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IPL resumes with the RCB vs KKR face-off; Virat Kohli's outing in focus

Israeli strikes kill at least 93 people in Gaza as Trump wraps up his Middle East visit

Bollywood stars pen lovely wishes for Vicky Kaushal as he turns 37

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MARKET SENSEX 82330.59 NIFTY 25019.80

WEATHER Sunrise 5:30 AM Sunset 7:06 PM

Today's Prediction Maximum 43°C Minimum 30°C

Trump says US will set new tariff rates for countries

EAM President says letters revealing rates will be sent out within weeks as Washington lacks capacity for individual deals

Washington President Donald Trump on Friday said the U.S. would begin unilaterally informing many of its trading partners of new tariff rates, rather than securing deals with the countries individually as the White House has repeatedly promised.



After his sweeping April tariff plan sent markets spiraling and set in motion a global trade war, Trump reversed course and issued a 90-day pause on the new duties for every affected country except China, opening the door for individual countries to negotiate deals with his trade team.

Instead, Trump said U.S. trading partners should expect individual letters from Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick "at a certain point over the next two to three weeks, in which they would be 'telling people what they will be paying to do business in the United States.'"

The president did not specify which countries would receive letters telling them what they would pay and which countries would still have the opportunity to negotiate. Trump slapped roughly 60 trading partners with so-called reciprocal tariffs of up to 50 percent in April, while imposing a baseline 10 percent tariff

on all foreign imports. Trump also touted a "fantastic trade deal" his administration reached with the United Kingdom earlier this month — the first of its kind since the launch of the administration's aggressive tariff policy in April, which the president promised would usher in a string of agreements with U.S. trading partners. The U.K., however, did not face the higher reciprocal tariff, only the 10 percent baseline tariff as well as other sector-specific tariffs on autos, steel and aluminum.

Trade tensions between the U.S. and China cooled earlier this week when the two major economies agreed to slash their triple-digit tariffs on one another, which had steadily escalated as the countries ramped up a major trade war after Trump slammed China with high tariffs in April. The truce is only temporary, however — Trump set a 90-day deadline to reach a broader trade agreement with Beijing, meaning the sky-high tariffs could snap back in August.

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Pak rebuilding destroyed terror camps with IMF aid: Rajnath

New Delhi

India on Friday called on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reconsider its \$1-billion assistance to Pakistan, suggesting that Islamabad could use it for terror funding.



In an address to military personnel in Bhubaneswar, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said India does not want that the funding it gives to the IMF should be used directly or indirectly to create terror infrastructure in Pakistan or any other country.

"I believe that in today's time, any kind of financial assistance to Pakistan is nothing less than terror funding. India would like the IMF to reconsider its assistance of one billion dollars to Pakistan and refrain from giving any kind of assistance in future," he said.

Singh, who arrived at the Bhub Air Force station in the morning to review the overall security situation, lauded the Indian Air Force for spearheading the campaign against terrorism effectively.

He said during Operation Sindoor, India's armed forces not only dominated the enemy but also succeeded in decimating them. Prime Minister Narendra Modi coined 'Operation Sindoor', Singh said.

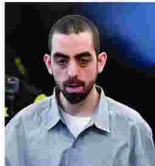
Lauding the Indian Air Force for spearheading the campaign against terrorism effectively, he said, "Our Air Force has touched new and greater heights with its valour, courage and glory."

The Air Force base here was among the military infrastructure that Pakistan targeted during the four-day confrontation between the two militaries.

In his address, he said that the \$1 billion IMF assistance to Pakistan would be used to fund terror infrastructure, and wondered if that would not be considered 'indirect funding' by an international organisation. Agency

Salman Rushdie attacker sentenced to 25 years in jail

Mayville The man convicted of stabbing Salman Rushdie on a New York lecture stage in 2022, leaving the prize-winning author blind in one eye, was sentenced on Friday to serve 25 years in prison.



A jury found Hadi Matar, 27, guilty of attempted murder and assault in February. Rushdie did not return to court to the western New York courtroom for his assault sentencing but submitted a victim impact statement.

During the trial, the 77-year-old author was the key witness, describing how he believed he was dying when a masked attacker plunged a knife into his head and body more than a dozen times as he was being introduced at the Chautauqua Institution to speak about writer-censorship.

Before being sentenced, Matar stood and made a statement about freedom of speech in which he called Rushdie a hypocrite. "Salman Rushdie wants to disrespect other people," said Matar, clad in white-striped jail clothing and wearing handcuffs. "He wants to be a bully, he wants to bully other people. I don't agree with that."

More institutes scrap MoUs with Turkiye, Azerbaijan; jewellers join protest

New Delhi

The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council urged the industry on Friday to suspend all business transactions with Turkiye and Azerbaijan, while reputed educational institutions, such as the IIT-Roorkee, cancelled MoUs signed with the universities of the two countries.



The developments came against the backdrop of Turkiye backing Pakistan and its condemnation of India's strikes on terror camps in the neighbouring country and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir under Operation Sindoor. Pakistan also used Turkish drones on a large scale during the military conflict with India.

Azerbaijan had also actively supported Pakistan in the conflict. Several trade bodies have given a call to boycott Turkish products, whereas Indian universities, including the JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia, have suspended their agreements with the two countries.

The Cochín International Airport Limited announced that it has discontinued the ground-handling services of Turkish company Celebi Airport Services India Private Limited, in compliance with the recent directives of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security with regard to national security.

HIGHLIGHT

The developments came against the backdrop of Turkiye backing Pakistan and its condemnation of India's strikes on terror camps in the neighbouring country and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir under Operation Sindoor.

Country, Army have bowed down before Modi, says MP deputy CM



Bhopal Madhya Pradesh deputy Chief Minister Jagdish Devda on Friday said the country, its army and soldiers have 'bowed down at the feet' of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, prompting the Congress to dub it an insult to the valour of the armed forces.

The Bharatiya Janata Party leader later claimed his statement was "distorted" by the opposition party, and he meant to say the people have bowed before the Army after seeing its valour during the successful execution of Operation Sindoor.

The controversy followed after another Madhya Pradesh minister, Vijay Shah, came under fire for remarks about Col Sofiya Qureshi who conducted media briefings on Operation Sindoor along with Wing Commander Vyomika Singh.

Devda, who is the finance minister of BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh, was speaking at a function of Civil Defence volunteers in Jabalpur. "We want to thank the prime minister. The entire country, its army and soldiers are 'natmastak' (with their heads bowed) at his feet. The entire country has bowed at his feet," he said. Agency

Ceasefire Mirage: Decoding Indo-Pak Dynamics and Trump's Ambiguous Diplomacy



Dr. Anil Singh The recent Indo-Pakistan ceasefire, coming after intense cross-border hostilities and devastating terrorist strikes, has sparked wide-ranging reactions and significant speculation. This ceasefire is not merely a cessation of hostilities but a complicated political maneuver perceived very differently by both nations. While theoretically, a ceasefire during wartime represents a temporary halt in hostilities to facilitate negoti-

ations or humanitarian aid, the Indo-Pak context often involves deeper strategic implications. India and Pakistan have historically had a tumultuous relationship marked by wars, skirmishes, and protracted proxy conflicts. The recent escalation, triggered by the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir orchestrated by Pakistan-based militants, saw India assert its military dominance decisively. India's message has been unequivocal: a ceasefire is acceptable only if terrorism originating from Pakistani soil ceases immediately and permanently.



For Pakistan, the ceasefire appears primarily a strategic necessity rather than a genuine commitment to peace. The substantial destruction of nearly half its operational airbases and critical military infrastructure in recent Indian airstrikes left Pakistan with little option but to halt further escalation. Internally, Pakistani leadership, particularly Deputy Prime Minister's admission, reflects the pragmatic realization of military limitations and the pressing need for diplomatic engagement to manage domestic and international backlash.



The role of U.S. President Donald Trump in the ceasefire process has been both intriguing and controversial. Initially, Trump's social media message on X triumphantly declared his instrumental role in negotiating peace, positioning himself as a pivotal peace broker between India and Pakistan. Trump's initial claim was clear and bold, suggesting a diplomatic victory on his part. However, under scrutiny and subsequent clarifications, Trump significantly scaled back his claims, eventually admitting his role was limited to merely facilitating the ceasefire rather than orchestrating it. This walk-back illustrates the complexities of international diplomacy where political figures often amplify their roles to consolidate personal stature and geopolitical influence.

The ceasefire's status beyond May 18 remains uncertain, primarily due to deep-rooted mistrust and ongoing provocations, including Pakistan's continued intermittent shelling despite initial agreements. The sustainability of this ceasefire critically hinges on both nations' strategic calculations and international diplomatic pressure, notably from the U.S. and other influential global players.

India's stance under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has undergone a significant shift. It is no longer constrained by previous strategic hesitancy. India's approach is unequivocally clear: the only acceptable negotiation points are the cessation of terrorism and the dismantling of terror infrastructure. Agency

NEWS IN BRIEF

Health check-up camps organised at Sanjay Camp

Staff Reporter
New Delhi

The NDMC here on Friday organised a health check-up camp in collaboration with Max Hospital, Saket for the residents of JJ cluster at Sanjay Camp, Chanakypuri.

NDMC vice-chairman Kuljeet Singh Chahal inaugurated the health check-up camp. On the occasion, Chahal said that it is also important for preventive health check-up and facilitate early detection of common ailments among the JJ cluster residents. The camp will especially focus on women, children and elderly people for ensuring inclusive healthcare coverage.

Director (Welfare) Anjum Siddiqui informed that a team of 15 doctors and other paramedical staff from Max Hospital, Saket conducted the preventive health check-up such as Pulmonary Function Test (PFT), Eye & ENT check-up and provided essential medical support.

She also informed that around 170 residents including 80 male, 65 female and 25 children have benefited in the health check-up camp.

MLA lays foundation stone for pond beautification work

Noida

MLA Pankaj Singh laid the foundation stone for the work of reviving and beautifying the pond at Sultanpur village.

The Noida Authority has proposed to develop the pond in an area of about 11000 square meter on the demand of the villagers.

The total cost of this project is Rs 434.45 lakh. Construction of a pond in the village will promote water conservation and this pond can be used by the general public during festivals like Chhath Puja etc.

Metropolitan president Mahesh Chauhan, Noida Authority's additional chief executive officer Sanjay Kumar Khatri, villagers and other officers and employees were present.

Noida Authority to build city's first synthetic athletic track

Noida

The Noida Authority is going to build city's first synthetic athletic track in Noida Stadium, sector-21A. The work on it is likely to start soon.

The length of this track will be 300 meters. The cost of its construction has been fixed at around Rs 2.90 crore. According to the Noida Authority, the synthetic track will be built in the vacant space near the skating ring in Noida Stadium. If needed, some part of Ramliya Ground will also be used for the track.

For its construction, Noida Authority CEO Lokesh M had inspected the stadium about six months ago. After which he had instructed to prepare a plan to build an athletic track. The construction agency has been selected and its work will start soon.

The construction of this synthetic track in Noida Stadium will provide better practice facilities to the players of the district. Its construction will benefit about 200 state and national level athletes of Noida.

Delhi govt plans to redesign portal make it more appealing

■ The Delhi government has floated a request for proposal (RFP) for designing and developing its web portal as well as associated departmental websites

New Delhi

The Delhi government plans to develop a single portal for citizens accessing its services and departments, with the capacity to handle 10,000 concurrent users and be "more informative and visually pleasing".

The Delhi government has floated a request for proposal (RFP) for designing and developing its web portal as well as associated departmental websites, said an official.

At present, the Delhi government portal at delhi.gov.in provides a unified interface to all government websites as well as information regarding various schemes and programmes.

The common portal includes approximately 180 associated departmental websites.

"The IT solutions provider will be tasked with migrating the entire existing portal of the Delhi government on the new platform and implement robust and scalable architecture in terms of content, security and load," said the official.

The company selected will have to maintain all Delhi government information at a single place and in a consistent manner. It will redesign and manage the current home page and corresponding web pages by making them "more informative and visually pleasing", the official added.

"The portal.delhi.gov.in will be a one-stop solution to addressing all the needs of citizens, with an aim to providing accurate information in various fields. With the launch of the portal, the Delhi government aims to have a single interface, comprising information on various government departments," he said.

The official said the system architecture must support the anticipated load of more than 10,000 concurrent users.

"The portal is expected to provide acceptable levels of performance under peak load. However, it is expected to handle burst levels of activity for a short (usually



five to 10 minutes) period without functional degradation," he said.

"It should be scalable in such a way that if there are concurrent users more than specified, then the capacity should get automatically enhanced by 20 per cent and so on without any impact on the service," he added.

Apart from information on departments, citizens will also be able to access information on government policies such as on electric vehicles, free transplantation and pollution.

Information on all Delhi government services will be available on the e-district website. Websites of individual departments will redirect applicants to the e-district website for accessing services provided by the respective department, the official said. The portal and websites will also provide the option of logging in through Google and Facebook, among others.

The selected bidder will maintain the portal and websites for at least five years.

Delhi government forms 10-member committee to draft revised EV policy

New Delhi

The Delhi government has formed a 10-member committee comprising officials and experts to draft a revised electric vehicle (EV) policy, officials said on Friday.

A 12-point agenda has been set for the committee, which includes transitioning all CNG vehicles to electric, charging facilities under flyovers, managing battery waste, last-mile connectivity, subsidy disbursement and other aspects of the revised policy.

"For proper CNG to EV transition, the committee shall ensure that a scientific study is done to assess the number of CNG cars currently in use in Delhi and to outline a feasible plan for replacing them with EVs within a year, starting from April 1, 2026," a government document said.

According to the document, the expert committee shall, after detailed examination, recommend measures on how to set up EV charging stations under flyovers and year-wise specific targets for setting up private and semi-public EV charging stations.

"Considering the anticipated large numbers of EV adoption by the general public, a perspective plan, including clarity on the allocation of land, needs to be put in place to address the needs of the NCT of Delhi, and the same needs to be incorporated in the revised policy," it added.

The committee has experts like K Ramachandra Rao, professor, Department of Civil Engineering and



Head of Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Centre (TRIIP), IIT Delhi; Sudhendu Jyoti Sinha, advisor, NTTI Aayog, and managing director of DTC; top officers of the transport department; members of power distribution companies; and others.

In a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on April 16, the extension of the existing EV policy was approved for three months.

The EV policy has been extended multiple times under both the previous AAP regime and the current government led by the BJP.

The committee shall in detail examine the delays caused in subsidy disbursement in the current policy, and it shall also objectively determine the number of women beneficiaries and the quantum of subsidy to be given to them," the government document said.

Launched in August

2020 as one of the key initiatives of the previous AAP government, the policy is aimed at tackling vehicular pollution and pushing the adoption of electric vehicles to 25 per cent by 2024. Although its initial three-year term ended in August 2023, the government decided to extend it.

To provide last-mile connectivity in congested unauthorised areas, the committee has been directed to look into ways in which mini-cabs and e-rickshaws can be deployed for public convenience.

"The committee shall suggest routes for which permits can be given and the maximum number of e-auto rickshaws and maxi cabs to ply on roads along with the location of public charging infrastructure in these areas," the document added.

The committee has to submit fortnightly reports on the progress made by the committee to Transport Minister Pankaj Singh

Delhi Govt to Set Up Welfare Board for Gig Workers



Staff Reporter
New Delhi

Delhi labour minister Kapil Mishra on Friday said the government will constitute a welfare board for gig and platform workers and frame schemes for their welfare.

Mishra chaired a meeting with gig workers and representatives from major platforms and aggregators, including Swiggy, Zomato, Blinkit, Uber, UrbanClap, and BigBasket, said an official statement.

The session provided a platform for gig workers to voice their concerns directly to the government and aggregators. They highlighted pressing issues such as long working hours, inadequate payments, and the absence of an effective grievance redressal system, which have long impacted their livelihoods, it said.

"All these problems will be addressed with the cooperation of platforms and aggregators. The government will constitute a welfare board for gig and platform workers

and will frame schemes for their welfare," he said.

He also assured the platforms and aggregators that they will not face harassment from inspectors or any other officers in any manner.

The Delhi government has allocated Rs 10 crore in its FY26 budget to support these initiatives, he informed the gathering.

The gig economy is among the fastest-growing sectors in India, currently employing approximately one crore people nationwide.

According to NTTI Aayog estimates, this figure is projected to rise significantly to 2.4 crore by 2029-30, the statement said.

In Delhi alone, around five lakh gig and platform workers contribute to this vital economic sector, underscoring its importance to the region's growth, it added.

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MY CLIENTS SH. BHOLA NATH SHARMA S/O. LATE SH. RAJA RAM SHARMA AND HIS WIFE SMT. PROMILA SHARMA BOTH R/O FLAT NO 356, THIRD FLOOR, POCKET-D DILSHAD GARDEN HAVE SEVERED ALL THEIR RELATIONS AND DEBARED THEIR SON AND DAUGHTER IN LAW NAMELY SH. MAYANK SHARMA AND SMT. POOJA SHARMA (@POOJA JAIN FROM ALL MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES DUE TO HER MISCONDUCT AND HOSTILE BEHAVIOUR. MY CLIENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ANY ACTS, DEBITS AND DEEDS IN FUTURE. DEEPA DOGRA ADVOCATE

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PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the Public at large that my client Sh. Prem Nath Sharma S/o B.R. Sharma & Smt. Santosh W/O Sh. Prem Nath Sharma, both R/O G-200 Gali no-8, Bhagat Singh Park, Sirsapur, North West Delhi, Delhi-110042 have discovered/debarred their daughter Deeksha Sharma from their entire movable/immovable properties, as their daughter Deeksha Sharma has become disoriented, uncontrollable, feeble and is associated with bad company and had tarnishing the image of her family in the society with her acts & deeds. She has misbehaved and committed extreme cruelty with my clients. It is further informed in the interest of general public that they shall not deal with aforesaid daughter of my clients. If anyone deals with her, he/she will do at his/her own risk. My clients, therefore, shall not be responsible for any act and deeds of their daughter Deeksha Sharma and severed all relations with her. MANAV SHARMA (ADVOCATE)

CH. NO. 40, Tabali Building, Office: WZ-44, UGF, Street No. 16, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054 Krishna Park, Opp. Vikasuri Red Light, New Delhi-110018

PUBLIC NOTICE
Be it known to all that my client name Smt. Meera Devi W/o Lt. Sh. Shyam Varan Singh, R/o 124-A, D-Block, Qutub Vihar Phase-1, Chirwa, Delhi-110071, have disinherited, disowned & severed all relations with her son and daughter-in-law namely Anit Kumar Singh S/o Lt. Sh. Shyam Varan Singh and Gudiya W/o Anit Kumar Singh Vihar inheriting their movable and immovable properties because the above named are out of control of my client. My client have severed all relations with them. Anyone dealing with them may do so at his/her own risks, costs, and consequences. MOHIT VASHISTHA ADVOCATE

Chamber No.559, Lawyers Chamber Complex District Courts Dwarika, Sector 10, New Delhi-110075

Ghaziabad Authority cracks down on illegal buildings on Matiyala Road

Shiv Kumar Ghaziabad

In a decisive move against unauthorized constructions, the Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) on Friday undertook a large-scale demolition operation at an illegal colony being developed on Matiyala Road, Village Sadarpur. This action was carried out under the direct instructions of the Vice Chairman of GDA, aimed at curbing the rampant issue of illegal colonies and unauthorized building activities in the region.

The demolition drive was led by Mr. Abid, In-Charge Enforcement Zone-3, along with Mr. Ateeq, sons of Shamsuddin, and Mr. Indrapal, son of Shri Hari Singh. The team targeted approximately 21.00 bighas of land, located directly opposite Janhit Institute, which had been illegally encroached upon and developed with unauthorized boundary walls,



roads, electric poles, and other infrastructure.

The operation faced stiff resistance from local developers and builders involved in the illegal colony's development. They protested vehemently against the demolition. However, the GDA police force was quick to control the situation and ensured

could lead to serious consequences.

Supporting the enforcement team were senior technical officials, including the Executive Engineer, Assistant Engineers, Junior Engineers, and various supervisors and foremen, who oversee the technical aspects of the demolition. Local police also maintained law and order throughout the operation.

This demolition drive is part of the ongoing efforts by the Ghaziabad Development Authority to crack down on illegal constructions and unauthorized colonies across the city to ensure planned urban development and protect citizens from fraudulent property deals.

The GDA has reiterated its commitment to take strict action against illegal land encroachments and warned the public to stay vigilant and avoid any dealings in unauthorized colonies.

'Mentally ill' man found hanging from tree in Delhi's Sarojini Nagar

New Delhi

A "mentally ill" man was found hanging from a tree near a taxi stand in the Sarojini Nagar area of southwest Delhi, police said on Friday.

The deceased has been identified as Ravindra Mehta (46), a native of Uttarakhand, he said.

On Wednesday, police received a call regarding a man hanging from a tree at Tikona Park NDMC taxi stand. Police reached the spot and found Mehta hanging from a tree with a rope.

The area was cordoned off and the body was sent to Safdarjung Hospital where he was declared brought dead, and sent for post-mortem, police said.

He was employed as an Upper Division Clerk (UDC) in the gram panchayat office of his native village, police in a statement said. Preliminary inquiry revealed that Mehta had been undergoing treatment for mental health issues and had travelled to Delhi with his wife a day



earlier.

His wife informed police that he had been mentally unwell for the past few days and had come for medical treatment in Chanakypuri.

The family did not suspect any foul play, and their statements were recorded accordingly, police said.

Police also reviewed nearby CCTV footage and found visuals of Mehta walking alone near the spot with a plastic bag around the time of the incident.

"At present, no foul play is suspected. Prima facie, it appears to be a case of suicide," the statement read. Further investigation is underway.



By Ajay Kumar

Pakistan done & dusted - Back to divisive polarization...

domineering superiority. The feeling of having missed the opportunity of achieving, complete annihilation of Pakistan, reminded a large section of BJP supporters of the Indian victory in 1971 and the subsequent toned-down Shimla Accord. Accentuating this sense of loss was the constant provocation and smear campaign by opposition parties, which goaded this disenfranchised BJP voter base into believing that their idol, the strong man, the iron man, Mr. Modi was no different from previous Prime Ministers. Little did this jingoistic, machoistic & mentally impaired vote base realize that PM Modi had achieved much more than former PM Vajpayee, Indira Gandhi, Lal Bahadur Shastri or Pundit Nehru. During Operation Sindoor, the Indian projectiles, missiles & air to surface guided munitions had destroyed Pakistani military hardware and bases like never before.

Yet, the ball of vote bank politics had rolled off.

To boost the morale of its core support base, the BJP decided to take out massive procession under the banner of 'Triranga Yatra'. All BJP state leaders including the chief ministers were to lead the Triranga Yatras. Laced with Indian flags, shouting nationalist slogans, long marches by varied BJP state leadership in different cities helped recover a lot of lost morale and sentiment. So did the media blitz, of a successful mission achieved against Pakistan under the astute leadership of the larger-than-life leader, PM Modi. Not to be left behind, the main opposition party, the Congress, launched its own 'Jai Hind Yatra' celebrating the achievements of the armed forces, while raising question on Modi's



alleged capitulation to the US President Trump. From Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh, Congress Pradesh committees took out processions, as usual shouting slogans against the very political leader - Narendra Modi - who made 'Operation Sindoor' a resounding success. With less than a year into the assembly elections in West Bengal, could Mamata Banerjee and her Trinamool Congress be left watching happily. How could TMC allow the BJP to capitalize the nationalist fervor in Bengal via its people connect initiative - Triranga Yatra. The TMC, launched its own missile of 'nationalism' encasement, with its very own 'Patriotic rallies'. Mamata Banerjee said, "our party will organize rallies on Saturday & Sunday from 3pm to 5pm. It is being done to express solidarity with our jawans and offer condolences for the brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the nation". Let's we forget that, it's the very same TMC government which till date has not taken any action against the wave of attacks on minority Hindus of Mumbai, the Congress party led by Mr. Rahul Gandhi, unleashed, yet

In the midst of "nationalism" encasement yatras, the Congress party led by Mr. Rahul Gandhi, unleashed, yet

another dose of divisive polarization - demand for caste-based reservation in private sector. Bihar assembly elections are held in next four to five months. Rahul Gandhi sought to reach the Ambedkar Hostel in Darbhanga, where he planned to interact with students and demand for the removal of 50% ceiling on reservations in government jobs and educational institutions. On being stopped by the local administration due to unmanageable crowd, Mr. Gandhi, choose to reach out to the students on foot. His three demands - national caste survey on the lines of Telangana sub classification model, removal of 50% cap on reservation imposed by the Supreme Court & the third being, implementation of reservations in private schools & colleges. All these three are, a neat steal from the playbook of JDU leader Nitish Kumar and RJD Leader Tejashwi Yadav's election manifesto. The caste cauldron is ultimate disruption within Indian society & polity, so vehemently pursued by all political parties, including the ruling BJP. It's a Pandora's box, which once opened has the potential of consuming & subsuming Indian innovation, enterprise & entrepreneurship. The demand for junking merit over deemed social justice, especially within the private sector - the only refuse of the

so called privileged upper castes or general category youth - shall set back the evolving 21st century India by another 100 years. The bandwagon of Mandelbrite parties seeking proportionate reservation based on numerical strength of castes - backwards or scheduled caste/tribe - shall have unfathomed consequences.

In between the ownership race of the 'nationalist narrative' and the 'caste calculus' driven agenda, remains the undercurrent palpable within the Muslims community on account of Waqf Amendment act, which continues its journey in the Supreme Court and also, in the minds of Islamic parties. May I humbly remind us all of the 8th May press release of All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB). It states, "The Muslim Personal Law Board will continue its Save Waqf Campaign as usual. Indoor programs, such as roundtable meetings with fellow citizens, interfaith dialogues, sermons in mosques, submission of memorandums via District Magistrates and Collectors, and press conferences, will continue as scheduled". In between a near war like scenario, the AIMPLB and varied other Muslim representative organizations are on a mission of their own. And mind you, all opposition parties including the AIMIM, led

by Asaduddin Owaisi are waiting for the SC to stay the amendment act. And if not stayed by the SC - protests, demonstrations, sloganeering, arson & looting - shall again set the country on the path of religious division for political one-upmanship.

And oh yes! how can we miss the unilateral, disruptive wave of economic challenges thrown up by the indomitable American President, Mr. Donald Trump. The self-serving head of state, who doesn't hesitate in taking a 747 Jumbo jet as a personal gift from a nation, hosting him as a State guest. After almost settling the tariff wars with China, Mr. Trump has already advised Apple's CEO, Tim Cook, to manufacture iPhone in America, rather than India, as earlier announced by Apple management. Indian Commerce minister is yet to undertake his second trip to the US to settle down BJP feather on the Capitol hill.

In this fast-changing landscape, a week really seems like a long time for the revolving door of political expediency. Just like trends changing on an hourly basis on YouTube, Google & X platforms, the issues demanding political, ideological and societal attention, shift focus, on a day to day basis. In between shifting focus and minimalistic attention span, it already feels like, Operation Sindoor was effected, a long time ago. It's a new day - I recall the nuns announce to us, at the boarding school - just that Indian politics through a new existential crisis, every day - after all, it's a 'new day'.

About the Author

Ajay Kumar, Columnist & Journalist

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.

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

Solution, Sudoku

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

THE WISDOM TREE BY SUVEEN KUMAR

VALUE

When you keep walking you would reach to the place you didn't intend to reach but always wanted to reach, when you keep working you achieve things that you didn't intend to achieve but always wanted to achieve, when you keep making you would make things that you didn't intend to make but always wanted to make. When you are not sure what you are doing, keep doing unless you are sure. When you are not sure what you are thinking, keep thinking unless you are sure. When you are not sure what you are wishing, keep wishing unless you are sure. The only way to find if you really wanted to do it or not is to keep doing. The only way to know if you really wanted to move or not is to keep moving. The only way to know if you really wanted to search it or not is to keep searching. Clarity lives in action and uncertainty is in inaction. I am sure you have found your own way of living but as long as you live and so long as you live, you will have to keep it changing. Change is not roadblock of life, it is a milestone of life. Change is

Moral: Life is so natural that even if you plan it, this will be naturally planned.



Operation Sindoor - India's Tech Power Takes the Frontline



By DIKSHA

auspicious symbol worn by married Hindu women and the name honored the women whose sindoor had been wiped away by the terror attack.

Operation Sindoor was a coordinated effort by the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force. It was conducted entirely from Indian territory using high-precision weapons such as Scalp guided missiles, Hammer precision-guided bombs, and loitering munitions. According to Government sources, around 100 terrorists were eliminated and key terrorist infrastructure in hubs like Muridke was destroyed. The entire mission was executed in a precise, calibrated and responsible manner, minimizing damage to civilians and avoiding unnecessary military escalation.

In response, Pakistan launched drone and missile attacks on various northern and western Indian cities, including Chandigarh and Bhuj. These were successfully neutralized by India's Integrated Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems Grid and Air Defence Systems.

The next morning, In-

dian Armed Forces carried out counter-strike operations, targeting air defense radars at various locations inside Pakistan, including Lahore. Strikes were also conducted on military bases in Noor Jahan, Kirana Hills and other locations, reportedly jamming Chinese-made equipment - showcasing India's superior technological capabilities. These strikes were executed with pinpoint accuracy, with all three services operating in perfect coordination. The S-400 defense system purchased from Russia, Heron and Kamikaze drones from Israel, as well as indigenous platforms like the Akash system - capable of neutralizing individual or swarm drone attacks - demonstrated that "India is in control of its skies".

ISRO also played a vital role in the success of these missions, deploying satellites to maintain 24/7 surveillance across India's 7,000 km. coastline. This capability was made possible by years of preparation under the visionary leadership of the Prime Minister, who has spent the last decade pushing for indigenous defense manufacturing

and self-reliance. From supporting the domestic manufacture of drones and incentivizing private sector involvement in homegrown systems like Akash and procuring advanced platforms like Rafales, the Government has steadily built a multi-layered, modern defense architecture. This conflict demonstrated that India is fully equipped for new-age warfare.

A viral image of two young women officers

backed by solid proof.

Lieutenant Colonel Yonika Singh, a Hindu and Wing Commander Colonel Sofia Qureshi, a Muslim - stood as a testament to India's rich diversity and rising women power in the armed forces, further justifying the symbolic naming of Operation Sindoor.

India has adopted a new doctrine stating that any act of terror will henceforth be treated as an 'Act of War' and will be met with an equivalent response. In addition, following its demonstration of superior military and technological capabilities during this dispute, India is poised to emerge as a prominent defense exporter in the near future. The most striking feature was the national unity witnessed from Kashmir to Kanayakumari, with leaders such as Owaisi, Omar Abdullah and Shashi Tharoor rising above vote-bank politics in the name of the Nation and emerging as national heroes. The unity was so profound that even the leaders themselves were pleasantly surprised. The armed forces, having learned from past mistakes, ensured that every strike carried out was

backed by solid proof. Our Prime Minister has made it clear that despite the ceasefire, Operation Sindoor remains ongoing and Indian Armed Forces remain on high alert mode to counter any future threats, keeping in mind the history of our neighbour country.

On the international stage, India received full support from its all-weather allies - Israel, Russia and France. Meanwhile, countries like China, Turkey and Azerbaijan backed Pakistan and nations such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia and the United States adopted a more neutral, equidistant stance. India should reconsider its relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan. India was among the first to respond when an earthquake struck Turkey - while we worked tirelessly to save their children, they supported those who destroyed ours by supplying military equipment to Pakistan. While relations with China cannot be overlooked, we must learn to peacefully coexist, yet remain fully prepared for a two-front war involving both China and Pakistan.

TOP STORY

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Three killed 31 injured as canter truck collides with another truck in Bulandshahr

Avnish Tyagi
Bulandshahr

In a heart-wrenching road tragedy early Friday morning, three people lost their lives while more than 31 others sustained injuries when a DCM (light commercial vehicle) carrying migrant workers collided head-on with a high-speed truck on the Bulandshahr-Amupshahr road near Jahangirabad in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh.

The horrific accident occurred around 6:30 AM near the 11 Mile outpost under Jahangirabad police station limits. According to initial reports from Superintendent of Police (Rural) Tejendra Singh, the DCM was on route from Moha village in Punjab to Shahjahanpur-Hardoi, carrying 36 passengers—primarily migrant laborers returning home after working at brick kilns.

Authorities stated that the collision was caused when the driver of the canter truck



allegedly dozed off at the wheel, losing control of the vehicle and crashing into an oncoming truck. The impact was so severe that both vehicles were left mangled beyond recognition. The DCM bore the maximum brunt of the crash, leaving many passengers trapped inside the twisted metal. The sound of

the collision and the cries of the injured drew dozens of local residents to the scene, who, along with the police and emergency responders, helped in pulling out the injured.

District Magistrate Shrutika Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police Dinesh Kumar Singh promptly

arrived at the accident site and later visited the Bulandshahr district hospital to monitor the medical response and check on the condition of the injured. Fourteen individuals critically wounded in the crash were referred to higher medical centers in Meerut for advanced treatment, while

four others were admitted to the Bulandshahr district hospital. The remaining injured passengers were also provided emergency medical care.

Among the deceased were 25-year-old Ravi, 60-year-old Shivdai, and 32-year-old Sunil, one of whom was a woman. All three reportedly died on the spot due to the severity of the injuries. Their bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination. Police confirmed that the driver of the DCM was also killed in the accident, while the truck driver fled the scene, abandoning the vehicle. Both the truck and the DCM have been seized as part of the ongoing investigation, and efforts are currently underway to trace and apprehend the absconding driver.

Circle Officer of Amupshahr, Ramkaran Singh, supervised the rescue and relief operations along with local police teams. Several ambulances from both govern-

ment and private hospitals were dispatched immediately to transport the victims. Local villagers also played a key role in the rescue efforts, providing crucial assistance before the arrival of official rescue teams.

This latest accident has once again drawn attention to the serious issue of road safety on rural and state highways, particularly those plagued by poor infrastructure, lax traffic monitoring, and frequent overloading of commercial vehicles. With three lives lost and many others still battling for survival, the accident has cast a pall of gloom over the migrant workers' native village, where families anxiously await updates.

As the injured continue to receive medical care and the investigation proceeds, the tragedy serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for stricter regulation and enforcement on high-risk routes used by commercial transport vehicles.

Haryana Govt Promotes Natural Farming on Agri Land

Praveen Attar
New Delhi/Chandigarh

The Haryana government on Friday said it will use agricultural land owned by the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Department for promoting natural farming across the state.

This initiative aligns with the government's broader vision of encouraging eco-friendly, low-cost, and chemical-free farming practices that not only improve soil health but also enhance farmer incomes. As a pilot project, this scheme will be launched in village Jathri, located in the Pundri constituency of Kaithal district, where over 53 acres of land belonging to the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Department will be brought under natural farming.

This land, which historically has been leased out to tenants and lessees, will now only be utilised for natural farming, said an official statement here.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has approved the decision.

The statement quoting the chief minister further said that the state government is committed to empowering farmers and ensuring long-term agricultural prosperity by promoting practices that are environmentally sound and economically viable.

Under this initiative, existing tenants or lessees will be eligible to participate and become beneficiaries of the scheme. They will also be encouraged and supported to transition to natural farming methods, with the government providing necessary guidance, training, and support mechanisms.

Upon success of pilot project, the scheme will be gradually scaled up and implemented across the entire state, making Haryana a frontrunner in sustainable agricultural practices in India, it said.

Labour laws must be pro-industry and pro-labour says UP CM

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said that labourers and industrialists are complementary forces and not rivals, according to a statement.

During a review meeting of the Labour and Employment Department, the chief minister said, "Balanced labour laws, which are both pro-industry and pro-labour, are essential for the state's industrial growth."

Adityanath directed officials to simplify labour laws to ease industrial operations while simultaneously safeguarding workers from exploitation and unfair treatment. To achieve the government's goal of "Har haath ko kaam" (work for every hand), he stressed the importance of strengthening industries, highlighting that industrial expansion, not closure, is the key to creating more employment opportunities.

He stressed on the importance of ensuring fair wages and insurance coverage for workers, providing protection for them and their families in case of accidents. He affirmed the state government's commitment to protecting workers' rights while actively promoting Uttar Pradesh as a leading worker-friendly and industry-supportive state.

Addressing the issue of child labour, the chief minister called for their rehabilitation not just through basic livelihood support, but by integrating them with schemes like the Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana and other sponsored programmes. He described this as a social responsibility vital for securing the future of the next generation.

Furthermore, Adityanath directed the transformation of 'Labour Addas' into model centres, equipped with dormitories, toilets, drinking water, canteens offering meals for a nominal ₹5-10, and training facilities.

He also instructed officials to conduct skill mapping for unorganised sector workers and implement a system to ensure they receive minimum wages, aiming to transition the unorganised workforce into an organised labour force.

Jairam Thakur calls for complete boycott of Turkey over support to Pakistan

Rajan Panchhi
Mandi

Former Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jairam Thakur has called for a complete boycott of Turkey, urging the Indian government to cancel all trade agreements with the country in response to its alleged support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor.

Addressing a press conference at Raj Mahal Hotel on Friday, Thakur said that a ban on the import of Turkish apples and discouraging Indian tourists from visiting Turkey would constitute a significant diplomatic counter-strike.

Thakur strongly criticized Turkey for allegedly supplying drones and providing technical assistance to Pakistan during the recent conflict. He said the Indian Army had successfully targeted terrorist camps, airbases, and military installations in Pakistan after the Pahalgaon terrorist attack, which

prompted retaliatory strikes from Pakistan using missiles and drones. However, the Indian Air Force defense system neutralized these threats. In the midst of this, Thakur claimed, Turkey sided with Pakistan, prompting nationwide calls for a boycott of Turkish goods and services.

Highlighting a recent development, he noted that the Indian government has already taken concrete action by revoking the security clearance of Turkish company Celebi Airport Services, which operated at eight major airports across the country. "This move is in national interest and will strike a blow to Turkey's tourism and business interests," Thakur said.

The senior BJP leader recalled India's humanitarian assistance to Turkey during its earthquake crisis, contrasting it with Turkey's current stance,

which he termed "intolerable." He emphasized that such actions have hurt Indian sentiments and that the people of Himachal Pradesh, in particular, are demanding an immediate halt to apple imports from Turkey. Thakur also urged Indian filmmakers to stop choosing Turkey as a shooting destination, and suggested that Indian tourists should explore domestic alternatives like Himachal Pradesh instead. "Tourism is a major source of income for Turkey. If Indian tourists stop going there and instead choose to travel within the country, it will benefit our own economy and send a strong message internationally," he said.

Calling for unity, Thakur concluded by stating that this is the time for every Indian to stand against nations that support terrorism and take measures that prioritize national interest.

'Nasha Mukti Yatra' to be taken out across Punjab from today Arvind Kejriwal

Komal Ramola
Chandigarh

Aam Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said a "Nasha Mukti Yatra" will be taken out across Punjab, marking a people's revolution to free the state from the menace of drugs.

Addressing an event at Langroya village in Punjab's Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district as part of the ongoing "Yudh Nashian Virudh" campaign, the AAP leader said the war against drugs has turned into a people's movement against the scourge.

"The entire state is united against drug abuse. The Nasha Mukti Yatra is starting from SBS Nagar today," the former Delhi chief minister said.

Over the next one-and-a-half months, we will go to all the 12,000 villages (in the state) and speak to the people. In the cities, we will go to every ward," said Kejriwal.



He also urged the villagers not to help people arrested in drug cases secure bail.

"The AAP government is taking steps to rein in the drugs menace, making the biggest recovery so far this year in Tarn Taran district where 85 kg of heroin was seized. More than 10,000 smugglers were arrested in the last two-and-a-half months, including 8,500 big ones," Kejriwal claimed.

"Everyone must take a pledge that they will not use drugs or allow their sale in the villages. The police and the administration are there to support the people in this movement against drug abuse," Kejriwal said.

"At the time of polls, we promised to make Punjab drug-free and we are doing our job. If needed, we are ready to sacrifice our lives," he added.

Kejriwal also said that all efforts will be made to help those falling prey to drug addiction, adding that the rehabilitation centres across the state have been equipped with modern facilities.

Over the next year, gymnasiums and grounds will be established in the villages so that the youth can channelise their energy in a positive manner, Kejriwal said.

Kejriwal also claimed that in the past three years, the AAP government has given government jobs to 55,000 youth purely on merit basis.

"Now, planning is being done on a big scale so that the unemployed youth in every village get jobs," he said.

Bulandshahr police recover 200 lost mobile phones worth over ₹30 Lakh

Avnish Tyagi
Bulandshahr

In a remarkable achievement, the Bulandshahr district police have successfully recovered 200 stolen and lost mobile phones within a span of just one week. The recovered devices, valued at over ₹30 lakh, were formally returned to their rightful owners in a well-organized ceremony held at the Police Lines Auditorium on Friday.

The operation was spearheaded by the district's surveillance team, working tirelessly to trace and retrieve the lost and stolen phones. Multiple police teams from different stations joined forces with the surveillance unit, resulting in this significant recovery drive.

The successful return of the phones has been widely appreciated by the local community, with many expressing immense gratitude towards the police force for their dedication and efficiency.

During the event, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Dinesh Kumar Singh personally handed over the mobile phones to their owners. The recipients, visibly overjoyed and overwhelmed with happiness, thanked the police for their prompt action and efforts in recovering their valuable possessions.



"The surveillance team worked diligently over the course of the week to track and recover these phones, ensuring they were returned to their rightful owners," said SSP Singh. He also announced a reward for the police team involved in the operation, recognizing their hard work and dedication.

The ceremony was conducted with respect and care, reflecting the police department's commitment to serving the community.

Speaking on the occasion, SSP Dinesh Kumar Singh

highlighted the importance of the operation, noting that mobile phones have become an expensive and essential part of everyday life. Losing a phone can cause a significant financial loss and inconvenience to the owner. He explained that the police launched this special recovery drive after receiving numerous complaints about missing phones in the district.

"The surveillance team worked diligently over the course of the week to track and recover these phones, ensuring they were returned to their rightful owners," said SSP Singh. He also announced a reward for the police team involved in the operation, recognizing their

hard work and dedication.

SSP Singh further assured the public that this campaign to recover lost and stolen mobile phones will continue in the future. He urged citizens to promptly report any cases of lost or stolen devices to the police, reaffirming the department's commitment to protecting the community's interests and property. The initiative has boosted the public's confidence in the local police force and demonstrated their resolve to address the concerns of the residents effectively. This operation stands as a testament to the power of coordinated police efforts and the positive impact of community-oriented policing in Bulandshahr.

Manya Sharma Aspires to Serve the Nation by Becoming an Engineer

■ Scores 94% in CBSE Class 10 Exams; Brings Pride to Shastripuram Community

Aakash Jain
Agra

In a heartening example of determination and academic excellence, Manya Sharma, a resident of Bansuri Vilas Colony in Shastripuram, has achieved an impressive 94% in the CBSE Class 10 examinations. A student of Delhi Public School (DPS), Agra, Manya's remarkable performance has not only made her parents proud but has also become a source of joy and inspiration for the entire locality.

Celebrations erupted in Bansuri Vilas Colony as neighbors and well-wishers gathered to congratulate the young achiever. Sweets were distributed and congratulatory messages poured in from all corners of the community, with many residents lauding Manya as a role model for the city's youth.

Manya's father, Vishal Sharma, and mother, Renu Sharma, were visibly elated. Speaking with emotion, Renu Sharma said, "My daughter worked very hard throughout the year. We always had complete faith in her dedication and discipline. Today, the results have proven that hard



work and consistency truly pay off. Her success is not just ours but belongs to the entire community."

An ambitious and focused student, Manya has already set her sights on the future. With a clear goal in mind, she aspires to become an engineer—not just to build a career, but to serve the nation through her skills and knowledge. "I'm thankful to my parents, my teachers, and everyone who supported me. This result is the outcome of regular study, proper guidance, and staying away from distractions. I want to pursue engineering and contribute to India's development," said Manya with a confident smile.

Manya's achievement has brought a positive wave of enthusiasm among students in the locality, many of whom now look up to her as an inspiration. Her story serves as a powerful reminder of the impact of perseverance, parental support, and academic discipline. As Manya prepares to embark on the next phase of her educational journey, the community of Shastripuram stands firmly behind her, cheering for her future and the heights she is destined to reach.

India A squad for England tour announced; Karun, Ishan, Shardul among notable names

IPL resumes with the RCB vs KKR face-off; Virat Kohli's outing in focus

Bengaluru: Brought to a halt by the recent India-Pakistan border tensions, the IPL will resume on Saturday with Royal Challengers Bengaluru taking on Kolkata Knight Riders in a high-stakes contest where the spotlight will firmly be on Virat Kohli following his recent Test retirement.

Mumbai: The India A squad for the tour to England was announced on Friday, with several notable players part of the squad, including Karun Nair, who got the reward for an extraordinary season of domestic cricket.

As a part of the tour, India A will play two first-class matches against the England Lions at Canterbury and Northampton on May 30 and June 6, before concluding their outing with an intra-squad match against Team India on June 13 at Beckenham.

The team will be led by Abhimanyu Easwaran, who has been a domestic cricket stalwart for Bengal, with 101 first-class games, 7,674 runs at an average of 48.87, 27 centuries and 29 fifties behind him. He did have a disappointing tour to Australia last year, where he ended up with just 36 runs in four innings.

Batters Shubman Gill and Sai Sudharsan will join the squad ahead of the second match. Currently, they are serving as the backbone of Gujarat Titans (GT) batting line-up, with 508 runs in 11 matches (five half-centuries) and 509 runs in 11 matches (with five fifties) respectively.

The dream domestic season 2024-25 of Vidarbha star Nair concluded with the 863-run season in Ranji, with an average of 53.93, four centuries and two fifties in 16 innings across nine matches. His best score of 135 came in the final, and his team emerged victorious.

A massive highlight of his season was the Vijay Hazare Trophy one-day tournament, where he top-scored with 779 runs in nine matches and eight innings at a stunning average of 389.50 and a strike rate of 124.04, with five centuries and a fifty and best score of 163. He played a massive role in his team's run to the finals, where they lost to his former team, Karnataka.

In the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 competition, Nair made 255 runs in six innings, averaging 42.50 at a strike rate of 177.08, with three half-centuries and the best score of 77. His team was knocked out in the quarterfinals.

The RCB are second on the table with 16 points from 11 matches, and a win here can propel them to the playoffs. KKR are sixth on the table with 11 points from 12 games, and a slip-up will evaporate the defending champions' hopes of making the playoffs.

The unexpected 10-day break has left both the RCB and the KKR with different goals to achieve and common challenges to hurdle over.

The RCB are second on the table with 16 points from 11 matches, and a win here can propel them to the playoffs. KKR are sixth on the table with 11 points from 12 games, and a slip-up will evaporate the defending champions' hopes of making the playoffs.

They are also faced with the challenging task of hitting the pre-break intensity straightaway at the Chinnaswamy stadium.

The hosts are coming off a four-match winning streak while the



tourists have managed to stitch two victories in three matches before the league came to a grinding halt. Questions remain on whether they can regain that competitive edge after a passage of uncertainty.

But RCB are better-placed to surmount these difficulties, and the sight of skipper Rajat Patidar batting rather fluently at nets might have soothed a lot of nerves.

Patidar had injured his finger during the home match against Chennai

Super Kings, forcing him to wear a splint.

The hosts also have most of their foreign recruits back in the hut after returning home in the wake of the Indo-Pak military face-off.

The likes of Phil Salt, Lungi Ngidi, Tim David, Liam Livingstone and Romario Shephard are available for this match and beyond.

The jarring notes will be the injury-enforced absence of Devdutt Padikkal and pacer Josh Hazlewood.

RCB will also hope

that Mayank Agarwal, who has replaced Padikkal in the line-up, will rise to the occasion.

Hazlewood has a shoulder injury and the franchise has not yet given clarity on his availability.

The Kohli factor However, the loudest cheers will be reserved for Kohli, who announced his retirement from Test cricket earlier this week.

If social media calls are anything to go by, the faithfuls are planning to don the white

Blow for DC as Mitchell Starc decides against returning for remainder of IPL



New Delhi: Australian speedster Mitchell Starc has reportedly decided against returning to India for the remainder of the IPL, dealing a blow to his team Delhi Capitals' prospects of reaching the playoffs.

According to the 'Australian Associated Press', Starc has told the franchise that he wouldn't be rejoining the team a week after being part of the match in Dharamsala that was called off due to security reasons following air raid alerts in nearby areas.

The league was suspended next day due to a military showdown between India and Pakistan, only for the BCCI to announce a resumption of the event from May 17 after getting necessary clearances from the government following a

seesaw. An integral part of the Delhi Capitals set-up, Starc is the team's highest wicket-taker so far this season with 14 scalps in 11 matches at 26.14, and his absence will be definitely felt in their upcoming matches as they seek to enter the playoffs.

Starc's wife and Australian women's team captain Alyssa Healy recently shared a gripping account of the night of "complete madness" when the IPL match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals was called off midway in Dharamsala.

"Couple of the light towers went out and we were just there waiting. I heard a rumour a couple of seats down that we might have to evacuate the stadium cause the lights gone down," Healy said on the 'WillTalk' podcast.

I would not have let Rohit Sharma miss Sydney Test: Ravi Shastri

New Delhi: Had he been the India coach on the previous tour of Australia, Ravi Shastri would not have allowed captain Rohit Sharma to drop himself from the Sydney Test despite loss of form.

Rohit had missed the first Test for personal reasons and did not feature in the last game of the series, taking a 'selfless decision' as he could manage only 31 runs in the five innings he played on that 2024-25 tour.

India had lost the Test series 1-3. Shastri said he spoke to Rohit during one of the IPL games this season and let him know how he would have handled the situation in Australia.

"I saw Rohit a lot at the toss. At the toss, you don't get enough time to speak. Though I did put my hand on his shoulder in one of the games, I think it was in Mumbai and told him, if I was coach you would have never not played that last Test match.

"You would have played that last Test match because the series wasn't over," Shastri said on the latest edition of the ICC Review.



Rohit recently retired from the Test format earlier.

"And I'm not someone who threw in the towel with the scoreline 2-1. If your mindset is you feel you are... that's not the stage, you leave a team," said the former India head coach.

Shastri said he would've pushed for Rohit's inclusion in Sydney.

"That was a 30-40 run game. And that's exactly what I told him. The pitch was so spicy in Sydney. Whatever the kind of form he was in, he's a match-winner,"

said Shastri. "If he had gone, sensed the situation, sensed the condition and smashed it for even 35-40 at the top, you never know. That series would have been level. But that's each one to his own.

"Other people have different styles. This would have been my style and I let him know it. It's sitting in my heart for a long time. I had to get it out. And I told him that."

Both Rohit and Virat Kohli have quit the traditional format ahead of India's tour of England, marking the beginning of the new World Test Championship cycle.

UP Gov directs safety & facility enhancements at Maj Dhyan Chand Sports University

By S Raju Meerut:

In a significant step toward improving student welfare and institutional development, Governor Anandiben Patel chaired the inaugural meeting of the Board of Governors of Maj Dhyan Chand Sports University at Raj Bhawan, Lucknow. During the meeting, she issued a series of key directives focused on strengthening safety, hygiene, and academic excellence at the university.

Emphasizing the importance of student security, the Governor instructed the installation of iron grills on windows in hostels and other university buildings. She also highlighted the need for maintaining strict hygiene standards in campus kitchens and ensuring the availability of clean drinking water throughout the premises. Acknowledging the specific needs of athletes, she directed the establishment of dedicated laundry areas and installation of washing machines in hostel facilities.

To bolster the university's healthcare system, the Governor ordered the appointment of specialized doctors at the university hospital, aiming to provide a comprehensive medical support structure for the students. She further recommended the exploration of new academic courses tailored for defence personnel and suggested collaboration with defence establishments and training centres to offer programs focused on physical training and sports-based activities.



Gen Deep Ahlawat presented a detailed update on the ongoing construction work at the Salawa campus in Meerut. He also briefed the board on the university's academic roadmap, including the proposed formation of essential bodies such as the Executive Council, Academic and Activity Council, and the Finance Committee.

The meeting was attended by several key officials, including Dr. K P Singh, Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University; Suhash L Y, Secretary, Sports and Youth Welfare; Sanjeev Singh, Special Secretary, Finance; V K Singh, District Magistrate of Meerut; Amit Kumar, Deputy Commissioner and Registrar; Monika Singh, Regional Higher Education Officer; and Atul Sinha, Regional Sports Officer, Meerut.

With these proactive measures and strategic planning, Maj Dhyan Chand Sports University is poised to enhance its infrastructure and academic offerings, ensuring a secure and supportive environment for its students.

Shubman Gill's competitiveness stands out: Gavaskar on India's likely Test captain

New Delhi: The great Sunil Gavaskar feels the high-octane IPL is the perfect training ground for future India captains, providing the likes of Shubman Gill the required leadership experience before granting to the highest level.

Advertisement Gujarat Titans skipper Gill is expected to captain India on the Test tour of England following the retirement of Rohit Sharma. Kishabh Pant is likely to be his deputy.

Virat Kohli's retirement, which came just days after his decision, has left a massive void in the Test team. Gavaskar said it would take at least a couple of years for Gill and other potential leaders like Pant and Shreyas Iyer to become financially prod-



ucts. "It would take a couple of years (to groom future leaders) to get to the level of our super captains (MS Dhoni, Rohit, Virat). All of them brought a different approach to captaincy," said Gavaskar in a response to a query on Star Sports Press Room.

Pant is currently captaining LSIG, while Iyer is leading the Punjab Kings in this IPL.

"When you see Gill, Iyer and Pant, three main pretenders to Indian captaincy you see an amalgamation of all three (Dhoni, Rohit, Virat). Gill probably is more competitive, when

there is a decision, he is asking the umpire right away. He is probably a lot more involved.

"Though Pant is behind the stumps, he is also very involved. Iyer too has been superb. All three have brought a lot of positivity in the way they have been captaining.

"As a captain, nothing gets you more experience than pressure of a T20 game. It is the best training ground for captaincy," added the former India captain.

On the same program, former India batter Suresh Raina underlined the importance of winning the IPL as a skipper before taking up the captaincy of the national team.

"Young players think differently these days. Gill is searching for that IPL trophy. If he goes on to lead in Tests after winning the IPL, he will not only flourish but he will also get a lot of respect in the dressing room.

"Rajat Patidar is also captaining well. Though he has not done a lot of captaincy, he has the calmness about him.

Rohit Sharma says it will be 'special feeling' to play at Wankhede Stadium with stand in his name

New Delhi: Senior India batter Rohit Sharma said it will be a "special feeling" for him to play in India jersey in the ODIs at the Wankhede Stadium where a stand was on Friday named after him.

Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) named a stand each at the Wankhede Stadium after Rohit, former India skipper Ajit Wadekar, and ex-BCCI president Sharad Pawar.

"I had never dreamt of what was going to happen today. You try to achieve a lot of milestones, but something like this is really special, because Wankhede is an iconic stadium and so many memories have been made here," said Rohit, who announced his retirement from Test cricket on May 7. "To have my name



here with the greats of the game and the world's best political leader, I cannot express the feeling. I am super grateful.

"I am still playing and retired from two formats. It will be surreal to play when I play on 21st (for Mumbai Indians in IPL) and have a stand here, it will be special when I represent the country here," added Rohit who has also retired from T20 Internationals after leading India to the

World Cup trophy last year.

Shubman Gill's competitiveness stands out: Gavaskar on India's likely Test captain

He also thanked his family members for the sacrifices they had made for him throughout his career. "It's going to be even more special, to have my family here, parents, brother, wife. I am grateful and thankful for whatever they have sacrificed for me."

Clash in Indonesia's restive Papua region kills 18 rebels 2 police officers

Jayapura: Indonesia's security forces have clashed with separatist rebels in the restive Papua region, leaving at least 18 insurgents and two police officers dead, officials and the rebels said Friday.

The battle erupted Wednesday when dozens of rebels armed with military-grade weapons and arrows attacked troops preparing to offer health and education services to villages in Intan Jaya, a hotbed of the insurgency, said Lt. Col. Iwan Dwi Prihartono, a military spokesperson.

"The situation changed when an armed group ambushed dozens of government soldiers," Prihartono said in a video statement. "So at that moment we carried out a measured and professional action operation."

Security forces seized one assault rifle, a homemade rifle, several arrows, rounds of ammunition and a "morning star" flag — a separatist symbol — after the clash, Prihartono said, adding there were no casualties on the government side.

Rebels in Papua have been fighting a low-level insurgency since the early 1960s, when Indonesia annexed the region, a former Dutch colony. Papua was incorporated into Indonesia in 1969, after a U.N.-sponsored ballot that was widely seen as a sham.

Israeli strikes kill at least 93 people in Gaza as Trump wraps up his Middle East visit

Deir al-Balah: At least 93 people were killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza on Friday as US President Donald Trump wrapped up his regional trip.

Strikes overnight hit Deir al-Balah, the outskirts of Deir al-Balah and the city of Khan Younis. Gaza's health ministry said hundreds more were injured in addition to those killed.

The widespread attacks come as Trump finishes his visit to Gulf states but not Israel. There had been widespread hope that his regional trip could usher in a ceasefire deal or a renewal of humanitarian aid to Gaza. An Israeli blockade of the territory is now in its third month.

Speaking to reporters at a business forum in Abu Dhabi on the final day of his trip, Trump said he was looking to resolve a range of global crises, including



ing Gaza. "We're looking at Gaza," he said. "And we've got to get that taken care of. A lot of people are starving. A lot of people are there's a lot of bad things going on."

Israel said Friday it was continuing its operations against militants in Gaza and that it struck 150 targets in the past day, including anti-tank missile posts and military structures.

In northern Gaza, it eliminated several militants who were operating in an observation compound, it said.

The strikes lasted for hours into Friday morning, and sent people fleeing from the Jabalya refugee camp and the town of Beit Lahiya. They followed days of similar attacks that killed more than 130 people, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Beit Lahiya: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed earlier in the week to push ahead with a promised escalation of force in Israel's war in the Gaza Strip to pursue his aim of destroying the Hamas militant group, which governs Gaza.

In comments released by Netanyahu's office Tuesday, the prime minister said Israeli forces were days away from entering Gaza "with great strength to complete the mission ... It means destroying Hamas."

An Israeli official said the strikes on Friday were preparatory actions in the lead-up to a larger operation and to send a message to Hamas that it will begin soon if there isn't an agreement to release hostages. The official was not authorized to brief media and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Islamabad: Pakistan on Friday said it would respond to any "aggression" from India, nearly a week after the two sides agreed to end the military conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

"The recent announcement of a Pakistan-India ceasefire is a positive development. We urge India to faithfully adhere to its implementation," Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafiq Ali Khan said while addressing the weekly press briefing, the first since the four-day clashes.

However, he asked international partners to ensure India follows its commitments to avoid "aggression."

"Should India resume hostilities, Pakistan will have no choice but to respond," he warned.

Khan said that the internal community was promoting regional peace and stability, but India was still showing a "tendency to distort facts".

"India's rhetoric re-

Pakistan says it would respond to any 'aggression' from India

flects a persistent tendency to distort facts, justify aggression and cast unwarranted aspersions on Pakistan's nuclear assets," he said.

The spokesperson said Pakistan is a responsible state and remains committed to the ceasefire and taking necessary steps towards de-escalation and regional stability.

Khan also appreciated the role of friendly countries in facilitating the ceasefire.

"India's portrayal of Pakistan as acting out of despair and frustration of Pakistan is baseless," he added.

He reiterated support for US President Donald Trump's announcement on engaging with Pakistan and India to seek a resolution to the Kashmir issue.

On May 10, Trump said that he would work with India and Pakistan for a "solution" on Kashmir. India has always maintained that the Kashmir issue is a bilateral matter and there is no space for any third party.

Russia-Ukraine peace talks end after less than 2 hours officials say

Istanbul: The first direct peace talks between Russia and Ukraine since the early weeks of Moscow's 2022 invasion ended Friday after less than two hours, according to the Turkish Foreign Ministry and a senior Ukrainian official.

Kyiv accused the Kremlin of introducing new "unacceptable demands" to withdraw Ukrainian forces from huge swaths of territory, according to the



official, who spoke to The Associated Press on

condition of anonymity because he was not au-

thorised to make official statements.

The demands had not been previously discussed, the official said.

He said the Ukrainian side reiterated that remained focused on achieving real progress — an immediate ceasefire and a pathway to substantive diplomacy, "just like the US, European partners, and other countries proposed," the official added.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry also said in a

statement that the session ended.

The two sides sat at a U-shaped table but remained far apart in their conditions for ending the war. US President Donald Trump, who has pressed both Moscow and Kyiv for an end to the conflict, saying a meeting between himself and Russian President Vladimir Putin would happen "as soon as we can set it up."

"I think it's time for us to just do it," Trump told

reporters in Abu Dhabi as he wrapped up a trip to the Middle East.

In Istanbul, a Ukrainian delegation led by Defence Minister Rustem Umerov sat opposite a low-level Russian team headed by presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky, according to Ukraine's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Heorhiy Tkychy, who published a photo of the meeting "as soon as we can set it up."

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan had opened the session by

urging the parties "to take advantage of this opportunity," adding that it was "critically important that the ceasefire happens as soon as possible."

Both countries engaged in diplomatic manoeuvring this week as they tried to show Trump that they are eager to negotiate, although he has expressed frustration over the slow progress and threatened to punish foot-dragging.

BUSINESS

MetaTwin Powers the Digital Creator Revolution

New Delhi: In a world in which influence is currency and reach is a measure of relevance, creators are competing to scale their presence without burnout. This is where digital twin technology comes in: Creating a twin of yourself is truly possible, thanks to MetaTwin, a generative AI platform that allows creators replicating their own persona and voice in synthetic media. Riding the wave of the Metaverse, MetaTwin provides creators a powerful tool to scale their expertise, deliver engaging experiences through AI personas with synchronized audio and visuals, and always-on presence for fan engagement in virtual forms of themselves.

At the helm of this platform is Swarn Avinash Kumar, founder of MetaTwin and a techie with a strong expertise in AI. With more than a decade of experience leading machine learning at Meta Platforms like Lyft, Amazon, and Google; Kumar has deep technical and strategic expertise, contributing to Meta-

win's vision. His vision for digital clone technology is not just about automation, it's about unleashing human potential. By allowing creators to be in multiple places at once, Kumar is enabling them to expand their reach, as well as to diversify their content and build scalable, AI-powered businesses.

Kumar's experience demonstrates the combination of wide-ranging knowledge with deep expertise. During his time at Meta Platforms as an Applied Research Scientist he managed teams in the Core ML division. Prior to that, he held key ML leadership roles at Lyft, where he worked on self-driving cars; Amazon Core ML, and Google Cloud. His important contributions to the field stand strong behind the remarkable body of intellectual work he has produced. His innovative work includes 12 filed patents along with six granted patents that focus on autonomous driving technology alongside generative AI applications and digital twinning methods.

Goyal to consider QCO deadline extension for electrical appliances

New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has agreed to consider the domestic industry's request to extend the implementation timeline of the quality control order (QCO) for various electrical appliances, an official statement said on Friday.

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) convened a stakeholder consultation meeting under the chairmanship of the minister on May 15 to discuss the issues being faced by the industry in the implementation of horizontal QCO on "Safety of household, commercial and Similar Electrical Appliances" notified on September 20, 2024.

The industry raised its concerns and highlighted issues faced by them in the implementation of the order on various electrical appliances.



The DPIIT said that the industry supported the intent behind QCOs to ensure only high-quality products, but they requested for notifying these orders on finished goods first followed by QCOs on components and raw materials, considering the complexity of global

supply chains.

They also recommended mapping domestic manufacturing capacities and available technologies to align compliance timelines, it said adding a phased rollout was also proposed.

Major concerns raised by the industry

included ambiguity as regard to coverage of DC Supplied Appliances and Battery-Operated appliances; non-availability of product manuals and test labs; lack of certification by domestic manufacturers as well as foreign makers; insufficient time available for getting the BIS

The industry raised its concerns and highlighted issues faced by them in the implementation of the order on various electrical appliances.

certification.

The minister "acknowledged concerns raised by the industry and agreed to extend the implementation timeline of the QCO, as well as the issue of legacy stock," the department said.

Goyal requested the industry to come up with a proposal for setting up more testing facilities with modern technology in public funded labs, labs in public sector enterprises and labs in state government institutions so that robust and accessible testing infrastructure will be made available for the industry pan-India.

India's Forex Reserves Jump to USD 690.61 Billion

Mumbai: India's forex reserves jumped by USD 4.53 billion to USD 690.61 billion for the week ended May 9 on the back of a steep increase in gold assets, the RBI said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had dropped by USD 2.065 billion to USD 686.064 billion. The forex reserves had touched an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in end-September 2024.

For the week ended May 9, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 196 million to USD 381.373 billion, the RBI said on Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves jumped by USD 4.518 billion to USD 86.337 billion during the week, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 26 million to USD 18.532 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was also down by USD 134 million to USD 4.374 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

India's Coffee Talents Shine at MONIN Coffee Cup 2025

New Delhi: The MONIN Coffee Creativity Cup (MCCC) 2025 is officially underway, launching this year's theme, "Alchemy of Flavors: A Fusion of MONIN & Esquisse Coffee," to spotlight India's most creative coffee professionals. Organized by MONIN India, a global leader in premium syrups and beverage solutions, the competition offers a dynamic platform for baristas to showcase their imagination, skill, and flair for flavor innovation. Winners at both regional



and national levels will receive exciting prizes, with the Grand Finale champion earning a global coffee experience and international fame

visit. Challenging participants to craft espresso-based mocktails using MONIN's extensive portfolio of beverage solutions, MCCC 2025 received thousands of entries from across the country. From these, the finalists were selected to compete in the Delhi

regional round, marking the official launch of the nationwide contest. Following an inspiring showcase of creativity and craftsmanship, the top three participants selected to advance to the National Finale in Jaipur are: Yogesh Kumar (Winner), Amish Ghai (1st Runner Up) and Ram Partap Kumar (2nd Runner Up).

These regional finalists will join champions from the upcoming Mumbai and Bangalore rounds to compete for the coveted national title. The winner of the

National Finale will go on to represent India at the MONIN Coffee Creativity Cup Asia Finals in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 9th September 2025, joining top talent from across the Asia-Pacific region.

This year's theme, "Alchemy of Flavors," invites baristas and beverage professionals to explore bold and unexpected combinations—blending MONIN's versatile flavors with the art of modern coffee brewing. It reflects the evolution of India's coffee culture and

MONIN's ongoing mission to empower hospitality professionals with meaningful platforms for innovation and recognition.

Mr. Germain Araud, Managing Director of MONIN India Pvt. Ltd., shared his thoughts on the competition: "We're proud to return with the MONIN Coffee Creativity Cup this year. This initiative is designed to offer a meaningful springboard for emerging talent, providing visibility and access to a wider, even global stage."

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'Dhamaal 4' books Eid 2026 release date

Mumbai
The 4th instalment of the superhit film franchise 'Dhamaal', now has a release date. The makers of the film have booked its release on Eid 2026. The film boasts of a stellar star cast including Ajay Devgn, Ritesh Deshmukh, Arshad Warsi, Sanjay Mishra, Jaaved Jaferi, Sanjeeda Shaikh, Anjali Anand, Upendra Limaye, Vijay Patkar and Ravi Kishan.

'Dhamaal 4' promises a laugh riot like never before. The film's shooting is currently underway in Mumbai. This comes after the crew finished an extensive first schedule in Malshej Ghat of Maharashtra. Last month, Ajay had shared an update about the film and announced the wrap of the first schedule of 'Dhamaal 4'. He shared some pictures with co-stars Arshad Warsi, Jaaved Jaferi, Anjali Anand, Sanjay Mishra, and Sanjeeda Shaikh, and wrote, "The



madness is BACK! #Dhamaal4 kicks off with a bang — Malshej Ghat schedule wrapped, Mumbai schedule rolling! Let the laughter riot begin". The starting of the 'Dhamaal' franchise was marked by the release of 'Dhamaal' which was released on 7 September

2007. The film gave birth to two sequels, 'Double Dhamaal', which was a direct sequel to the first film, and 'Total Dhamaal'. The first two films featured Ritesh Deshmukh, Arshad Warsi, Jaaved Jaferi, Saanand Verma, Ashish Chaudhary, Karan Deol, and Sanjay Dutt in lead

roles. The third instalment also featured Ajay Devgn, Anil Kapoor, Johnny Lever, Boman Irani, Mahesh Manjrekar and Madhuri Dixit along with the original cast, but Sanjay Dutt did not appear in the third film. Gulshan Kumar and T-Series present, in association with Devgn Films, a T-Series Films, Maruti International, Panorama Studios production. Dhamaal 4' is directed by Indra Kumar and produced by Ajay Devgn, Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Ashok Thakeria, Indra Kumar, Anand Pandit, and Kumar Mangat Pathak.

Bollywood stars pen lovely wishes for Vicky Kaushal as he turns 37

Mumbai
Actor Vicky Kaushal celebrated his 37th birthday on Friday, and to commemorate his special day, many Bollywood celebs showered the "Ur" actor with lovely wishes.

Vicky's 'Chhaava' co-star Rashmika Mandanna took to her Instagram stories and dropped a black and white picture of the two as Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, and Yesubai Bhon-sale. "Happy Birthday Maharaj! @vickykaushal09," Rashmika wrote, wishing Vicky on his birthday.

Actress, Rakul Preet Singh dropped a dapper pic of the birthday star, along with the following words, "Happy bday Punjabi munde @vickykaushal! Wishing you all the happiness your heart can hold. Have a wonderful birthday and a fantastic year ahead!" Sunny Kaushal also used social media to pen an adorable greeting for his elder brother. The "Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga" actor took to his IG and dropped an adorable picture of Vicky. The image featured Sunny holding a Polaroid of Vicky celebrating his birthday. Vicky was seen standing in front of a backdrop with a 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' banner, along with a cluster of gold, white, and grey balloons.



Sunny penned the caption, "Happy birthday, meri jaan Vicky Kaushal," with a red heart emoji. On the work front, banking in the success of 'Chhaava', Vicky Kaushal will next be seen sharing screen space with Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor for the first time in Sanjay Leela

Bhansali's 'Love & War'. Set against the backdrop of war, the film deals with a complex love triangle involving two army officers (Ranbir and Vicky) who find themselves not only fighting it out on the battlefield but also for the love of the same woman (Alia).

David Leitch in talks to direct 'Gears of War' movie

Washington
Filmmaker David Leitch is in talks to direct a feature adaptation of the hit video game 'Gears of War' for Netflix. Jon Spaihts is writing the script for the feature for which Netflix has partnered with The Coalition Studio, the Canadian game developer behind the franchise, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Leitch and his wife and producing partner, Kelly McCormick, will produce the feature via their 87North banner along with The Coalition. The game is set on a planet on the brink of societal collapse when a monstrous threat in the form of underground creatures known as the Locust takes humanity to the verge of extinction, as per The Hollywood Reporter.

He made his directorial debut on the action film John Wick (2014) with Chad Stahelski, though only Stahelski was credited. He later also directed the films Atomic Blonde (2017), Deadpool 2 (2018), Hobbs & Shaw (2019), Bullet Train (2022), and The Fall Guy (2024).

Leitch, who established himself as a major action filmmaker with films like 'Bullet Train', 'Deadpool 2', and 'Atomic Blonde'.

Maika Monroe to star in psychological horror thriller 'Victorian Psycho'



Washington
Actress Maika Monroe will be seen as a killer governess in Victorian Psycho, a psychological horror thriller directed by Zachary Wigon.

The project adapts the best-selling book by Virginia Feito, who also wrote the script, as per The Hollywood Reporter.

Set in 1858, the story centres on a governess named Winifred Notty, hiding her psychopathic tendencies while arriving to tendancy at a remote gothic manor.

As the woman takes care of her charges, staff members begin to disappear, and the owners of the estate begin to think about the reason and wonder if their new governess is serving up a spoonful of sugar with a little arsenic on the side, as per the outlet. The film is being produced by Dan Kagan under his Traffic banner as well as Sebastian Raybaud for Anton and Wigon, in association with Anomymous Content.

Nick Shumaker, Bard Dorros and Virginia Feito will executive produce.

"Maika's intense screen

presence has resonated with me over and over again throughout her history of complex performances," said Wigon in a statement. "I'm absolutely thrilled for her to bring her unique style of psychological portraiture to the fascinatingly bizarre Winifred Notty."

Maika made her film debut with the drama At Any Price (2012), and led the thriller film The Guest and the horror film It Follows (both 2014), which established her as a scream queen. She starred in the thrillers Greta (2018) and Watcher (2022) as well as the horror film Longlegs (2024).

Apart from her horror and thriller roles, Monroe appears in the action film Independence Day: Resurgence (2016), the neo-noir Hot Summer Nights (2017), the black comedy Villains (2019), and the action film God Is a Bullet (2023).

Monroe will shoot Reminders of Him, Universal's adaptation of the best-selling novel by Colleen Hoover, which is a story of motherhood and redemption, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Smokey Robinson sexual assault allegations under criminal investigation

Washington
A criminal investigation has been launched into the sexual assault allegations against legendary singer-songwriter Smokey Robinson, his attorneys and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department confirmed to Variety.

The singer was sued last week by former female employees alleging sexual battery, assault and false imprisonment.

The women are asking for a trial with general damages for several allegations of no less than USD 50 million.

Four Jane Does, who worked for the singer between 2006 and 2024, filed a suit against Robinson and his wife Frances in Los Angeles Superior Court on Tuesday, all making similar claims



that Robinson sexually assaulted them during their employment as housekeepers at his Chatsworth, CA, residence, as per the outlet.

"The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Special Victims Bureau is actively investigating criminal allegations involving William Robinson AKA 'Smokey Robinson'. The investigation

Michael J Fox joins 'Shrinking' season 3 in guest role

Washington
Actor Michael J Fox will be joining the cast of season three of 'Shrinking'.

The five-time Emmy winner will guest star in the Apple TV+ comedy, however, details of his role are being kept under wraps, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Season three of 'Shrinking' is currently in production.

Fox's last on-camera acting role was in 'The Good Fight' in 2020, reprising his Emmy-nominated role as attorney Louis Canning.

The actor has been living with Parkinson's disease for more than 30 years.

Fox's 'Shrinking' role will mark his reunion with co-creator Bill Lawrence. The two worked together on ABC's 'Spin City' (Lawrence's first series as a creator).

Fox joins Jeff Daniels, Sherry Cola and Isabella Gomez.

'Shrinking' stars Jason Segel, Ford, Christa Miller, Jessica Williams, Luke Tennie, Michael Urie, Lukita Maxwell and Ted McGinley.

Segel, Lawrence and Brett Goldstein created 'Shrinking'. They executive produce with Neil Goldman, James Ponsoldt, Jeff Ingold, Liza Katzner, Randall Winston, Annie Mbane, Rachna Fruch-bom and Brian Galian, Ashley Nicole Black and Bill Posley, according to The Hollywood Reporter.



Lizzo reveals she stopped reading online comments "about two years ago"

Washington
Singer and rapper Lizzo shared why she stopped reading online comments two years ago.

"All viral ain't good viral. The internet don't know that they think all viral is good viral. It's not," the singer said on the recent episode of the talk show Therapuss with Jake Shane, reported People.

After the host shared that all press is not good press, Lizzo said that sometimes when her content is going viral, she tends to have an "anxiety attack."

"And I'll be like 'Oh ..., what did I do wrong? I did something wrong, because I don't read comments anymore and I don't have context with anything anymore. I live in a bubble,'" she said, as per the outlet.

The rapper shared that she stopped reading comments "about two years ago," and it has been "liberating."

"I never scrolled through my comments because that sounds like hell but also TikTok comments got so mean," she said, adding, "You know when I really stopped after the very backhanded compliments trend," which she described as a

trend where people give mean comments by tricking you with a "cute emoji and say something evil," reported People.

However, this was not the first time she had opened up about her anxiety.

During her 37th birthday, the singer opened up on Instagram about how she dealt with her emotions leading up to the special day.

"I'm a tough cookie. I tried

my whole life not to cry and be seen as anything less than strong. I had a lot of anxiety leading up to my birthday and I could feel it clogging my emotions... last night at dinner, while freakin' out about not spending time with everyone equally and worrying if people were having a good time," she wrote next to photos from her birthday, as per the outlet.