6	1	2	5	7	3	9
9	3	7	6	8	4	1	5	2

**THE WISDOM TREE**

BY SUVEEN KUMAR

**COUNSELLING**

The feeling of being heard is touching, the feeling of being heard and being accepted is soothing, the feeling of being heard, being accepted and being supported is motivating. Counselling is not giving the advice but helping them choose one's choice. Everybody needs counselling but not every time, every body should do counselling but not to everybody, everybody should learn counselling but not from anyone.

When you counsel, you listen with love, and you support with care. Counselling is not judging but it is analysing, counselling is not motivating but it is directing, counselling is not giving the advice but helping them choose one's choice. Everybody needs counselling but not every time, every body should do counselling but not to everybody, everybody should learn counselling but not from anyone.

It is human for a counsellor to get attached with counselee by one way or other but it is important for a counsellor to recover from that attachment. It is human for a counsellor to feel the emotions strongly but it is important for the counsellor not to express them, it is human for a counsellor to judge the counselee but it is important for them not to convict them with the judgement.

When they need it the most, counselling is a feeling of doing care when they need it the most, counselling is a feeling of open share when they need it the most. When you put a smile back on someone's face you put a life back in someone's heart.

Moral: For a counsellor, counselling shouldn't be a job of his life but counselling should be a life of his job.



By Dr Satyavan Saurabh

# Changing lifestyles invite obesity

India has seen an alarming rise in obesity, with reports indicating that 24% of men and 25% of women are now overweight or obese. Worryingly, obesity among children aged 5-9 years has doubled in the last decade. Factors such as urbanization, dietary changes, sedentary habits, and environmental influences are fueling this trend. A comprehensive approach is needed to tackle this issue. The percentage of overweight and obese women increased from 20.6% to 24%, while for men it has increased from 18.9% to 22.9%. Moreover, obesity rates among children under 5 years of age have increased from 2.4% to 3.4%, and the trend is even worse among older children. The World Obesity Atlas 2022 estimates that 12% of men in India suffer from abdominal obesity. Genetic factors contribute to the tendency to accumulate fat in the abdominal region, increasing the risk of metabolic disorders. While obesity is primarily an urban problem, it is increasingly affecting the rural population due to changes in lifestyle

Unhealthy eating habits, increased consumption of highly processed foods, refined sugars, and greasy fast food are major factors in rising obesity rates. The fast-food trend in Indian cities has particularly affected the urban middle-class population, resulting in increased obesity levels. High prices of protein, dairy, and fruits cause many low-income families to turn to cheap, high-carbohydrate diets such as rice and wheat.

and dietary habits. Currently, 60% of deaths in India are caused by non-communicable diseases, which are further aggravated by obesity and an inactive lifestyle. Unhealthy eating habits, increased consumption of highly processed foods, refined sugars, and greasy fast food are major factors in the rising rates of obesity. The fast-food trend in Indian cities has particularly affected the urban middle-class population, resulting in increased obesity levels. High prices of protein, dairy, and fruits cause many low-income families to turn to cheap, high-carbohydrate diets such as rice and wheat. The Public Distribution System (PDS) supplies mainly staple cereals, which lack nutrient-rich foods essential for a balanced diet. Sedentary office jobs, along with digital entertainment and long working hours, leave little time for physical activity, leading to weight gain. According to a study by Lancet Global Health, 50% of Indians do not do enough physical activity, which is a significant factor in the obesity epidemic. Lack of awareness about nutrition and exercise leads to poor lifestyle choices, especially in the lower-income groups and rural areas.

Many Indian families mistakenly assume being overweight is a sign of good health, thereby delaying necessary interventions for obesity. Aggressive marketing of processed foods, sugary beverages, and fast food greatly influences dietary choices, especially among children. Social media promotions and celebrity endorsements further promote junk food consumption among youth. The expansion of urban areas, along with the prevalence of digital entertainment and remote working, has led to a decline in overall physical activity levels. Traffic congestion and pollution prevent outdoor exercise, leading to a greater reliance on sedentary indoor activities. Lack of parks, playgrounds, and pedestrian-friendly areas makes it difficult to engage in physical activities such as walking and cycling. Poor urban planning and lack of cycling infrastructure complicate active commuting, leading to higher obesity rates. Additionally, pollution-related inflammation increases the risk of metabolic disorders, which can lead to weight gain. Research has shown a link between high pollution levels in Indian cities and the accumulation of visceral fat and an increase in obesity. The

uncontrolled expansion of fast-food chains and processed food markets, especially in urban centers, has led to unhealthy options becoming more accessible than fresh produce. Addressing obesity is an urgent priority. We should consider imposing higher taxes on sugary beverages and ultra-processed foods while providing subsidies for healthier food choices. For example, Mexico's sugar tax resulted in a 12% reduction in soft drink consumption, indicating its effectiveness in tackling obesity. Additionally, it is essential to introduce mandatory physical education and nutrition education programs in schools and workplaces. Japan's 'Shokaiiku' initiative has successfully reduced childhood obesity rates by emphasizing a balanced diet. Creating pedestrian-friendly streets, cycle paths, and safe public parks can encourage daily physical activity. The 'Newerlands' urban cycling approach has shown a reduction in obesity rates through active commuting. Clear food labeling on packaged goods is also important to help consumers make informed dietary decisions. Chile's front-of-pack warning labels on high-sugar

and high-fat foods have successfully reduced junk food consumption among children. National campaigns promoting balanced diets, regular exercise, and reduced sugar intake are important to changing consumer behavior. Initiatives such as the Fit India Movement and Eat Right India Abhiyan aim to promote healthy lifestyle choices among the population. A healthy nation is indeed a prosperous nation. To effectively tackle obesity, we need a comprehensive strategy that strengthens public health policies, encourages nutritious eating, integrates physical education, and ensures that urban planning supports active living. Expanding initiatives such as the Poshan Abhiyan and Eat Right India with community-driven, technology-enabled solutions will lead to lasting change.

**About the Author**

(Dr. Satyavan Saurabh, Post, freelance journalist and columnist)

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# Ajaraie nets double as NorthEast United FC breeze past East Bengal FC

Shillong (Meghalaya) NorthEast United FC (NEUFC) defeated East Bengal FC (EBFC) by 4-0 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Shillong in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 tonight. The Highlanders thus bagged their 10th win of the league season, wrapping up their 24 games and earning 38 points before embarking on their playoffs journey. This was the eighth match where NorthEast United FC scored three or more goals this season and also got their first-ever ISL win in Shillong, ISL.



East Bengal FC had limited chances coming their way in the first half, but Cleiton Silva did give NorthEast United FC a moment of scare through a probing free-kick in the 22nd minute. With the team earning a chance at a promising spot on the left flank, Silva swerved in a telling delivery that resulted in the ball landing over the crossbar.

NorthEast United FC retaliated by moving gradually up the left wing through Alaeddine Ajaraie, who lobbed in a cross for Nestor Albach in the 32nd minute. Nestor made a robust effort at hitting the target with an aerial effort, but the shot was kept off limits by the East Bengal FC goalkeeper Debjit Majumder.

Ajaraie back-heeled a pass for the onrushing Tondonba Singh on the left flank, followed by the latter drilling

in a cross for Nestor at the centre of the 18-yard box. Nestor met the lateral ball with thorough finesse and slotted it into the bottom right corner with his left foot to break the deadlock in the 59th minute.

The Highlanders (NEUFC) rode on this brief wave in their favour as Nestor played a key role in shaping up a dynamic offensive sequence from a

corner kick. Guillermo Fernandez curled in a right-footed inward curling cross for Macarton Nickson that was hammered on target. Debit made a quick first save before Ajaraie lapped upon the rebound and nestled it into the bottom left corner amid a crowded box to double the lead in the 66th minute.

Ajaraie took over a dazzling role

thereafter, with East Bengal FC conceding him plenty of space to work his footwork around in the defensive third. The free-flowing forward looked to breach into the opposition's box from the left side and sprinted near the six-yard box. Tanmay Das fouled Ajaraie, and the striker stepped up to take over the spot-kick duties, using his right foot to dispatch the ball into the bottom right corner in the 79th minute. Das was sent off after another foul in the 84th minute, handing the Highlanders a numerical advantage in the final phase of the encounter.

NorthEast United FC did not relent on offensive pressure and kept pushing forward, thereby earning set-piece chances, including corner kicks, to peg East Bengal FC back further in the game. One such corner kick in the 86th minute resulted in the Highlanders grappling to discover another goal before Mohammed Ali Benammer pounced upon a loose ball and settled it into the bottom right corner to find his team's fourth goal of the night, propelling them to finish their league stage on a positive note.

Alaeddine Ajaraie completed 17 out of 21 attempted passes, scoring twice, creating four goal-scoring chances, and making four crosses.

NorthEast United FC are set to feature in the playoffs now, whereas East Bengal FC's ISL campaign draws to an end with this match.

# Kolkata Knight Riders appoints Ottis Gibson as assistant coach

Kolkata Kolkata Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) announced Ottis Gibson as assistant coach ahead of the 2025 Indian Premier League (IPL), according to a release from KKR.

A former fast bowler from Barbados himself, with over 650 first-class wickets to his name, Ottis represented West Indies in both Tests and ODIs from 1995-1999 before embarking on his journey as a coach. He comes with extensive experience, having had two stints as bowling coach of the England Cricket Team - from 2007-10 and again from 2015-17.

He served as head coach of the West Indies from 2010-14. During his tenure, the team won its first ICC World T20 title, in 2012 in Sri Lanka. He went on to become head coach of the South African team from 2017-2019 and has since held several coaching positions across the T20 franchise circuit.

Ottis joins a strong support staff unit at KKR, comprising mentor Dwayne Bravo, head coach Chandrakant Pandit, bowling coach Bharat Arun, spin-bowling coach Carl Crowe and others.

Last year in November, he was the coach of Ajman Bolts in the Abu Dhabi T10 League.

The Kolkata Knight Riders will kick off their IPL 2025 campaign against the Royal Challengers Bengaluru on March



22 at the iconic Eden Gardens. KKR squad for IPL 2025:

-Batters: Rinku Singh (retained), Rovman Powell, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Manish Pandey, Luvnith Sisodia, Ajinkya Rahane.

-Wicketkeepers: Quinton de Kock, Rahmanullah Gurbaz.

-Allrounders: Venkatesh Iyer (pace), Andre Russell (pace; retained), Sunil Narine (spin; retained), Ramandeep Singh (pace; retained), Anukul Roy (spin), Moeen Ali (spin).

-Spinners: Varun Chakravarthy (retained), Mayank Markande.

-Fast bowlers: Harshit Rana (retained), Vaibhav Arora, Anrich Nortje, Spencer Johnson, Umran Malik.

# Shubman Gill outlines role, his "hallmark" batting approach, expectations from Dubai surface



Dubai India's vice-captain Shubman Gill opened up about his experience serving as skipper Rohit Sharma's deputy, his approach with the bat when he steps up on the field, and the way the Dubai surface could behave in Sunday's Champions Trophy final against New Zealand.

The number one-ranked ODI batter has been thriving across all spectrums of the format since being promoted to vice-captaincy for the ongoing marquee event.

With his promotion in the decision-making hierarchy, Gill's responsibility isn't limited to piling up runs on the board but also to overseeing and bearing the responsibility of the events unfolding on the field.

Ahead of the final, Gill illuminated his journey as vice-captain and the new responsibilities and challenges that have come along in the next chapter of his career.

"You get to learn a lot. When you are with the team as a player, obviously you have a responsibility as a batsman, as a fielder, but when an added responsibility is given to you, it's very important for me to know how the other players are feeling on the field if they are thinking the right way. We have a lot of young players in the team. So, just like I was talking about experienced players and young players, because experienced players have done the same thing so many times, and they've made mistakes too," Gill told reporters ahead of the final on Sunday.

"So, my role is, at that time, when there is a young fast bowler or a young spinner in our team, when there is pressure on them, whether they are thinking right or not, you can be successful or fail in thinking, but the probability of you being successful increases if you think right. So that is my role in the team. Whenever the bowler is under pressure, I have to talk to them and ask about their plans. And sometimes we

forget to do simple things under pressure, so I try to remind them of our plans," he added.

Since his promotion, Gill has notched up his performances with the bat. During the buildup to the Champions Trophy, Gill top-scored in the three ODIs against England, with a whopping 259 runs to his name.

He began his Champions Trophy campaign with an unbeaten century against Bangladesh and topped it up by initiating India's recovery with a composed 46(52).

Gill illuminated his mantra of reacting to the situation, not pre-meditating, and taking calculated risks, which is the "hallmark" of his game.

"I honestly don't really think about that. I need to take more risks, or I need to take less risk. It's about me being in my zone and taking calculated risks, and I think that is the hallmark of my game. I take risks at the right point when I feel the bowler is under pressure, and most of my betting is instinctive. I don't pre-plan. I don't play any shots which are pre-planned," he said.

"I see the situation, and I see when is the right time to put the bowler under pressure. Obviously, when you are playing on the wicket, you kind of have an idea what kind of total you're looking to make on that wicket. And then you add 15, 20 runs to give that extra cushion to the bowlers. And that's what I think of when I'm batting," he added. With the final set to be played in Dubai, Gill expects the pitch to behave the same way as it has since the beginning of the tournament. A 300+ score remains elusive, while spinners are expected to have their say in the wicket-taking column.

"I don't think the wicket is going to behave any differently. We haven't really seen a 300 score here as yet, and I think, irrespective of the weather, the wicket is going to be similar to what we've been playing on.

# Shami is very good, hope Rohit scores century in Champions Trophy final: Deep Dasgupta

Kolkata (West Bengal) As India prepares to take on New Zealand in the ICC Champions Trophy final in Dubai on Sunday, former India cricketer Deep Dasgupta shared his thoughts on the two key players - captain Rohit Sharma and pacer Mohammed Shami.

Rohit has not been at his best recently. However, Dasgupta remains hopeful that the Indian skipper will deliver a big innings in the final.

"Rohit is known for double hundreds. His playing nature has changed, and so has the team's approach. We definitely hope that instead of scores of 30-40, he will get 130, or 140 but the way he is playing, it is important for him to continue in that manner," Dasgupta told ANI.

"What about Shami? I mean, listen - just look at the record. Nobody has a better record than him in ODIs. So, leave him as he is. He is very good," he said.

India are undefeated in the tournament so far and the Kiwis have looked rock solid with bat and ball under Mitchell Santner's captaincy.

The clash promises to be an epic sequel to the 2006 ICC Champions Trophy final, which New Zealand won. Men in Blue would like to avenge losses to the Blackcaps in the 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup semifinal and 2021 ICC World Test Championship final.

India claimed last week's contest against the Kiwis by 44 runs, after post-



ing 249 runs from their 50 overs and restricting New Zealand to 205 runs all out in the 46th over. While there's been a lot of focus on spin bowlers stepping up in the UAE, it was Matt Henry who starred with the ball for the Black Caps, claiming 5/42 off eight overs, in an innings where Shreyas Iyer top-scored for India with a 79 off 98 balls.

Kane Williamson fought valiantly for the Kiwis with an 81 (120 balls), but couldn't find support in the middle order. India's spinners combined for nine wickets, led by 'secret weapon' Varun Chakravarthy, taking 5/42 - coincidentally the exact figures as Henry for the Kiwis - in what was just the 33-year-old leg-spinner's second One

Day International.

**Squads:**  
**India Squad:** Rohit Sharma (c), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Axar Patel, KL Rahul(w), Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Harshit Rana, Mohammed Shami, Kuldeep Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravarthy, Arshdeep Singh.

**New Zealand Squad:** Will Young, Devon Conway, Kane Williamson, Rachin Ravindra, Tom Latham(w), Glenn Phillips, Michael Bracewell, Mitchell Santner (c), Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, William O'Rourke, Daryl Mitchell, Nathan Smith, Mark Chapman, Jacob Duffy.

# Shubman Gill dismisses retirement talks about Rohit Sharma

Dubai Ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy final against New Zealand in Dubai, India opener Shubman Gill made it clear that there have been no discussions about Rohit Sharma's retirement within the team. Addressing the media in the pre-match press conference, Gill emphasized that the entire squad, including the skipper, is solely focused on the crucial final.

Dismissing speculation, Gill stated that no conversations regarding Rohit's future had taken place in the dressing room or with him personally.

"No discussion in the dressing room or with me - even Rohit bhai would be thinking about the Champions Trophy final, like all of us. So, nothing like that now," he said.

According to Gill, Rohit might make a decision after the final: "I think once the match ends tomorrow, he will make a decision. There is no talk about it within the setup."

# Mumbai Indians sign Corbin Bosch as replacement for 'injured' Lizaad Williams

Mumbai (Maharashtra) Mumbai Indians have decided to pick South African all-rounder Corbin Bosch as a replacement for injured right-arm seamer Lizaad Williams for the upcoming season of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025.

"South African fast bowler Lizaad Williams is ruled out of the upcoming TATA IPL 2025 due to an injury, and Mumbai Indians have signed his compatriot Corbin Bosch as his replacement," IPL said in a release.

Bosch is yet to make his IPL debut and has previously been a part of Rajasthan Royals as a reserve player in 2022, coming in as a replacement for Australia's Nathan Coulter-Nile.

The 30-year-old is familiar with the MI franchise, considering he was a part of their title-winning SA20 side, MI Cape Town, in February earlier this year.

He scythed 11 scalps in seven innings at an economy rate of 8.68 in MICT's journey to the franchise's maiden SA20 title. Bosch will reink with his national and SA20 team-



mate Ryan Rickelton at Mumbai Indians.

Notably, Bosch was a diamond pick by Peshawar Zalmi for the Pakistan Super League 2025 draft, held in January. With the PSL set to be played in an April-May window, clashing with the IPL, Bosch will need to forgo his stint in Pakistan.

# "Player of the Match, would go for an all-rounder...": Ravi Shastri

Dubai Ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy final between India and New Zealand in Dubai, former head coach Ravi Shastri made some predictions, saying that the Player of Match will likely go to an all-rounder and players like Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson and Rachin Ravindra could play a crucial role in the match.

India will play New Zealand in the final of the ICC Champions Trophy on March 9 at the Dubai International Stadium. India is undefeated in the tournament so far, and the Kiwis have looked rock solid with bat and ball under Mitchell Santner's captaincy.

The clash promises to be an epic sequel to the 2006 ICC Champions Trophy final, which New Zealand won. Men in Blue would like to avenge losses to the Blackcaps in the 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup semifinal and 2021 ICC World Test Championship final.

Shastri joined host Sanjana Ganesan and made his predictions.

"Player of the Match, I would go for an all-rounder. I'll say Axar Patel or Ravindra Jadeja from India. From New Zealand, I think that Glenn Phillips has something up. He might just show flashes of brilliance in the field.

# Mumbai Indians sign Corbin Bosch as replacement for 'injured' Lizaad Williams

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ing 59 wickets at an economy rate of 8.38 and amassing 663 runs at a strike rate of 113.33.

The five-time IPL champions retained their 'Fab Four' by shelling out a hefty amount. Along with Hardik Pandya, Rohit Sharma, Tilak Varma, and Suryakumar Yadav, Bumrah was among the five players retained by the Mumbai-based franchise ahead of IPL 2025.

China extends repayment period of USD 2 billion loan to Pakistan by one year

**Islamabad:** China extended the repayment period of Pakistan's USD 2 billion loan by one year, easing pressure of the International Monetary Fund on the dollar-deficit country.

The loan was originally due for repayment on March 24, but China has agreed to extend the deadline, providing Pakistan with crucial financial relief.

Geo News quoted the Ministry of Finance as confirming the roll over by China, adding that this extension comes as Pakistan faces economic challenges, including pressure on foreign exchange reserves.

Around 92 per cent of Pakistan's external debt is owed by three major sources, including multilateral and bilateral creditors as well as through international bonds. Among the bilateral creditors, China is on the top keeping in view the total external debt and liabilities.

Meanwhile, the cash-strapped country is seeking a fresh loan tranche from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with the Washington-based lender's team currently in Pakistan for negotiations.

Islamabad secured the USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) last summer to help claw its way out of an economic crisis.

The programme has played a key role in stabilising Pakistan's economy and the government has said the country is on course for a long-term recovery.

# South Korea's impeached President Yoon released from prison

**Seoul:** South Korea's impeached conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol was released from prison on Saturday, a day after a Seoul court cancelled his arrest to allow him to stand trial for rebellion without being detained.

After walking out of a detention centre near Seoul, Yoon waved, clenched his fists and bowed deeply to his supporters who were shouting his name and waving South Korean and US flags. Yoon climbed into a black van headed to his presidential residence in Seoul.

In a statement distributed by his lawyers, Yoon said that he "appreciates the courage and decision by the Seoul Central District Court to correct illegality," in an apparent reference to legal disputes over his arrest. He said he also thanks his supporters and asked those who are on hunger



Yoon Suk Yeol was released from prison on Saturday, a day after a Seoul court cancelled his arrest to allow him to stand trial for rebellion without being detained.

strike against his impeachment to end it. Yoon was arrested and indicted by prosecutors in January over his December 3 martial law decree that plunged the country into huge political turmoil. The liberal opposition-controlled National Assembly separately voted to impeach him, leading to his suspension from office.

The Constitutional Court has been deliberating whether to formally dismiss or reinstate Yoon. If the court upholds his impeachment, a national election will be held to find his successor within two months.

The Seoul Central District Court said Friday it accepted Yoon's request to be released from prison, citing the need to address questions over the legality of the investigations on the president. Yoon's lawyers have accused

the investigative agency that detained him before his formal arrest of lacking legal authority to probe rebellion charges.

The Seoul court also said the legal period of his formal arrest expired before he was indicted.

Yoon's release came after prosecutors decided not to appeal the decision by the Seoul court. South Korean law allows prosecutors

to continue to hold a suspect while pursuing an appeal, even after his or her arrest is canceled by a court.

The main liberal opposition Democratic Party, which led Yoon's Dec. 14 impeachment, lashed out at the prosecutors' decision, calling them "henchmen" of Yoon, a former prosecutor general. Party spokesperson Cho Seung-rae urged the Constitutional Court to dismiss Yoon as soon as possible to avoid further public unrest and anxiety.

**In a statement distributed by his lawyers, Yoon said that he "appreciates the courage and decision by the Seoul Central District Court to correct illegality," in an apparent reference to legal disputes over his arrest.**

The group Palestine Action said it "rejects Donald Trump's treatment of Gaza as though it were his property to dispose of as he likes".

"To make that clear, we have shown him that his own property is not safe from acts of resistance," it said in a statement.

Police Scotland said it received a report of damage to the golf course in the early hours of Saturday, and that inquiries are ongoing.

The future of Gaza is uncertain as the first

Activists vandalise Trump golf resort over his comments on emptying out Gaza

**London:** Pro-Palestinian activists said Saturday they have vandalised one of US President Donald Trump's golf resorts in Scotland in response to his proposal to empty the Gaza Strip of its Palestinian population.

Activists targeted Trump's Turnberry golf course and hotel in southwest Scotland overnight, painting "Gaza Is Not For Sale" in giant letters on the lawn and using red spray paint on the club house's exterior wall.

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The future of Gaza is uncertain as the first

phase of a ceasefire that paused the 15-month war between Israel and Hamas ended with no clarity on what would come next because the agreement's second phase has not yet been hammered out.

Meanwhile, Trump has called for Gaza's population to be resettled elsewhere permanently so that the United States can take over the territory and develop it for others. Palestinians have roundly rejected calls to leave.

Turnberry is one of 10 courses on the rotation to host the British Open, the oldest of the four major championships in men's golf.

However, it hasn't staged the event since Trump bought the course in 2014 and renovated several holes.

In November, Martin Slumbers, who at that time was the chief executive of British Open organiser the R&A, said there were no immediate plans for the event to return to Turnberry.

# Activists open abortion centre in front of Polish parliament on Women's Day

**Warsaw:** Polish abortion rights activists opened a centre across from the parliament building in Warsaw on Saturday where women can go to have abortions with pills, either alone or with other women.

Opening the centre on International Women's Day across from the legislature was a symbolic challenge to authorities in the traditionally Roman Catholic nation, which has one of Europe's most restrictive



Abortion activists gathered inside for its inauguration. They blasted loud sounds of babies' cries and held huge, gruesome posters.

"We will never allow people to kill Polish children on demand," said one of the anti-abortion protesters, Marek Krawczyk, as he held a rosary high. "We warn all Polish politicians not to introduce disgraceful decisions."

The abortion rights activists with Abortion Dream Team had private security guards standing at the door, while police also formed a barrier between protesters and the centre.

"We came here to

claim the space and to remind you in your face that women have abortions in Poland and we are not going to wait for your empty promises," one of the activists, Kinga Jelinska said, a message directed at the country's politicians. She wore a mint green sweatshirt with the words "abortion is normal."

Jelinska said it was the first stationary abortion centre in Poland, but that centres like it have been founded in Lat-

in American countries with restrictive laws like Mexico and Argentina.

She and her colleagues said that it will be a safe place for women who prefer not to have abortions alone in their bathrooms at home. Women can show up for advice, or to have abortions together, or in a space alone.

Asked if the centre would provide the pills themselves, Jelinska said that was between the activists and the women who need abor-

tions.

One of the activists who launched the centre is Justyna Wyrzyńska, who was found guilty by a court in 2023 of aborting an abortion. That ruling was recently annulled and a retrial was ordered.

The organisation has been trying to destigmatise abortion in a society where they say abortions are common, mostly carried out by women at home with pills, but abortion remains a taboo topic.

## BUSINESS

### India's Shipping Ministry Targets 150 Projects by 2025

**New Delhi:** Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has reviewed 150 projects of the port ministry worth USD 2 trillion, and set a target, after consulting with experts, to complete at least 150 projects by September 2025, an official statement said on Saturday.

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) organised a two-day 'Chintan Shivir, 2025' in Srinagar with a vision to evaluate, reset, discover and apply solutions to unlock the potential of the Blue Economy of India.

The statement said the event focused on strengthening India's shipbuilding and repair capabilities, improving financial and digital solutions for maritime infrastructure and pushing for a greener and more sustainable shipping industry.

achieving targets set out in Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision (MAKV) 2047, it added.

A total of 150 initiatives/projects were identified for completion within the next six months, with a deadline set for September 6, 2025," the statement said.

According to the statement, Sonowal's vision is to be among the top 5 shipbuilding nations by 2047, with an additional shipbuilding capacity of 4 million Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT).

He also directed the formulation of suitable policies and skill development initiatives while encouraging collaboration with state governments.

Bharat Container Shipping Line will be established under the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), the statement said.

# India looks for good trade agreement with US: Sitharaman

**New Delhi:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said India is looking for a "good" trade agreement with the US to promote economic growth and ensure smooth supply chains.

She also said that amid a growing global tariff war, India will have to move "smartly" to guard against possible dumping of goods from countries that are facing higher US tariffs. At the same time, India will protect the interests of domestic industries that rely on affordable imports.

"In a broad sense, I think, both sides should have ambition for a good treaty, and nobody can fault that. Particularly for India, when you are looking at Viksit Bharat, you need to have good traction. Everybody is concerned about the growth numbers," she



Sitharaman said at The Economic Times Awards. "The minister said that a lot more steps are required to strengthen the country's exports across the board, wherever there is potential."

"So, I am sure the commerce minister (Piyush Goyal) is quite seized of this, and he would take this (trade) agreement to meet the ambitions that

we have in terms of promoting growth, in terms of ensuring that our supply chains are intact and smooth and flowing well, and therefore, that would guide his negotiations, I would think," Sitharaman said.

India and the US are negotiating a bilateral trade agreement, with an aim to double trade to USD 500 billion by

2030. After a week-long visit, Goyal on Saturday returned from Washington after holding trade talks with his US counterparts.

Over the concern that due to the US tariffs, there is a possibility of dumping of goods in the country, Sitharaman said: "When such chances exist, we will have to guard ourselves against

it. But, how smartly do we do that?...We need to be smart about these sorts of things."

Among stakeholders, there are sections that opt for complete stoppage of dumped goods and some sections prefer a calibrated approach to it, she added.

"So, the government's task is to make sure that we plan for it and balance everybody's interests," the minister said.

Already various sectors like steel have approached the government to impose safeguard duties to protect them against the increase in imports from countries, such as China, which have huge inventories.

When asked about the guiding principles that India needs to follow while negotiating free trade agreements, she said: "The first principle is to put India's interest first."

# Sun-days Co Unveils Luxurious Eyewear Destination at Omaxe Chowk, Chandni Chowk

**New Delhi:** Sun-days Co is thrilled to announce the opening of its latest destination at Omaxe Chowk, Chandni Chowk—a perfect blend of luxury and style. Offering a carefully curated selection of over 60 renowned global eyewear brands, Sun-days Co brings to the greater the best in sunglasses, from timeless icons like Ray-Ban, Prada, and Gucci to contemporary trends from Kuboraum and Philipp Plein. It's the ultimate destination for eyewear enthusiasts seeking a blend of elegance and cutting-edge design.

Nestled in the heart of



Delhi in Omaxe Chowk, Sun-days Co finds its

ideal home in a space that embodies luxury

and sophistication. Omaxe Chowk is not

just a shopping center—it's an experience, built to offer a world-class ambiance and premium services. The mall's contemporary design, stunning architecture, and exceptional brand selection make it the best place for fashion-forward consumers to explore a curated shopping experience, making it a perfect fit for Sun-days Co's luxurious eyewear offerings.

To celebrate its opening, Sun-days Co is hosting an exclusive event featuring celebrity Garima Jain, known for her remarkable work in television and film. The event prom-

ises to offer an unforgettable experience, showcasing the future of fashion-forward eyewear in a chic, vacation-like atmosphere.

The vision behind Sun-days Co comes from Devansh Binani, the dynamic fourth-generation Director of Himalaya Optical, with a legacy spanning 85 years in the eyewear industry. His leadership ensures that Sun-days Co blends rich heritage with the latest in eyewear technology, bringing unparalleled luxury and style to Delhi.

In addition to a range of high-fashion sunglasses, Sun-days Co

also offers prescription sunglasses that combine practicality with sophisticated style. The store also features an exclusive collection of sports sunglasses from leading brands like Maui Jim and Oakley, ensuring superior protection and performance for athletes and outdoor enthusiasts.

Visit Sun-days Co at Omaxe Chowk, Chandni Chowk, and immerse yourself in a world where luxury eyewear meets an extraordinary shopping experience. Step into the world of Sun-days Co and discover your perfect pair of sunglasses today!

### IIFL Finance Launches Seven All Women 'Shakti' Branches on Women's Day

**New Delhi:** IIFL Finance, one of India's largest non-banking financial companies, has launched seven gold-loan branches exclusively run by women employees across the Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) and Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). This pioneering initiative, unveiled on Women's Day, marks a first in the gold-loan industry and underscores IIFL Finance's commitment to empowering women in financial services.

Branded as 'Shakti' branches, the new outlets celebrate the strength and resilience of women who drive social and economic change in their communities. These branches will cater to all borrowers while offering special benefits and financial literacy programs tailored for female entrepreneurs.

Abhiram Bhattacharjee, President and Chief Operating Officer of IIFL Finance, a quarter of IIFL Finance's customers are women, mostly from unbanked and underbanked segments. Additionally, we have a significant number of women employees at the branch level. Through these women-centric initiatives, we aim to foster financial independence and create a more inclusive business ecosystem."

For Advt Contact: 9818-799941

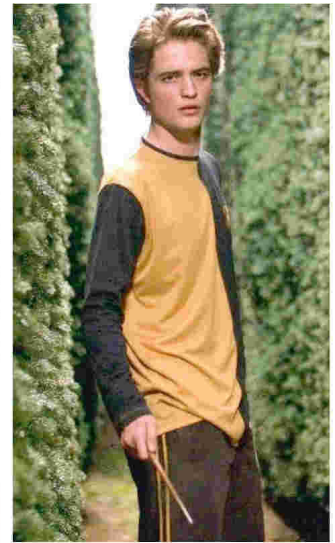


## Kiran Rao recalls her cameo in 'Dil Chahta Hai', says she was roped in as an "extra"

**Mumbai** Indian filmmaker Kiran Rao, best known for directing 'Dhobi Ghat' and 'Laapataa Ladies', recently revealed an interesting anecdote from her early days in the film industry. Before she started working as an assistant director on films like Lagaan and Swades, Kiran made a cameo in the 2001 hit film Dil Chahta Hai, which starred her ex-husband and actors Aamir Khan, Saif Ali Khan, and Akshaye Khanna in lead roles. Kiran made a blink-and-

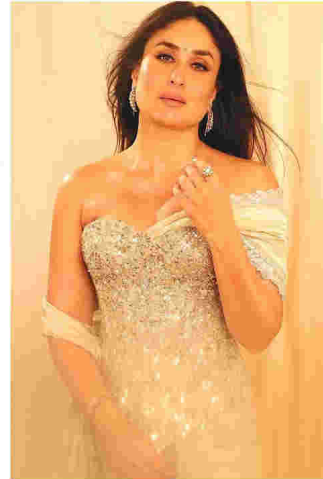
you-miss-it appearance in the film, where the three lead actors are waiting at a hotel. In the scene, the filmmaker, with her shoulder-length curly hair, can be seen entering with two friends, wearing a printed blue halter top and a yellow sarong. In a recent conversation with ANI, Kiran recalled how she unexpectedly landed the role and shared that she was initially responsible for casting extras for the Goa schedule of the film. However, when they were short on background actors, her friends pushed her to step in. "This is thanks to my friends Arjun Bhasin, Reema Kagti, and Zoya Akhtar, who were all, most annoyingly, leading the set. I was actually casting the extras for Dil Chahta Hai for the Goa schedule. And every time they felt short of an extra, they were like, 'Kiran, just wear this costume and walk,'" she chuckled as she recalled the incident. "I was like, guys, I'm the extras coordinator. I'm the casting director of extras. And Arjun, who was the costume designer, put me in this, and I was like, 'What is this, Arjun? With this, like literally, you're sending me out nanga!'" she added. She explained that Arjun convinced her by saying, "It's a beach, and nobody else is willing to wear it, so come on, you go!" After 'Dil Chahta Hai', Kiran worked as an assistant director on 'Lagaan', where Aamir Khan played a village boy who takes on the British in a cricket match. She later married Aamir Khan in 2005 and made her directorial debut with Dhobi Ghat in 2011. She recently returned to directing with 'Laapataa Ladies'.

## Robert Pattinson says he got "frightened" after watching a horror film



**Washington** Actor Robert Pattinson opened up about his reaction after watching a horror film recently and said that now his reaction is not like before. He admitted in a conversation with his 'Mickey 17' director Bong Joon Ho that he "used to watch a lot of really dark stuff" when he "was younger and just think, like, 'Yeah, this is cool.'" "Things have changed," reported People. "Now, I'm too sensitive," he said. "It's strange—you would think it would go the other way around: As you get older, you become less frightened of these. But I can't watch horror movies anymore." The actor shared that he did get "frightened" recently after watching a specific horror movie before meeting with its director for something else. "He'd done this horror movie, and I watched it, and I kept thinking that someone was breaking into my house," Pattinson recalled, not naming the director. "And so I was sitting on my sofa with two kitchen knives, waiting for the person to come in." He continued, "And then I fell asleep with them basically in my neck on the couch. My girlfriend [Suki Waterhouse] came in, and she was like, 'What is happening?! Why do you have two knives in your face and you're sleeping?'" reported People. "It was probably a squirrel," Pattinson added of the noise he heard. While talking about another thing that makes him nervous, he mentioned that he "was sweating so much" when the day came for him to film a dance sequence for Die, My Love. "And they just find it so easy, and they're like 'Just dance, it's just music playing, just dance,'" reported People. "I did this movie with Lynne Ramsay, and she's a really good dancer, and Jennifer Lawrence, really good dancer," he continued, referencing Die, My Love. "And they just find it so easy, and they're like 'Just dance, it's just music playing, just dance,'" reported People.

## Shahid Kapoor, Kareena's friendly hug at IIFA press conference breaks the internet



**Jaipur** Bollywood fans were in for a surprise at the IIFA 2025 press conference in Jaipur on Saturday, as former co-stars and ex-lovers Kareena Kapoor and Shahid Kapoor were spotted sharing a warm moment. The two stars, who were once one of Bollywood's most loved couples, were seen hugging and chatting as paparazzi captured the rare interaction. Bebo and Shahid were in a relationship in the 2000s and starred together in several films, including Fida, Chup Chup Ke, and Jab We Met. Their on-screen chemistry made them a fan favorite; however, the two parted ways just before Jab We Met was filmed. Years later, Kareena married Saif Ali Khan and had two sons,



## "Shows struggle of father to fulfill his daughter's dream": Abhishek Bachchan

**Mumbai** Bollywood actor Abhishek Bachchan talked about his film 'Be Happy', which portrays a beautiful father-daughter bond. Abhishek plays Shiv, a dedicated single father to his lively and intelligent daughter, Dhara (Inayat Verma). Dhara dreams of performing on the country's biggest dance reality show. However, an unexpected crisis threatens to crush her dream, leaving Shiv with a tough choice. To keep his daughter's hopes alive, he embarks on an extraordinary journey—challenging fate, rediscovering himself, and finding the true meaning of happiness. In a conversation with ANI, he said, "Shiv is a banker in Ooty, who stays with his daughter Dhara. He is a widower. Dhara wants to participate in a dance competition and go to Mumbai. However, her father is reluctant to send her away from her. Later, he allows her to go, and it shows the struggle of a father to fulfill his daughter's dream. There are a number of movies that are made on a mother putting all efforts for their kids, but this film shows the love of a father for his daughter." The film stars Nora Fatehi,

the emotional, loving, and caring bond between a single father and his passionate daughter. It shows the dedication and passion of a father for making her career in dance and how her father is initially reluctant but later supports her in fulfilling her dreams. Taking to Instagram, Prime Video dropped the trailer of 'Be Happy' and wrote in the caption, "Sometimes it takes two to achieve a dream...#BeHappyOnPrime, March 14" "Playing Shiv was an emotional journey, as he is a father fighting against time and fate to make his daughter's dream come true," said Abhishek Bachchan in a statement. "Be Happy" is more than just a movie; it's a powerful testament to resilience—reminding us that the bravest thing we can do is keep moving forward, even when life's toughest moments try to hold us back, much like in dance. The film owes its heart and soul to Remo's vision and expertise. His ability to weave depth and emotion into every scene is unparalleled, and I believe the audience will feel a profound connection to the story and its characters. I'm looking forward to the movie premiering on Prime Video on March 14," he added.

## Being the new Kapoor on the block a double-edged sword: Zahan Kapoor

**New Delhi** Zahan Kapoor, who recently starred in the critically acclaimed web series 'Black Warrant', on Saturday said being the newest actor from the Kapoor film family has both its advantages and disadvantages. Being the new Kapoor on the block a double-edged sword: Zahan Kapoor. Being the new Kapoor on the block a double-edged sword: Zahan Kapoor. The actor, who is the grandson of the legendary actor and producer Shashi Kapoor, was speaking at a session on the second day of the India Today Conclave 2025 here. "Being the new Kapoor on the block is a common source of intrigue for a lot of people. It's interesting. It's both an advantage and a disadvantage. A double-edged sword. There is pressure and expectation, yet there is also forgiveness and accessibility in certain ways. Thankfully, I'm happy to say that my parents ensured I wasn't carrying that weight on my shoulders and taught me to be diligent with my own work. Things are in my hands and in how I show up," Zahan said. The 32-year-old actor said belonging to a film family didn't necessarily make things "easy" for him. "It's subjective. I can only speak for myself. I was given some opportunities and access, but not everything... It was difficult for me to navigate these expectations. "All I knew was that I wanted to be a part of this magical world of telling stories, to serve it in the best way I can. And I like learning. I really do. I'm very nerdy like that. So I'm reading, learning, talking to people, watching rehearsals and films. I am fascinated and trying to reflect on life around us, so society questions that."



## Sonu Sood's much-awaited Fateh is now streaming exclusively on JioHotstar!

**Chandigarh** After a successful box office run, Sonu Sood's much-awaited directorial debut, Fateh, is now streaming exclusively on JioHotstar. This action-packed thriller delves into the dark underbelly of cybercrime while delivering pulse-pounding sequences that will keep audiences hooked. Starring in the titular role, Sonu Sood leads an ensemble cast featuring Naseeruddin Shah, Jacqueline Fernandez, and Vijay Raaz in prominent roles. Directed by Sonu Sood, produced by Sonali Sood and Umesh KR Bansal under the banner of Shakti Sagar Productions and Zee Studios, the film follows Fateh Singh (Sonu Sood), an ex-special



ops officer who has left his past behind to lead a peaceful life in Punjab. However, when a village girl, Nimrit Kaur, falls prey to a ruthless cybercrime syndicate led by Raza and Satya Prakash, Fateh is forced to come out of retirement. Teaming up with ethical hacker Khushi Sharma (Jacqueline Fernandez), he embarks on an intense, action-filled mission to dismantle the cyber mafia and rescue Nimrit, all while uncovering the deep-rooted dangers of the digital world. Director and actor Sonu

Sood who is playing the titular role of Fateh said, "Stepping into direction while playing Fateh was an incredible journey—both challenging and exciting. I've always had a deep love for action, and it's amazing to see how much my fans enjoy it too. With Fateh, we wanted to take things to another level. It's not just about cybercrime; it's a high-energy, action-packed ride. Balancing acting and directing was definitely a learning experience, constantly shifting between performing in front of the camera and making creative calls behind it. But having such a fantastic team made it all feel effortless. I can't wait for everyone to watch it on JioHotstar and feel the same rush we did while bringing this story to life."