



### Santner named New Zealand Test skipper for Zimbabwe Series



### Trump administration pressed to address starvation in Gaza

### Sanjay Dutt's fierce look from 'The Raja Saab' unveiled on his birthday



CRICKET PAGE-10 WORLD PAGE-9 FILM PAGE-12

**3 DELHI**  
CM Gupta launches 'Hauslon Ki Udaan' to empower city's youth

**4 STATE**  
Heavy rains trigger traffic chaos waterlogging across Delhi

**7 NATIONAL**  
Shah must take responsibility for 'security lapse' at Pahalgam Mallikarjun Kharge in RS

**8 STATE**  
Jai Ram Thakur Questions State Govt's Relief Efforts After Mandi Cloudburst

**9 BUSINESS**  
TCS Layoffs: Market Valuation Drops Rs 28,149 Cr

**11 SPORTS**  
Wanted to join a club that ranks among the top three: Florian Wirtz

MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
81337.95	24821.10
446.93	140.20

GOLD	
98.050.00	113,650.00
515.00	597.00

WEATHER	
Sunrise	5:41 AM
Sunset	7:14 PM
Moonrise	10:45 AM
Moonset	10:28 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	31°C
Minimum	27°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
Maximum	31°C
Minimum	26°C

## PM Modi says Operation Sindoor still on, denies global pressure to enforce ceasefire

Responding to opposition criticism, PM Modi says no world leader pressured India to halt Operation Sindoor and that Pakistan pleaded for a ceasefire after suffering heavy losses.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Tuesday that no world leader had told India to stop Operation Sindoor as he lashed out at the Congress for "importing issues from Pakistan" and said the opposition party is joining terrorists and their masterminds in shedding tears after the victorious Indian military action.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Replying to an over 16-hour discussion in Lok Sabha on the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor, Modi rebutted the Opposition's charge over US President Donald Trump's repeated claims of mediating "ceasefire", saying he had told US Vice President J D Vance on May 9 night that Pakistan will pay dearly for any attack on India.

In his 102-minute speech, the prime minister lauded India's military action as a "vijayotsav" (victory celebration) and told the House amid cheers from the treasury benches that he was presenting the "stand of Bharat". "India destroyed Paki-

stan's military strength between May 9 and May 10. Pakistan now clearly understands that India's response will always get bigger and that India can do anything if it engages in any misadventure in future," he said, emphasising that Operation Sindoor is continuing.

Modi said Vance called him up a few times but he was busy in meetings with the armed forces brass and returned the call later. "The Vice President

told me that Pakistan is going to launch a big attack. I told him if this is Pakistan's intention, then this will cost it dearly. We will respond with a bigger attack. We will fire cannonballs against their bullets."

"No world leader asked India to stop its military operation," he said.

No country stopped India from acting in its defense, PM Modi stressed, adding that only three of the 193 UN members spoke in favour of Pakistan, re-

marks which came soon after Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi claimed no country condemned Pakistan and cited Trump's claims to question Modi's leadership.

Modi then turned on the Congress. The opposition party has fallen to such a low that despite governing India for so long, it does not trust the country's establishment and its trust is in fact guided by remote control in Pakistan, he said.

## Rahul attacks Modi, dares him to rebut Trump on truce

New Delhi: In a no-holds-barred attack, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of using the armed forces to protect his image after the Pahalgam attack and dared him to rebut US President Donald Trump's India-Pakistan ceasefire claims.



Rahul Gandhi

"If Modi ji has even 50 per cent of the courage that Indira Gandhi had, then clearly he must say in Parliament - Donald Trump is lying," he said. Gandhi also said that if the government had listened to his statement in Lok Sabha a few months ago on China and Pakistan fusing together, they would "not have lost five aircraft" during Operation Sindoor.

Participating in a special discussion in Lok Sabha on "India's

strong, successful and decisive Operation Sindoor in response to the terror attack in Pahalgam", he claimed the government revealed sensitive details about Operation Sindoor to Pakistan, soon after it was launched.

"Yesterday, I watched Rajnath Singh ji's speech. He said that Operation Sindoor began at 1:05 in the morning and lasted for 22 minutes. He said a very shocking thing:

that at 1:35, we called Pakistan and told them that we had hit non-military targets and we didn't want escalation. These are the words of the Defence Minister of India," the former Congress president said.

"You told Pakistan exactly what you would do: that you would not target military establishments and you didn't want escalation. That's surrender. Immediate surrender in 30 minutes," Gandhi said, slamming the government. Agency

## If Pak not able to take action against terrorism India can help: Rajnath in RS

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said if Pakistan cannot take action against terrorism on its soil, India is ready to help it as Indian forces are capable of fighting terror on the other side of the border as well.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

Initiating a special discussion on Operation Sindoor in Rajya Sabha, Singh said three terrorists involved in the Pahalgam attack have been eliminated by Indian forces.

He further said that Operation Sindoor - India's response to the Pahalgam attack - has been halted, and can be resumed anytime if Pakistan indulges in terror activities in India again.

"India wants terrorism to end in the whole world, including Pakistan... I had advised Pakistan earlier as well,

and today I want to say again, that if you are unable to take effective action against terrorism, take India's help. India's forces are capable of taking effective action against terrorism this side of the border, as well as on the other side. Pakistan

has already witnessed this during Operation Sindoor," he said.

"If Pakistan commits any terror incidents in future, we will launch Operation Sindoor without hesitation," he said. Singh stressed that our vision is that Operation Sindoor should

carry on continuously. "There can be a comma but no full stop." While expressing surprise over questions raised by some opposition leaders over getting back Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, he said, "I am surprised at this demand, because when they were in power they did just the opposite."

CONTD ON PAGE-2

## Nehru didn't take back PoK, abandoned Assam: Shah in LS



Home Minister Amit Shah

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday affirmed that no leader of any country had asked India to stop Operation Sindoor.

India was also waiting for an opportunity to hit back, Modi said. When Pakistan retaliated, the Indian armed forces taught it a lesson it will not forget for years, Modi said, adding that the neighbouring country was brought to its knees following Indian strikes in its different corners.

As the discussion on 'Operation Sindoor' in both houses of Parliament witnessed fiery speeches by top Congress leaders, Modi said Pakistanis, which appeared on social media, to stress on their shock at the Indian attack.

Their DGMO called up the Indian DGMO saying, "Bas karo, bahut mara... stop the attack." They could not bear it any more, he said.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

Shah informed the Lower House that Indian agencies have ample evidence confirming the three men killed in Monday's 'Operation Mahadev' near Srinagar were Pakistani terrorists linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba, nearly 100 days after the Pahalgam attack.

"Operation Sindoor will continue. It is a notice to Pakistan that India will always act till Pakistan stops attacks," Modi declared during his marathon reply to the discussion in the Lok Sabha, as he accused the Congress and its allies of becoming spokespersons of Pakistan propaganda.

Shah told the Lower House that Indian agencies have "ample evidence" that the three men who were killed on Monday in an encounter as part of 'Operation Mahadev' near Srinagar, nearly 100 days after the Pahalgam attack, were Pakistani terrorists affiliated to the banned Pak-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). Agency

## US team to visit India on August 25 for next round of talks for trade pact

New Delhi: The US team will visit India on August 25 for the next round of negotiations for the proposed bilateral trade agreement between the two countries, an official said on Tuesday.

Though the team is coming at the end of next month, both sides remain engaged to iron out differences for an interim trade deal before August 1, which marks the end of the suspension period of tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump on dozens of countries, including India (26 per cent).



"The US team is visiting for the sixth round of talks," the official said. "The prospects for an interim deal may look dim as US Trade Rep-

resentative Jamieson Greer has said that more negotiations will be needed with India on a trade pact. However, officials are not ruling

out the possibility of a last-minute breakthrough. "We continue to speak with our Indian counterparts, we've always had very constructive discussions with them," Greer told CNBC on Monday. Indian exporters may

face an additional duty of 6 per cent - on top of the existing 10 per cent, if the August 1 deadline is not extended further or an interim deal is not reached between the two countries.

India and the US teams concluded the fifth round of talks for the agreement last week in Washington.

India's chief negotiator and special secretary in the Department of Commerce Rajesh Agrawal and Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch held the deliberations. Agency

## Starmar says UK will recognize Palestinian state unless Israel agrees to a ceasefire

London: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Tuesday said the UK will recognise the state of Palestine at the United Nations General Assembly in September unless Israel moves towards a ceasefire in Gaza.



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer

In an address from 10 Downing Street, Starmer also asked Hamas to immediately release all the Israeli hostages taken on October 7, sign up to an immediate ceasefire and commit to disarmament as well as accept that it will play no part in the government of Gaza.

"I've always said that we will recognise a Palestinian state as a contribution to a proper peace process at the moment of maximum impact for the two-state solution," said Starmer. "With that solution now under threat, this

is the moment to act. So today as part of this process towards peace, I can confirm the UK will recognise the State of Palestine by the UN General Assembly in September unless the Israeli government takes substantive steps to end the appalling situation in Gaza, agree to a ceasefire and commit to a long-term sustainable peace, reversing the prospect of a two-state solution," he said. Agency

CONTD ON PAGE-2







**Terrorists are being eliminated one by one**  
J K DGP

Jammu  
Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Tuesday said the terrorists are being eliminated one by one in ongoing operations across the region.  
"They (terrorists) have been operating here for the past four years. Operations are going on continuously. One by one, they are being eliminated," he told reporters at a function here.  
The DGP was responding to questions about the ongoing operations and the number of terrorists killed.

In response to another question about the number of terrorists currently active in Jammu and Kashmir, he said the figures cannot be disclosed in the public domain.  
Prabhat avoided a direct response to a question on "Operation Mahadev" and said the country's top leaders have already spoken on the matter.

In a major breakthrough, the Army's elite para commandos earlier on Monday gunned down the alleged mastermind of the Pahalgam terror attack along with two of his associates in an encounter in a forest area on the outskirts of Srinagar.

Suleman alias Asif, who is believed to be the mastermind of the April 22 attack, was killed after the security forces launched a surprise action, codenamed 'Operation Mahadev'.

**Indian Army to hold drone competition in forbidding Spiti valley**

Shimla  
The Indian Army is going to host a drone competition to bring together freelancers and original equipment manufacturers from across the country, an army officer said on Tuesday.

The exercise will be a joint venture between the Surya Command of the Indian Army and the Drone Federation of India.

The event will take place in the Sumdo village of Spiti Valley in two phases — August 10-15, and August 20-24 —, the spokesperson said.

Surya Dronathon 2025 will feature obstacle negotiation and an endurance race.  
The participants will face one of the highest drone obstacle courses in the country, situated at an altitude of 10,700 feet in the open category, service team category and freelancers category.

The last date for online registration is August 1.

According to an official statement, the event seeks to foster a robust ecosystem of innovation in the defence sector, aligning with the vision of "Atmanirbhar Bharat."

FOR ADVERTISING IN

**TOP STORY**  
PLEASE CONTACT:

9818799941

**Haryana CM stresses need-based fire station setup, reviews key development announcements**

Komal Ramola  
Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Tuesday directed officials to assess fire station requirements across the state based on population density and future growth trends, in order to ensure timely establishment of new fire stations where needed. The Chief Minister was chairing a high-level meeting in Chandigarh to review the progress of various Chief Minister's announcements made over the years.

Underscoring the importance of essential public services, the Chief Minister emphasized that departments must ensure the availability of roads, electricity, and water in every corner of the state, including remote and hilly regions such as Morni. "Even if there is only one household in a far-flung area, it is the responsibility of the government to provide all basic amenities," he asserted.

In a significant directive aimed at public safety and cleanliness, Saini instructed that a special campaign be launched to make Haryana free of stray cattle. He called upon the Animal Husbandry and Dairy Department to work in coordination with the Urban Local



Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini presiding over a review meeting regarding CM Announcements at Chandigarh on July 29, 2025.

Bodies Department and the Gau Seva Commission to remove all stray cattle from roads and public spaces within two months. These animals are to be relocated to be housed in gaushalas (cow shelters) in a systematic and safe manner.

Reviewing the functioning of the Animal Husbandry and Dairy Department, the Chief Minister noted that Nandi Shalas have already been established in Panchkula, Panipat, and Hisar. He urged that similar facilities be created in all other districts.

He also directed the department to explore setting up Nandishalas through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Additionally, veterinary clinics must be established at all existing Nandishalas, with arrangements for regular visits by veterinary surgeons.

During the review of the Irrigation and Water Resources Department, Saini instructed officials to ensure the timely and high-quality completion of development works, so that their benefits reach the people direct-

ly. He also ordered a survey to be launched for channeling water from the Yamuna River in the Kaesar region to Panchkula and adjoining areas. The initiative aims to support agricultural activities and advance the 'River Linking Campaign' envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

While reviewing the Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department, the Chief Minister directed officials to maintain and regularly update the database of all subsidy-related

**Underscoring the importance of essential public services, the Chief Minister emphasized that departments must ensure the availability of roads, electricity, and water in every corner of the state, including remote and hilly regions such as Morni.**

schemes. This, he said, would help ensure transparency and efficiency in delivering benefits to farmers. He also suggested the creation of a special program to develop high-quality seeds through agricultural scientists, enabling farmers to boost productivity. He called on the Horticulture Department to collaborate actively with Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and extend technical support to farmers under this year's action plan.

Saini concluded the meeting by reviewing all department-wise Chief Minister's announcements made since 2014. He instructed all concerned officers to prioritize the timely execution and completion of pending commitments to ensure that the state's developmental goals are achieved efficiently.

**Punjab Police busts cross-border arms smuggling module**

Chandigarh

The Punjab Police on Tuesday claimed to have busted a cross-border arms smuggling module and apprehended an operative working under the directions of a Pakistan-based smuggler.

Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav, in a post on X, said the accused had retrieved a weapon consignment from near the India-Pakistan border and was en route to deliver it when a police team intercepted him.  
In a statement issued later, Yadav said the man was identified as Bharatpreet Singh from Marhi Megha village in Tarn Taran. Police teams recovered five sophisticated pistols from his possession and impounded his motorcycle, which was used for transporting the consignments.

Yadav said preliminary investigations have revealed that the arrested accused, along with his two associates, was acting upon the directions of the Pakistan-based smuggler, who has been using drones to drop weapons consignments from across the border.

The arrested accused was further supplying arms to criminals and gangsters in Punjab to fuel criminal activities in



the state, he said. Sharing operation details, the DGP said teams of the counter-intelligence wing in Amritsar received specific intelligence about the retrieval of weapons consignments from the India-Pakistan border area near Dalri village in Tarn Taran.

Acting swiftly, police teams intercepted Bharatpreet Singh from Mulechak road in Amritsar, when he was going to deliver the consignment to a party, and recovered illegal weapons from his possession, he added.

An FIR has been registered at the State Special Operation Cell, Amritsar, he said. Further investigation is underway to expose the entire network and its linkages, he added.

**JK LG expresses gratitude to security forces for eliminating Pahalgam attackers**

Srinagar

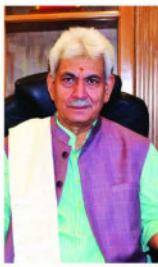
Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday thanked the security forces for eliminating the three terrorists who were involved in the Pahalgam attack.

Addressing a cultural programme in Baramulla district, Sinha also lauded the Army for its dedication and commitment to safeguarding the country.

"The security forces on Monday eliminated three terrorists who gunned down 26 civilians in Pahalgam's Baisaran valley on April 22. The terrorists were killed in an encounter conducted jointly by the Army's elite PARA commando unit along with CRPF and Jammu and Kashmir Police at Mulnar in Harwan area near Dachigam National Park."

Sinha "expressed gratitude on behalf of the nation and Jammu and Kashmir to Army, paramilitary and police forces for successfully executing 'Operation Mahadev', in which three Pakistani terrorists involved in the April 22 heinous Pahalgam terror attack were eliminated in Dachigam forest", an official spokesperson said.

At the event in Baramulla, Sinha called on the youth to rise above language, sect and religion,



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha

and collectively counter those who spread public unrest.

"There are disturbing elements in society who attempt to justify terrorism and the killings of innocents and try to hold hostage the aspirations and dreams of lakhs of youths. Such individuals need to be unmasked," the LG said.  
He also congratulated 20,000 youths of Baramulla for setting a world record in calligraphy and 'Ladishah', a folk storytelling art.

"By coming together for Ladishah and calligraphy, you have set a new world record. This accomplishment will serve as inspiration for sections across society to reconnect with their heritage, embrace their culture, and uphold their values," he said.

**Bullock cart races represent glorious cultural heritage of rural Punjab: CM Mann**

Ludhiana

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday said the bullock cart races are not just a source of entertainment but represent the glorious cultural heritage of rural Punjab.

He said that such races have been held in Punjab since ancient times and served as a living connection to our traditions and cultural identity.

Mann, according to an official statement, said that Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev also practiced farming with bullocks during his time in Kartarpur Sahib.

The chief minister said that the ban earlier on bullock cart races had not only disheartened lovers of traditional sports but also dealt a blow to our heritage.

Addressing a gathering in Mehna Singh Wala village in this district, Mann said that there had been growing demand from Punjabis to bring a new law so that these traditional games can be revived.

Mann said the Punjab Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2025 was unanimously passed in the state assembly on July 11.

The chief minister said this law will not only help in preserving indigenous animal breeds in Punjab but also pave the way for resuming bul-



Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann in Mehna Singh Wala village

lock cart races. He said this law now awaits the consent of the President of India.

Speaking about the new legislation, Mann explained its primary objective is to ensure safety measures for animals participating in sports, including veterinary supervision, safety standards, registration and documentation, and penalties for violations, so that no cruelty is inflicted upon voiceless animals.

The chief minister also announced that his government will explore possibilities of reviving pigeon flying competitions as well.

After the Bill was unanimously passed by the Punjab Assembly

earlier this month, Mann had called it a "historic" day and said the bullock cart races will now resume in the entire state.

It allows the resumption of bullock cart races in Punjab besides ensuring safety measures for animals taking part in sports.

Bullock cart race had not been taking place at Kila Raipur Sports Festival in Ludhiana district, popularly known as 'mini or rural Olympics'.

In 2014, the Supreme Court had banned these sports for being violative of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. "Considering the important role played by Bullock Cart Racing towards promoting the spirit of games and

sports, and enriching the cultural heritage and tradition in the State of Punjab, which is also a great source to keep the Punjab's youth away from drug addiction and also to improve indigenous cattle breeds of Punjab, the government of Punjab has decided to exempt the conduct of Bullock Cart Racing in Punjab from the provision of the said Central Act 59 of 1960," according to the Bill passed by the Punjab Assembly.

Meanwhile, Mann while referring to the sports festival held at Kila Raipur village said the games, which began in 1933, are popularly known as "Mini Olympics" or "Rural Olympics".

According to a statement issued here, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS) cases in Himachal Pradesh constitute nine per cent of total cases, significantly lower than Punjab's 20 per cent.

Under the present government's tenure, properties worth Rs 42.22 crore belonging to persons involved in drug-related activities have been attached.

Also, 44 detention orders have been issued and executed under the PIT-NDPS Act, it added.

Agency

**Tiger count in UP rises to 205; CM extend greetings on International Tiger Day**

Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak on Tuesday extended greetings to people on International Tiger Day, as the state recorded a rise in the animal's population from 173 to 205.

In a post on X in Hindi, Adityanath said, "Hearty congratulations to all nature lovers and wildlife protectors on 'International Tiger Day'! The tiger is a symbol of

our biodiversity, ecological balance and natural dignity. Let us make this day meaningful by resolving to protect the tiger, a symbol of speed and power."

State Minister of Forest and Environment (Independent Charge) Arun Kumar Saxena also posted on X, "Hearty congratulations and best wishes on International Tiger Day. Tiger is not only our national animal but also our heritage. Let us take a pledge to protect tigers on the International Tiger Day."



He said the number of tigers in Uttar Pradesh has increased to 205 from 173 according to the 2022 tiger census

report. "There are four tiger reserves in the state. Efforts to improve tiger habitat, creation of borewells for

water availability during summer, fencing of forest areas, and intensified afforestation are among the steps taken to support the growth in tiger numbers," he added.

Saxena further said that the state is working to expand grassland cover to ensure an adequate prey base, such as deer and other herbivores, for the tigers.

People living near forest areas are being sensitised about safety measures, including staying indoors if they spot an animal pugmarks, ensuring

children do not play alone and moving in groups when venturing out, the minister added.

Deputy Chief Minister Maurya also in a post on X said, "Heartiest greetings of International Tiger Day to the entire country and the people of the state! Let us all fulfill our responsibility towards wildlife conservation, especially the protection of our national heritage — the tigers."

Deputy CM Pathak echoed similar sentiments in his message on X.

# After BSNL, now it is the turn of government schools

**W**henever a government talks about national interest, citizens should understand who is actually benefiting from these so-called national interests. Today's India is standing at a turning point where public services are being handed over to private hands in a planned manner. What we are calling reform is actually a planned disinvestment - in which the rights of the public are being slowly snatched away and converted into market commodities. The biggest example of this entire process is Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited i.e. BSNL, and now the same experiment is being done on the government schools of India.

BSNL was once a communication system that reached every corner of the country. BSNL had services even in the mountains, border areas and rural areas where no private company could reach. But the governments gradually started stopping its pace. It was prevented from introducing new technologies, there was delay in providing 4G service, the number of employees was reduced, and financial assistance was limited. The result was that an important public company of the country gradually weakened. Parallel to this, private companies like Jio were encouraged at every level. They got spectrum at cheap rates, rules were relaxed and administrative help was also given. Ultimately BSNL was weakened and private companies dominated the market.

The same scenario is now being repeated in the field of education. Government schools are being systematically maligned. It is being said that the level of education there is poor, there are fewer students, the results are not good. But no one asks how many teachers are teaching in these schools, for how many years permanent appointments have been stopped, how dilapidated are the school buildings, where are the libraries and laboratories. What is the transport arrangement to take children to school? All this has been deliberately neglected, so that an image can be created that government schools are unsuccessful.

When government schools look weak, the trust of the society will automatically decrease. Then parents will be forced to send their children to private schools, even if their financial condition does not allow it. This is a very deep and dangerous strategy. First weaken the services, then make the public choiceless, and finally push them towards private services.

Today, all the big private schools have some political or administrative person behind them. A minister's wife's trust, a former MP's charitable foundation, a bureaucrat's NGO - these are the names behind the



By Priyanka Saurabh



Research Scholar in Political Science, Poet, freelance journalist and columnist.



glitz of private schools. In such a situation, when an education policy is made, only these people benefit. The government itself makes the policy, and its own schools benefit from those policies.

Now the situation is such that even poor and middle-class families are paying huge fees to educate their children in private schools. Admission fees, monthly fees, annual fees, uniforms, books, smart classes, transport - money is taken for everything and education is sold as a product. If a parent delays paying the fees, the child is humiliated or threatened with expulsion from school. Is this the purpose of education?

Meanwhile, a policy of merging government schools is brought. Where the number of children is less, there is a suggestion to merge them with the nearby school. But it is not seen whether the distance is too much? Are there enough teachers there? Has

the safety of the girl students been taken care of? Policies look good only in figures, not on the ground.

Today, even the Right to Education Act has become a mere paper document. School Management Committees exist only in name. Governments do not give priority to education in their budgets. Expenses are cut, teachers are not recruited for years, and the teachers who are there are put to non-teaching work. Sometimes election duty, sometimes census, sometimes vaccination campaign - teachers are made to do everything except teaching.

Amidst all this, the English language has been presented in such a way as if life is impossible without speaking English. Private schools have made the English medium synonymous with superiority. If a child can speak two sentences in English, he is considered smart and successful, even if he does not understand

the subject. On the other hand, no matter how intelligent a child studying in government schools is, if he speaks in Hindi, he is considered backward. This is the height of mental slavery.

Government schools are not just buildings, they are the hope of education for the most backward and deprived sections of society. For these children whose parents are laborers in the fields, rickshaw pullers or domestic workers, government schools are the only means of education. If these schools are abolished, it will be an insult not to education but to social justice.

Here the question is not only of facilities but also of intentions. If the government wants, it can make government schools model schools. They can be made better than private schools by providing facilities like teachers, library, lab, smart class, sports equipment and transport. But doing so would go against the personal interests of the people in power, so it does not happen.

The problem is that we have considered education as a means of profit. Now it is not a right, it has become a service - and that too a service which is available only to the rich. This is dividing the society into two parts - one who will get expensive education in English and get urban jobs, and the other who will study in Hindi and work as labourers in the villages under broken roofs.

Now the time has come that we should not remain silent. If we do not raise our voice now, then the coming generations will remain puppets in the hands of a particular class. We have to demand that instead of closing down government schools, they should be strengthened. The pillar of education should be strengthened in every village, every town. Teachers should be recruited on time, they should be given only the work of teaching and schools should be made resource-rich.

We have to understand that privatization of education is not only a path to economic slavery but also to ideological slavery. When a class is not educated to think, question and recognize its rights, then democracy will become only a vote machine.

What happened with BSNL was an economic game, but abolishing government schools would be a social and ideological crime. If we want the next generation of the country to be independent, empowered and have an egalitarian mindset, then we must save the government education system today.

## "Transfer files are gathering dust: Government's intentions are in question"

**T**he confusion over the transfer policy of teachers in Haryana has now become a joke. For the last several months, teachers have been waiting for the transfer portal to open, for the cabinet meeting to decide, and for their hopes stuck for years to come true. But alas, all these things now depend only on the "political priorities" of the government. And when we look at the priorities of the government, it becomes clear that the transfer policy of teachers is at the bottom of their agenda.

On the other hand, the speed with which the government has conducted the CET (Common Eligibility Test) has become an unparalleled example - form, exam and now result in a month! If the same will had been shown in the transfer policy, today hundreds of teachers would have been with their families, with sick parents or taking care of small children.

Speed in CET, suspense in transfer

Talking about CET exam, the government has introduced forms,

Fixed exam centers, conducted exams for lakhs of candidates,

And now the result is also going to be declared - all this within 30-35 days. This could have been a wonderful example of administrative machinery - if the same speed and transparency was seen in the teacher transfer policy as well. But there every time the excuses of waiting for the cabinet meeting, portal update, citing policy review and many more were made.

Cabinet meeting: An excuse for a decision or a way to mislead the public?

Every time it is said that "a decision will be taken in the next cabinet meeting." But that next meeting never becomes the "final" one. Teachers keep their eyes fixed on the meeting every Wednesday, but every time they are disappointed. Have these cabinet meetings become just a political drama of procrastination? Or does the government actually not want to understand the pain of teachers?

Transfer policy: Justice only on paper, injustice on ground

Every year, the government opens the MIS portal and asks teachers to update their documents. The teachers update everything faithfully, but when the need arises - the transfer process - the same portal succumbs to "technical glitches".

There are many teachers who are stuck in the same school for 10-12 years. Their family, mental, and physical condition depends on this transfer. But the government is luring them with words like "policy waiting" and "committee review".



By Dr. Satyawan Saurabh



Poet, freelance journalist and columnist, Radio and TV panelist.



"Teachers waiting, government in denial: Is transfer just an electoral tool?", "Teacher transfer policy: Intent or just a sham?", "Policy, intention and negligence: Teachers versus system in Haryana"

The teacher transfer policy in Haryana has been lying in cold storage for years, while the government conducted the CET exam in just one month - from form to result. This contradiction shows that the government's priority is politics, not teachers. Every time the transfer is postponed by making the excuse of cabinet meeting and portal update. The family, mental and health related needs of the teachers are being sacrificed at the expense of the government's intentions. Now is the time for the government to implement a transparent policy, otherwise the silent discontent can soon turn into a movement.

Niti vs Niyat: This is the real difference

If the government's intention had been transparency and teacher welfare, the transfer policy would have been implemented by now.

If the work of months for 15 lakh CET students can be completed in weeks, then why not the transfer of a few thousand teachers?

This difference is not just administrative, it is a

difference of mindset. The government thinks that teachers are "silent workers", they will not protest, will not take to the streets, and will not suffer any political loss. This thinking neglects them.

Teachers' lives are hostage to government laziness

Some teachers want transfer to serve their elderly parents, some to take care of their young children, some married teachers are waiting for permanent posting with their spouses. Some teachers also need transfer due to their illness. But these human aspects are twisted in the transfer policy into technical terms of "data", "rank", "distance", and "online process".

Electoral advantage vs sensitive administration

The government works where it sees votes. CET is a big political gamble - the government wants to show the youth that it is sensitive to jobs, even if the selection rate is only 1-2%. But in reality, this exam is also an illusion - PhD holders are standing in for peon posts.

The same teachers, who are running the government's education system, on whose shoulders rests the future of children - have been left astray in the maze of policies.

The fire of the silent movement is burning

Thousands of teachers working in government schools are now expressing their views through social media, WhatsApp groups and quietly through administrative channels. But this silence will not last long.

If the government continues with this attitude, then soon this discontent can take the form of a movement. And then the government will understand that "teachers not only run schools, they can also create public opinion."

Has transfer become a political tool?

The Haryana government has to clarify whether the teacher transfer policy is actually a policy or a political tool, which is opened and closed according to elections or pressures. The government should not forget that > teachers are the backbone of the education system, and no government can stand for long by ignoring the backbone.

Now the government has only two options:

1. Implement transfer policy with transparency and sensitivity
2. Or confront this politics of neglect in the form of electoral discontent.

# Shah must take responsibility for 'security lapse' at Pahalgam Mallikarjun Kharge in RS

**New Delhi**  
Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday said Home Minister Amit Shah must take responsibility for the "security lapse" that led to the Pahalgam terror attack, demanding that accountability be fixed and "whosoever is responsible should quit".

Participating in the "Special discussion on India's strong, successful and decisive 'Operation Sindoor' in response to terrorist attack in Pahalgam" in the Rajya Sabha, he attacked the government citing Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha's statement admitting to the security lapses that led to the terror attack.

Kharge also questioned the silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on US President Donald Trump's repeated claims of mediation and brokering a cease-



Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge

fire with Pakistan, and asked whether India had accepted a third-party mediation with Pakistan.

"India's strategic interests were not secured despite Howdy Modi, Namaste Trump, because nobody stood by you despite such deep friendship. No country, not even the US openly con-

demned Pakistan. This shows nobody supported you...," Kharge said.

He asked why India did not object to economic packages for Pakistan by the World Bank and the IMF.

The leader of opposition posed four questions to the government, asking why India accepted a ceasefire even

claimed by Trump repeatedly.

"Did the US president broker this ceasefire as he is repeatedly claiming, and if so, isn't this against India's no-third party mediation policy?" Kharge said.

Kharge said the government should release a report on the Pahalgam terror attack, as was done after the Kargil war.

The Congress president took a jibe at PM Narendra Modi's unscheduled visit to Pakistan in 2015, and said foreign policy is not 'event-based', urging the government to formulate a proper policy.

"Here we (Congress) criticise (Pakistan) and there you go to their dawat and embrace them," Kharge said, using the term "Vishwa Guru" without naming the PM.

Kharge questioned the prime minister's silence when BJP MPs and ministers insult the country's

armed forces, and also criticised the BJP for eulogising prime minister Modi and treating him like God, noting that democratically-elected people should be respected but should not be equated to God.

He said if Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor's statement on security lapses was aimed at "saving" the home minister.

"Jammu Kashmir LG Manoj Sinha himself admitted that Pahalgam was a security lapse and what happened in Pahalgam was unfortunate, innocent people were brutally killed. (Sinha said) I take all responsibility for the incident."

"However, the home minister must take responsibility for security lapse not the LG," Kharge said. He asked when the accountability will be fixed and also accused the Modi govt of being arrogant, and not responding to letters by responsible for this? Vacate

## Navy Chief Admiral Tripathi embarks on visit to Japan

**New Delhi**

Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi has embarked on a four-day visit to Japan with a focus on enhancing bilateral maritime cooperation in line with the 'special strategic and global partnership' between the two countries.

Admiral Tripathi's visit from July 30 to August 2 is part of the ongoing efforts to consolidate bilateral defence relations between India and Japan, the Indian Navy said.

He is scheduled to hold bilateral discussions with Defence Minister Nakatani Gen, Vice-Minister of Defence Masuda Kazuo and Admiral Saito Akira, the Chief of Staff of Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF).

"Discussions are expected to encompass a broad spectrum of defence cooperation areas, with particular emphasis on maritime security, technological collaboration, and identifying new avenues to strengthen naval synergy and interoperability," the Navy said.

Admiral Tripathi will also visit JMSDF units and interact with the Commander-in-Chief of the Self Defence Fleet, at Funakoshi JMSDF base, it said.

The Navy Chief's engagements in Japan are "poised" to further deepen the bonds of friendship and defence cooperation, paving the way for enhanced mutual understanding in key areas of shared strategic and maritime interest, the Navy said in a statement.

"The visit reaffirms the time-tested India-Japan friendship anchored in mutual respect, maritime trust, and a shared vision for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific," it said.

## Eight-fold rise in cybercrime cases against children from 2018 to 2022, says Govt

**New Delhi**  
The number of cybercrime cases against children has seen a nearly eight-fold jump from 232 in 2018 to 1,823 in 2022, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

In a written reply to a question, Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar provided data on cybercrimes against children from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) database, which showed that 232 such cases were registered in 2018, 936 in 2019, 1,102 in 2020, 1,376 in 2021 and 1,823 in 2022.

From just four cases reported in 2018, the number of cases of cyber blackmail of children increased to 74 in 2022, the data showed.

Cases of cyber pornography, hosting or publication of



File Photo

obscene sexual materials depicting children increased over 26 times from 44 such cases reported in 2018 to 1,171 in 2022. Cases of cyber bullying and stalking rose from 40 to 158 during this period, it said.

Kumar said the NCRB compiles and publishes the statistical data on crime in its publication "Crime in India". The latest published report is for 2022.

The minister was asked about specific measures be-

ing taken to enhance cybersecurity awareness and digital safety education among children in the northeast, particularly in tribal areas, and measures being taken by the government to enhance child-friendly cybercrime reporting mechanisms.

He said a special booklet is being designed by I4C in collaboration with Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) on cyber hygiene, especially targeted at women and children, and it will be delivered to schools and district centres in northeastern states.

"I4C is also in touch with NCERT to include a cyber hygiene chapter in course curriculum which will be taught in schools of northeastern states, as well," Kumar said.

## SC agrees to hear pleas for review of verdict on liquidation of Bhushan Steel

**New Delhi**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday fixed July 31 for hearing pleas seeking a review of a May 2 verdict that set aside a resolution plan submitted by JSW Steel Limited for Bhushan Steel and Power Limited (BSPL), holding it illegal and in violation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

A bench of Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma allowed an application for open-court hearing and fixed July 31 for hearing a batch of pleas seeking a review of the verdict.

"Application(s) for listing review petition(s) in open court and application for oral hearing are allowed. Issuance notice. List these matters



Supreme Court

on July 31, 2025 at 3 pm," the bench ordered.

The court considered the review pleas in chambers by circulation and passed the order.

The former promoters of BSPL urged the top court on July 21 to accord an open-court hearing to their plea for

a review of the May 2 verdict.

The former promoters of BSPL were Sanjay Singhal and his family, specifically including his father Brij Bhushan Singhal and brother Neeraj Singhal.

Legal firm Karanjawala and Co. said a review petition was also filed by JSW Steel

Limited on June 25, along with the review petitions filed by the Committee of Creditors (CoC) and the resolution professional against the May 2 verdict.

The firm said the former directors had moved the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for starting the process of liquidation for BSPL, without allowing JSW to exercise its proper legal remedies against the May 2 verdict.

It added that on May 26, on a special leave petition filed by JSW Steel Limited, the top court ordered status quo on the liquidation proceedings of BSPL and temporarily halted the proceedings before the NCLT till the disposal of the review petition, which were to be filed

## Indian Tourism Ministry to expand focus on MICE sector, calls for city-level convention bureaus

**Chennai/Kochi**

India's Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) industry is poised for significant expansion, with the Ministry of Tourism underlining the need for robust city-level convention promotion bureaus and a strong national branding strategy to tap into the global MICE market.

Speaking at the South India Thought Leaders Conference, Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General of the Ministry of Tourism, highlighted that India is ready to establish itself as a global MICE hub. The day-long event, organised by the Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, brought together industry stakeholders, state tourism officials, and private sector representatives to chart a roadmap for the MICE sector.

"States across the country are unlocking tourism opportunities in their own unique ways — and now, it's time for India to position itself firmly on the global MICE map," said Billa. "With iconic venues such as Bharat Mandapam, Yashobhoomi, and Jio World Centre, and with MICE being prioritised under the Incredible India campaign, our goal is to elevate at least ten Indian cities, especially in South India, into globally recognised MICE destinations."



**Billa further emphasised the importance of establishing autonomous city-level MICE convention bureaus, citing their success in other countries. He pointed out that while the global MICE market is valued at USD 850 billion, India holds only a 5% share.**

Billa further emphasised the importance of establishing autonomous city-level MICE convention bu-

reaus, citing their success in other countries. He pointed out that while the global MICE market is valued at USD 850 billion, India holds only a 5% share. "There's immense potential to grow this share by building institutional frameworks that can attract and manage high-profile global events. This will also create opportunities for the MSME, service, and hospitality sectors," he added.

Tamil Nadu, already known for its robust infrastructure for exhibitions and conferences, was identified as a key state for MICE tourism growth. T. Christuraj, Director of the Department of Tourism and Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Tourism De-

velopment Corporation, said the sector's footprint must extend beyond Chennai. "Cities like Kanchipuram, Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, and Salem have great potential for MICE tourism. It is critical to bridge the current gaps and spread this sector statewide," he noted.

Echoing the sentiment, IEIA officials and other tourism heads stressed the need for stronger public-private collaboration. Mr. Dhawan from the IEIA said, "India is a significant and rapidly emerging player in the MICE landscape. The global market is projected to grow to over USD 1.4 trillion by 2030, and we must be ready with a national strat-

egy to leverage this growth." Speakers at the conference consistently advocated for the creation of a robust calendar of global events that could be hosted in India, as well as for infrastructural developments to support larger and more complex exhibitions and conferences. The expansion of road, aviation, and rail networks was cited as a key enabler in positioning India as both a preferred destination and a global hub for business events.

Other notable speakers included Srikanth TG, Chairperson of IEIA Southern Region; Dr. Rajendra KV, Commissioner, Department of Tourism, Karnataka; Amrapali Katta, Managing Director, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation; Shikha Surendran, Director, Kerala Tourism and MD, Kerala Tourism Development Corporation; Jyoti Kumari, Secretary Tourism, Andaman & Nicobar; Gary Khan, CEO, Hyderabad Convention Visitors Bureau; and Vijay Sharma, Director, JWC GmbH.

## IIA and MoFPI Host Seminar in Delhi on the Impact of PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana in North India

**Union Minister Chirag Paswan Stresses Empowerment of Farmers and Value Chain Development**

**New Delhi**

The Indian Industries Association (IIA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India, organised a regional seminar on "The Impact of Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (From the Perspective of North India)" at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The event brought together key stakeholders from the government, industry, and academia to assess the implementation of the scheme in states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and to deliberate on the future of food processing in the region.

Delivering the keynote address, Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Shri Chirag Paswan, underscored the untapped potential of the sector and urged the industry to deepen its engagement with grassroots stakeholders. He noted that despite progress, India's food processing sector has only scratched the surface of its capabilities.

"India will become truly self-reliant only when our farmers are empowered—and for that, we must empower this sector," he said. "The PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana is not just a funding mechanism; it is a catalyst for reducing post-harvest losses, enabling value addition, and ensuring our agri-produc-



Chirag Paswan

ers connect directly to global markets."

Shri Paswan emphasized the need to address gaps in cold storage and logistical infrastructure, particularly in agriculturally rich yet underprocessed states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. He highlighted that the share of processed food exports has increased from 13% in 2013 to 23% in 2024—an encouraging trend, yet one that demands continued momentum.

"The strength of India lies in its diaspora and agricultural diversity. Our aim should be to build value chains that connect the local to the global," he added. The Minister also announced that the upcoming World Food India 2025 will be held at Bharat Mandapam in September, providing a global platform to showcase India's food processing capabilities.

In her welcome address, Dr. Mamtamy Priyadarshini, Chairperson of IIA Delhi State, said the seminar aimed to bridge the gap between



policy and practice. "PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana has the potential to transform rural livelihoods, but its success depends on how effectively industry engages with it at the ground level," she said. Mr. Aksh Agrawal, Senior Vice-Chairperson, IIA Delhi, said, "There is an urgent need to create capacity-building platforms for small food processors so they can adopt modern technology and adhere to safety and quality norms."

Shri Chetan Deo Bhatta, Vice President — Food Processing Industries, highlighted practical challenges faced by entrepreneurs in accessing scheme benefits and called for streamlined compliance processes and easier credit access. Shri Anuj Garg, CEC Member, stressed on the integration of the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative with international supply chains and urged for infrastructure that keeps pace with global standards.

Two arrested in Amethi for teen's rape attempted change of religion

Amethi (UP): Police arrested two men under the "love jihad" law for their alleged involvement in raping a 17-year-old girl from Amethi, attempting to forcefully change her religion and pressure her to marry, officials said on Tuesday.

Additional Superintendent of Police Shaileendra Kumar Singh said following a complaint from the victim's brother, the police registered an FIR at Peeparpur police station and arrested Haider Ali and Ajit Pal.

The brother, in his complaint, said Ali allegedly took his 17-year-old sister to Hyderabad about a month ago and kept her in a room.

He alleged that Ali began beating her after a few days and attempted to forcefully convert to Islam and marry him. Ali allegedly also raped her in the room, the complainant said.

On July 10, while Ali was away, the girl managed to escape with help from a man from Thakurwar and returned home in a distressed state, her brother said.

Later, she informed her family about the incident, the officer said.

Police said they have filed charges under the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act and relevant sections of the BNS for rape. The victim has undergone a medical examination and further legal action is underway, police said.

Advt Contact: 9818-799941

# Cloudburst Claims Three in Mandi Tragedy

Rajan Punchhi  
MANDI:

A devastating cloudburst struck Mandi city around midnight on Monday, unleashing a torrential downpour that turned into a flood and wreaked havoc across multiple areas, claiming the lives of three family members and leaving a trail of destruction behind. The victims—Balvir Singh, his wife Sapna, and their son Amandeep Singh—were buried under the debris that crashed into their home in Jail Road. The bodies have been recovered.

The tragedy unfolded in the Jail Road and Palace Colony areas, where former councillor Krishna Devi lost her younger son, daughter-in-law, and grandson. Her elder son Darshan Singh was injured, suffering a fractured leg. The cloudburst triggered a massive landslide that buried hundreds of vehicles and forced many residents to flee in the dark to save their lives.

Heavy rainfall between the night of July 28 and the morning of July 29 led to enormous amounts of water flooding residential colonies, lanes, and roads.

## Jai Ram Thakur Questions State Govt's Relief Efforts After Mandi Cloudburst

Rajan Punchhi  
MANDI:

Former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur has strongly criticized the Himachal Pradesh government's handling of relief operations in the wake of yet another devastating cloudburst in Mandi district. Speaking to the media after visiting the site of destruction at Jail Road in Mandi town, Thakur said the situation has reached a point where accountability must replace political posturing.



A drain near the jail in Jail Road overflowed with water and mud, sweeping through parked vehicles and engulfing homes. In many houses, debris entered through windows and doors, trapping people inside. At least fifteen individuals were rescued, including two who had to be

pulling out through a broken window after getting trapped in a room filled with mud and stones. Several parts of Mandi city—Jail Road, Palace Colony, Mat, Sain Mohalla, water and debris damaged many roadside vehicles. At the Regional Hospital Mandi, floodwater and debris entered the premises, trapping vehicles parked inside.

The main access roads to the city have been blocked due to landslides. Near Nirankari Bawan ter and debris gushed through the drains with such force that it became nearly impossible to save lives." He confirmed that three people had lost their lives in the latest cloudburst at Jail Road, and one individual had suffered serious leg injuries. According to him, as many as 50 people might still be buried under the debris.

Criticizing the state government's response, Thakur said, "The government is making announcements but no real ground-level relief work

is visible. The affected families are still waiting for assistance." He pointed out that this is the third consecutive year that Himachal Pradesh has faced severe devastation due to rain and natural calamities, yet the government has failed to implement a robust action plan.

"The administration has the technology and resources to carry out effective relief work, but the funds are not being released. People cannot afford to wait for the Chief Minister or ministers to arrive by helicopter for

even minor relief measures. This is not a normal situation," he added.

Thakur urged the government to stop making speeches and instead focus on providing concrete help to the disaster-affected population. He called on local deities and Apoorva Devtas to come to the aid of the people in distress and support all affected families.

"The time for politics is over. Lives are at stake. What we need now is action, compassion, and accountability," Thakur emphasized.

## CM Yogi's IGRS and Dashboard model to be adopted by Delhi govt



Lucknow:

The Yogi government's Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGRS) and CM Dashboard have emerged as national models of good governance. Their effectiveness in resolving public grievances and monitoring development work has drawn the attention of several states. Delegations from across the country have visited Uttar Pradesh to study these systems, including a team from the Delhi government, which praised the model for its efficiency and transparency.

Impressed by the efficiency and advanced technical framework of Uttar Pradesh's grievance redressal and monitoring systems, the Delhi government has decided to adopt CM Yogi's IGRS and Dashboard model. The decision follows a comprehensive presentation made by the UP government in Delhi a few months ago, which was attended by senior officials of the Delhi administration. The move aims to ensure prompt grievance redressal and real-time tracking of development projects in the national capital.

Subsequently, a team of Delhi government officials visited Lucknow for an in-depth, two-day as-

essment of both the administrative and technical aspects of the systems. The team recognized the model as technically sound, citizen-centric, and highly effective.

Shortly after this visit, the Delhi government formally requested support from the Yogi government to implement the IGRS and CM Dashboard in Delhi. The request reflects growing recognition of Uttar Pradesh's governance innovations under CM Yogi Adityanath's leadership.

It is worth mentioning that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the IGRS to provide a quick, transparent, and accountable mechanism for resolving public complaints. The CM Dashboard, on the other hand, serves as a real-time monitoring tool to track progress and ensure quality in development works across the state. Together, these platforms have strengthened governance delivery and become models for replication nationwide.

## Leopard attacks in UP claim teen's life woman seriously injured

Bahraich/Gorakhpur:

Leopard attacks in two districts of Uttar Pradesh have left a teenager dead and a woman injured, creating an environment of fear and panic among locals.

Sanjana, 14, was on her way to agricultural fields when a leopard mauled her to death in the Katariniaghat Wildlife Division in Bahraich on Monday, police said. According to eyewitnesses, the leopard, which was hiding behind the bushes, pounced on the girl and caught her by her neck. When the girl screamed for help, villagers rushed to the site to rescue her.

The teenager was severely injured and was referred to the district medical college in Bahraich, where doctors declared her "brought dead".



The body has been sent for postmortem, the police said. Her family has been given Rs 5,000 assistance and will be given Rs 5 lakh compensation after completion of formalities in accordance with the state's policy, officials said.

In another incident in Gorakhpur on Monday, Geeta Devi was out for a morning walk when she was attacked by a leopard, leaving her seriously injured.

She was rushed to the

district hospital, where doctors administered anti-rabies vaccines and gave her six stitches. Initially, the injuries were suspected to be caused by a dog, but doctors raised doubts, a local forest official said.

The CCTV footage from a nearby building, shared by a friend of her son, showed a leopard roaming in the area around 4 AM, confirming the attack by the leopard, the official said.

## Nagaland CM calls on ULBs to lead from front in disaster preparedness

Kohima:

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on Tuesday urged Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across the state to take proactive leadership in disaster risk reduction, emphasising their crucial role as frontline defenders of lives, infrastructure, and the environment in the face of growing natural calamities.

Speaking at the inaugural session of a three-day training on Urban and Local Resilience held here, Rio stated, "You are not just administrators—you are the first line of defence."

The training is being organised by the Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority (NSDMA), Home Department in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Dis-



aster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), International Institute of Safety and Security Management (IISSM), and the state's Urban Development and Municipal Affairs Department.

Highlighting that Nagaland falls under the highest-risk Seismic

Zone V, the chief minister urged municipal leaders to uphold their duty in ensuring structural safety and enforcing building regulations.

"Your signature on a building permit can save a life; your vigilance can prevent a man-made disaster," he said.

Rio expressed concern over the repeated devastation caused by flash floods and massive landslides during the monsoon season, citing recent incidents in Chumoukiedima, Niland, Dimapur Market, Kisama, and Pipheha.

He also lamented the poor condition of the Dimapur-Kohima highway, part of the Trans-Asian Highway No 1, attributing the damage to unregulated development and neglect of fragile land.

Rio emphasised the need for strict enforcement of building by-laws and called for zero tolerance against illegal constructions, especially in flood-prone and landslide-prone zones.

He urged municipal authorities to issue stop-work notices wherever necessary and take decisive action to demolish unsafe structures.

He further called for mandatory soil testing and geotechnical assessment prior to the approval of infrastructure projects, particularly along NH-29 and other vulnerable corridors.

Prayagraj:

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath held a high-level meeting with MPs, MLAs, and MLGs of Prayagraj and Vindhyachal divisions on Tuesday at Circuit House, Prayagraj, as part of the ongoing Mandal-wise Janpratinidhi Samvad series. Aimed at driving holistic development, the meeting focused on reviewing schemes, understanding regional challenges, and aligning priorities with public expectations. The Chief Minister interacted with each representative to gain ground-level insights and ensure timely, effective solutions.

The Chief Minister said that the government is prioritising the development of Prayagraj and Vindhyachal, which are key centres of Uttar Pradesh's



historical, cultural, and spiritual identity. Their revival and integrated development will serve as a catalyst for the state's overall progress, he added. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the proposals submitted by public representatives. The

Chief Minister directed the Public Works Department to categorise and prioritise these proposals constituency-wise. Both the PWD and the Charitable Works Department were instructed to coordinate with public representatives, ensure timely execution of

the proposed works, and maintain transparency and quality at every step.

The proposed works covered a wide range of infrastructure needs, including connectivity to block headquarters, interlinking roads, access routes to religious sites, logistics hubs,

bypasses, ROBs/underpasses, flyovers, major and minor bridges, road safety upgrades, irrigation in infrastructure and pontoon bridges. These projects aim to connect geographically challenging areas and stimulate local economic growth.

The Chief Minister directed the Urban Development Department to seek input from local public representatives before drafting any project proposals. He also instructed that the names of the concerned public representatives be displayed on stone plaques at the project sites. Additionally, CM Yogi emphasised that priority proposals must be acted upon promptly, so that Bhoomi Pujan and foundation stone-laying ceremonies for these projects can begin after September 15.

## Several booked for assault gunfire after clash between two groups in Shimla

Shimla:

Police booked several people for a clash between two groups, including for an alleged gunfire by one side here on Tuesday, police said.

However, no one was injured in the incident that took place in Tharu village in Theog subdivision in Shimla district, police said.

Police registered two FIRs after receiving complaints from both sides regarding an alleged verbal dispute that escalated to assault on one side, which responded with opening fire.

As per a complaint filed by Bimla Devi, a group comprising Durga Singh, Sandeep Singh, Lal Chand, Jeet Ram,

and 352 (intentional provocation with intent to provoke breach of peace) of Bhawanija Nyas Sanhita (BNS 2023) was registered in Theog Police Station.

In a counter-complaint, Sandeep Kumar alleged that he was working in his apple orchard when Dhyani Singh, accompanied by Mahender and Bimla Devi, began verbally abusing and threatening him.

Based on her complaint, a case under sections 190 (unlawful assembly), 191 (2) (rioting), 115(2) (voluntarily causing hurt), 351 (3) (criminal intimidation)

and 352 (intentional provocation with intent to provoke breach of peace) of Bhawanija Nyas Sanhita (BNS 2023) was registered in Theog Police Station.

In a counter-complaint, Sandeep Kumar alleged that he was working in his apple orchard when Dhyani Singh, accompanied by Mahender and Bimla Devi, began verbally abusing and threatening him.

Police booked several people for a clash between two groups, including for an alleged gunfire by one side here on Tuesday, police said.

However, no one was injured in the incident that took place in Tharu village in Theog subdivision in Shimla district, police said.

Police registered two FIRs after receiving complaints from both sides regarding an alleged verbal dispute that escalated to assault on one side, which responded with opening fire.

As per a complaint filed by Bimla Devi, a group comprising Durga Singh, Sandeep Singh, Lal Chand, Jeet Ram,

and 352 (intentional provocation with intent to provoke breach of peace) of Bhawanija Nyas Sanhita (BNS 2023) was registered in Theog Police Station.

In a counter-complaint, Sandeep Kumar alleged that he was working in his apple orchard when Dhyani Singh, accompanied by Mahender and Bimla Devi, began verbally abusing and threatening him.



Satyra Devi, and Kiran allegedly attacked her husband, Dhyani Singh, outside their residence.

Bimla Devi said that she rushed outside due to the commotion and saw the assault on her husband.

Based on her complaint, a case under sections 190 (unlawful assembly), 191 (2) (rioting), 115(2) (voluntarily causing hurt), 351 (3) (criminal intimidation)



Illegal kidney transplant network busted in Pak, 8 arrested

**Lahore:** Eight members of an illegal kidney transplant network, including doctors and nurses, have been arrested in Pakistan's Punjab province, an official said on Tuesday.

According to a spokesperson of the Punjab Human Organ Transplantation Authority, a network involved in illegal kidney transplants has been uncovered in Sheikhpura, some 50-km from Lahore.

He said the illegal kidney transplant procedures were conducted at a private hospital. "During the raid, a kidney was being removed from a resident of Sheikhpura to be transplanted into an African national," the spokesperson said.

Eight people, including doctors and nurses, have been arrested, he added.

He said the network would charge at least PKR 7 million from a person for the illegal transplant. Usually, the kidneys are sold for up to PKR 10 million to the recipient, but donors hardly get 10 per cent of the total amount.

Raids are being conducted to arrest more people involved in the illegal network, he said.

The commercial trade of human organs was made illegal in Pakistan in 2010. The punishment for those caught includes a decade-long jail term and a huge fine.

**Washington:** Senate Democrats are imploring President Donald Trump's administration to step up its role in addressing suffering and starvation in Gaza, with more than 40 senators signing onto a letter Tuesday urging the resumption of ceasefire talks and sharply criticising an Israeli-backed American organisation that had been created to distribute food aid.

In a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the Republican president's special envoy, Steve Witkoff, the senators said the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, created in February with backing from the Trump administration, has "failed to address the deepening humanitarian crisis and contributed to an unacceptable and mounting civilian death toll around the organisation's sites".

It marked a mostly united plea from Senate Democrats — who are

# Trump administration pressed to address starvation in Gaza



President Donald Trump's administration to step up its role in addressing suffering and starvation in Gaza (FILE PHOTO)

locked out of power in Washington — for the Trump administration to recalibrate its approach after the collapse of ceasefire talks last week.

Trump on Monday expressed concern about the worsening humanitarian situation and broke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's claim that people are not starving in

the Gaza Strip. But it is unclear how Trump will proceed.

Democratic Senator Brian Schatz of Hawaii said it was "not at all credible" to think the Israeli military — one of the most advanced in the world — is incapable of distributing food aid or performing crowd control.

"They made a choice to establish a new way of

doing food distribution," he said. "And it's not working at all."

The letter, obtained by The Associated Press, calls for a "large-scale expansion" of aid into Gaza channels through organisations experienced working in the area. It also says efforts for a ceasefire agreement are "as critical and urgent as ever".

The message was led

by four Jewish members of the Democratic Caucus — Senators Adam Schiff of California, Chuck Schumer of New York, Jacky Rosen of Nevada and Schatz — and calls for the return of the roughly 50 hostages, 20 still believed to be alive, held by Hamas since its Oct 7, 2023, attack.

The signatures from 44 senators — the vast majority of the Senate Democratic Caucus — on the letter show the extent to which Democrats have achieved some unity on a foreign policy issue that deeply divided them while they held the White House last year.

It marked a mostly united plea from Senate Democrats — who are locked out of power in Washington — for the Trump administration to recalibrate its approach after the collapse of ceasefire talks last week.

# Indian national killed in plane crash in Canada



Ottawa: An Indian national has died in a small plane crash near Deer Lake in eastern Canada, the Consulate General of India in Toronto said on Saturday.

The plane crashed shortly after take-off near the Deer Lake Regional Airport on Saturday evening, according to CBC news.

"With deep sorrow, we mourn the tragic passing of Mr. Gautam Santhosh, an Indian national, who lost his life in an accident involving a commercial survey aircraft near Deer Lake, Newfoundland," the Consulate said on social media.

It said it is in close contact with the bereaved family and local authorities in Canada to provide all necessary assistance and support. "We extend our heartfelt

condolences to his family during this difficult time," it added.

The Transportation Safety Board said a Piper PA-31 Navajo aircraft registered to Kiskadee Aerial Survey Inc. crashed about a kilometre south of the Deer Lake Airport after taking off on a local flight on July 26.

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the crash prompted the immediate closure of the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH) near the Deer Lake Airport for several hours to allow emergency personnel to respond to the scene.

"Two persons were on board the flight: the pilot, a 54-year-old man, and his lone passenger, a 27-year-old man. Both occupants were pronounced deceased at the scene," it said in a statement.

# Iraq's PM seeks closer US ties while keeping armed groups at bay

**Baghdad:** The prime minister of Iraq has kept his country on the sidelines as military conflicts raged nearby for almost two years. This required balancing Iraq's relations with two countries vital to its power and enemies with each other: the US and Iran.

The feat became especially difficult last month when war broke out be-

tween Israel, a US ally, and Iran, and as US struck Iranian nuclear sites. Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said he used a mix of political and military pressure to stop armed groups aligned with Iran from entering the fray.

In an exclusive interview with The Associated Press, Al-Sudani explains how he did this, how he plans to keep



Mohammed Shia al-Sudani (FILE PHOTO)

these groups in check going forward and — as he seeks a second term — why he wants to get

closer to the Trump administration, even as he maintains strong ties to Iran-backed politi-

cal parties that helped propel him to power in 2022.

After Israel launched airstrikes on Iran and it responded by firing missiles at Tel Aviv, armed groups in Iraq attempted to launch missiles and drones toward Israel and at bases in Iraq housing US troops, al-Sudani said. But they were thwarted 29 times by Iraqi government "se-

curity operations" that he did not detail.

"We know that the (Israeli) government had a policy — and still does — of expanding the war in the region," al-Sudani said. "Therefore, we made sure not to give any justification to any party to target Iraq."

Al-Sudani said his government also reached out to leaders in Iran to urge them toward calm

and to make room for dialogue and a return to negotiations.

The US and Iraq last year announced an agreement to wrap up the mission of an American-led coalition in Iraq fighting the Islamic State, and in March, al-Sudani announced that the head of IS in Iraq and Syria had been killed in a joint Iraqi-US operation.

and to make room for dialogue and a return to negotiations.

The US and Iraq last year announced an agreement to wrap up the mission of an American-led coalition in Iraq fighting the Islamic State, and in March, al-Sudani announced that the head of IS in Iraq and Syria had been killed in a joint Iraqi-US operation.

Advt Contact: 9818-799941

## BUSINESS

AIIB aims to ramp up annual lending to USD 17 bn in 3-4 years



**New Delhi:** AIIB vice president (investment solutions) Ajay Bhushan Pandey on Tuesday said the multilateral development bank is looking to scale up average annual lending to USD 17-18 billion in the next 3-4 years in view of growing demand for infrastructure development.

Currently, annual funding done by Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is around USD 10 billion.

The Beijing-based lender has so far provided loans worth USD 12 billion to India. Out of that, he said, AIIB has provided USD 1.8 billion to the private sector so far.

Speaking about the pipeline for sovereign funding, Pandey said, AIIB is having a series of meetings with various line ministries to create a pipeline of sovereign projects.

"Our message to the ministries and state governments is this: this is your bank and you must make optimum use of the resources available," he said at an event organised by Fieci here.

On Monday, he said, "we had a detailed meeting with the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, and Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation on the water sector, including revival of many dams, the Namami Gange project and the inter-linking of rivers."

Besides, he said, "we are going to have discussions with the ministries of health and power and then with the chief minister of Maharashtra and state officials to discuss building a pipeline of infrastructure projects both in public and private sector."

# TCS Layoffs: Market Valuation Drops Rs 28,149 Cr

**New Delhi:** Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has lost Rs 28,148.72 crore from its market valuation in two days after the company announced that it will lay off about 12,000 employees of its global workforce this year.

On Tuesday, the bellwether stock declined 0.73 per cent to settle at Rs 3,056.55 apiece at the BSE. During the day, it dropped 1.23 per cent to Rs 3,041.

On the NSE, it dipped 0.72 per cent to Rs 3,057.

Shares of TCS had declined nearly 2 per cent on Monday.

The stock has lost 2.48 per cent in two trading days. The market capitalisation (mcap) of TCS eroded by Rs 28,148.72 crore to Rs 11,05,886.54 crore in two days.

India's largest IT services firm TCS is set to lay off about 2 per cent, or 12,261 employees, of its global workforce this year, with the majority of those impacted belonging to middle and senior grades.

As of June 30, 2025, the TCS workforce stood at 6,13,069. It increased its workforce by 5,000



Tata Consultancy Services (FILE PHOTO)

in the recently concluded June quarter.

The move is part of the company's broader strategy to become a "future-ready organisation", focusing on investments in technology, AI deployment, market expansion, and workforce realignment, TCS said in a statement.

"Towards this, a number of reskilling and redeployment initiatives have been underway. As part of this journey, we will also be releasing associates from the organisation whose deployment may not be feasible. This will impact about 2 per cent of our global work-

force, primarily in the middle and the senior grades, over the course of the year," it said.

TCS will provide appropriate benefits, outplacement, counselling, and support to the impacted employees, it added.

The move comes at a time when India's

top IT services companies have delivered single-digit revenue growth in Q1FY26, capping off a somewhat sobering June quarter as macroeconomic instability and geopolitical tensions weighed on global tech demand and delayed client decision-making.

RBI caps investment by a bank in AIF scheme at 10 pc

**Mumbai:** The Reserve Bank on Tuesday capped contributions by a single regulated entity (RE), including banks and NBFCs, at 10 per cent of the corpus of an Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) scheme.

Also, collective contribution by all REs in any AIF scheme should not be more than 20 per cent of the corpus of that scheme, said the Reserve Bank of India (Investment in AIF) Directions, 2025.

REs refer to banks, NBFCs and All-India Financial Institutions.

The RBI had issued guidelines in December 2023 and later in March 2024 prescribing the regulatory guidelines in respect of investment by the REs of the Reserve Bank in AIFs.

The guidelines have been reviewed, inter alia, taking into account industry feedback as well as the regulations issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) relating to specific due diligence of investors and investments of AIFs, the RBI said in a circular on Tuesday.

"No RE shall individually contribute more than 10 per cent of the corpus of an AIF Scheme," the circular said.

Collective contribution by all REs in any AIF Scheme shall not be more than 20 per cent of the corpus of that scheme.

# Ebix Smartclass sets sights on 10 million future coders

**New Delhi:** Ebix Smartclass, India's leading e-learning solution provider, announced the launch of its latest innovative program — Ebix AI School — a comprehensive AI and Coding Program tailored for school students, this new initiative marks a significant leap toward preparing students for the digital future.

Building on Ebix Smartclass's presence in over 65,000 classrooms across 10,000+ schools,

the new program aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) mandate on coding and computational thinking, guiding students from basic digital literacy to advanced applications in AI, Robotics, and the Internet of Things (IoT). With Ebix Smartclass AI, students from Grades 1 to 12 can now gain hands-on exposure to essential 21st-century skills including pro-coding, AI, robotics, and IoT — all through a single, integrated plat-

form. Mr. Arun Batra, Ebix Next Managing Director, Ebix Technologies Ltd, said "With Ebix Smartclass AI, we're not just teaching students to code — we're equipping them to thrive in an AI-driven world. Coding and computational thinking are no longer optional; they are foundational skills, and we're proud to be bringing this transformation directly into classrooms across India. Our plug-and-play model ensures

seamless integration without any additional hardware investment. Over the next 2-3 years, our goal is to empower over 10 million students by equipping them with essential coding skills — turning every classroom into a launchpad for future innovators."

India accounted for nearly 5% of the global AI in Education market in 2022, generating INR 1,200 crore (USD 140.7 million). With a projected CAGR of ~40%,

the market is expected to hit INR 17,500 crore (USD 2.06 billion) by 2030 — making India the fastest-growing AI in Education market in Asia-Pacific. With over 25 crore students enrolled in recognized schools, the potential K-12 EdTech market is valued at INR 25,000 crore (USD 2.9 billion). Ebix Smartclass, with its scalable plug-and-play model and deep reach, is well-positioned to capture a significant share.

The Union Budget 2025 further reinforced the momentum, allocating INR 500 crore (USD 60 million) to create Centres of Excellence for AI in Education. Ebix AI School, with its goal to empower 1 crore students over the next 2-3 years, stands as both a transformative education initiative and a key growth driver in India's surging digital learning economy.

The program aims

Intelligence, Coding, Robotics, and Computational Thinking to students from Grades 1 to 12, using a hands-on and activity-based learning model. Developed by a team of leading technologists and educators, the curriculum will be delivered through a blend of interactive digital content, project-based learning, and well-explained sessions — making complex concepts simple, intuitive, and fun.

FOR ADVERTISING IN TOP-STORY PLEASE CONTACT: 9818799941

### Chandrakant Pandit parts ways with KKR after four-year stint

New Delhi: The Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) have officially announced the departure of head coach Chandrakant Pandit, bringing an end to a four-year tenure marked by both highs and lows, including a memorable Indian Premier League (IPL) title triumph in 2024.

In a statement shared on KKR's social media platforms on Tuesday, the franchise confirmed the development. "Mr. Chandrakant Pandit has decided to explore new opportunities and will not continue as Head Coach of Kolkata Knight Riders."

Pandit, a respected figure in the Indian domestic coaching circuit, took over the reins of KKR ahead of the 2022 season. While his first two seasons saw the team finish in the bottom half of the table, it was in 2024 that his leadership bore fruit, guiding the franchise to its third IPL title and their first in ten years.

Reflecting on his contribution, KKR added, "We are thankful for his invaluable contributions -- including leading KKR to the TATA IPL Championship in 2024 and helping build a strong, resilient squad. His leadership and discipline have left a lasting impact on the team."

The franchise also extended their good wishes to Pandit for his next chapter. "We wish him all the very best for the future."

### Nathan Lyon opens up on Test snub against West Indies

New Delhi: Veteran Australian off-spinner Nathan Lyon has admitted he was disappointed at being left out of Australia's playing XI for the final Test of the Caribbean tour, a rare omission for reasons other than injury in more than a decade.

However, the 36-year-old also acknowledged the selectors' call was understandable given the conditions and, in hindsight, the right one, as per ESPNcricinfo.

## Kotak Stands Firm as Curator Clash Heats Up

London: A day ahead of the highly anticipated fifth and final Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy at The Oval, tensions flared between India's head coach Gautam Gambhir and Oval chief curator Lee Fortis. The dramatic confrontation, which unfolded during India's training session on Tuesday, drew considerable attention as support staff, players, and coaching personnel were left momentarily stunned by the altercation on the field.

India's batting coach Sitanshu Kotak, addressing the media at the post-practice press conference, shed light on the events that transpired during the session and defended Gambhir's reaction, clarifying that the team did nothing inappropriate to damage the practice strip.

The confrontation erupted when Fortis objected to the Indian team utilising what he perceived to be a sensitive area of the main square. Kotak explained that the Indian team was merely inspecting the wicket-wearing joggers -- and was taken aback when a member of the ground staff relayed instructions to stay 2.5 metres away from the pitch. According to Kotak, the tone of the message was needlessly confrontational.

"We were just looking at the pitch when they sent



Tensions flared between India's head coach Gautam Gambhir and Oval chief curator Lee Fortis. -- (FILE PHOTO)

a man over, asking us to stay 2.5 metres away. It was surprising. We were in joggers and not doing anything that could harm the wicket. Curators can be overprotective, and I understand being possessive about the ground, but there's no need for arrogance," said Kotak.

In what quickly escalated, Gambhir reportedly lashed out at Fortis, pointing his finger and using strong language in defence of his team. Kotak attempted to mediate, pulling Fortis aside to have a private word, but Gambhir, standing nearby, made his displeasure known, telling Fortis sternly, "You don't tell us what to do."

The incident reached a boiling point when Fortis allegedly shouted at Indian support staff bringing a cooling box near the practice area. Kotak downplayed the impact of the 10-kilogram box on the ground, suggesting that Fortis's reaction was overblown.

"He shouted from the roller, telling our support staff not to bring the cooling box. Gautam stood up for his team, as any head coach would. It's not acceptable to address staff in that manner," Kotak added.

He further revealed that Gambhir was already aware of Fortis's reputation prior to arriving at The Oval, hinting that the

tension may have been brewing from the outset. "Most of the team knew before coming that the curator is not the easiest person to get on with. It was already known. That gives a lot of answers."

Despite the dramatic episode, Kotak confirmed that India would not be lodging any formal complaint against Fortis, describing the situation as something that got "built up unnecessarily."

Fortis, for his part, declined to elaborate on the incident but labeled Gambhir a "touchy guy" when speaking briefly to reporters. "It's a big game coming up. It's not my job to be happy or unhappy with him. I've never met

him before today," he remarked.

No Decision Yet on Bumrah's Availability

Meanwhile, Kotak also addressed speculation around the availability of star seamer Jasprit Bumrah for the final Test. The world's No. 1-ranked Test bowler is reportedly fit, but a final decision on his inclusion remains pending.

"There has been no discussion yet on whether Jasprit will play. He is fit now, and according to his load, he bowled in one innings in the last match. Our head coach, physio, and captain will sit down to decide," Kotak explained.

Bumrah has played a crucial role in the series so far, picking up 14 wickets, including two five-wicket hauls, at an average of 26.00. However, he has not featured in consecutive Tests as part of his workload management due to past back issues, notably a stress reaction during the Sydney Test in early 2025.

Kuldeep Yadav's Inclusion Also Under Discussion

Kotak further stated that a decision on including spinner Kuldeep Yadav in the playing XI would be taken on Wednesday. "Our captain and head coach will sit and decide. It hasn't been finalised. Even if it has been, it's not my place to declare it," he said.

### Santner named New Zealand Test skipper for Zimbabwe Series



Auckland: Mitchell Santner becomes the 32nd player to lead New Zealand's men's side in Test cricket as regular Blackcaps captain Tom Latham.

"We'll continue to assess and see whether a replacement player is necessary, but at this stage we are hopeful that he'll recover in time," he noted.

"Mitch (Santner) did a wonderful job with the T20 squad in this recent series. While the format is different, he certainly has the respect of the players and will be supported by some highly experienced Test cricketers, so I trust that he's going to do a great job," Walter said.

New Zealand squad for the 1st Test: Mitchell Santner (c), Tom Blundell, Devon Conway, Jacob Duffy, Matt Fisher, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Michael Bracewell, Rachin Ravindra, Nathan Smith, Will Young.

### Zimbabwe Cricket gets major boost with US\$ 50,000 CABS sponsorship

Harare: Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) has received a significant financial boost with a US\$ 50,000 sponsorship from CABS, a leading Zimbabwean financial institution. The funding is set to directly support the country's five provincial first-class teams, as per ESPNcricinfo.

In a press release, ZC confirmed that the funds will be distributed among the five teams that form the backbone of Zimbabwe's domestic circuit, Eagles, Rhinos, Tuskers, Mountaineers and Southern Rocks. These sides participate in the Logan Cup, the Pro50 Championship, and the domestic T20 competition.

"We are grateful to CABS for coming on board as a valued partner in our domestic cricket journey," ZC managing director Givemore Makoni said, as quoted from ESPNcricinfo.

"This kind of corporate support plays an important role in strengthening the game's foundation and enabling long-term growth," he added.

"For our provincial teams, it means greater stability and the ability to invest more consistently in key areas such as player welfare, coaching and talent development -- factors that are essential to building a stronger



(FILE PHOTO)

pipeline for the future of Zimbabwean cricket," he noted.

CABS Managing Director Mehluu Mpfu described the sponsorship as more than just financial assistance.

"This sponsorship is more than support for cricket -- it is a commitment to the dreams of Zimbabwe's young people. Across the country, there are talented, passionate youths who see sport as a pathway to opportunity, purpose and pride," Mpfu said.

"At CABS, we recognise that potential. By investing in domestic cricket, we are answering their call, building platforms for growth and helping shape a future where

every young Zimbabwean has a chance to shine," he noted.

CABS has a long history with Zimbabwean cricket, having first extended its support back in 2004 when it helped sponsor T20 tournaments.

The timing of the support couldn't be better. Zimbabwe has had a packed international calendar this year, having already played seven Test matches. They also recently hosted a T20I tri-series featuring heavyweights South Africa and New Zealand. Now, all eyes are on the upcoming two-Test home series against New Zealand, starting July 30.

## India head coach Gambhir engages in heated exchange with Oval curator

London: India head coach Gautam Gambhir engaged in a heated verbal spat with Lee Fortis, chief curator at The Oval in London, ahead of the final Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy, which is scheduled to begin on Thursday.

During India's practice session on Tuesday, Gambhir had a fierce altercation with Lee regarding the practice facilities. As he stepped away, the Indian head coach animatedly pointed a finger and mouthed a couple of words. India's batting coach, Sitanshu Kotak, was seen stepping in, taking Lee away and having a brief conversation with him.

While Kotak appeared to diffuse the situation while explaining their stance, Gambhir, who stood near the nets, pointed his finger towards Lee and furiously said, "You don't tell us what to do."

India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate joined Kotak during his conversation with Lee, while Gambhir continued to make his point from the other end. Lee said a couple of words to Gambhir before eventually walking away from the scene.

Lee was quizzed about the entire situation, but he chose to remain tight-



Gambhir had a fierce altercation with Lee regarding the practice facilities. -- (FILE PHOTO)

lipped while speaking to the reporters and said, "It's not my job to be happy with him. I don't know, you have to ask him."

Kotak, along with a couple of members of the Indian management, were seen trying to explain the situation to an English official. Kotak was the one who spoke for the majority of the period. India's chief selector Ajit Agarkar was also present during the discussion.

The dramatic behind-the-scenes encounter echoes the emotions that have boiled over in the past two Tests in London and Manchester. In the third Test at Lord's, tem-

perament frayed, fingers were pointed, emotions ran thin as the element of sports entered the picture. It all started with captain Shubman Gill screaming at Zak Crawley in the final moments of the third day. He felt the lanky English opener was trying to run down the clock to deny India the opportunity of bowling a second over. Fingers were raised, words were said, and sarcastic applause further inflamed the tensions.

The emotions yet again split over in the final hour of the fifth Test at Old Trafford in Manchester when the draw appeared to be looming large. With Jadeja on 89 and Sundar

on 80, the southpaws refused to accept it.

Shortly after the drama, England bowled loopy balls and delivered through Harry Brook and Jadeja dispatched the ball for a maximum to bring up his fifth Test century.

A statement from Stokes was caught on the stump mic during which he said, "Jadeja, do you want to get a Test 100 against Brook & Duckett? Jadeja responded to the English skipper's comment and said, "What do you want me to do, just walk off?" Zak Crawley, who stood close to the crease, chipped in, saying, "You can, just shake your hand."

## Second edition of Delhi Premier League to kick off on August 2

New Delhi: The stage is set for a grand opening as the second edition of the Delhi Premier League (DPL) kicks off on August 2 at New Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium.

The inaugural edition began with a vibrant musical concert -- a lively mix of sport and song that instantly captured everyone's attention and set a fresh template for opening ceremonies at various cricket leagues, as per a press release from DPL.

Promising a night of glamour, music, and high-octane energy, the opening ceremony will



Delhi Premier League to kick off on August 2 -- (FILE PHOTO)

dazzle fans with spectacular performances by Punjabi pop sensa-

tion Sananda Sharma, chart-topping rapper Raftaar, lyrical power-

house KR\$NA, and the electrifying hip-hop duo Seedhe Maut.

As cricket meets culture under the lights of Delhi, the DPL is all set to begin its new season with a celebration befitting the capital's spirit -- bold, vibrant, and unforgettable.

Speaking on the occasion, Rohan Jaitley, President, Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA), said, as quoted by DPL press release, "We are thrilled to launch the second edition of the Delhi Premier League, ushering in a new chapter of excitement, opportunity, and high-quality cricket. This season marks a fresh beginning -- not

just for the teams and players, but also for fans across the city and beyond. With renewed energy, emerging talent, and a deeper commitment to promoting both men's and women's cricket, the DPL promises to deliver a bigger, bolder, and more engaging experience for everyone involved."

The opening clash of DPL 2025 will set the tone for a thrilling season as South Delhi Superstar take on the defending champions, East Delhi Riders, in what promises to be a blockbuster curtain-raiser. All eyes will be on star per-

formers like Navdeep Saini, Anshu Rawat, Ayush Badoni and Digvesh Rathi.

The men's final will be held on August 31, 2025, with September 1, 2025, reserved as a backup day in case of weather disruptions. The women's competition will be held from August 17 to August 24, 2025, showcasing a week of exciting and competitive cricket. This season will feature eight men's teams and four women's teams, with strong emphasis on competitive balance, emerging talent, and fan engagement.

IOS Sports & Entertainment signs Indian Football team defender Sandesh Jhingan

New Delhi: IOS Sports & Entertainment have announced the signing of Indian national football team defender Sandesh Jhingan. The 31-year-old star from Chandigarh brings over a decade of international football experience to the IOS roster, as per a release from IOS Sports & Entertainment.

Currently representing FC Goa in the Indian Super League, Jhingan has been instrumental in Indian football's growth since making his international debut in 2013. The defender has captained India in prestigious tournaments such as the AFC Asian Cup and FIFA World Cup qualifiers, while also featuring for prominent ISL clubs including Kerala Blasters, Mohun Bagan Super Giant and Chennaiyin FC.

The defender also gained valuable international experience during his stint with Croatian club HNK Šibenik, becoming one of the few Indian players to compete in European football.

Throughout his illustrious career, Jhingan has earned recognition as one of Asia's finest defenders. He was named AIFF Player of the Year in 2020-21 and has been a consistent performer in the Indian Super League, helping his teams reach multiple playoffs and finals.

Known for his aerial dominance and leadership qualities, Jhingan has represented India in over 50 international matches. "I'm excited to join the IOS Sports and Entertainment family and work with a team that has such an impressive track record with Indian top athletes. Their expertise feels like the perfect assist as I look to amplify my story and connect with more people at a deeper level," shared the star defender, as quoted from a release by IOS Sports & Entertainment.

**J&K, Bihar Shine in Sub-Junior Hockey Nationals**

Chennai: Day 2 of the 19th Hockey India Sub-Junior Men National Championship saw a series of commanding performances, with Jammu & Kashmir, Hockey Association of Bihar, Hockey Uttarakhand, Hockey Bengal, Hockey Gujarat and Kerala Hockey emerging victorious in their respective matches.

In the opening match of the day, Jammu & Kashmir edged past Le Panchsury Hockey with a narrow 1-0 win in a Pool A encounter of Division 'C'. Captain Prabh Singh Bali (53) scored the decisive goal in the final quarter, sealing a hard-fought victory for his side.

The second fixture witnessed a dominant display by the Hockey Association of Bihar, who overwhelmed Tripura with a staggering 19-0 win in Pool B of Division 'C'. Deepu Vahwakarma (3) opened the scoring early, setting the tone for a goal fest. Suyam Kumar Panda (5, 40, 60) and Amritendu Pandey (36, 42, 43, 47) both netted hat-tricks, while contributions also came from Raj Pandey (8, 13, 33), Nikhil Navin Kumar (8, 20), Laksh Kumar (16), Sumit Kumar (20, 28, 58, 60), Chiranj Kumar (47), and Ranjan Ashish (50).

## Kho Kho secures spot in major national sports calendars, signals new era of popularity

New Delhi: In yet another major milestone for Kho Kho, the sport has now been formally included in the annual sports calendar of All India Electricity Sports Control Board (AIESC), the premier governing body committed to the regulation and advancement of sports within the electricity sector across India which is a development that underscores the sport's rising stature.

The announcement was made during the AIESC's General Body Meeting held in Mumbai, where the sport was recognised as an official discipline alongside 16 other sports, including cricket, football, kabaddi, badminton, hockey and tennis, among others.

This significant development marks a growing trend among government and semi-government organisations to embrace Kho Kho as a mainstream sport, thereby expanding its presence across major sporting calendars of various government, non-government and autonomous bodies.

With Kho Kho being included in the AI-



Kho Kho being included in the AIESC's sports calendar. (FILE PHOTO)

BESC's sports calendar, players now have increased avenues for stable careers through employment quotas in sports providing further motivation for aspiring athletes to take up the game professionally. Kho Kho is already part of the sporting calendars of the Services Sports Control Board and the Railways Sports Promotion Board.

The development not only highlights the sport's evolution from traditional roots to a professional format but also creates new employment opportunities

through departmental teams and job reservations in various government sectors.

"Kho Kho's inclusion in major sports calendars is much more than a symbolic recognition; it's a validation of the sport's growing relevance across India," said Sudhanshu Mittal, President of the Kho Kho Federation of India. "We are witnessing a major shift where a traditional Indian game is now commanding space at the highest institutional levels. This will inspire thousands of youth from rural and semi-urban India

to pursue Kho Kho as a viable career option."

In a further affirmation of the sport's growing national stature, Kho Kho was also introduced for the first time in the Supreme Court of India's Annual Sports Meet earlier this month. This inclusion by a prestigious institution of national importance indicates the expanding viability of the sport in major sporting calendars is playing a pivotal role in shaping a future where Kho Kho athletes have access to structured employment, sustained growth opportunities, and a pathway to represent India at national and international events.

With more government bodies expected to follow suit, the future of Kho Kho as a sport and profession looks increasingly bright, bringing pride to its rich heritage and newfound momentum to its modern resurgence.

## Harith Noah finishes fifth at Baja Aragon 2025 in FIM Bajas World Cup

New Delhi: India's Harith Noah, representing the Bharat TVS Rally Factory Team, delivered a gritty and determined performance to finish 5th overall in the 450cc category of the FIM Bajas World Cup at Baja Aragon 2025.

Over the course of three challenging stages across the Spanish desert terrain, Harith clocked a total time of 7:16:32.0, placing him among the elite finishers in a field stacked with top international competitors. In a press release from Baja Aragon World Cup,

Held from July 25 to 27 in Teruel, the 41st edition of Baja Aragon tested riders with its demanding mix of high-speed gravel tracks, rocky climbs, and soaring summer temperatures, true to its reputation

as one of the most iconic events on the rally-raid calendar. Harith's finish came as part of a competitive top five, which included fellow Sherco TVS rider and rally veteran Lorenzo Santolino Sanchez of Spain, who clinched the overall victory with a time of 6:58:50.0. Lorenzo was followed by Neils Theric of France and Javi Vega Puerta of Spain. Konrad Dabrowski of Poland, riding for Duust Rally Team, finished fourth, just ahead of Harith in fifth.

Speaking after the race, Harith Noah said as quoted by a press release, "It feels great to finish strong at Baja Aragon. This rally is never easy, it's fast, unpredictable, and physically tough. There was a lot of dust, but I stayed calm and focused on having a clean race.

## Sanan Mohammed's strike gives Jamshedpur FC

Jamshedpur: Sanan Mohammed's second-half strike ensured Jamshedpur FC secured a 1-0 victory over Indian Army FT for their consecutive victory in Group C of the 134th Durand Cup, which was played here at the JRD Tata Sports Complex.

With this win, Jamshedpur FC have six points from two matches and are on top of the group, closer to a place in the knockout stages. Jamshedpur FC Head Coach Khalid Jmal made two changes to his starting line-up bringing in Karthik Choudhary and Sourav Das in place of Sarthak Golou and Lalruiapui Chawngthui while Indian Army Head Coach Manish Wahi named an experienced starting eleven in a 4-3-3 formation with Rahul Ramakrishnan, Liton Shil, Shubham Rana and Samir Murmu, who debuted for Jamshedpur FC in the ISL last season, leading the attack.

Indian Army dominated the first half of the game, maintaining possession and creating better chances. The Armymen could have taken a two-goal lead inside the first 15 minutes, but Samir Murmu's effort from a tight angle whisked past the far post, and minutes later, Samananda Singh glanced a header wide from a corner kick.



Sanan Mohammed (FILE PHOTO)

Jamshedpur FC struggled to match the Army side's physicality, as the Army side dominated the midfield with Lethachen Khongrai and P. Christopher Kamei dictating the pace of the attack. Samir came close once again to score as the striker pounced on a weak-headed pass from Praful Kumar to the goalkeeper, but his effort was blocked by the keeper, Amrit Gope.

## Luka Majcen winner gives debutants Diamond Harbour FC

Kolkata: Debutants and I-League 2 champions Diamond Harbour FC (DHFC), rode on Slovenian poacher Luka Majcen's injury time winner, to register a historic 2-1 victory against former champions and local giants Mohammedan Sporting, in the first Group B clash here at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan (VYBK).

Thokhom Adison Singh scored for the Kolkata giants in the first half, with DHFC's Samratkins drawing parity in the second for the debutants. Just as it looked that the match was petering out for a tame draw, Luka penetrated the Mohammedan defence, got lucky with a rebound and calmly scored the winner to give his side full three points.

Celebrated DHFC coach Kibu Vicuna Silva, hit his slot just wide off the Mohammedan post. Ashley Alban Koli scored with the assist as he found Thokhom's run from the right with a floater from the centre of midfield. The diminutive Mohammedan wing-



Luka Majcen (FILE PHOTO)

er controlled well and burst in with pace. With experienced defender Melroy Assai in attendance, Thokhom drove towards the near post with keeper Mirshad's palm, deflected onto his thighs and bulged the net.

Vicuna did not waste time as Mohammedan took the lead into the half-time break.

He made two changes, bringing in Luka Majcen and Samuel in place of Clayton and Naro Hari Sreetha up front. That brought immediate results, as just after the break, Samuel's corner from the right saw DHFC defender Saivratkima meet it with a strong header which beat Subhaji Bhattacharjee in the Mohammedan goal. Former Chennaiyin FC

star Sajal Bag then had the best chance of the rest of the half when his rifle-drove from range in the 83rd minute, shaved Mirshad's palm and struck the post.

Mohammedan played good football throughout the match and looked stronger in the finish, but Luka Majcen's opportunism inside the box changed the course of the match. Samuel cheated down to put Luka through, and after his first shot was saved by Subhaji, it deflected off Dinesh Meetei in the Mohammedan defence and rolled back into the Slovenian's path, who finished with elan.

On Tuesday, there is a double header, first in Jamshedpur for a Group C clash, where ISL side Jamshedpur FC will face Indian Army FT at the JRD Tata Sports Complex Football Stadium with kick-off scheduled at 4:00 PM. Then, we move to Meghalaya for the highly octane Shillong Derby, where Shillong Lajong FC take on Rangajied United FC in a Group B fixture at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium at 7:00 PM.

## Breaking Time

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.

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

## Solution, Sudoku

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

## TOP STORY

Dear Reader, If you have any news or you have any suggestion regarding our newspaper or you have any problem with any government department, you may contact us on 24 hour helpline no: 0120-4225517, 4241284for Delhi & Ghaziabad (958210372), for Noida(981899989), Advertisement (9818799941), Circulation (08586925450)

Readers are recommended to make all necessary enquiries and seek appropriate advice before action on any advertisement and content published in this publication. The printer, publisher, editor and seller of the TopStory do not vouch for any claims. The publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having final authority of or binding in any way. We do not owe any responsibility for damage or loss to any person, a purchase of this production is not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only.

FOR ADVERTISING IN  
**TOP STORY**  
PLEASE CONTACT:  
9818799941

## Wanted to join a club that ranks among the top three: Florian Wirtz



Florian Wirtz (FILE PHOTO)

London: Before the 2025-26 Premier League season, German star Florian Wirtz has officially joined Liverpool. The former Bayer Leverkusen attacking midfielder opened up about his move, sharing his joy, the thought process behind the decision, and a heartfelt message for the fans who had been eagerly waiting for his arrival.

"I feel very happy and proud. It's finally done, something I have been waiting for a long time. I'm really happy," Wirtz said on Twitter.

The 22-year-old player was one of Europe's most sought-after talents this summer, with several clubs showing interest, but for Wirtz, there was clarity in his decision.

"I felt it was the right moment in my career to take the next step. I wanted to join a club that ranks among the top three in the world, and in my opinion, Liverpool is one of them," he explained.

"I saw myself in the best hands at Liverpool and was truly convinced by the people here, the club's vision, and what it offers me. Ultimately, it was an easy decision to make," he said.



# Sanjay Dutt's fierce look from 'The RajaSaab' unveiled on his birthday

**Mumbai**  
It's actor Sanjay Dutt's birthday, and the makers of his upcoming film 'The RajaSaab' marked the special day by unveiling a new poster of the actor from the film.

Taking to their Instagram, the makers dropped a new poster that shows Dutt in a never-before-seen avatar. The actor can be seen dressed in dark tones with long silver hair, a beard, and an intense expression.

'The RajaSaab' stars Prabhas in the lead and is directed by Maruthi. The film is produced by TG Vishwa Prasad under People Media Factory and has music by Thaman S.

Prabhas, who will soon feature alongside Dutt in the film, wished the actor on his special day and wrote, "Wishing the ever-inspiring Sanjay Dutt sir a very Happy Birth-



day! Grateful to share the screen with you in #TheRajaSaab."

The film is set to release in cinemas worldwide on December 5, 2025, in five languages: Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada.

Meanwhile, the actor celebrates his 60th birthday today, several friends from the

industry also wished him on his special day.

Actress Shilpa Shetty took to her Instagram and penned a heartfelt post for Dutt, calling him an "incredible talent" and an "amazing person."

Shilpa wrote, "You bring so much energy and passion to every part that I'm constantly inspired by your

brilliance on and off screen. But what truly sets you apart is your kind heart and generosity of spirit that I have witnessed. Here's wishing you all the love, happiness, and great health above all, Rockstar."

The actor also has Dhun-dhar and KD - The Devil in the pipeline.

# Aamir Khan explains why he dodged OTT for 'Sitaare Zameen Par'

**Mumbai**  
Aamir Khan, who is all set to release his sports drama 'Sitaare Zameen Par' on YouTube Movies, shared the reason for skipping popular OTT platforms and instead deciding to go directly to YouTube.

The film will be available from August 1 on YouTube Movies on demand at an accessible price, skipping other digital platforms entirely. It will be priced at Rs 100 in India and will also be available in 38 other countries, including the US, UK, and Australia, with prices tailored to local markets.

During a press conference in Mumbai on Tuesday, Aamir explained that his aim was to make the film affordable and accessible to as many people as possible.

Aamir shared, "Think about it. If a family of four watches the film for Rs 100, that's just Rs 25 per person. You can even invite your neighbors. When I was young, I used to watch movies with neighbors. If you watch it with eight peo-

ple, it's even cheaper. You can show it to the whole village, 100 people for Rs 100, that's just Rs 1 per person."

He added, "It's up to you how you want to use it. But our effort is to reach every corner of India and ensure everyone benefits from it. This is a big step for us."

The film will skip all other digital streaming platforms and go straight to YouTube Movies on demand.

Aamir spoke openly about why he chose not to follow the OTT route like many other filmmakers. He shared that he "never liked" the traditional OTT model and wanted to try something different that would reach more people at a lower cost.

"Many journalists have asked me why I didn't go to OTT," Aamir said. "At that time, I couldn't explain it clearly. But the reason is that I never liked that model. I never understood it. That's why I've come up with this new model. I hope you'll like it. This model every citizen of the country will appreciate it. I believe cinema, which once soared, will soar high again."



# First look of 'Pride and Prejudice' series unveiled

**Los Angeles**  
Netflix has released the first look of 'Pride and Prejudice'. The streaming giant also shared its supporting cast as production begins in the UK.

Joining the Jane Austen adaptation are Rufus Sewell ('The Diplomat') as Mr. Bennet, Freya Mavor ('Industry') as Jane Bennet, Jamie Demetriou ('Stath Lets Flats') as Mr. Collins, Daryl McCormack ('Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery') as Mr. Bingley, Louis Partridge ('House of Guinness') as Mr. Wickham, Rhea Norwood ('Heartstopper') as Lydia Bennet, Siena Kelly ('Black Mirror') as Caroline Bingley and Fiona Shaw ('Killing Eve') as Lady Catherine de Bourg. Hopey Parish and Hollie Avery make their debuts as Mary Bennet and Kitty Bennet, respectively, as per Variety.

Other new cast members include Anjana Vasani ('We Are Lady Parts'), Sebastian Armesto ('Gangs of London'), Rosie Cavaliero ('KAOS'), Saffron Coomber ('Three Little Birds and Die Zwerfelin'), James Dryden ('Deadpool'), Justin Edwards ('The Thick of It'), James Northcote ('The Last Kingdom'), Eloise Webb ('The Queen's Gambit') and Isabella Sermon ('Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom'). They join previously announced cast members Emma Corrin ('Nosferatu'), Jack Lowden ('Slow Horses') and Olivia Colman ('The Crown'), who lead 'Pride and Prejudice' as Elizabeth Bennet, Mr. Darcy and Mrs. Bennet, respectively.

The six-part limited series promises a faithful adaptation of Austen's immortal 1813 novel from 'Heartstopper' director Euros Lyn and screenwriter Dolly Alderton.



# Disha Patani celebrates 3 years of 'Ek Villain Returns'

Sharing a BTS clip from the movie, Disha on Instagram wrote, "One of the few times we get to play villain. Thank you Mohit sir for giving me Rasika."

**Mumbai**  
Actor Disha Patani on Tuesday took a stroll down memory lane, recalling working in 'Ek Villain Returns'.

In her post, Disha expressed gratitude to director Mohit Suri for giving her the role of Rasika.

Sharing a BTS clip from the movie, Disha on Instagram wrote, "One of the few times we get to play villain. Thank you Mohit sir for giving me Rasika."

Released in 2022, 'Ek Villain Returns' also stars John Abraham, Arjun Kapoor, and

Tara Sutaria.

The film is the sequel to the 2014 hit film, Ek Villain, which starred Sidharth Malhotra, Shraddha Kapoor and Riteish Deshmukh.

Meanwhile, Mohit Suri is basking in the success of his latest directorial 'Saiyaara', which is headlined by youngsters Ahaan Panday and Anet Padma.

On Saturday, film trade expert Taran Adarsh took to Twitter to share an update on Saiyaara's box office performance. "SPLENDID SATURDAY - 'SAIYAARA' REMAINS A MAJOR FORCE... #Saiyaara continues its tri-

umphant run, now eyeing the Rs 300 cr milestone after crossing Rs 200 cr on its second Saturday [Day 9]. Now comes the best part: #Saiyaara's "second" Saturday is HIGHER than its "first" Saturday [26.25 cr] - a remarkable feat and a rarity in today's times. There's just no stopping this blockbuster! #Saiyaara [Week 2] Fri 18.50 cr, Sat 27 cr. Total: Rs 220.75 cr."

The Mohit Suri directorial tells the story of a young couple, a singer and a lyricist, showing their journey on the path of love, loss, achievements, and heartbreak.



**Aamir Khan to release 'Sitaare Zameen Par' on YouTube**

**Mumbai**  
Aamir Khan has made an unusual move by choosing to release his latest sports drama 'Sitaare Zameen Par' directly on YouTube after its run in theatres.

The film will be available from August 1 on YouTube Movies on demand at an accessible price and will skip other digital platforms entirely.

The approach aims to make the film accessible to people, especially those who do not have access to theatres or streaming services.

The film will be available in India at Rs 100. It will also be available in 38 other countries, including the US, UK, and Australia, with prices suited to local markets.

# Mia Carragher to be seen in 'The Hunger Games: On Stage'

**Los Angeles**  
Mia Carragher has come on board to essay the role of Katniss Everdeen in 'The Hunger Games: On Stage' play.

The update was shared via the show's Instagram. "Meet our girl on fire," the post reads alongside a headshot of Carragher. An intro video followed, featuring footage of the actor rehearsing with crossbow in hand, as per Variety.

"I'm really excited to play Katniss. I relate to her quite a lot," Carragher said in the clip.

"I think she's very fearless, but then she's also got that nurturing quality about her. Everyone needs to come and watch 'The Hunger Games: On Stage' because it's going to be nothing like you've ever seen."

The daughter of English



football analyst and former Liverpool player Jamie Carragher, she graduated from England's Tring Park School for the Performing Arts in 2022 and also studied acting at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute. She has previously starred in the film "One Night in Istanbul" and

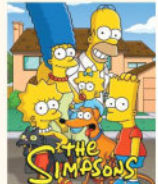
Channel 4's "The Gathering." She'll next team up with "Hunger Games" movie alum Josh Hutcherson in the comedy "Let's Love" alongside Martin Freeman and Malin Akerman. The first-ever live stage adaptation of "The Hunger Games," the play begins performances on

Oct. 20 at the Troubadour Canary Wharf Theatre, a new 1,200-seat venue. Award-winning playwright Conor McPherson adapted Suzanne Collins' first "Hunger Games" book for the show, and it's being helmed by "2:22 - A Ghost Story" director Matthew Dunster.

# 'The Simpsons', 'Doc' and more shows lined up for September premieres

**Los Angeles**  
Popular animated show 'The Simpsons', medical drama 'Doc' and many other releases have been lined up for Fox's fall 2025 slate. The network is gearing up to bring all of its entertainment premieres in the second slate of September, with no post-NFL premieres or two-hour openers, reported Variety.

The second season of Molly Parker and Felicity Huffman starrer 'Doc' has been slated for release on September 23 at 9 PM, following



the premiere of the crime drama 'Murder in a Small Town Season 2.'

For September 24, Rob Lowe's 'The Floor' will be returning with its fourth season, as well as the new game show '99 to Beat'.