

TOP STORY

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Gill emerges frontrunner to be India's new Test captain: Sources



At least 60 people killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza as Israel lets minimal aid in



Alia Bhatt leaves for her Cannes debut, quashes rumours of absence from film festival

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Maharishi Kashyap's legacy will continue to inspire humanity: CM Saini



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MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
81721.08	24853.15
769.09	243.45
GOLD	SILVER
96,400.00	98,000.00
-21.00	-54.00

WEATHER

Sunrise	5:27 AM
Sunset	7:10 PM
Moonrise	2:24 AM
Moonset	3:03 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	29°C
Minimum	25°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
Maximum	39°C
Minimum	28°C

Trump threatens Apple with 25% tariff if iPhones are made in India

Trump's social media threats show his power to disrupt the global economy, but his tariffs haven't yet delivered the trade deals or manufacturing revival he promised.

Washington
President Donald Trump on Friday threatened a 50% tax on all imports from the European Union as well as a 25% tariff on Apple products unless iPhones are made in America.



The threats, delivered over social media, reflect Trump's ability to disrupt the global economy with a burst of typing as well as the reality that his tariffs have yet to produce the trade deals he is seeking or the return of domestic manufacturing he has promised voters.

preserving a baseline 10% tax on most imports. "Our discussions with them are going nowhere," Trump posted on Truth Social. "Therefore, I am recommending a straight 50% Tariff on the European Union, starting on June 1, 2025. There is no Tariff if the product is built or manufactured in the United States."

That post had been preceded by a threat of import taxes against Apple for its plans to continue making its iPho-

hone in Asia. Apple now joins Amazon, Walmart and other major U.S. companies in the White House's crosshairs as they try to respond to the uncertainty and inflationary pressures unleashed by his tariffs. "I have long ago informed Tim Cook of Apple that I expect their iPhones that will be sold in the United States of America will be manufactured and built in the United States, not India or anyplace else," Trump wrote. "If that is not the

case, a Tariff of at least 25% must be paid by Apple to the U.S."

In response to Trump's tariffs on China, Apple CEO Tim Cook said earlier this month that most iPhones sold in the US during the current fiscal quarter would come from India, with iPads and other devices being imported from Vietnam.

After Trump rolled out tariffs in April, bank analysts estimated that a \$1,200 iPhone would, if made in America, jump in price anywhere from \$1,500 to \$3,500. Stock futures sold off after Trump's postings, with the S&P 500 index futures down roughly 1.3%. The markets have developed a hair-trigger sensitivity to the US president's statements, often slumping when he announces high tariffs and rallying when he retreats from those threats.

The core of Trump's argument against the EU is that America runs a "totally unacceptable" trade deficit with the 27 member states. Countries run trade deficits when they import more goods than they export.

From the vantage point of the EU's executive commission, trade with the US is roughly in balance if both goods and services are included. As a global centre for finance and technology, the US runs a trade surplus in services with Europe. That offsets some of the trade gap in goods and puts the imbalance at \$4 billion euros (\$5.4 billion).

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IndiGo crew sought to enter Pak airspace, confirms DGCA



New Delhi

aviation watchdog DGCA on Friday said the crew of the IndiGo flight from the national capital to Srinagar on Wednesday had sought permission to enter Pakistan airspace to avoid turbulence but the request was rejected. In a detailed statement about the incident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said there was no injury to any passengers who were on the flight and that the aircraft's "nose radome" was damaged.

The incident of the aircraft encountering turbulence is being probed by the DGCA.

near Pathankot. "As per crew statement, they requested Northern control (IAF for deviation towards left (International Border) due to weather on the route, however, it was not approved."

"Later, the crew contacted Lahore to enter into their airspace to avoid the weather but the same was refused too," DGCA said. The DGCA statement confirms a report of May 22 that the Lahore ATC had rejected the flight pilot's request to use the Pakistan airspace to avoid turbulence. Indian Air Force sources said the Northern Area Control advised the IndiGo crew within the frame of the NO-TAM, ensuring safety of aircraft and passengers. Agency

After IMF, India to oppose World Bank's \$20 bn loan to Pak

New Delhi
India will next month oppose the World Bank funding to Pakistan, just as it had done in the case of the International Monetary Fund, arguing that Islamabad had used such funds in the past to procure arms and ammunition, a government source said.



the ten years beginning 2026.

"We will oppose the upcoming World Bank funding to Pakistan," the source said. India had lobbied with IMF Chief Kristalina Georgieva and ministers of IMF board member nations against the agency extending a USD 2.3 billion assistance to cash-strapped Pakistan earlier this month.

New Delhi presented proofs ranging from presence of senior Pakistani military officials at the funeral of designated terrorists to data that

Shah also said that the operation showed the "firm" political will of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the "precise" intelligence inputs from agencies, and the "lethal" capabilities of the armed forces. India hit as deep as 100-km inside Pakistan after they dared to target a few Indian civilian and military setups following Operation Sindoor (on May 7), when nine terrorist camps were decimated, he said. Shah made the remarks while delivering

Op Sindoor exposed Pakistan's terror sponsorship: Amit Shah

New Delhi

The Operation Sindoor undertaken by the Indian armed forces in retaliation for the Pahalgaon terror attack has "completely exposed" the fact that terrorism in India is sponsored by Pakistan, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday.

Shah also said that the operation showed the "firm" political will of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the "precise" intelligence inputs from agencies, and the "lethal" capabilities of the armed forces. India hit as deep as 100-km inside Pakistan after they dared to target a few Indian civilian and military setups following Operation Sindoor (on May 7), when nine terrorist camps were decimated, he said. Shah made the remarks while delivering



the annual Rustamji Memorial Lecture organised by the Border Security Force (BSF) alongside its 22nd investiture ceremony. Raised in 1965, the BSF guards the over 6,000-km-long Indian borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh. The BSF was founded by Rustamji was the former chief of the BSF. "The terrorists undertook an extreme attack in Pahalgaon as they selectively chose inno-

HIGHLIGHT

Shah said that the operation showed the "firm" political will of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the "precise" intelligence inputs from agencies, and the "lethal" capabilities of the armed forces.

of which two were the headquarters of terror outfits, Shah said. "We did not attack their military installations or air bases. We only hit the terrorist bases in Pakistan. Those who committed a criminal act on our land - the Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hizbul Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Toiba - their bases, houses, training camps and launchpads used against India were destroyed," Shah said. Agency

Bangladesh's interim govt chief Yunus likely to resign



Dhaka
Bangladesh's interim government chief Muhammad Yunus is mulling resignation as he is finding it difficult to work in view of political parties failing to reach a common ground to bring a change in the country, according to a media report. Student-led National Citizen Party chief Nhid Islam was quoted by BBC Bangla Service that Yunus is apprehensive over the evolving political situation in the country and whether he will be able to carry on with his work. "He (Yunus) said he is thinking about it (resignation). He feels that the situation is such that he cannot work," Islam said on Thursday night after he met with the 84-year-old leader. Islam said he went to meet chief adviser Yunus after hearing throughout the day about the speculation of his resignation. "Sir (Yunus) said, if I can't work, I was brought here after a mass uprising to bring change and reform to the country. But in the current situation, with mounting pressure from movements and the way I'm being cornered, this isn't how I can work," Islam told the BBC Bangla. Agency

India pushes to get Pakistan back in FATF 'grey list'

New Delhi
India will highlight Pakistan's persistent support for terrorism and its fuelling of multilateral funds for arms procurement to build a strong case for reinstating Islamabad on the global money laundering and terror financing watchdog's 'grey list', and block funding from the World Bank.



terrorists and the same was evident when senior military officials were present at the funeral of the terrorists killed in Indian military attacks of May 7. The Financial Action



Task Force is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog and sets international standards that aim to prevent these illegal activities. "India will submit a

dossier to the FATF on the omissions and commissions by Pakistan with respect to FATF anti-money laundering and terror financing norms. We will be taking it up (with the FATF) for grey listing of Pakistan," a government source said.

The next meeting of the Asia Pacific Group of FATF is scheduled for August 25, during which India is likely to present its views to the global watchdog. The next FATF plenary and working group meeting is scheduled for October 20. Agency

RBI to give record dividend of Rs 2.69 lakh crore to govt

Mumbai

The Reserve Bank on Friday announced a record Rs 2.69 lakh crore dividend to the government for FY25, 27.4 per cent higher than 2023-24, helping the exchequer to tide over challenges posed by US tariffs and increased spending on defence due to the conflict with Pakistan.

The decision on the dividend payout was taken at the 616th meeting of the Central Board of Directors of Reserve Bank of India held here under the Chairmanship of Governor Sanjay Malhotra. The central bank had



transferred Rs 2.1 lakh crore dividend to the government for the fiscal 2023-24. The payout was Rs 87,416 crore for 2022-23. In a statement, the RBI said the transferable surplus for the year (2024-25) has been arrived at on the basis of the revised Economic Capital Framework (ECF) as approved by the Central Board in its meeting held on May 15, 2025. The revised framework stipulates that the risk provisioning under the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB) be maintained within a range of 7.50 to 4.50 per cent of the RBI's balance sheet. During accounting years 2018-19 to 2021-22, owing to the prevailing macroeconomic conditions and the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Board had decided to maintain the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB) at 5.50 per cent of the Reserve Bank's Balance Sheet size to support growth and overall economic activity. Agency

Trump threatens Apple with 25% tariff if iPhones are made in India

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German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl said the EU's executive commission has his country's full support in working to "preserve our access to the American market."
"I think such tariffs help no one, but would just lead to economic development in both markets suffering," Wadepuhl said in Berlin. "So we are still counting on negotiations, and support from the European Commission in defending Europe and the European market while at the same time working on persuasion in America."
"Trump aides have said the goal of his tariffs was to isolate China and strike new agreements with allies, but the president's tariff may undermine the logic of those claims. Not only could the EU face higher tariffs than China, but the bloc of member states might have been better off by establishing a broad front with China and other countries against Trump's trade policy," said German economist Marcel Fratscher.

"The strategy of the EU Commission and Germany in the trade conflict with Trump is a total failure," Fratscher, the head of the German Institute for Economic Research, said on X. "This was a failure you could see coming — Trump sees Europe's wavering, hesitation and concessions as the weaknesses that they are."

"Trump has now hot and cold on his relationship with Apple, a sign that currying favour with him might not necessarily shield a company from his anger. He has essentially told companies such as Walmart to "eat" the costs of his tariffs instead of raising prices, even though doing so could squeeze profits and cause layoffs. He now appears to be deploying a similar degree of pressure to force Apple to accept the higher costs of relocating its supply chains."

After IMF, India to oppose World Bank's \$20 bn loan to Pak

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showed that Islamabad had missed funds in last two decades with arm procurements rising exponentially.
Sources said Finance Minister Nirima Sitharaman spoke to IMF chief, and some ministers on IMF board, while the Indian Embassy officials also presented the case before powerful nations like the US.

The funding could, however, not be blocked as the agenda had previously been circulated to all members and it was left to them to vote on extending assistance to Pakistan.
India's efforts, however, led to IMF imposing 11 strict conditions on Pakistan. The 11 new structural benchmarks introduced by the Fund have been linked to fiscal, governance, social, monetary and financial parameters along with metrics to be met in energy sector and trade, investment policy and deregulation.

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Railway minister inspects Jamalpur railway workshop, lays foundation stone for new project

Ahishhek Byahat Jamalpur: (Bihar) Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday laid the foundation stone for a project to increase the wagon periodical overhauling (POH) capacity at the Jamalpur railway workshop in Bihar's Munger district and also interacted with the employees.

Vaishnaw visited Bihar, where he met Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to discuss ongoing railway projects.

During his visit, he inspected the rail route from Patna to Jamalpur and provided instructions to officials. Accompanying him were Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh and Deputy Ministers Samrat Chaudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha.

At Jamalpur, the Minister evaluated rehaul development work at



Workshop, which costs ₹78.96 crore. He inspected the wagon POH (Periodic Overhaul) capacity at

the station, which costs ₹78.96 crore.

He inspected the wagon manufacturing and crane shops, examining the production of vari-

ous wagons and newly manufactured cranes. Additionally, he visited the Indian Railways Institute of Mechanical and Electrical En-

Railway minister lays foundation stone for project of wagon POH capacity augmentation at Jamalpur Locomotive Workshop

gineering (IRIMEE) in Jamalpur, where he released a booklet titled "Centre of Excellence." This booklet outlines plans for developing training facilities in engineering areas like Welding, Pneumatics, Hydraulics, and Mechatronics, with a total investment proposal of ₹350 crore for this development.

During his inspection, Vaishnaw highlighted the significant increase in railway budget allocation for Bihar, growing from ₹1,000 crore a decade ago to ₹10,000 crore today. He mentioned that 1,832 km of new

railway tracks have been laid in Bihar and over 34,000 km nationwide in the past ten years, along with the completion of electrification over 50,000 km. This electrification reduces reliance on oil imports.

Ministers Singh and Choudhary expressed their appreciation for the Railway Minister's efforts and contributions toward Bihar's development. Vaishnaw noted that the new wagon POH project at Jamalpur would improve the workshop's capacity to handle more wagons each month, enhancing operational efficiency and turnaround times.

The event gathered various dignitaries, including local MLAs and railway general managers, who recognized the positive impact of these developments on the region's infrastructure and economy.

Stalin in Delhi for NITI Aayog meet visits Sonia Rahul

Chennai/New Delhi
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Friday called on top Congress party leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi after arriving in Delhi to take part in the NITI Aayog governing council meeting on May 24.

Stalin was accorded a warm reception in the national capital by DMK leaders led by veteran TR Baalu.

Later, the chief minister from the southern state met the top Congress leaders and said in a social media post: "There's a special warmth in every meeting with Madam Tmt (Mrs). Sonia Gandhi and dear brother @RahulGandhi at their residence. It never feels like a visit; it truly feels like being with family."

Also, Stalin met a Tamil Nadu native, Dr A Parameswaran, a survivor of the Palahgam terror attack, who is being treated at a hospital.

The CM said: "Just met Dr. A. Parameswaran at AIIMS Delhi, the ENT surgeon from Tamil Nadu, who survived the #Palahgam terror attack. Calm, composed and courageous beyond words. I personally wished him strength and a swift recovery."
Stalin says ago asserted he would be in Delhi to take part in the meeting to voice the demand for "fair financial right of Tamil Nadu."

He had said: "I will be firm on the ideology! I will get funds for Tamil Nadu through struggle."
The CM's visit to the national capital for the NITI Aayog meeting comes against the background of main opposition ALADMK's strong criticism of the chief minister.

Bhubaneswar to host global conference on Kalinga & Southeast Asia

Manoranjan Sasmalbabu Bhubaneswar

An international conference focusing on the social, literary, cultural, and civilizational ties between Odisha and Southeast Asian countries is set to take place in Bhubaneswar. Scheduled for May 24 and 25, the two-day event is being organized jointly by the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture, the Institute of Media Studies at Utkal University, and the Government of India.

The conference will delve into the theme "Civilizational Connection between Kalinga and South-East Asian Countries," exploring the historic and enduring links between the region of ancient Kalinga (present-day Odisha) and various Southeast Asian nations. Alongside the main discussions, special sessions will be held to raise awareness, particularly among the youth, about Odisha's rich commercial traditions and its historical role in regional trade and cultural exchanges.

Historically, Odia sagas and traders traveled to areas such as Java, Sumatra, and Indonesia, fostering vibrant trade and cultural relationships that have left lasting impressions on the arts and traditions of these regions. This cultural interplay remains visible today in various art forms. For instance, the Pashumukha dance of Odisha shares stylistic similarities with the Barong dance of Bali, while the Chhau dance from Mayurbhanj district finds parallels in Indonesia's Gaba-Gaba dance. Similarly, the tribal Birli dance of Odisha resonates with tribal dances performed in Indonesia.

The conference aims to revive and highlight these ancient civilizational connections and provide a valuable educational platform for young people to appreciate Odisha's historic and cultural links with Southeast Asia. Organizers hope the event will deepen understanding and promote continued cultural exchange in the years to come.

Gurgaon

Agate on Friday launched India's first dedicated Farmers Mall at Bhorra Kalan, Patnaudi. Farmers can now access verified agri-inputs, training, and retail services under one roof, offering quality, convenience, and cost efficiency.

The grand inauguration was graced by the divine presence of Mahamandaleswar Swami Dharm Dev Ji Maharaj, a spiritual force and farmers' well-wisher, along with Sukhbir Singh, ACP, Patnaudi, Kamal Yadav, Former District President, BJP Gurgaon and Shrinima Vimala Devi, MLA, Patnaudi and Binla Chaudhary—MLA Halka Patnaudi.

This launch also marked key initiatives, including free soil testing in collaboration with Coromandel, a strategic partnership with PI Industries, and live demonstrations of traps, fertilizers, irrigation solutions, and other agri-services.

One of the major highlights is the strategic collaboration with PI Industries, working

Agate launches Haryana's first multi-brand mall for farmers



jointly to showcase the best technologies and sustainable practices, ensuring real-time

demonstration on 1 acre of cultivated land, while offering the best rates for farmers.

Commenting on the launch, Ankit Rawat, CEO & Founder of Agate, said, "At Agate, we're revolutionizing Indian agriculture through innovative solutions like the Agate Kisan Mall and Farm Experience Center—connecting farmers with leading brands, technology, and hands-on knowledge for a sustainable future."

Multiple brands from seeds to harvest—including Namdhari, Indus, Coromandel, Aries, PI Industries, Netafim, Signet, along with 20 more brands—are part of this initiative. The model offers direct-to-farmer access to top-quality seeds, nutrients, crop protection, and equipment, significantly reducing cost of cultivation by eliminating middlemen.

Beyond being a retail hub, Agate functions as a full-fledged Research and Experience Centre, where farmers can learn about innovative, science-backed techniques, witness results in real-time, and adopt modern, efficient farming practices suited for their region.

Alternative medicine movement drives Electropathy forward

New Delhi

A major step toward mainstreaming alternative and affordable healthcare in India was taken on Friday as a press conference was held in the Press Club of India, New Delhi, to call for national legal recognition of Electropathy, also known as Electro Homeopathy.

The Press Conference was addressed by Dr. Jasvinder Singh, President of the World Bio Cares Health Organization (WBCO) and Founder of EBio Cares. A globally awarded healthcare professional, World Record Holder, Dr. Singh has helped thousands of patients with chronic conditions such as Autism, ADHD, Cerebral Palsy, and Speech Disorders, areas where conventional medicine often offers limited solutions.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Singh emphasized the need for the Government of India to follow the example of Rajasthan, which has already granted legal status to Electropathy. On 30 April 2025, Rajasthan officially notified the for-



mation of five-member State Electropathy Board, paving the way for structured development, regulation, and education in this medical system.

He welcomed recent political support from states like Uttar Pradesh, where Minister Dr. Sanjay Nishad has reportedly raised the issue with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak. Similar advocacy efforts are underway in Himachal Pradesh, led by the Electro Homeopathy Development and Welfare Society, which has submitted a formal memorandum to Health Minister Dhani Ram Shandil.

While addressing the press conference, Dr. Singh said: "The time has come for India to recognize Electropathy as a valid system of medicine at the national level. With growing support from elected leaders and the success of state-led models like Rajasthan, we urge the Central Government to bring forward legislation that ensures protection, registration, and development of Electropathy for the benefit of millions."

Electropathy is a plant-based system of medicine developed in 1865 by Italian physician Count Cesare Mattei, which uses extracts from 114 medicinal plants to prepare remedies. Advocates of Electropathy describe it as a natural, affordable, accessible, and non-toxic approach that has shown effectiveness in treating a wide range of ailments.

SC is chief justice centric court image must change Justice: A S Oka

New Delhi

Justice Abhay S Oka on Friday called the Supreme Court a "chief justice centric court" while advocating for a change in light of its composition of 34 judges coming from different regions of the country.

Bidding goodbye at an event organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association, Justice Oka said the Supreme Court and the High Courts have neglected the trial and district courts which were the judiciary's backbone.

He said there was huge pendency in trial courts with some cases pending for 90 years.

"High Courts function more democratically than the Supreme Court because there is an administrative committee of first five judges in place. Major decisions are taken by the administrative committee. In the last few years, I have found that the Supreme Court is Chief Justice centric court, I think we need to change that," he said.

"The judge went on, "The Supreme Court is a court of 34 judges

who come from different areas of the country. Therefore the image of the Chief Justice centric court needs to be changed."

On listing of selected matters before the top court, Justice Oka said manual intervention should be reduced.

"People complain about why some cases are listed the next day and why other cases are pending after so many days. We cannot have a better listing unless we reduce manual intervention to the minimum. We have Artificial Intelligence technology and other software which can help in rational listing of cases," he said.

Justice Oka revealed in his career spanning over two decades, he never delivered a dissenting judgment.

"During my entire tenure, I never delivered dissenting judgment. Neither my colleagues dissented. Only one exception happened two days back," he said.

need some time for talking to the press.

"I have taken a stand that talking to the media while I am holding office is out of the question. I would never do that. I will need a cooling period of two to three months. The reason is that if I talk to the media today, my mind is full of emotions and I may end up saying something which I should not say. So I have requested them to give me some time so that I can be in a better frame of mind," Justice Oka said.

In a message to the bar, which was read out separately, Justice Oka said the Supreme Court completed 75 years of its existence on January 28 and instead of celebrating the occasion there is a need to introspect.

"Citizens of the country had very high expectations from this court. Though no one can deny the contribution of this court, my personal view is that the Supreme Court has not fulfilled the expectations of the citizens of India." Agency

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all my clients (1) Sh. Satyapal Singh So. Sh. Umesh Singh R.No. 37, (2) Sh. 5, Ram Chander Inchara, Utam Nagar, New Delhi-110059 (UD No. 7574-577-9055) (2) Sh. Subhash Prasad So. Sh. Manoj Mandel R. No. 640, Block-C, Bhagwati Garden Ext. Utam Nagar, New Delhi-110059 (UD No. 3084-4741-6588). Owners of built up property situated at Plot No. 54, Area Measuring 62.12 Sq. Yds. out of Khata No. 6518 village Hastal Colony, Ram Chander Inchara, Mohan Garden, Utam Nagar, New Delhi-110059. Have original G.P.A. and will in favour of my client Satyapal Singh and it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in the said property then he/she may contact and handover same to me. My claim is subject to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

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Tale of two Army Chiefs – Bangladesh & Pakistan

Despite a crushing defeat, an army chief assumes a colonial legacy and coronates himself as the second ever declared 'Field Marshal', assuming all controls over every wing of the defence forces. And other, tersely warns a caretaker government to cease and desist from making a mockery of a transitional government clinging to power in a revivalist Islamist zeal. Fascinatingly lucid is the tale of two off India's immediate neighbors – Pakistan and Bangladesh. Enjoined at the hips by an overtly binding stand of Islamic extremism and now a deep-seated angst against India, both these nations are on their path of self-destruction and possible annihilation. Encouraged and cajoled by the pre-eminent Asian power, China – both Bangladesh and Pakistan seem to fall prey to the devious, yet overtly attractive Chinese foreplay. Interestingly, China seems to be playing a pious game of patience while it is proxies, Bangladesh and Pakistan, force Indian hands into constrained, limited and constricted action. It's a tale of two Army Chiefs, their maneuvers, quest for preeminence, laced with puppetry of democratically elected fig leaf governments.

Pakistani Gen Munir, now redesignated, Field Marshal Asim Munir, is less of a progressive military ruler and more of a religious zealot, with a lust to overturn the Kafirs living in India. A week before Pahalgam massacre, General Munir's address to Pakistani NRIs was not just a recitation of Iqbal & Jinnah's two nation – two religion theory, but a commentary of Munir's deep-seated disdain for progressive, diversified, economically and militarily superior India. Foreign minister S Jaishankar, summed this effectively in Copenhagen, "Deliberately, an element of religion was introduced... on the Pakistani side, you have a Pakistani leadership, specially the army chief, who's very driven by an extreme religious outlook... They've also pursued a radical, I would say, extremist religious agenda... using terrorism across the border as a way of trying to pressure us". Perhaps this explains, why in less than ten days of ceasefire announcement post Operation Sindoor, Gen Asim Munir went on to assume the same grand standing as that of Gen Ayub Khan in 1958, who had unleashed a military dictatorship in Pakistan after assuming the rank of Field Marshal. Prior to social media frenzy ebbs - so unleashed by serial Pakistani handles - exposing the truth of devastating Indian drone, missile and lazy munition attacks, the Pakistani decadent political class personified by PM Shahbaz Sharif, redesignated Gen Munir as the fulcrum of Pakistan's polity, military & Islamic leadership. The arch rivalry between, now jailed former PM Imran Khan and Field Marshal Munir is a known fact. With International Monetary Fund levying harsh program implementation & execution schedules, the World Bank seeking quick repayment of it's long overdue loan installments and a restive political class hell bent on securing Imran Khan's release - secretly backed by a group of Pakistani Americans in Trump administration - Shahbaz Sharif, Bilawal Bhutto & army generals are on the back foot.

The overt Chinese diplomatic support, military supplies and constant reiteration of long-standing partnership with Pakistan, does act a balm to the frayed nerves of Pakistani politico-military complex. But in reality, the thwarted CEPC project, abductions & killing of Chinese workers and nationals on Paki-

By Ajay Kumar



Commentator & Journalist



stani soil and a free for all situation in Baluchistan, restive Jeay Sindh movement in Sindh, Pashtun Tahafuz movement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province are not just pain points, but constant irritants in Sino-Pak relations. A balkanized Pakistan is off no use to China and its neo-imperialistic zeal at becoming the dominant super power. Nor is the concentration of jihadi, terrorist, Islamist and fatalistic ensemble of terror houses in close proximity to the CEPC zone, extending from Pakistan's Kakarokam range in the north to the Gwadar port in Baluchistan. A collapsed Pakistan splitting into provincial Islamic dominions appears to be at the very edge of a precipice that could flare up the Uyghur Muslim agitation within China and also jeopardize its much desired & coveted sea access to central and western Chinese provinces. And it is hence a domineering Field Marshal, who could still preordain a subservient political class under a dominant military rule - is a acceptable compulsion to China and Russia, than a splintered Pakistan.

Not quite on the same wavelength, but former East Pakistan and current Bangladesh is faced with a near similar evolving, dynamic political play. The armed student's agitation, provoked and sustained by two dominant political formulations, Bangladeshi Nationalist Party (BNP) & Jamaat e Islami, has now gone astray. In a zeal to rid Bangladesh off

the semi-autocratic Awami League regime of Sheikh Hasina, the radical Islamist students' unions seem to have attacked the very core of Bangladeshi freedom movement and its avowed purpose of separation from oppressive West Pakistan. Care taker noble laureate Muhammad Yunus, currently a much-derided political stooge of the United States, has developed a curious taste of holding on to political power. Driven by clandestine neo-Islamism, giving a free hand to Jamaat e Islami and other extremist Islamic organizations working as proxies of Pakistani spy agency, ISI - Yunus, is on a path of radicalized, theocratic and autocratic Bangladesh. The overt bonhomie exhibited amidst the varied visits of Pakistani generals, bureaucrats and foreign ministry delegations is a stark shift in Bangladeshi foreign policy and political outreach. Combine this with Yunus's comment during his Chinese visit, "land locked North east India", the picture of a new emerging three nation axis is not far from envision. The destruction, attacks and political cum judicial prosecution of Bangladeshi Hindus, despite repeated protests by the Modi government is a clear indicator to times to come. In this milieu, it was Bangladeshi Army Chief, Wakar Uz Zaman, who eventually threw his hat in the ring. In a meeting of the three-armed forces chiefs, senior political leaderships and bureaucrats, Bangladeshi army chief, Wakar Uz Zaman pressed upon Yunus that elections

need to be held before December 2025, so that troops fall back to their barracks - "Bangladesh needs political stability. This is only possible through an elected government, not by unelected decision makers". Pointedly, Zaman is being accused of being hand in glove with BNP, by the very students' unions and Islamist parties, who hailed the army's role post Hasina's flight from Bangladesh. It is believed that the Bangladeshi Army chief is opposed to Yunus government's green signal to Rakhine corridor stretching up to Myanmar and also upset with the border trade stand off post India's decision on barring landing ports for products via North East India. In the backdrop of Jamaat e Islami's over support for a continued caretaker government under Yunus, Army Chief Wakar uz Zaman's threat of a military take over seems quite imminent, if Yunus continues with his lust for opportunistic brinkmanship.

So the question is, will the two army generals of neighboring countries add to the existing woes of India? To my mind, it's too early to say. The last military dispensation in Bangladesh, didn't obstruct Indian interests in the region and was not a hindrance to India's look east policy, which then was in its formative stages. Would a Wakar uz Zaman in Bangladesh become a mirror image of Asim Munir in Pakistan - frankly the bets are yet to be played out. Under no circumstances, the former East Pakistan (Bangladesh) can be compared with the current Pakistani mindset & disposition. The pace of economic reform and conversion of Bangladesh as the apparel hub of the world along with Vietnam has taken a severe beating post Sheikh Hasina's departure. Bangladesh is also keenly aware of the ill effects of an overt Chinese presence on its economic and defence infrastructure. Likewise, a jihadi - Islamist - orthodox - neo wahabi Bangladesh on the patterns of Pakistan has never been the grain of its very existence. It is hence, not too premature to infer that a military dictatorship in Bangladesh won't really stretch Indian security and diplomatic concerns.

As for Pakistan, the devil is not just in the details, but writ large on the face. A rogue terror sponsor state, using terrorist outfits operating on its soil as an extension of its extra territorial military complex, is the harsh reality that India has to contend with. Whether a military dictatorship or a symbolic democratically elected government - Pakistan is a nation hinged on its military's preeminence. Rather the interlude of military dictatorships in Pakistan is a cleaner slate to work with, when it comes to India. Rather than dealing with a hydra headed formulations that prevails during elected governments in Pakistan, direct communication with a single window military junta is far easier. In days to come, this too shall play out, while a select peace advocating journalist - commentator complex within India, keeps playing the dove & white flag bohemian commentary between the two nations.

Is the U.S.-China Friendship a Setback for India's Hopes?

The honey fight between the U.S. and China over trade tariffs has stopped - for now.

The two countries have agreed to pause their tariff war for 90 days. What happens after that is uncertain.

Both countries are led by leaders - Donald Trump and Xi Jinping - who are known for being unpredictable and arrogant. So, this agreement may not last long enough to imbalance world trade scene.

During the recent trade war, both countries kept announcing increase in tariffs on each other's goods.

This made businesses in both the U.S. and China uneasy and worried. China depends on the U.S. market, and Americans use many Chinese products. So both sides were getting hurt. That's why they agreed to stop the fight for now. This came as a huge relief to the world.

The U.S. and China are two of the world's biggest economies, so when they fight, other countries also feel the effects. India was benefiting from their fight in some ways. Indian companies, especially in tools, electronics, and home appliances, were getting orders that used to go to China. Chinese companies had started using Indian companies to complete their U.S. orders, and some American buyers were also considering buying directly from India.

India also got better prices from Chinese suppliers during the trade war. Chinese electronics companies were offering discounts - up to 5% - to Indian buyers. This helped reduce the prices of items like TVs, fridges, and smartphones in India.

Now that the U.S. and China have agreed to work together again, some say it could hurt India's dream of becoming a manufacturing hub. But is that really true?

It's true that India may miss the chance to take over some of the exports that China sends to the U.S. But this doesn't mean investors and companies will

By Abhishek Malhotra



stop trusting India or investing here. In recent years, many foreign companies have increased their presence in India - even when there was no U.S.-China trade war.

For example, the Taiwanese company Foxconn is investing more in India. Apple is also focusing more on India and is even moving the production of many iPhones from China to India. Even though Donald Trump advised Apple's CEO not to make iPhones in India, the company is still going ahead with its plans.

India is becoming stronger in manufacturing and is attracting global companies. People are hopeful about India's growing economy. In fact, India is now the world's fourth-largest economy, ahead of Japan, with a GDP of \$4.187 trillion.

The Indian government has also made it easier to do business. It is welcoming foreign companies. Its PLI (Production Linked Incentive) scheme gives rewards to companies for making products in India. This is helping to attract global manufacturers.

Overall, India still has many things that attract foreign investment. Big companies are already looking for alternatives to China, and that won't change just because the U.S. and China are getting along for now. The U.S.-China deal may reduce some temporary gains for India, but it won't stop India's long-term growth.



Maharishi Kashyap's legacy will continue to inspire humanity, says CM Saini

Komal Ramola Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced a series of initiatives to honour the legacy of Maharishi Kashyap during the state-level celebration of Maharishi Kashyap Jayanti, held under the 'Sant-Mahapurush Vichar Samman and Prasar Yojana' in Ladwa, Kurukshetra.

In a significant tribute, the Chief Minister declared that a government institution in Haryana will be named after Maharishi Kashyap. Additionally, he announced a grant of ₹21 lakh each for the expansion of Kashyap Rajput Dharamshalas at the pilgrimage sites of Kurukshetra and Kapil Mochan. He further revealed that a square in Ladwa would be named in honour of Maharishi Kashyap, and a plot would be allocated—subject to feasibility—for the construction of a Kashyap Rajput Dharamshala in Ladwa, Kurukshetra, or Indri.

Describing Maharishi Kashyap as a symbol of Indian culture and spiritual wisdom, Saini said, "Maniraj



Kashyap provided a new direction to human civilization through his wisdom, penance, and scholarly works. Texts such as the Smriti Granth and Kashyap Samhita continue to guide society. His inspirational legacy will always illuminate the path for humanity.

The Chief Minister paid homage to the historical contributions of the Kashyap

community, dating back to the Ramayana era, citing examples such as King Nishad, who aided Lord Shri Ramchandra during his exile. He also highlighted the community's participation in the freedom movement and its continued role in nation-building by upholding the ideals of Maharishi Kashyap. Touching upon the recent Operation Sindoor, the Chief

Minister referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strong stance against terrorism, asserting that the Indian Armed Forces, supported by modern technology, had decisively responded to threats, sending a clear message to both terrorists and their supporters in Pakistan. Saini expressed confidence that the Kashyap community would contribute significantly

to achieving the Prime Minister's vision of transforming India into a developed nation, global leader, and cultural superpower by 2047. He reiterated the state government's commitment to promoting the teachings of spiritual figures through initiatives such as the Sant-Mahapurusha Samman Vichar Prasar Yojana.

He also outlined various measures taken by the government for the welfare of the underprivileged, including increasing the creamy layer income limit for backward classes from ₹6 lakh to ₹8 lakh annually and providing 27% reservation in educational institutions for these communities. Emphasizing the principle of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Prayas, he noted that the government had worked consistently to uplift the poorest over the past ten and a half years.

Saini highlighted progress on the promises made in the party's Sankalp Patra, stating that 19 commitments had already been fulfilled and the remaining 90 would be addressed soon. He acknowledged the Kashyap community's support in the

last general elections, which helped the government secure a third consecutive term.

Presiding over the function, MLA Ramkumar Kashyap welcomed the Chief Minister and highlighted the historical and spiritual contributions of the Kashyap community. He mentioned figures such as Raja Nishad, Bhakt Prahlad, and Bhai Himmat Singh Kashyap—one of the Panj Pyare of Guru Gobind Singh Ji—as exemplars of the community's legacy.

Haryana Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Krishan Kumar Bedi lauded the government's efforts to uplift the marginalized, noting that the current administration is committed to the spirit of Antyodaya. He praised Chief Minister Saini as a leader who remains accessible to the people and thanked him for participating in the Kashyap Jayanti celebration.

Several other dignitaries, including MLA Jagmohan Anand, former minister Subhash Sudha, BJP District President Tejinder Goldy, and various community representatives, were also present at the event.

49 killed in rain-related incidents across UP



Lucknow (UP)

At least 49 people died across Uttar Pradesh due to various rain and storm-related incidents between 8 pm on May 21 to 4 pm on May 22, according to a report of the Integrated Disaster Control Centre, Relief Commissioner's Office, Lucknow.

The state experienced strong winds accompanied by heavy rainfall in most parts of the districts on the night of May 21-22.

The fatalities, primarily caused by falling of trees, collapsing of walls and roofs, and lightning strikes, have been reported from numerous districts across the state.

As per the information provided by the Relief Commissioner's Office, five persons each were killed in Kasganj and Fatehpur districts. Four deaths each were reported from Meerut and Auraiya districts while three persons each were killed in Bulandshahr, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Kannauj, Kanpur Nagar and Etah.

Two deaths each caused by rain-related incidents were reported from Ghaziabad, Firozabad, Etawah and Kanpur Dehat. In Aligarh, Hathras, Chitrakoot, Ambedkar Nagar, Amethi, Ayodhya, Azamgarh and Unnao one death each was reported. The Relief Commissioner's Office has directed district officials to provide assistance and an ex-gratia amount to the family members of the deceased.

Meanwhile, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav expressed condolences on the deaths due to storm, rain and cyclone in the state, calling it extremely sad.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the SP said, "Shri Akhilesh Yadav expressed condolences to the families of the deceased and said that the government should immediately compensate the affected families and help them in other ways."

Yadav said that in the last three days, lakhs of people were affected by storms and rain in dozens of districts of the state. Dozens of houses collapsed. Waterlogging occurred at many places including the chief minister's home district of Gorakhpur, the statement added.

The SP chief also said that the government should not make announcements on paper. It should really help the families affected by storms, he said.

The SP chief alleged in the statement, "The BJP government is an expert in making false announcements. This government has not fulfilled the previous promises made to the public."

"During various disasters, this government did make announcements but the farmers and victims did not get help on the ground. In a democracy, it is the responsibility of the government to work for public interest and public welfare but the BJP government always discriminates. It ignores farmers, the poor and the victims."

Army launches first FM radio station in Uttarakhand



The objective of the initiative is to create goodwill between the Indian Army and people of the border areas, said Manish Singhal, manager of the radio station.

The first FM radio station operated by the Indian Army in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand was inaugurated on Friday by General Officer Commanding (GOC) of Army's Central Command Anindya Sengupta.

The objective of the initiative is to create goodwill between the Indian Army and people of the border areas, said Manish Singhal, manager of the radio station.

He said that the community radio station being operated under 'Operation Sadbhavana' has been named 'Panchshul Pulse' and will be broadcast on 88.4 FM.

The station manager said the radio station is being operated from the Army Public School of the 'Panchshul Brigade' of the Indian Army and people within a radius of 12 km from the radio station can listen to it.

The programmes will pay special attention to the local history, culture, society and occupations of people of the border areas such as agriculture, horticulture.

It will also have focus on raising awareness of the achievements of people of the border areas, sportsmen and people who have worked in the social and cultural sectors, Singhal said.

24x7 control room to be set up at SDM office Mandi for Monsoon emergencies: Rupinder Kaur

Rajani Panchhi Mandi

In a proactive move ahead of the monsoon season, the Mandi sub-division administration has initiated comprehensive preparations to tackle potential disasters. As part of these efforts, a 24x7 control room will soon be established at the SDM office in Mandi to provide emergency assistance and weather-related updates to the public.

SDM Mandi Rupinder Kaur announced the initiative during a virtual review meeting held to assess monsoon preparedness. The meeting saw participation from senior officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI),



Public Works Department (PWD), Jal Shakti Department, Health Department, Electricity Board, Revenue Department, Disaster Management Authority, and the

Police Department.

SDM Kaur instructed all departments to ensure the availability of essential resources in advance. Emphasizing the importance of readiness, she directed NHAI and the PWD to identify landslide-prone areas and deploy the necessary machinery and manpower accordingly. The PWD was specifically asked to station JCBs and other critical equipment at designated locations.

The SDM also urged NHAI to complete repair work in vulnerable stretches between Mandi and Pandoh to prevent road blockages on the four-lane highway during the monsoon. In a bid to strengthen disaster management,

she announced plans for public awareness campaigns in collaboration with Panchayat representatives and voluntary organizations. "It is crucial to educate the general public about safety precautions during the monsoon to minimize the risk to life and property," said SDM Rupinder Kaur. "This control room will serve as a vital communication hub for citizens seeking help or information during emergencies."

With the monsoon approaching, the Mandi administration is committed to ensuring public safety through coordinated efforts and efficient resource management.

Punjab Govt approves sweeping amendments to property regulations

Komal Ramola Chandigarh

In a significant move to streamline property transactions and boost state finances, the Punjab Cabinet, headed by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, has approved a crucial amendment to the Punjab Management and Transfer of Municipal Properties Rules, 2021. The decision was taken during a Council of Ministers meeting held at the Chief Minister's official residence on Friday.

According to a spokesperson from the Chief Minister's Office, the amendment reduces the time period for depositing the sale price by allottees of properties sold by Urban Local Bodies from the earlier provision of six half-yearly installments to a single payment within six months (180 days) from the date of allotment. This change is expected to accelerate revenue realization for urban local bodies, strengthen municipal finances, and reduce legal disputes arising from delayed payments, thereby providing greater convenience to the public.

In another significant development, the Cabinet sanctioned Rs 5 crore to the Punjab Innovation Mission. This fund allocation is aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and leveraging Punjab's growth potential by developing the state as a vibrant industrial hub.

The Mission has been recognized for its critical role in generating employment, attracting investments, and propelling the overall economic growth of Punjab.



In another significant development, the Cabinet sanctioned Rs 5 crore to the Punjab Innovation Mission. This fund allocation is aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and leveraging Punjab's growth potential by developing the state as a vibrant industrial hub.

Additionally, the Cabinet approved the framing of service rules for officers and employees serving in the 207 Specially Promoted Cadre of the Punjab Police, particularly those elevated from the sports quota. This

move is intended to regulate future promotions and streamline service matters for this group, ensuring clarity and structure in their career progression.

The Cabinet also gave its consent to the Punjab Appropriation Acts (Repeat) Bill, 2025, following recommendations by the Group of Secretaries committee tasked with reviewing relevant laws. The bill aims to repeal expired appropriation acts that authorized departmental expenditures from the Consolidated Fund of the State. Officials clarified that repealing these acts will not affect any valid past or pending actions carried out under their authority.

Agra DM leads eco-focused district talks

Akash Jain Agra

A comprehensive review and planning meeting encompassing four key district-level environmental committees—the District Environment Committee, District Tree Plantation Committee, District Wetland Committee, and District Ganga Committee—was convened at the Collectorate Auditorium under the chairmanship of District Magistrate Mr. Arvind Mallappa Bangari. The meeting focused on intensifying environmental efforts in the Agra district and aligning them with both state and national environmental mandates.

In his opening remarks, District Magistrate Bangari emphasized the importance of ensuring the survival of saplings to be planted during the 2024-25 plantation season. He issued firm instructions to all concerned departments to implement protective measures, regular irrigation, and systematic maintenance for the planted saplings. To streamline monitoring, he directed that each department should designate a nodal officer specifically responsible for overseeing the plantation initiatives. These officers are required to maintain detailed, site-specific plantation registers, recording the species of saplings planted as well as the survival count, which



must be regularly updated.

The meeting also took stock of the ongoing compliance with directives from the National Green Tribunal (NGT). There was an in-depth discussion regarding key environmental issues such as solid waste management, pollution control—both air and water—and forest conservation. The District Magistrate underscored the need for timely and effective implementation of NGT orders by all involved departments, reiterating the administration's commitment to sustainable environmental governance.

As part of preparations for the large-scale plantation drive scheduled for the monsoon season of 2025, Mr. Bangari instructed all departments to submit detailed plantation action plans to the Social Forestry

this statewide green initiative.

In the segment dedicated to the District Ganga Committee, the meeting focused on strategies for the conservation and rejuvenation of the Ganga River and its tributaries flowing through Agra. A multi-pronged approach was discussed, centering on educational outreach, community involvement, and ecological restoration. It was decided that schools, colleges, and social organizations would be roped in for awareness drives, educational campaigns, and dialogue sessions emphasizing the importance of water conservation and biodiversity.

Special focus was given to the revival of Agra's local rivers—namely the Kibbar, Khari, Karban, and Pavarti rivers. Participants concurred that maintaining the natural flow of these tributaries, preventing pollution, enhancing green cover along their banks, and ensuring community engagement would serve as the cornerstones of the rejuvenation campaign. All members present at the meeting underscored the critical role of these tributaries in upholding both the ecological balance and cultural heritage of the region. They unanimously agreed that a holistic and persistent effort is required to safeguard these lifelines for future generations.

Josh Hazlewood likely to join RCB squad ahead of the IPL 2025 playoffs

New Delhi: Right-arm seamer Josh Hazlewood is firming to return to Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) for the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 playoffs after coming through a period of rehab on a shoulder niggle back in Australia, as reported by ESPNcricinfo.

The fast bowler flew back to Australia during the hiatus, and since then, he has been training in Brisbane for the upcoming World Test Championship final against South Africa.

Hazlewood, who missed RCB's last IPL 2025 clash, which was against the five-time champions Chennai Super Kings, is the fourth-highest wicket-taker in the ongoing 18th edition of the cash-rich league with 18 wickets in 10 matches at an average of 17.28.

RCB have been in strong form this season, winning eight of their 11 matches so far. They will face Sunrisers Hyderabad in Lucknow on Friday before concluding their league campaign against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG). A top-two finish remains within reach, and the team will hope the new additions can provide timely reinforcements.

Earlier, the venues for the playoffs of the 18th season of the Indian Premier League were unveiled on Tuesday. According to the latest schedule, Qualifier 1 will be hosted in New Chandigarh on May 29, featuring the top two-ranked sides, followed by an engrossing Eliminator clash on May 30.

Along with the New PCA Stadium, Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium, the world's largest cricket stadium, will serve as the venue for an electrifying Qualifier 2 on June 1 and the grand final of the 18th edition of the cash-rich league on June 3.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru Squad: Jacob Bethell, Virat Kohli, Mayank Agarwal, Rajat Patidar (c), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Tim David, Romario Shephard, Krunal Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Blessing Muzarabani, Yash Dayal, Suyash Sharma, Kasikh Dhar Salam, Manoj Bhandage, Liam Livingstone, Swapnil Singh, Philip Salt, Mohit Rathke, Swastik Chikara, Abhinandan Singh, Josh Hazlewood, Nuwan Thushara.

ICC announces match officials for WTC final between Australia, South Africa

Dubai: Chris Gaffaney of New Zealand and England's Richard Illingworth have been announced as on-field umpires for the World Test Championship (WTC) final which is set to take place at Lord's from June 11 to 15 between Australia and South Africa, as per the ICC official website.

The highly anticipated clash will see South Africa take on Australia in the culmination of a fiercely contested two-year Test cycle for the race.

Illingworth, who was also part of the officiating team in the 2021 and 2023 finals, continues his consistent presence in marquee Test matches. He is also the current ICC Umpire of the Year, having won the David Shepherd Trophy for

Surfing Federation of India confirms 6th edition of Indian Open of Surfing

Mangaluru: The Indian Open of Surfing (IOS), the second stop in the National Surfing Championship series, is set to return for its sixth edition. The event was recently announced by the Surfing Federation of India (SFI), the governing body for Surfing and Stand-Up Paddling in the country, according to a release from SFI.

Recognized by the International Surfing Association, this prestigious national competition will be hosted by the Mantra Surf Club and organized by the Surfing Swami Foundation. Set against the scenic backdrop of Sasi-hithlu beach in Mangalore, Karnataka, the event will take place from May 30 to June 1, 2025.

The three-day premier surfing competition will witness participation from India's top-ranked surfers in four categories: Men's Open, Women's Open, Groms (U-16) Boys and Groms (U-16) Girls. Following the International Surfing Festival Kerala Varkala 2025, held in April, the Indian Open



of Surfing (IOS) serves as the second stop in the National Championship Series.

This highly competitive event showcases intense action and fierce rivalry between surfers from the east and west coasts of India. Each event in the series carries crucial ranking points that determine the surfers' standings at the end of the season.

Last year, India earned its first-ever surfing quotas for a multisport event, securing two spots for the 2026 Asian Games at the Asian Surf Championship 2024 in the Maldives - a milestone that marks a new era for surfing in the country.

The current edition of the Indian Open of Surfing holds significant importance, as it offers athletes the opportunity to boost their rankings and enhance their chances of qualifying for the Asian Surf Championship, the qualifier event for the 2026 Asian Games scheduled later this year.

Arun Vasu, President, Surfing Federation of India, on the announcement said, "We are pleased to announce the sixth edition of the Indian Open of Surfing - the premier surfing event on the west coast since its inception. In 2024, our surfers created history by securing

qualification spots for the Asian Games for the first time, marking a significant milestone that has elevated the sport's profile across the country. As we set our sights on Aichi-Nagoya 2026, the competition promises to be more intense than ever."

Kishore Kumar, Harish Muthu, Kamali P, Ajeesh Ali, Srikanth D, and Sanjay Selvamani are among the top surfers to watch at the Indian Open of Surfing, following their standout performances at the Asian Surfing Championship and the Maruhaba Cup in 2024.

These athletes have also secured multiple national championship titles in recent years. The year 2024 was a landmark for Indian surfing, with the national team earning a 5th-place ranking in Asia and making a strong impression on the international stage.

Rammohan Paranjape, Vice President, SFI and Director, Mantra Surf Club said, "The sixth edition of the Indian Open of Surfing stands as a testament to the dedication and success of the previous editions.

IPL 2025 Fever Comes to Agra - Fan Park to be Held at GIC Ground on May 24 & 25



Akash Jain Agra: Cricket fans in Agra have reason to celebrate as TATA IPL 2025 is all set to break all previous records, promising to be bigger, more passionate, and more entertaining than ever before.

A major part of this excitement is the IPL Fan Park, which will be grander, more energetic, and more engaging this season.

Organized by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), this unique initiative will be held across 50 cities in India, and Agra is proud to be one of them. The city's cricket enthusiasts will get the golden opportunity to be part of the Fan Park experience at

GIC Ground, Agra on May 24 and 25, where they can enjoy live matches on a giant screen.

The Fan Park will offer more than just thrilling cricket action. Fans can enjoy face painting, whistling, cheering, music, crazy stunts, and high-energy entertainment. With free entry, no fan will be left out of this exhilarating experience.

Adding to the fun will be music, official IPL merchandise, food stalls, exciting beverages, and special activities by IPL's official sponsors, ensuring a complete entertainment package. The goal of the Fan Park is to recreate a stadium-like atmosphere so fans can

cheer for their favorite teams in full spirit.

The event is being made possible with the key support of the Agra District Cricket Association. Speaking about the initiative, Association President Sunil Joshi said, "We are fully prepared to offer Agra residents an unforgettable IPL experience. This year, IPL fever will be at its peak!"

Puran Dawar, Life Member of the Agra District Cricket Association and the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association, added, "Events like these bring joy to local cricket lovers and also inspire the youth to connect with the spirit of the game."

Gill emerges frontrunner to be India's new Test captain: Sources

New Delhi: Following Rohit Sharma's retirement from Test Cricket, right-hand batter Shubman Gill is likely to be named the captain of the Indian Cricket Team in the longest format, as per sources.

On May 7, Rohit announced his retirement from Test cricket after a career spanning 67 Tests and 11 years, ahead of the England tour, kickstarting India's ICC World Test Championship 2025-27 cycle from June 20 onwards.

He amassed 4,301 runs at an average of 40.57, with 12 centuries and 18 fifties. His highest score of 212 came during a memorable home series against South Africa in 2019. He finishes as India's 16th-highest run-getter in the long-test format.

After Rohit's departure, Shubman Gill is the frontrunner to lead the Indian side in whites, whereas wicket-keeper-batter Rishabh Pant is the likely choice as his deputy.

Right-arm seamer Jasprit Bumrah was also considered a potential candidate for the Test captaincy,



however, recurring injury concerns in recent times have diminished his prospects. Another name in contention was middle-order batter KL Rahul, but at 33, his age is seen as a limiting factor for a long-term leadership role.

The India A squad for the tour to England was announced on May 16, 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.

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.

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

Solution, Sudoku

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

THE WISDOM TREE

BY SUVEEN KUMAR

The more you can wait, the more you can get. Patience is not an act of foolishness but it is the price you pay for a true life. It can never be a good competition that how bad you can be. God will listen to you if you pray. You are not responsible for someone's sorrow only if you are not the reason of someone's happiness. Fear makes you do sin. It is responsible for your bad fall. People will never bring fire to you if you are not flammable. Letting someone use you is not a matter of greatness, because one day if you will need you, they will refuse to give you to you, and you will have to beg them for your own self.

The reason you become weak before someone is because you give your strength to them. If you are bound to suffer, you will suffer but

keep God on your side even when you're suffering. Suffering is not a process that you can do something about, it is a result, and it has to happen. A problem created by a person can't be solved by a person; it requires God to solve it. When it hurts too much, cry out loud, call God's name but don't go back to the person who has hurt you. The reason you may not choose to go to God when it hurts like hell because you can't see him but faith is faith. He is there even when you don't see Him. If you always remember how sure death is, you will never forget how unsure the life is.

Moral: Waiting can be equally pinching as working if you don't learn how to wait!



England's Ollie Pope ignores speculations about his place ahead of India tour

Nottingham: After scoring a ton against Zimbabwe during the ongoing one-off Test, Ollie Pope dismissed the growing speculation about his axing from England's squad in the upcoming five high-stakes Tests against India, scheduled to begin from June 20.

Test captain Ben Stokes dropped a compelling hint about including young Jacob Bethell in England's squad, citing his impressive run in New Zealand last year. Bethell's inclusion would likely come at the expense of opener Zak Crawley or the number three Pope, who laboured for runs during the three Tests against the Blackcaps.

On the opening day of the one-off Test, Crawley crossed



the three-digit mark, which eluded his bar for the first time since July 2023. After being trapped by Sikandar Raza in front of the stumps, Crawley returned with 124(77), and then Pope took centre stage with his masterclass.

He struck handsomely above a 100 strike rate, defined the true meaning of 'Bazball' and stayed unbeaten with 166 from 163 deliveries when umpires decided to call the end of the opening day's action.

"Watching those two [Duckett and Crawley] score runs, you don't want to be the one to miss out, so it was nice

to get in the flow of things early," Pope told Sky Sports.

After sending a strong message in response to his critics before the squad announcement for the India series, Pope assured that he knows where he stands in the "hierarchy" and ignores the media and the speculations to ensure his "mental game" remains unfazed.

TOP STORY

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China criticizes US ban on Harvard's international students

Bangkok: The Chinese government said Friday that the Trump administration's move to ban international students from Harvard would harm America's international standing, as anxious students and parents overseas fretted over what would come next.

Among the two largest parts of the international student community in Harvard are Chinese and Indian students. The university enrolled 6,703 international students across all of its schools in 2024, according to the school's data, with 1,203 of those from China and 788 from India.

The Trump administration's move, announced Thursday, was a hot topic on Chinese social media. State broadcaster CCTV questioned whether the US would remain a top destination for foreign students, noting Harvard was already suing the US government in court.

"But with the long litigation period, thousands of international students may have trouble waiting," the CCTV commentary said. It went on to say that it becomes necessary for international students to consider other options "when policy uncertainty becomes the norm."

At least 60 people killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza as Israel lets minimal aid in

Deir Al-Balah: At least 60 people were killed by Israeli strikes across Gaza in a 24-hour period, Gaza's health ministry said Friday, as Israel pressed ahead with its military offensive and let in minimal aid to the strip.

The dead included 10 people in the southern city of Khan Younis, four in the central town of Deir al-Balah and nine in the Jabalya refugee camp in the north, according to the Nasser, Al-Aqsa and Al-Ahli hospitals, where the bodies were brought.

Israel is facing mounting international criticism for its latest offensive and pressure to let aid into Gaza amid a catastrophic humanitarian crisis. The strip has been under an Israeli blockade for nearly three months, according to the United Nations. Experts have warned that many of Gaza's 2 million residents are at high risk of



famine. Even the United States, a staunch ally, has voiced concerns over the hunger crisis.

The strikes that lasted into Friday morning came a day after Israeli tanks and drones attacked a hospital in northern Gaza, igniting fires and causing extensive damage, Palestinian hospital officials said on Thursday. Victims taken by a health official at Al-Awda Hospital show walls blown away and thick black smoke billowing wreckage.

Israel said it will continue to strike Hamas until all of the 58 Israeli hostages are released — fewer than half of whom are believed to be alive, according to Israel — and until Hamas disarms.

Suspect charged with murder over deaths of Israeli Embassy staffers in Washington

The strikes come a day after two Israeli Embassy staffers were shot while leaving a reception for young diplomats at the Capital Jewish Museum, in Washington, DC. The suspect told police he "did it for Palestine," according to court doc-

uments filed Thursday as he was charged with murder. He didn't enter a plea.

On Thursday night, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the killings in Washington "horrific and blasted France, the UK and Canada for proposing to establish a Palestinian state."

"Because by issuing their demand, replete with a threat of sanctions against Israel — against Israel, not Hamas — these three leaders effectively said they want Hamas to remain in power," he said.

Earlier this week the three leaders issued one of the most significant criticisms by close allies of Israel's handling of the war in Gaza and its actions in the West Bank, threatening to take "concrete actions" if the government did not cease its renewed military offensive and significantly lift restrictions on humanitarian aid.

Trump administration says Columbia violated civil rights of Jewish students

New York: The Trump administration is accusing Columbia University of violating the civil rights of Jewish students by "acting with deliberate indifference" toward what it describes as rampant antisemitism on campus.

The finding was announced late Thursday by the Health and Human Services Department, marking the latest blow for an Ivy League school already shaken by federal cutbacks and sustained government pressure to crackdown on student speech.

It comes hours after the Department of Homeland Security said it would revoke Harvard University's ability to enroll international students, a major escalation in the administration's mounting attack on higher education.

The Health and Human Services Department said its Office of Civil Rights had found Columbia in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which blocks federal funding re-

ipients from discrimination based on race, colour or national origin. That final category includes "discrimination against individuals that is based on their actual or perceived Israeli or Jewish identity or ancestry," the press release states.

The announcement did not include new sanctions against Columbia, which is already facing USD 400 million in federal cuts over what the Trump administration describes as its permissive approach to antisemitism on campus.

A spokesperson for Columbia said the university is currently negotiating with the government about a resolution to those allegations.

"We understand this finding is part of our ongoing discussions with the government," the spokesperson said in an email. "Columbia is deeply committed to combating antisemitism and all forms of harassment and discrimination on our campus."

Bangladesh's interim govt chief Yunus mulls resignation: Report

Dhaka: Bangladesh's interim government chief Muhammad Yunus is mulling resignation as he is finding it difficult to work in view of political parties failing to reach a common ground to bring a change in the country, according to a media report.

Student-led National Alliance Party chief Nihad Islam was quoted by BBC Bangla Service that Yunus is apprehensive over the evolving politi-



cal situation in the country and whether he will be able to carry on with his work.

Islam said on Thursday night after he met with the 84-year-old leader.

Islam said he went to meet Chief Adviser Yunus after hearing throughout the day about the speculation of his resignation.

"Sir (Yunus) said, 'I can't work... I was brought here after a mass uprising to bring change and reform to the country. But in the current situation, with mounting pressure from

movements and the way I'm being cornered, this isn't how I can work,'" Islam told the BBC Bangla.

Another media report referring to unnamed sources close to Yunus said he actually threatened to resign if political parties do not give him their backing and expressed his desire to quit at a cabinet or advisory council meeting earlier on Thursday.

It said the other advisers, effectively ministers, however, persuaded him

not to do so.

Islam told the BBC that he urged Yunus "to stay strong for the sake of the country's security, and future and to meet the expectations of the mass uprising" (and) I hope everyone will cooperate with him".

Islam, one of the key coordinators of the Students Against Discrimination (SAD), who previously served as one of three representatives of the platform in the interim government's

advisory council or cabinet, quit his office to lead the NCP that emerged in February this year, blessing with Yunus's visits.

The SAD led the July uprising last year forcing the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League regime on August 5, 2024.

Three days later Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize winner for experiment of microfinance, flew from Paris to take charge.

BUSINESS

Sebi Mandates Digital KYC Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities



New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi on Friday directed intermediaries to extend their services enabling digital accessibility to persons with disabilities and also issued frequently asked questions (FAQs) explaining account opening by such persons.

Sebi said that intermediaries will be guided by FAQs on account opening by persons with disabilities.

In a circular, the regulator said it is "committed to the cause of enabling equal access of services of its registered intermediaries to persons with disabilities, including persons with visual impairments and

in order to make the digital KYC process inclusive and accessible, FAQ on Account opening by persons with disabilities has been revised".

"This FAQs are applicable to intermediaries establishing account-based relationships including mutual funds.

Under the FAQs, Sebi said the facility of online or digital KYC can be extended to persons with disability by adopting accessibility standards. On request of the client, the intermediary should extend their assistance for video capturing in a live environment to facilitate online or digital KYC to persons with disabilities.

India-UK FTA: Concerns Over UK Firms Bidding for Public Contracts

New Delhi: The Congress on Friday expressed concerns that UK firms would be allowed to bid for public contracts in India that would otherwise be open only for domestic companies as part of the India-UK free trade agreement.

In a post on X, AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh said India had stoutly resisted joining the WTO's Agreement on Government Procurement for more than 30 years.

"But now it appears that as part of the India-UK FTA (free trade agreement), UK firms will be allowed to bid for public contracts floated by the Union government that would otherwise have been open only to Indian companies. Having opened this window, US companies also will be beneficiaries," he said in his post.

As part of the FTA, India has agreed to allow UK companies to partic-



ipate in public procurement only in non-sensitive sectors.

UK firms, however, will not be allowed to participate in procurement by state government entities and local bodies.

UK-based suppliers will be allowed to bid for domestic tenders above the agreed threshold (above Rs 200 crore) as deemed Class II local suppliers under public procurement.

The UK, for the first

time, has agreed to accord non-discriminatory treatment to Indian companies in its public procurement system.

Under the UK's social value law, its government departments require public authorities

In a post on X, AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh said India had stoutly resisted joining the WTO's Agreement on Government Procurement for more than 30 years.

to have regard to economic, social and environmental wellbeing in connection with public services contracts.

Earlier, India opened the government procurement segment in the comprehensive trade pact with the UAE. Under that pact, UAE-based firms are allowed to participate in procurement tenders worth over Rs 200 crore.

In 2020, the government modified public procurement norms to give maximum preference to companies whose goods and services have 50 per cent or more local content to promote 'Make in India'.

Six-member board to regulate payment systems: RBI notification

New Delhi: RBI governor headed a six-member Payments Regulatory Board, including three central government nominees, will regulate and supervise payment systems in the country, according to a central bank notification.

The Payments Regulatory Board (PRB) will replace the Board for Regulation and Supervision of Payment and Settlement System (BPSS).

The five-member BPSS is also headed by the RBI Governor but does not include any



government nominee. The other members are a deputy government concerned and three di-

rectors from the Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India.

The Reserve Bank has now notified Payments Regulatory Board Regulations, 2025, to the notification,

other members of the governor-headed Payments Regulatory Board (PRB) will be the Deputy Governor in charge of the Payment and Settlement Systems, one officer of the RBI to be nominated by the Central Board and three persons nominated by the central government.

RBI Governor, Deputy Governor and the central bank official will function as "ex officio" members of the Board.

It further said the PRB may invite persons with experience in the fields of payment and settle-

ment systems, information technology, and law to attend its meeting either as permanent or ad hoc invitees and the Principal Legal Adviser of the RBI shall be a permanent invitee to the meetings.

The Payments Regulatory Board shall ordinarily meet at least twice a year, the notification said.

Earlier, the government had set up an inter-ministerial committee headed by the economic affairs secretary to finalise amendments to the Payment

and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. In its draft report, the panel suggested the creation of an independent regulator Payments Regulatory Board to deal with payments-related issues.

The Reserve Bank of India, in October 2018, released its 'Dissent Note' to the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the finalisation of Amendments to the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, objecting to the panel's recommendation of having a regulator for payment systems outside the RBI.

India's Forex Reserves Drop to \$685.72 Billion

Mumbai: India's forex reserves dropped USD 4.888 billion to USD 685.729 billion for the week ended May 16, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

The overall reserves jumped by USD 4.553 billion to USD 690.617 billion in the previous reporting week. The forex reserves touched an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in September 2024.

For the week ended May 16, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 279 million to USD 581.652 billion, the data released 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.

After the sharp USD 4.52 billion jump in the previous reporting week, the gold reserves dropped by USD 5.121 billion to USD 81.217 billion during the week, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 43 million to USD 18.49 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was also down by USD 3 million to USD 4.37 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

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Alia Bhatt leaves for her Cannes debut, quashes rumours of absence from film festival

Mumbai Only two days before her Cannes debut, Alia Bhatt was spotted at the Mumbai International Airport in the early hours of Friday morning as she departed for her much-anticipated debut at the ongoing Cannes Film

Festival 2025. The 'Highway' actress was dressed in a casual yet striking ensemble

The 'Highway' actress was dressed in a casual yet striking ensemble which included an oversized blazer, blue baggy jeans and a white tank top as she entered the airport amid the media frenzy. Alia looked beautiful as she complemented her look with black sunglasses.

The recent appearance of Alia at the airport, leaving for Cannes, quashes the rumours of her possible absence from the film festival.

Many Indian celebrities, including Anupam Kher, Karan Johar, Aishwarya Rai, Kiara Advani and others, have already attended the Cannes Film Festival this year for their movie screenings and other purposes.

The fans have been eagerly waiting for the actress to make her Cannes red carpet debut after she wowed fans with her dress at the Met Gala last year.

The 78th edition of the Cannes Film Festival is set to be held till May 24, 2025.

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan made a stunning appearance on the red carpet at the 78th Cannes Film Festival.

The actress, who impressed fans earlier with her traditional Banarasi sari look, returned in a bold, black couture gown by Indian designer Gaurav Gupta on Thursday.

Aishwarya's gown, titled 'Heiress of Clam', was a custom-made piece from Gaurav Gupta Couture.

The body-fitted gown was hand-embroidered in shades of silver, gold, charcoal, and black.

Adding more to her dramatic look, the actress completed her look with a Banarasi brocade cape, handwoven in Varanasi.

The cape stood out not just for its rich texture but also because it was inscribed with a Sanskrit shloka from the Bhagavad Gita.



Kartik Aaryan begins shooting for 'Tu Meri Main Tera, Main Tera Tu Meri'

Mumbai Bollywood heart-throb Kartik Aaryan has officially kick-started the shoot of his next big film titled 'Tu Meri Main Tera, Main Tera Tu Meri', under the banner of Dharma Productions and Namah Pictures. The announcement came with two captivating behind-the-scenes images that have already taken social media by storm.

In the first image, Kartik is seen in a rugged, sun-kissed look, wearing a sleeveless beige vest, layered with a simple chain and beaded bracelets. He poses coolly against a scenic European backdrop—possibly Croatia—while a clapboard reading 'Mahurat' is held beside him. The film is directed by Sameer Vidwans and lensed by acclaimed cinematographer Anil Mehta. The casual-yet-intense look hints at a fresh and charming character arc for Kartik.

The second image captures a cinematic moment as a plane flies overhead with a clapboard reading Scene No. 18 MOS and Shot No. 1, indicating a silent (MOS - Mit Out Sound) sequence. The blue sky and distant city skyline suggest the film may blend romance with a travelogue-like feel.

Interestingly, this marks another collaboration between Kartik Aaryan and director Sameer Vidwans after their successful outing with Satyaprem Ki Katha. The duo's chemistry on set seems promising once again.

'Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai' featuring Varun Dhawan to hit big screen on April 10, 2026

humor, action, and heart. The film, which was produced by Tips Films, stars Varun Dhawan, Mrunal Thakur, and Pooja Hegde.

The movie is anticipated to be a multigenerational hit when it opens in theatres on April 10, 2026.

The movie is anticipated to be a multigenerational hit when it opens in theatres on April 10, 2026. Filming is presently taking place in Scotland.

caption read, "Double the trouble, triple the fun! Jab... 'Hai Jawani toh Ishq Hona Hai' hits cinemas on 10th April 2026"

A source close to the development said, "It's a quirky title in sync with the world that David Dhawan is looking to create with Varun Dhawan, Mrunal Thakur, and Sreeleela. It's a family entertainer with the love triangle of the trio at the center.

David Dhawan has cracked a concept that's fresh and original, and is confident to recreate the magic of comedies on the big screen again."



Kim Kardashian robbery case nears end as Paris court prepares verdict

Paris The robbery was over in minutes, the fallout long: Nearly a decade after robbers stormed Kim Kardashian's luxury residence and tied her up at gunpoint, a Paris court will decide the verdict Friday in one of the most audacious celebrity heists in modern French history.

Nine men and a woman stand accused of carrying out or aiding the crime during the 2016 Fashion Week, when masked men dressed as police entered Kardashian's Paris residence, bound her with zip-ties and vanished with \$6 million in jewels.

After delivering final statements in court, the defendants were dismissed Friday morning, with a verdict expected later in the day.

At the heart of the trial is 70-year-old Aomar Ait Khedache, the alleged ringleader and a veteran of Paris' criminal underworld. Prosecutors have asked for a 10-year sentence. His DNA, found on the zip-ties used to bind Kardashian, cracked open the case. Wiretaps captured him giving orders, re-



cruting accomplices, and arranging to sell the diamonds in Belgium. The loot was never found.

Khedache claims he was only a foot soldier. He blamed a mysterious "X" or "Ben"—someone prosecutors say never existed. Khedache asked for "a thousand pardons," communicated via a written note, according to French media. Other defendants also used their final words to express remorse.

The accused became known in France as "les payes braquiers"—the grand-pa robbers.

Mumbai Producer Ramesh Taurani teams up once again with veteran director David Dhawan for their latest venture, Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai—a romantic comedy that promises a generous dose of

presently taking place in Scotland.

The makers shared a poster with the film's name and the release date in their latest post on Instagram on May 23. The

Hugh Jackman teases his appearance in 'Avengers: Doomsday' as 'Wolverine'

Washington X-Men: Wolverine's recent addition to Disney's Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) has fans thinking about Hugh Jackman's inclusion in the upcoming film 'Avengers: Doomsday'. The actor also teased about his potential appearance in the film, reported Deadline.

Following his return to the role (aka Logan) in last year's Deadpool & Wolverine, the Oscar nominee recently assured he "actually" has no news about whether he'll clench his claws once again for Avengers: Doomsday.

"I really can't say much, except when you say 'appear,' more like dominate and destroy every other character—I'm kidding. I re-

ally have nothing to add, and if I did, I would find a really cool way to not say it, but I actually have nothing to add," said Hugh Jackman as quoted by Deadline.

Jackman made his debut as Wolverine in 2000's X-Men. He reprised the role in X2 (2003), X-Men: The Last Stand (2006), X-Men Origins: Wolverine (2009), The Wolverine (2013), Logan (2017) and 'Deadpool & Wolverine' (2024).

According to Deadline, actress Halle Berry has previously shut down any hope of her inclusion as 'Storm' in 'Doomsday'.

Meanwhile, Patrick Stewart (Professor X), Ian McKellen (Magneto), Alan Cumming (Nightcrawler) Rebecca Romijn (Mystique) and James Marsden (Cyclops) are set to return in the film.



Michael Jackson biopic 'Michael' delayed, likely to release in 2026

Washington The Michael Jackson biopic titled 'Michael' release date is expected to be delayed to 2026, reported Variety. It is being directed by Antoine Fuqua.

During Lionsgate's Q4 2025 earnings call, CEO Jon Feltheimer shared an update on the film starring Jackson's nephew Jaarar Jackson, who makes his screen debut in the project.

"In regard to our Michael Jackson biopic, we're excited about the 3 1/2 hours of amazing footage from producer Graham King and director Antoine Fuqua, and we will be announcing a definitive release strategy & timing in the next few weeks. I would note that it is likely we will move 'Michael' out of the fiscal year which will impact fiscal '26 financial results but will bolster an already strong fiscal '27 slate," said Feltheimer as quoted by Variety.



The fiscal calendar ends on March 31, 2026, so Feltheimer's statement indicates that the film (or films) will likely debut after April 1, 2026.

Last month, Variety reported that the film would likely be split into two parts and be pushed from the initially announced release date of Oct. 3, 2025.

As per Feltheimer's statement, the film is likely to debut after April 1, 2026, as the fiscal calendar of 2026 ends on March 31.