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NEPAL DISASTER

Shah blames global warming; flood death toll climbs to 1,243



A woman looks on during the final rites of victims of the flash floods at Pashupati Aarey Ghat in Kathmandu on Wednesday. TASHI TOBGYAL

Global community must work to reduce climate risks, says PM

Yubaraj Ghimire
Kathmandu, September 2

EXACTLY A week after the flash flood that has left a trail of devastation in at least three districts adjoining Kathmandu, Prime Minister Balendra Shah on Wednesday made a rare appearance in Parliament, his fourth in as many months, and said Nepal will seek justice as well as support from the international community towards rehabilitation and reconstruction.

He said the flash flood on August 26 was something that could not have been anticipated, but the government acted efficiently without any loss of time. Shah praised the role of security agencies which jumped into the search and rescue mission immediately, and succeeded in rescuing more than 13,000 people.

Shah did not confirm the possibility of his leading a Nepali delegation to the UN General Assembly, but said there is need to make a strong case for justice for the loss and damage that Nepal, with its many snow-capped mountains, faces.

He added that Nepal is a victim of global warming and carbon emissions largely from industrialised countries.

Briefing the House of Representatives about the devastation caused by the floods, Shah said, "This incident shows the increasing risk the people of the mountain region have to bear with the occurrence of climate change... There is a global contribution behind climate change. And the responsibility to manage and minimise its effects also rests on the global community."

The Prime Minister had earlier said that what happened last week was a tragedy that hit the nation, but what the Nepalese army, police and the armed police force were doing was commendable.

"The flood water gushing into the tunnel along with mud is not a normal situation that is seen elsewhere and the rescue operation becomes difficult and there is no available technology to win over it."

The death toll from Nepal's devastating flash floods rose to 1,243 on Wednesday, with nearly 4,875 still missing, as rescuers battled continuous rain and debris.

Speaking about the international assistance, Shah said, "There is no question about not accepting international assistance at this magnitude of crisis, and we have coordinated with the international community to receive support and assistance since the beginning."

He said the government has followed protocols, legal and scientific norms in handling bodies of unidentified victims and buried them for now after taking their DNA -- so that these could be exhumed later if relatives came to claim a body.

—WITH PTI INPUTS

Where roads end, drones carry the dead home in flood-hit areas

Kathmandu: In the flood-ravaged hills of Nepal, drones are doing something far beyond their traditional role of taking aerial photographs or mapping — carrying the dead home.

Seven bodies were airlifted by drones this week from Devghat-3 in Nuwakot to Devghat-5, from an area so difficult and dangerous to navigate that rescuers could not safely reach it, according to a report published in *The Kathmandu Post* newspaper on Wednesday.

It was "perhaps their most unusual role yet", the report said.

The drone team included personnel from Nepal Police,

Nepal Army, and drone manufacturing company GarudX.

The unusual operation is the latest example of how drones, are quietly becoming an extra pair of hands and eyes in Nepal's disaster response. In Devghat-3, one of the worst-hit areas, an AI-enabled drone recently flew over stranded villagers, its loud-speaker asking them a series of simple questions: Do you have water? Food? Medicine? Villagers were asked to raise their hands in response.

"Based on villagers' response, we make an assessment for what they require and send delivery through drones," Milan

Pandey, director of Airlift Technology and a drone pilot, was quoted as saying by *Post* report.

The drone also asked people to provide a phone number or address, which could be written on a placard or even in the mud, allowing operators to identify their location and requirements.

"We supplied at least 1.5 tonnes of emergency supplies, including food, to the affected areas in three days," Pandey said.

In another operation, a drone was flown inside the tunnel of Upper Trishuli-1 hydropower project, where scores of workers are believed to have been trapped following floods. PTI

In Egypt, Xi calls for new security framework for West Asia

Reuters
Cairo, Beijing, September 2

CHINESE PRESIDENT Xi Jinping called on West Asian nations to oppose external interference and consider reshaping region's security order during a visit to Egypt Wednesday, as Beijing seeks to expand its influence amid the US war against Iran.

Xi's first trip to West Asia in four years comes as US partners in the region reassess their strategic relationships after months of conflict that have disrupted trade, shaken economies and raised questions about Washington's long-term role.

Egypt, itself a major US defence partner that receives around \$1.3 billion annually in military aid from Washington, has been steadily increasing economic and military cooperation with China in recent years.

Welcomed by President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi with a military ceremony in Cairo, Xi said countries in the region should be "masters of their own destiny" and "explore a new regional security architecture", according to China's state news agency *Xinhua*.

Xi also said China was ready to work with regional countries to safeguard shipping routes, an issue that has taken on greater importance after conflict disrupted traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb.

U.S. SAYS IT TARGETED IRGC SITES IN RESPONSE TO STRIKES ON SHIPPING

US bombs Iran again, Tehran hits back at bases across Gulf

18 killed, 108 injured in US strikes; Iran: Wedding venue hit

Reuters
Washington, Dubai, September 2

IRANIANS AND their Arab neighbours feared a return of war Wednesday after the biggest exchange of fire between Tehran and Washington since July, with US forces striking Iran's southern coast and Iran firing at American bases across region.

The US threatened more devastating strikes. Iran accused Washington of hitting a wedding party, killing four people and wounding dozens. Its health minister later said 18 in total had been killed and 108 injured in the latest wave of US strikes.

The US military said it struck air defences, radar systems, maritime assets, mine-laying capabilities and communications sites on Tuesday. Iran reported hits on multiple targets near the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran responded by striking what it said were US assets in Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and Iraq, and said its aim was now to drive US forces from the vast network of military bases they have



Debris surrounds a car at the site of US strike in Kuhestak, southern Iran, on Wednesday. REUTERS

across West Asia.

"American evil in the region will be met with heavier, more widespread, and devastating responses, and any country that cooperates with the aggressive American army must accept its dangerous consequences," Iran's military command said.

Iran said it killed US forces in Jordan and at a base in northern Iraq, but US officials told *Reuters* there were no casualties, according to initial assessments.

In Kuwait, Iran said it had carried out a missile and drone attack on the vast US Ali Al Salem Air Base and targeted the accommodation of a US commander. Kuwait's fire service

said it put out a blaze at a residential complex hit by a drone.

Qatar, home of the largest US airbase in the Gulf, said it held Iran responsible for attacks and their repercussions. Bahrain, which houses the regional headquarters of the US Navy, said Iranian drones were intercepted and destroyed.

Iran also said two tankers had been struck by mines while being steered through the Strait of Hormuz by US personnel.

Iran blacklisted 11 more ships, bringing the total number of such vessels to 56, a government website showed, meaning it would consider them subject to fines, confiscation or detention if they try to sail through Strait without permission.

However, US President Donald Trump repeated his assertion that the strait was open to shipping. "Now that we have it under USA control, should we change the name Hormuz Strait to TRUMP STRAIT???" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Iran said four people including a 4-year-old were killed while celebrating a wedding at a home in Sirik.

Iranian media said as many as 68 were wounded there, and released images of injured children in hospital.

Reuters was unable to independently verify the incident.

US Navy Captain Tim Hawkins, a spokesperson for Central Command, said: "We are aware of reports, which originated from Iranian state media. The U.S. military never targets civilians, unlike the IRGC," referring to Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

Russian drones crash into central Kyiv on seventh day of attacks

Reuters
Kyiv, September 2

RUSSIAN DRONES tore into central Kyiv on Wednesday morning, wounding nine people and damaging residential and university buildings on the seventh day of nearly round-the-clock attacks that have upended daily life in the city.

Moscow's new air campaign against Ukrainian capital and surrounding region has killed dozens of civilians and disrupted logistics as Kyiv struggles to shoot down the jet-powered drones swarming in waves.

Wednesday's attack on a downtown university took place while students were in class, forcing some 160 to seek shelter, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. The mounting attacks come as Ukraine braces for a new season of Russian strikes on energy infrastructure, amid a critical shortage of US-designed missile interceptors needed to down ballistic missiles.

Earlier on Wednesday, Russia struck power facilities in the southern Odesa region with missiles and drones, authorities said, knocking out power to more than 350,000 homes.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday he had ordered his forces to prepare new campaign of "massive" strikes.

"Unfortunately, there has been far too little response from the world and its most influential leaders to this latest Russian escalation of strikes," Zelenskyy wrote on X.

Two people were also killed and eight wounded in Russian strikes on the southeastern city of Dnipro, the regional governor said, where food warehouses and educational buildings were damaged.

Loud explosions thundered through Kyiv Wednesday morning as air defences targeted incoming drones.

Earlier this week, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said his city's defence council had appealed to the government to ease the wartime curfew and other traffic restrictions during alerts.

After drone event, EU to hit Russia with more curbs

Brussels: European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen vowed on Wednesday to increase pressure on Russia, including with new sanctions, after an attempted drone attack at Leipzig/Halle Airport in Germany that she said showed Moscow's growing "recklessness".

"Europe and NATO will not just maintain our pressure on Russia; we will increase it, and we will not stop — not until Russia stops bombing and killing innocent children, men and women in Ukraine," von der Leyen said in Brussels.

"Europeans are faced with the hard truth that this is the new normal. We have to step up, and that means being ready to respond to Russia's recklessness faster and better."

REUTERS

• BRIEFLY

UNITED STATES

\$1 coin with Trump's face goes on sale, can be used as legal tender



The \$1 coin featuring President Donald Trump's image. FILE

THE \$1 COIN designed to celebrate America's 250th birthday and seemingly President Donald Trump, whose face gazes from one side of the gold finish, will go on sale Wednesday, according to the US Mint. The coin's design — Trump's visage as "heads" and the Great Seal of the US as "tails" — was given the stamp of approval this year by US Commission of Fine Arts. The coins, which can be used as legal tender, stirred criticism because federal law bars depiction of living president on currency. REUTERS

EGYPT

22 killed after bus overturns

AT LEAST 22 people, including Egyptians and Jordanians, were killed Wednesday in a passenger bus crash in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, authorities in both countries said.

Twenty-eight others were injured, official said. AP

TURKEY

2 tankers collide, 10 of crew missing

A TURKISH cargo ship with 10 crew aboard sank Wednesday after a collision with a tanker off Istanbul, Turkish authorities said. A lifeboat have been found but there is no sign of the crew, the General Directorate of Maritime Affairs said. AP

Joshua Wong pleads guilty to 'Western collusion'

David Pierson
September 2

JOSHUA WONG, a prominent Hong Kong pro-democracy activist, pleaded guilty on Wednesday to collusion for lobbying Western lawmakers, a case that shows how China treats international outreach as a national security crime. The maximum penalty for colluding with foreign forces is life in prison.

Wong was accused of conspiring with other campaigners



Joshua Wong

to lobby lawmakers, particularly those in the United States like Nancy Pelosi and Marco Rubio,

to impose sanctions on Hong Kong and China. The campaigners sought to pressure officials in China and Hong Kong for greater democratic rights in the semiautonomous territory.

Wong, who turns 30 next month, was one of the youngest activists in a democracy movement that was quashed in 2020 after China introduced a sweeping national security law that effectively outlawed political dissent in Hong Kong.

In a sign of the sensitivity

around the case, police officers in tactical vests and police vehicles surrounded the courthouse where Wong's case was being heard on Wednesday.

He is already serving an almost five-year prison term for his role in an unofficial primary election in 2020 organized by the city's pro-democracy camp that the authorities deemed subversive. That case, the city's largest national security trial, led to the conviction of Wong and over 40 former politicians.

Times Square stabbing: Bank of America V-P killed

New York: A Bank of America vice president was killed in a stabbing in New York City's Times Square Monday, sending a shock wave through the bank after the random incident took place in broad daylight in heart of the city's tourist industry.

Erin Piacenti, 32, was a vice president in BofA's business selection and conflicts unit, according to her LinkedIn profile. The NYPD said that the suspect was a woman with a history of mental health issues.



Erin Piacenti

"We are shocked and deeply saddened by the tragic loss of our colleague. She was a valued

teammate who will be greatly missed. Our hearts go out to her family and all of her loved ones," the US banking giant said in an emailed statement to *Reuters*.

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani said Monday in a press briefing that a woman carrying multiple large knives stabbed two people in Times Square before police used a Taser and fired their weapons.

Piacenti sustained stab wounds in the incident and was later pronounced dead, the

NYPD said. A 68-year-old male also sustained stab wounds and was in stable condition, it added.

NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch said the attacks, which took place on August 31 appeared to be random and unprovoked. "The investigation remains ongoing by the NYPD Force Investigation Division," the NYPD said in a statement.

The suspect, Pamela Cisneros, a 49-year-old woman, was killed on Monday as officers responded. REUTERS

• WHILE SOCIAL MEDIA HAS BEEN AWASH WITH JIBES ABOUT 5,000 'LUSTY' SAILORS, SHORE LEAVE SPENDING INVARIABLY BOOSTS THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Pattaya's nightlife eyes a boom as war-weary crew of US warship arrives for 'R&R'

Sakchai Lalit,
Jintamas Saksornchi
Pattaya, September 2

THERE'S NO getting around the fact Thailand's seaside resort of Pattaya has a lingering reputation for sex tourism, even though that's only part of the story for the city offering shore leave for crew members aboard *USS Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier.

On Wednesday, *USS Abraham Lincoln*, which spent nearly nine months at sea to support US operations against Iran, docked at the Laem Chabang port in Thailand's Chonburi province. The 5,000 or so sailors and Marines aboard the nuclear-

powered ship had not been on shore for more than 260 days, and reports emerged last month of deteriorating mental health among the crew as well as shortages of key food supplies aboard.

The *Lincoln's* crew members debarked to spend their free time in nearby Pattaya, a seaside resort city that US military personnel have frequented since the Vietnam War era.

They will be following millions of other tourists, including a significant number of US military personnel who take part every year in major land and sea exercises nearby with their Thai counterparts.

Social media ahead of the *Lincoln's* visit has been awash

with jibes about lusty sailors, but recent visitors say the development of more family-friendly attractions means the new, more wholesome Pattaya overshadows its former seedy self.

Shore leave spending boosts the local economy, and mission duties often include community outreach in and around the city, about 100 km southeast of Bangkok. That includes specialized medical care for villagers or volunteering at orphanages.

But when hundreds or thousands of sailors have a chance to enjoy some onshore liberty, the navy deploys members of its Shore Patrol to work side by side with Thai police to defuse any trouble.



The USS Abraham Lincoln sails toward Laem Chabang Port in Chonburi province, Thailand, on Wednesday. AP

Navy personnel are likely to have been reminded that, though rarely enforced, the law in Thailand technically bans

prostitution, and paying for sex is a punishable offence under Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the legal

framework for US armed forces.

The military connection goes back at least to the Vietnam War era, when at its height, 40,000–50,000 US service personnel were stationed in Thailand. Bases used by US forces dotted Thailand, and all attracted their share of nightlife activities. Pattaya was close to both Sattahip naval base and Thai Navy's U-Tapao airfield, which hosted B-52 bombers.

Elizabeth Becker, author of *Overbooked: The Exploding Business of Travel and Tourism*, wrote American GIs during the Vietnam War flocked to Pattaya, a once-quiet fishing village, "and it turned into a raunchy seaside playground." The military facil-

ities brought a continuous stream of personnel through Pattaya, while the 1966 Entertainment Places Act created a legal gray area allowing the sex trade to operate semi-openly in bars and massage parlors — as something of a private arrangement between customer and employee — despite a 1960 law criminalizing prostitution.

Pattaya's infrastructure of go-go clubs and other entertainment venues was marketed to travellers arriving in greater numbers due to cheaper travel and boom in package tours.

Severe economic disparities brought many young women and men from Thailand's poor northeastern Isan region to work

in Pattaya's lucrative nightlife sector. They earned wages far exceeding rural agricultural incomes, allowing them to send money home to their families.

Prostitution is culturally taboo, but sex work has quietly flourished in Thai society for centuries, with the domestic market dwarfing the more glitzy one for foreigners.

Pattaya underwent another evolution in the 1990s, with a new wave of tourists coming from the erstwhile Soviet Union, after Communism there collapsed in late 1991. Embracing modern globalized tourism, the newcomers came on direct charter flights benefiting from a 30-day visa-free agreement. AP

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2026



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ECONOMY PAGE 17

GOVT REJECTS CRITICISM OF GDP ESTIMATES, SAYS NUMBERS CORRECT

INSIDE PAGE 2

RAHUL'S EVENT IN MP POSTPONED, SPARKS CONG, BJP WAR OF WORDS

CBI chargesheets five Haryana IAS officers in Rs 504-crore IDFC First Bank fraud case

Sukhbir Siwach
Chandigarh, September 2

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed a charge-sheet against five Haryana IAS officers and 14 others Wednesday into the Rs 504-crore IDFC First Bank fraud case.

According to the CBI, public servants, in connivance with officials of IDFC First Bank and AU Small Finance Banks, illegally transferred funds of eight Haryana government departments and bodies from empanelled banks into specific branches of the two banks. In this process, they allegedly violated the guidelines of the Haryana finance department.

Among those charge-sheeted, IAS officers Pankaj Agarwal and R K Singh were arrested and suspended, while a third IAS officer, Pradeep Kumar, was arrested in June, on the day he was due to retire. Three more senior IAS officers have been chargesheeted in

NEW APPOINTMENTS IN AYODHYA AS PART OF ADMINISTRATIVE SHAKE-UP

Rejig after theft: Air commander in Op Sindoor is Ram temple CEO

Trust inducts three new members for administration of temple affairs

Maulshree Seth & Amrita Nayak Dutta
Lucknow, New Delhi, September 2

IN A major administrative overhaul of the Ram Mandir Trust in Ayodhya, two months after the arrest of eight men over the alleged theft of donated funds, Air Marshal (retd) Jeetendra Mishra, who commanded the IAF's Western Air



(From left) Air Marshal (retd) Jeetendra Mishra; Ram temple's new trust members Mahesh Bhagchandka, Madan Mohan Pandey and Dr Nirmala Yadav.

RELATED REPORTS, PAGE 16

Command during Operation Sindoor in May 2025, was Wednesday appointed the first Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.

The Trust named three new trustees, including its first woman member, and re-

shuffled key office-bearer posts. Swami Govind Dev Giri has been appointed the Trust general secretary while newly-inducted trustee and M2K Group chairman Mahesh Bhagchandka will be the treasurer.

The two other new trustees are Madan Mohan Pandey,

former Additional Advocate General of Uttar Pradesh who had a leading role in the Ram Janmbhoomi case in courts; and Dr Nirmala Yadav, a retired college principal from Shikohabad.

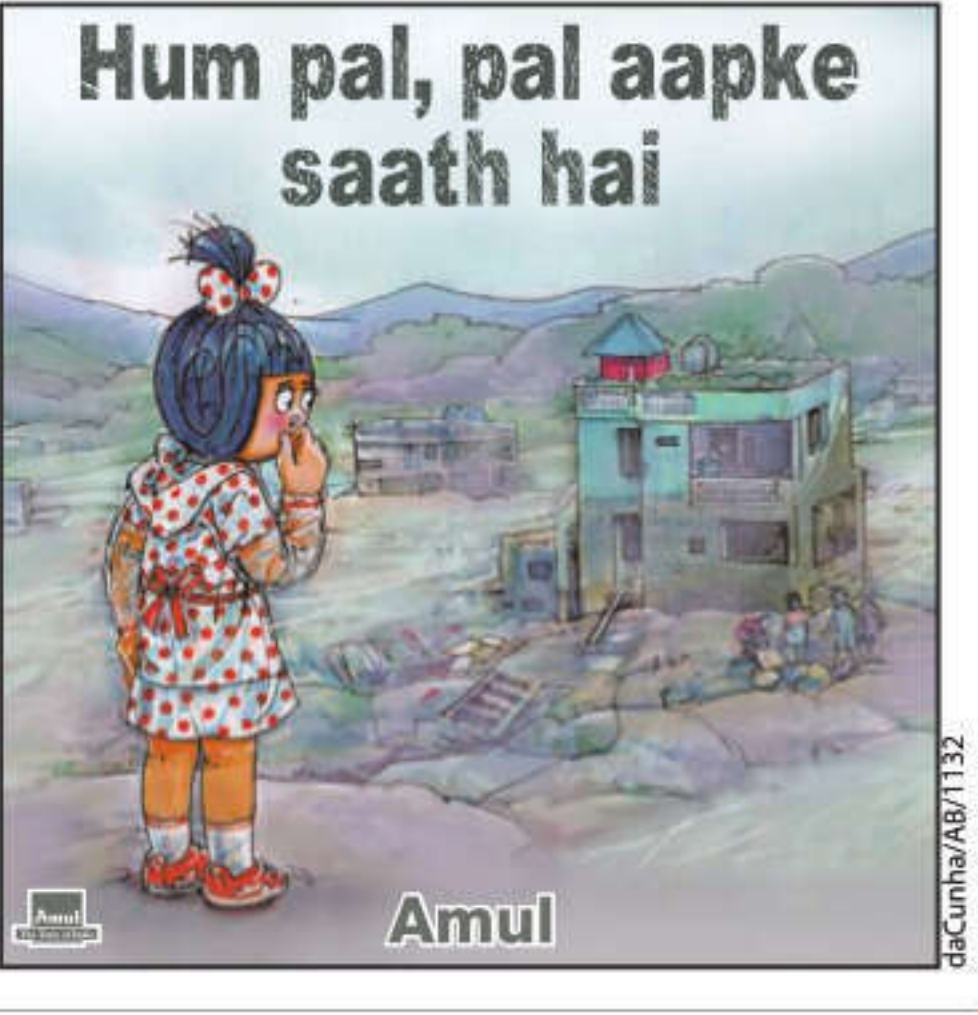
In first remarks after being named CEO, Mishra told news

agency ANI: "I consider this a great fortune that they chose me from so many candidates. I also consider this the blessing of Lord Ram that after 43 years of service to the nation in the Air Force, he has given me the opportunity to serve Sri Ram Mandir and Sri Ram bhakts."

He was among seven top military officers awarded the Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal for their role in Operation Sindoor.

Following the registration of an FIR over the alleged theft and arrest of eight men in June, three officials, including Trust general secretary Champat Rai, stepped down from their posts. Two SITs were formed to probe

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



EXPRESS special

RS member Raghav Chadha deleted from Punjab draft SIR, alleges vendetta

EC conducts SIR, Punjab Govt has no role in exercise: State official, AAP

Jatin Anand & Damini Nath
New Delhi, September 2

AN ESTIMATED 13.37 crore names have been deleted across the country from draft electoral rolls prepared during the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) over the past year. One of them is that of the youngest Rajya Sabha MP — Raghav Chadha, who was elected as an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) nominee in 2022 and crossed over to the BJP in April this year.

The deletion has sparked a political faceoff. While Chadha has alleged "political vendetta" by the AAP government in Punjab, a senior Punjab government official and the AAP countered that the SIR is conducted by the EC and the state government has "no role".

Chadha's name appears on the list of those deleted in the Punjab draft roll, which was



Elected as AAP RS nominee in 2022, joined BJP in April 2026

published on August 13, Election Commission records show. This is the ASDD list (list of "absent, shifted, deceased and duplicate"). Against his entry, is the noting: "permanently shifted." Chadha was one of the 20.66 lakh or 9.7% of the pre-SIR electorate in Punjab deleted.

Punjab's final SIR roll is scheduled to be out on October 12. Those deleted in the draft stage have a chance to get back

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Business as Usual
By EP UNNY



POLITICS PAGE 16

FIRST TIME SINCE MANIPUR UNREST, 2 KUKI MLAs ATTEND HOUSE SESSION

Note on meeting over caste census rewritten after Ministry pushback

Shyamlat Yadav
New Delhi, September 2

THE COUNTING of caste in the 2027 Census has become a political flashpoint with the government opting for an "open-ended question" format rather than a drop-down menu, and Leaders of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, slamming the decision, saying social justice policies cannot be effectively implemented without accurate data.

The Indian Express has learnt that two key government arms behind the exercise, Of-

E. EXPLAINED

2011 dilemma

The open-ended response format leaves a problem that had complicated the 2011 exercise: how to convert millions of individual responses into reliable, standardised caste data without appearing to determine or alter what respondents have reported.

Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) and Ministry of

Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE), were not always on the same page, either.

Sources said Ministry officials expressed their willingness to share the list of OBCs, maintained by the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), for the caste enumeration exercise at a key meeting on June 1. But the offer, sources said, was not reflected accurately in an initial draft of the minutes of this meeting prepared by the Registrar General's office.

Following a pushback, the Registrar General's office

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Happening today

● EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar will begin his three-day visit to Ukraine and Poland.

● BCCI TO hold a review meeting featuring head coach Gautam Gambhir and chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar.

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NATION PAGE 12

SIX YEARS AFTER DISHA SALIAN'S DEATH, BOMBAY HC ORDERS CBI PROBE

Jharkhand SIR: Poll officials order probe into voter deletion forms

Inquiry related to booth in Maheshtikri village, says BDO of Basantrai in Godda

Shubham Tigga
Ranchi, September 2

DISTRICT ELECTION authorities in Godda, Jharkhand, have sought a report and initiated an inquiry into the submission of Form 7 applications seeking deletion of voters' names at Booth No. 9 in Maheshtikri village of Basantrai block, after The Indian Express reported that Block Level Officers (BLOs) of at least four booths had

raised red flags over them.

Block Development Officer (BDO), Basantrai, Sriman Marandi said Wednesday that the Deputy Election Officer (DEO) had sought a report, and a Block Panchayati Raj Officer was sent to Maheshtikri to conduct a field inquiry. The report is expected by Thursday.

"The panchayat officer went to the village and spoke to the people," Marandi told The Indian Express, adding that the



The Indian Express report published on September 2

findings would be submitted to the block-level officer, following which the report would be forwarded to the DEO.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

● ROADS IN CENTRAL DELHI AT HEART OF BEAUTIFICATION PLAN, MURALS TO BE PAINTED IN NATIONAL MUSEUM AREA

Capital makeover for BRICS Summit: Floral displays, food festivals, performances

Mishal Mussaddique
New Delhi, September 2

THREE YEARS after the Capital's streets were given a makeover for the G20 Summit, Lutyens' Delhi is getting another facelift — this time ahead of the BRICS Summit on September 12-13.

"We have been preparing for this for a while. The face of the city is soon going to change after our team's extensive efforts to give the NDMC areas a facelift," said New Delhi Municipal Council chairperson Manoj Kumar Dwivedi.

The BRICS Summit is being hosted at the Bharat Mandapam in Central Delhi.

While roads and roundabouts remain at the heart of the beautification plan, the city will see landscaping, floral displays, fountains, murals, food festivals and performances.

Forty-one major roads have been identified and divided into 14 circles, with a dedicated nodal officer assigned to each. "The officers and their field teams will conduct daily inspections, overseeing cleaning, beautification and other civic arrangements on the stretches under their

watch," Dwivedi said.

From these roads, the makeover will fan out into the roundabouts and public space. According to officials, 15 locations have been identified for floral boards, nine for flower fountains, and 17 roundabouts for special beautification and landscaping.

The areas for parking vehicles will also be spruced up, while the roads and surrounding areas will be closely monitored, the officials said.

"The areas around the 10 hotels where BRICS delegates will stay are also being given special attention," Dwivedi said.



Workers paint a zebra crossing near India Gate ahead of the BRICS Summit in New Delhi. PRAVEEN KHANNA

Also in focus are the India-Africa Friendship Rose Garden, planted in 2015, and the BRICS

Friendship Rose Garden, inaugurated in 2016 when India hosted the summit.

INSIDE PAGE 2

DRONES TO MONITOR TRAFFIC DURING BRICS SUMMIT

Beyond the landscaping, the city will also carry "visual imprint" of the BRICS Summit, officials said.

According to officials, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has given NDMC inputs on the "creatives" to be installed around the city. These include ideas for giving the BRICS logo a more prominent visual treatment, additional floral boards, and boards carry-

ing photographs of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The MEA has given (ideas for) creatives like beautifying the BRICS logo, more floral boards, and installation of boards with pictures of the Prime Minister. They have also asked us to support the events that will be held as part of the Summit programme," Dwivedi said.

Bringing the BRICS Summit into the city's public spaces, a food festival, mural paintings, and performances by artists from BRICS member countries are among the events being planned. "The Talkatora Garden amphitheatre will host artists' performances, while

murals will be painted in the National Museum area. Artists from all member countries will have a platform to showcase their talent. The food festival will have a variety of cuisine which can be enjoyed by the public," Dwivedi said.

A 12-member core team, supported by around 200 additional staff, has been formed to maintain venues and assist the MEA during the events. With the Monsoon rains still a concern, Dwivedi said: "We have ensured that additional sets of pumps are ready to drain out any waterlogging as quickly as possible. Desilting is ongoing in several drains in the area."

AI CLIPS TO MEMES

In Punjab, how Congress vs AAP vs BJP battle flares on social media

Social media battle between contenders hits a new low ahead of 2027 elections

Kanchan Vasdev
Chandigarh, September 2

FROM DIGITALLY dressing up a turbaned Sikh politician in an off-shoulder woman outfit to showing a chief minister being slapped inside a classroom, the social media battle between political rivals in Punjab seems to have hit a new low in the run-up to the Assembly polls due in February 2027.

With the parties increasingly using AI-generated videos, memes and images to attack their opponents, the lines between political satire and personal attacks appear to be getting blurred.

This has recently led to a

court intervening in a case involving Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira.

In a video circulated on Facebook by a handle called "Charda Punjab" and on Instagram by "Charda_apunjab", Khaira's face, beard and turbaned Sikh appearance were allegedly superimposed on an artificially generated body of a woman.

"Parties must refrain from putting up such posts as it takes the political discourse too low. Even while dealing with opponents, a certain degree of standard and grace must be maintained. I moved court as I felt strongly about it," Khaira told *The Indian Ex-*



Sukhpal Singh Khaira

press.

After this video went viral, Khaira approached the Chandigarh District Court, seeking protection of his reputation, dignity and personality rights, besides damages.

While granting ad-interim relief, the court observed that the content appeared to be defamatory, objectionable and AI-generated, and that its continued circulation could cause irreparable injury. It also directed Meta to take down the post and disable access within 72 hours.

BJP joins in

Barely weeks later, however, the social media battle appeared to have descended another notch. Last week, the Punjab BJP's official social media handle shared an AI-generated video in which Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was shown being slapped inside a classroom.

The video was built around a controversy over alleged spelling mistakes in educational material. It showed a student writing incorrect spellings in a notebook, with CM Mann, AAP national convenor

Arvind Kejriwal and Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains appearing in the classroom. Mann was then shown being slapped.

The BJP later deleted the video after it drew criticism. Punjab BJP president Kewal Singh Dhillion sought to distance himself from the post, saying he had not seen the video and did not want the CM to be insulted.

Social activist Tehseen Poonawalla wrote on X: "This ad is astonishingly arrogant & stupid! Showing a Chief Minister, actually any human being slapped is not a political argument."

He added that reducing campaigning to "playground violence" amounted to losing the political debate, describing the video as "childishness with the Lotus symbol".

AAP, BJP spar

The AAP and the BJP subsequently traded charges over the use of AI-generated content.

AAP spokesperson Bikramjit Passey demanded an apology from the BJP. "They should be ashamed that they are posting such videos. The BJP has always spread hatred and should apologise. They are slapping a man in a turban and that too someone occupies a constitutional post," he said.

BJP spokesperson Pritpal Singh Ballewal, however, said the party would not apologise. "If we open AAP's social media pages, you will see many Punjab's Sikh leaders being mocked at with AI videos. How will the AAP respond to this? In our video, did we mention anywhere that it was Mann? We will not apologise," he said.

High Court quashes dismissal of DSP Sandhu, removed from service over Lawrence interview

Jagpreet Singh Sandhu
Chandigarh, September 2

HOLDING THAT Punjab government had wrongly bypassed a regular departmental inquiry, the Punjab and Haryana High Court has quashed the dismissal of DSP Gursher Singh Sandhu, who was removed from service over the recording of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's interview while he was in police custody.

Justice Namit Kumar, in a judgment released on Wednesday, directed the state to reinstate Sandhu with all consequential benefits. The court, however, said the reinstatement would not affect the state's right to continue the departmental inquiry already pending against Sandhu and other police officers before former HC judge Justice Rajiv Narain Raina.

The court held that the state had failed to establish circumstances that made a regular departmental inquiry "not reasonably practicable", as required to invoke Article 311(2)(b) of the Constitution, which allows an inquiry to be dispensed with in exceptional cases. The case relates to Lawrence's interview recorded on the intervening night of September 3 and 4, 2022, while he was in the custody of CIA Staff, Kharar. A Special Investigation Team constituted on the HC directions had recommended departmental action against police officers for alleged misconduct, negligence and dereliction of duty during his custody.

Sandhu, then Mohali DSP (Detective), received show-cause notices in September and October 2024. The second notice alleged he facilitated the interview by being present at CIA Staff, Kharar, and staying in close contact -- telephonically and personally -- with journalist Jagwinder Patial of a news channel.

He was subsequently suspended and chargesheeted on October 25, 2024. Sandhu had denied the allegations, submitting that Lawrence's inner security at CIA Staff, Kharar, was being supervised by the Anti-Gangster Task Force, while the CIA was responsible only for the outer cordon and transit security.

Sandhu's counsel, senior advocate D S Patwalia, assisted by advocate Bikramjit Singh Patwalia, argued that the power to dispense with an inquiry was exceptional and could not be exercised mechanically. Referring to Rule 8 of the Punjab Civil Services (Punishment and Appeal) Rules, 1970 and Rule 16.24 of the Punjab Police Rules, 1934, Sandhu submitted that dismissal was a major penalty and ordinarily required a regular departmental inquiry. He argued that the reasons cited by the state, including alleged evasion of service and non-cooperation, were flimsy.

On the allegation that Sandhu had deliberately evaded service of the chargesheet, his counsel submitted that the state was aware of his permanent address at Jalandhar, but he had been transferred from there.

The HC found the record did not support the state's case -- presented through Additional Advocate General P I P Singh -- of deliberate non-cooperation. It noted that Sandhu had replied to the first showcause notice, filed an interim reply to the second and sought documents needed to respond effectively.

"Mere recital in the order that an inquiry is not reasonably practicable would not, by itself, be sufficient. The competent authority must demonstrate a real and proximate nexus between the circumstances prevailing at the relevant time and the inability to hold departmental enquiry," the HC said. It also noted that there was no material showing that Sandhu had threatened or intimidated witnesses, tampered with evidence or interfered with the functioning of the inquiry officer.

The HC further pointed out that the same departmental inquiry against nine officers was continuing before Justice Raina. "If the inquiry could be conducted against the other officers in respect of the same occurrence, the respondents were required to demonstrate some additional circumstance peculiar to the petitioner which made an inquiry against him impracticable. No such circumstance has been shown," it added.

After his dismissal, Sandhu obtained the chargesheet through his counsel and appeared before Justice Raina virtually on November 1, 2025, besides appearing on later dates in March 2026. The proceedings concerning him were closed only on May 3, 2026 after the inquiry officer noted that he had already been dismissed.

"The aforesaid sequence of events demonstrates that there was, in fact, no impediment in conducting the departmental enquiry against the petitioner...", the HC said.

It also rejected the state's stand on service of the chargesheet, noting that there was no material to show that a genuine attempt was made to serve it at Sandhu's known permanent address in Jalandhar. The HC further held that once the department had considered it feasible to initiate regular disciplinary proceedings, abandoning it and resorting to Article 311(2)(b) required a subsequent or newly-arisen circumstance making the inquiry not reasonably practicable.



Gangster Lawrence Bishnoi

PUNJAB'S DRUG CENSUS

Survey covers 99.56% of its target, over 7 lakh entries flagged by AI

Kanchan Vasdev
Chandigarh, September 2

THE PUNJAB government has covered 55.36 lakh families in the state's first Drug and Socio-Economic Census against a target of 55.61 lakh. While the exercise reached 99.56 per cent of its target by August 30, nearly 3.49 lakh families did not respond to the census.

As per the data compiled by the government, the AI based quality control system initially flagged nearly 7.24 lakh of the 51.88 lakh surveys taken up for quality checks. While 44.63 lakh surveys were accepted by the AI system, 7.24 lakh, or 13.96 per cent, were marked "AI rejected" and sent for manual quality control.

"The manual scrutiny has since cleared majority of these cases. Of the 7.24 lakh entries eligible for manual QC, 7.23 lakh had been processed, with 6.77 lakh ultimately accepted, including those accepted after editing. Only 19,432 surveys (0.37 per cent of the surveys eligible for QC) remained classified as rejected after manual scrutiny," a source told *The Indian Express*.

While the field exercise has been virtually completed, 3,48,692 cases were recorded separately as "non respondent and denied survey". "These respondents were not forthcoming," said the source adding that of the 55.36 lakh families covered, 51.88 lakh families have been enumerated. District-wise, Amritsar exceeded its assigned target, recording 4,80,030 surveys against a target of 4,75,079, or 101.04 per cent. Mansa, Tarn Taran, Sangrur and Ferozpur also crossed 100 per cent, while Fazilka, Moga and Patankot exactly reached their targets.

Faridkot had the lowest coverage at 95.32 per cent, followed by SAS Nagar at 98.04 per cent, Rupnagar at 98.13 per cent and Ludhiana at 98.15 per cent. Ludhiana, however, had the largest numerical gap, with 6,46,634 surveys against a target of 6,58,844, a shortfall of 12,210.

The survey, launched in April with government employees deployed across the state, was designed to go beyond identifying drug users. The government had said the exercise was intended to establish the extent of drug abuse, identify substances being used and understand the age, education, income and socio-economic circumstances of affected people and their families. The data was also intended to help frame rehabilitation and treatment policies. As many as 28,000 govern-

ment employees were asked to volunteer for the survey.

The drug-specific section asked whether any family member suffered from substance dependence, the duration of addiction, whether the person had sought treatment, whether they had visited a de-addiction facility and the distance to the nearest rehabilitation centre. Enumerators also recorded perceptions about the drug situation in the locality and the government's anti-drug campaign.

The questionnaire covered household composition and living conditions, education, employment and monthly income, land ownership, loans and migration, including whether family members had gone abroad for work or studies. It also sought information on caste and sub-caste and whether members of a household had faced discrimination while accessing public services such as schools, healthcare facilities, places of worship and water sources.

The bandwidth of the questionnaire had prompted Opposition to raise questions, alleging that the extensive data collection was aimed at building a database ahead of the 2027 Punjab Assembly elections. Opposition leaders had stated that questions were related to people's assessment of government performance, way beyond a drug census and could provide the ruling Aam Aadmi Party with socio-economic and public sentiment data ahead of the polls.

The government will now be collating and analysing the data to formulate policies and schemes. A committee headed by Chief Secretary KAP Sinha has been constituted, "A committee of department of planning has been constituted under Chief Secretary KAP Sinha, having secretaries from all concerned departments for formulating new schemes for different strata after the data is collated," a government source said.

Once the data is collated, the government will examine how widespread drug abuse was across Punjab, what substances were being used and what patterns of dependence emerged. It will also analyse whether women had become part of the drug menace, where drugs were being sold and which areas emerged as hotspots. "The socio-economic data will be analysed alongside the drug-related information to identify patterns among affected households, including their caste and sub-caste, education, employment, income, landholding, indebtedness and migration," said a source.



Farmers under the banner of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha gather near a tented 'pandal' at the Chandigarh-Mohali border during their ongoing week-long protest, in Chandigarh, Wednesday. PTI

HC halts Punjab's Malwa Canal land acquisition over pending report

Raakhi Jagga
Patiala, September 2

THE PUNJAB government's much-hyped Malwa Canal project, involving the construction of a 149-km canal, has hit a roadblock with the Punjab and Haryana High Court halting all land acquisition proceedings until the environment impact assessment (EIA) report is finalised.

In its August 25 order, a division bench of Justices Jagpreet Singh Puri and Pravindra Singh Chauhan said that neither the petitioners nor similarly placed landowners could be dispossessed of their land, and no award could be passed in relation to the Malwa Canal until the EIA report is complete.

The case involves 273 landowners from Muktsar, Faridkot, and Ferozepur districts who challenged the land acquisition proceedings initiated for the Malwa Canal construction.

The matter first came up for hearing on August 17 after

farmer Jasdev Singh Sidhu filed a petition. The case was subsequently taken up on August 25 and decided along with three other writ petitions challenging the same land acquisition proceedings.

During the proceedings, the bench asked the state about the purity of the water to be released in the canal. "The State of Punjab had filed a short affidavit in court, but failed to clarify whether the water to be released in the Malwa Canal would be fit for human consumption or not?" the bench said. "The State of Punjab or the officials present in Court could not reply to the said question and merely said that the Environment Impact Assessment report was not finalised yet." The landowners' case was represented by senior advocates Inder Pal Singh Doabia, Sanjay Roy and GS Doabia.

What is the Malwa Canal project?

The Malwa Canal is a proposed major irrigation project of the Punjab government aimed at bringing canal water to parts of south-western Punjab facing irrigation shortages and heavy dependence on groundwater. The proposed canal is expected to pass through Ferozepur, Faridkot and Sri Muktsar Sahib districts. Earlier project details described the canal as being approximately 149 km long, originating near the Harike Headworks/Sutlej system and carrying water towards the Muktsar region. Its stated objective is to provide irrigation water to tail-end agricultural areas, reduce dependence on tube wells and help address Punjab's rapidly depleting groundwater. The project has been estimated to cost around Rs 2,300 crore.

Why were villagers against the project?

Villagers from 33 panchayats across the three districts opposed the land acquisition, pointing out that no environment impact assessment had been carried out.

Harminder Singh Thandewala of Thandewala village in Muktsar, who has been spearheading the agitation under the banner of the Punjab Bachao Morcha, said, "Already, the irrigation department of Punjab is providing polluted water in the existing canal network in Malwa Punjab. What is the guarantee of clean water in the newly proposed Malwa Canal?"

He also raised concerns over the proposed source of water for the canal. "Water for the canal was to be taken from Harike Barrage, which is at the confluence point of the Sutlej and Beas rivers in Ferozepur. This point already has polluted water, as water from the Sutlej passes through Ludhiana, where a drain called Buddha Nallah is highly polluted. This Buddha Nallah water falls into the Sutlej river in Ludhiana, and the river further flows towards Harike Barrage," he explained.

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● GEN JJ SINGH WAS TRAVELLING FROM GOA TO DELHI WHEN THE INDIGO FLIGHT Faced ENGINE FAILURE

Former Army Chief recounts anxious moment onboard aircraft

Express News Service
Chandigarh, September 2

FORMER CHIEF of Army Staff and Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Gen JJ Singh Wednesday said that the engine failure of an Indigo flight from Goa to New Delhi on Tuesday on which he was travelling gave passengers some anxious moments but the skill of the pilots ensured a safe landing.

Gen JJ Singh was flying on IndiGo flight 6E 2102 which departed from Goa for Delhi around 9.16 am. Soon thereafter an engine failure was reported leading to a full emergency being reported. The aircraft landed safely back at Goa on at around 9.50 am. There were 229 passengers were on board the flight.

Gen JJ Singh said there was considerable scare among the passengers when one of the engines went silent and many people started crying or screaming. "Yesterday morning while flying from Goa to Delhi I was witness to moment's that reminded me as to why professional training and composure matter so much in aviation. Midway through the ascent, at around fifteen thousand feet and still climbing to-

ward the cruising altitude of thirty-five thousand feet, one of the engines emitted a loud noise and a hissing sound, and then there was silence. The situation demanded immediate and precise action," he said.

The former Army chief said the pilots came to know immediately that one of the engines had probably flamed out, then he stabilised the aircraft with remarkable skill, managing the remaining engine and bringing the aircraft safely back to Goa, despite significant turbulence due to the monsoon. "The landing was rough; all passengers and the cabin crew heaved a sigh of relief, applauded and clapped



Former Chief of Army Staff General JJ Singh

ward the cruising altitude of thirty-five thousand feet, one

when the aircraft touched the runway, even those who were crying out and screaming or praying a few moments earlier," he said.

General Singh says he has already written to the Aviation Minister and IndiGo, recommending that the pilot concerned be considered for a spot promotion, or at the very least, an incentive or increment, in recognition of his professionally outstanding and commendable performance whereby he saved the lives of over 200 passengers and cabin crew as well, even those who were crying out and screaming

or praying a few moments.

"In hundreds of flights that I have taken in my life this has never happened before. My mind told me that anything can happen but I tried to reassure people behind me that they should not worry," he said. Gen Singh said he had gone to Belgium to take part in a seminar and was returning through Goa. "Since we were following evacuation drill we could not shake hands with the crew. However, I told the cabin crew who I was and conveyed my appreciation to them and the flight crew," he said.

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Congress MLA raises HRTC bus shortage, poor condition of fleet

Saurabh Parashar
Shimla, September 2

THE HIMACHAL Pradesh Assembly on Wednesday passed the Himachal Pradesh State Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026, amid strong opposition from BJP legislators, who said that the proposed changes would undermine the autonomy of state universities and bring their functioning under greater government control.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who moved the Bill for consideration and passage, described it as a "historic" legislation aimed at safeguarding the interests of qualified youth and people of Himachal Pradesh. He assured the House that the government would not interfere in the syllabus, routine academic functioning or student-teacher affairs of universities.

The Bill, which will be now send for the Governor's assent, will cover Himachal Pradesh University, established in 1970; Sardar Patel University, Mandi, established in 2021; Himachal Pradesh Technical University, established in 2014; Himachal Pradesh Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry University, established in 1986; and Atal Medical and Research University, established in 2017.

Sukhu said, "Appointments to the posts of Assistant Professor and Professor would continue to be made by the universities and asserted that the Bill would not affect their recruitment. Financial requirements of universities would be examined by the Finance Secretary led Finance Committee, including whether a new university was required. The Executive Committee, headed by the Vice-Chancellor, would remain supreme, while the Finance Committee would submit its reports to the Executive Committee." He said, "Himachal Pradesh Public Service Commission will only recruit the class-III and class-IV employees and non-teaching faculty member."

Leader of Opposition (LoP)
Jairam Thakur said, "This



Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu speaks during the Monsoon Session of the State Assembly, in Shimla on Wednesday. ANI

amendment Bill will also meet the same fate which was met to the amended provisions of Himachal Pradesh Universities of Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry Act, 1986, in the Himachal High Court on August 27. He said that the high court had struck down provisions that gave the state government a decisive role in appointing vice-chancellors (V-Cs) of the state's agricultural universities.

BJP MLA Randhir Sharma from Sri Naina Devi opposed the Bill, saying universities were already regulated by the UGC and enjoyed autonomy under its rules and regulations. He said, "The amendment amounted to an 'attack' on the independence of universities." Sharma objected particularly to the proposed role of the government in recruitment and financial affairs, arguing that the existing system provided for university-based selection committees with UGC and government nominees. Sharma also linked the Bill an attempt to fill certain people affiliated

to a particular class, political party into the state univer-

sities, which were funded by the UGC.

He said the proposal was also contrary to the National Education Policy's emphasis on institutional autonomy. Recalling his student days with Sukhu, Sharma said they had together fought for university autonomy. BJP MLA from Bilaspur Trilok Jamwal accused the government of trying to convert universities into government departments. He questioned the proposed composition of the Finance Committee and said that the amendment was being brought to facilitate government appointments.

Jamwal said, "One of the provisions in the amendments is that Finance Secretary will chair the Finance Committee and member-Vice-Chancellor will be the member of committee. Vice-Chancellor is the representative of Chancellor-cum-Governor. Does this provision not undermine the protocol? Will State's Finance Secretary chair the committee and Vice-Chancellor will be a member of the committee means a representative of Chancellor-cum-

Governor report to the Finance Secretary.”

Meanwhile, Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharamani defended the Bill, saying autonomy was important but could not become a shield for misuse.

He cited examples from YS Parmar University and NIT Hamirpur and suggested that teaching posts should be filled through expert committees, while non-teaching posts could be recruited through the Public Service Commission on merit. Opposing the Bill, BJP MLA Vipin Singh Parmar said that the Bill would collapse university autonomy.

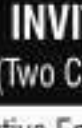
Defending the Bill, Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi supported the legislation and criticised the BJP over its past appointments. Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur accused the government of repeatedly bringing Bills and amendments that later faced judicial scrutiny. Sukhu hit back, saying the LoP was "in the habit of speaking lies" and clarified that a court had commented on university rules, not struck down the entire Act.

Congress MLAs Suresh Kumar and Harish Janartha also backed the Bill, with Janartha stressing the need for greater monitoring of financial affairs and alleging irregularities in university administration.

Two other Bills were passed

Two more bills including Shimla Roads Users and Pedestrians (Public Safety and Convenience) Amendment Bill, 2026, seeking to further amend the Shimla Roads Users and Pedestrians (Public Safety and Convenience) Act, 2007.

Sukhu also introduced the Himachal Pradesh Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2026, proposing further amendments to the Himachal Pradesh Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, were passed in the Assembly on Wednesday.

 BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION Office of the Executive Engineer, Shivaji Nagar Division, Thimmaiah Road, Queens Road, Bangalore	
No.EE/SJNE-PROC/26/2021-27	Date: 02.09.2026
INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPMP Portal only)	
The Executive Engineer (Shivaji Nagar Division), BCCC, Bangalore invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES/ National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of work detailed in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for the work given in the table through e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka (via http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in). The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderer's to qualify for award of the contract (Standard Tender Document KW4). 2) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before 16.00 hours on 18/09/2026. 3) Other details can be seen in the tender document.	
Sl. No.	Name of the Work/Approximate value (Rs in Lakhs) (Without GST)/EMD amount in Rs.
1	Park Area Development, CONSTRUCTION OF Seating Plaza, Civic Center And Other Finishing Works In Ulsoor Lake (Call-VI). Approximate value of work : Rs. 787.20 Lakhs , EMD Amount in Rs : Rs.11,80,000,-/
Calendar of events :	
1) Pre bid meeting will be held on 15/09/2026 at 15.00 in the office of the Chief Engineer Zone-2, Bengaluru City Central Palike, Annexure-3, 4th Floor, GBA office compound, N R Square, Bengaluru. 2) Last date for uploading the Filled Tender Document is 18-09-2026 upto 04.00 p.m. 3) Date of Opening of the Technical Bid Tenders is on 19-09-2026 by 11.00 A.M. 4) Date of Financial bid Opening of Tenders is on after Technical bid opening	
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Shivaji nagar Division, BCCC.	

issue, saying a similar situation prevailed in his Seraj constituency. "At least 17 HRTC routes under my Assembly have been closed for unexplained reasons. Not operating buses on 17 routes means depriving a large section of the population of connectivity," he said. Thakur also questioned the government's plan to procure electric buses, asking whether they would be suitable for Himachal's difficult mountainous terrain. CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said the government was committed to providing better bus services through HRTC. "Electric buses are the



CSB Bank
Trusted Mortgage Smart Future

**PUBLIC NOTICE ON AUCTION OF
PLEGDED GOLD ORNAMENTS**

The borrowers in specific and interested bidders in general, are hereby informed that on account of non-repayment of loans due by the borrowers, the bank has issued public notice and recall-auction notice issued by the Bank, the gold ornaments pledged with the bank security by the respective borrowers for the loan availed by them will be sold in public auction on "as is where is" and "non-recourse" at branch premises on **15th September 2022 at 10.30 AM**. The auction may be adjourned to any other later date at the discretion of the bank upon publication of the name in the Bank's notice board. The borrowers are hereby further inform that the gold ornaments will be disposed of by public auction/-auction, if the auction is not successful, and if there is a default in the payment of the loan, the bank will be entitled to recover the loan amount from the recovery of the balance amounts due to the bank. "In case of deceased borrower, all conditions will be applicable to legal heirs."

S. No.	Auction Center CSB Branch	Account Name	Client ID	No. of Occ.	Bal. Outstanding as on 01.09.2022	Weight (grams)
01	Amritsar	Nishan Singh	08309142	001	41,375.38	36.00
02	Amritsar	Ravinder Kaur	07909382	002	8,23,289.80	69.23
03	Amritsar	Robin	05077389	001	8,20,493.09	80.30
04	Amritsar	Vishal Athwal	04851549	001	8,19,333.64	69.09

For more details/auction-wise information borrowers/interested bidders may contact respective branches and for participating in the auction

PUNJAB | 03/09/2022

SD/- AUTHORIZED OFFICER, CSB BANK

राजस्थान सरकार			
सामाजिक न्याय एवं अधिकारिता विभाग			
जो 3/1, अम्बेडकर भवन, रेजीडेंसी एरिया, 22 मोदाम, जयपुर			
क्रमांक: F9(4)/Sch/AY 2026-27(2)/04969-9928645 PF1 10194261 दिनांक :			
यहाँ ई-हस्ताक्षरित			
ध्वजित			
सैथिक सत्र 2026-27 में राजस्थान राज्य के मूल निवासियों के लिए विभाग द्वारा संचालित विभिन्न छात्रवृत्ति योजनाओं में यथा अनुसूचित जाति/अनु. जनजाति/अति पिछड़ा वर्ग/अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग/आर्थिक पिछड़ा एवं/मुसलमानी संरक्षण राज्य शिक्षा सार मंत्रीक छात्रवृत्ति योजना/मुसुम, धुमन एवं अर्द्धमुसुम समुदाय तथा गिरासी एवं पिरसी समुदाय योजना में राज्य की राजकीय / निजी मान्यता प्राप्त शिक्षण संस्थाओं एवं राज्य के चारर संस्थानित राज्यीय / राजकीय स्तर की शिक्षण संस्थाओं के पाठ्यक्रमों में प्रवेशित /अध्ययनरत (कक्षा 11 य 12 के अधिकर) विभाग संस्थाओं के विद्याधियों से वेब पोर्टल www.sjmsnew.rajasthan.gov.in/ पर Scholarship अथवा एयरएसओ पोर्टल पर रज्कारितरिष एखेई एवं के माध्यम से ऑनलाईन फेयरली छात्रवृत्ति आवेदन पर भरने के लिए गुणगुनवार विधियां निधारी की जाती हैं :-			
क्र. सं.	विषय वस्तु	निधारित तिथियां	
1	उत्तर मंत्रीक छात्रवृत्ति हेतु राजकीय एवं निजी मान्यता प्राप्त शिक्षण संस्थाओं में अध्ययनरत छात्रवृत्ति के द्वारा फेरलेत ऑनलाईन आवेदन पर पंजीकरण कर ऑनलाईन आवेदन पर करने के लिए पोर्टल प्रारम्भ करने की तिथि	15 अगस्त 2026	
2	उत्तर मंत्रीक छात्रवृत्ति हेतु राजकीय एवं निजी मान्यता प्राप्त शिक्षण संस्थाओं में अध्ययनरत छात्रवृत्ति के द्वारा फेरलेत ऑनलाईन आवेदन पर पंजीकरण कर ऑनलाईन आवेदन पर करने के लिए अनितन तिथि/पोर्टल बन्द करने की तिथि	31 अक्टूबर 2026	
उत्तर मंत्रीक छात्रवृत्ति योजनाओं से संबंधित केन्द्र / राज्य सरकार द्वारा जारी आद्यतन दिशा-निर्देश की विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए www.sjmsnew.rajasthan.gov.in/scholarship अथवा विभागीय वेबसाइट sje.rajasthan.gov.in का अनिवार्य रूप से अवलोकन कर लेते हैं।			
(सलित कुमार)			निदेशक एवं संयुक्त शासन सचिव

BJP protests move to start lottery sale

Express News Service
Shimla, September 2

THE OPPOSITION BJP on Wednesday staged a protest at the Himachal Pradesh Assembly against the state government's decision to introduce lottery sales, the alleged failure to generate employment and cannabis cultivation.


Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Ltd.
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सां०नि०वि० वृत्त चूरू

क्रमांक :-754 दिनांक: 13.08.2026

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या ०4/2026-27

इच्छुक निविदादाताओं से निम्न चूरू में रातक कार्यों अर्थात् प्रती पथ पर आरवृक्षी कार्य (निष्कमुखा रोप विन्यास व पथार अर्थात्) कार्य होतु अनुमानित लगान रशि रु० 15,10,93 लाख की ई-निविदा आमन्त्रित की जाती है। कार्य के निविदा उपर दिनांक 08.09.2026 तक 6.00 बजे तक अनिवार्य अग्रपरीक्ष करार आयोजित होगा। उक्त निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण राज्य सरकार के प्रोक्वायरमेंट पोर्टल <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://proc.rajasthan.gov.in> व विभागीय वेबसाईट <http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in> पर देखे जा सकते हैं।

NIB No- PWD2627A2369
UBN No:-

1. PWD2627WSOB10519
2. PWD2627WSOB10521
3. PWD2627WSOB10523
4. PWD2627WSOB10526

हस्ता/-
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
सांनिवि वृत्त चूरू

DIPR/C/15533/2026



POOMPUHAR SHIPPING CORPORATION LIMITED

(A Government of Tamilnadu Enterprise)

892, Anna Salai, IVth Floor, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035, India

Telephone No. : 044 - 2433005 / 805 / 748 ; 91-44-24344-945 / 2433706,

E-mail : pscship@nic.net.in CIN : U63090TN1974PLC068596

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER No. PSC/TC/THRUVALLUVAR/D/01/2026-27, Dt.04.08.2026

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER FOR DRY-DOCK OF 130 PAX (131 NON-AC) 150 PAX (130 AC) PARTIALLY AIR-CONDITIONED M.L.THRUVALLUVAR SAILING UNDER POMOUPHAR SHIPPING CORPORATION LIMITED, KANNIYAKUMARI FERRY SERVICE, KANNIYAKUMARI.

Bids are invited from the eligible shipbuilders/contractor/yard for Poompuhar Shipping Corporation Limited, Kannyiakumari ferry service, Kannyiakumari. to carry out dry-dock repair of 130 PAX (131 non-AC) 150 PAX (130 AC) partially air-conditioned M.L. Thruvalluvur sailing under Poompuhar Shipping Corporation Limited, Kannyiakumari ferry service, Kannyiakumari. 60 days from taken and handing over at Kannyiakumari ferry service, Kannyiakumari.

On-line Bid Submission start Submission end Technical bid Opening Price bid Opening Value of the Tender	1000 Hrs. on 03.09.2026 1200 Hrs. on 23.09.2026 1000 Hrs. on 23.09.2026 1600 Hrs. on 23.09.2026 or after Rs.48,82,000/-
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Bid submission through the NIC web portal : <https://tenders.gov.in/nicgeppage> EMD Through above web portal for Rs. 50,000/-

Prospective Bidders are advised to refer our website www.tamlnip.com <http://tenders.gov.in> for downloading the tender specifications and the specific important details. The Tender document is available in the above websites and the same may be downloaded at free of cost. The bids should be uploaded through the NIC portal before closing the bids and after the closing period, the condition requirements and the details mentioned in the website shall meet out by the Bidders. This advertisement is for invitation of bids only. The details given in the website are comprehensive.

Tender Opening Venue: Poompuhar Shipping Corporation Ltd., IV Floor, 892, Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai- 600 035

Further, all communication will be updated through web portal only.

DI/PT/27-TENDER/2026

GENERAL MANAGER (OPERATIONS)

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA				CORRIGENDUM	
SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/ NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD/ CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	DIRECTORATE OF STATE TRANSPORT HARYANA.	02/2026-27/SPA-1/TECH TENDER ID- 2026_HRY_539130-1	ONLINE TENDER FOR PURCHASE OF 500 STANDARD NON-AC DIESEL BUSES MEETING BS-VI EMISSION NORMS. THE CLOSING DATE IS EXTENDED UP TO 14.09.2026 TILL 15:00 HOURS AND OPENING OF TECHNICAL BID WILL BE 21.09.2026 AFTER 15:00 HOURS	https://harranrps.gov.in http://etenders.hry.nic.in	01722710371 landbuilding0002@gmail.com
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeaprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in					No- 48890/HRY

 GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA		TENDER NOTICE 				
SR NO	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	PWD B&R, AMBALA	STRENGTHENING OF OLD NH-65 (KM 5.00 TO 11.400) (ROAD ID 12708) IN AMBALA DISTRICT (WORK PROGRAMME 2026 AND 27) (UNDER AMBALA CITY NSTITUENCY). (GROUP 3)	31.08.2026 14.09.2026	743.53 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01712977224 pwd-ecpd1-ambala@hry.nic.in
2	PWD B&R, AMBALA	WIDENING AND STRENGTHENING OF 04 NOS. ROADS UNDER PROVINCIAL DIVISION NO.1, PWD BANDR BRANCH, AMBALA CANTT IN AMBALA DISTT UNDER AMBALA CITY CONSUENCY UNDER WORK PROGRAMME 2026-27 (ROAD ID 97, 197, 205 AND 206) (GROUP 1) + 2 WORKS	31.08.2026 10.09.2026	1051.64 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01712977224 pwd-ecpd1-ambala@hry.nic.in
3	PWD B&R, HISAR	CONSTRUCTION OF 200 BEDDED CIVIL HOSPITAL AT SEC-9 IN DISTT. FATEHABAD. (PDG 11 KV INDEPENDENT FEEDER ONLY)	01.09.2026 07.09.2026	351.82 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01662225651 pwd-ceed-hissar@hry.nic.in
4	PWD B&R, KATHAL	IMPROVEMENT OF 7 NOS. ROADS (1) K.K ROAD TO GEONG (ROAD ID 7097) (2) SARPAN KHRI TO SEGA ROAD (ROAD ID 7095) (3) KATHWAR-MUNDRI ROAD TO KARNAL ROAD AT VILL. MUNDRI (ROAD ID 9418) (4) MUNDRI NAINA DHONS ROAD TO MUNDRI KATHWAR ROAD (ROAD ID - 10092) (5) KATHIAL PEHOWA TO JAGDISHPURA (ROAD ID 7122) (6) KEORAK BAROUT ROAD TO KATHIAL PEHOWA ROAD (ROAD ID 9414) (7) BAROUT TO TECK RLY. STATION (ROAD ID 7132) IN KATHIAL CONSUENCY UNDER WORK PROGRAMME 2026-27 (GROUP-II)	CLOSING DATE 10.09.2026	430.49 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9896320998 pwd-ecpd-kathal@hry.nic.in
5	PANCHAYATI RAJ, AMBALA	DPLAN CONST. OF COMMUNITY HALL AT VILLAGE DHURALA AND INSTALLATION OF OPEN GYM NEAR COMMUNITY CENTRE AT VILLAGE CHUDIALA BLOCK SAHA + 9 WORKS	29.08.2026 07.09.2026	158.96 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0171-2551368 prexeeng.amb@hry.nic.in
6	PANCHAYATI RAJ, AMBALA	D PLAN INSTALLATION OF SHED AND GRANITE FLOORING ON STAIRS IN STADIUM IN VILLAGE PANJOKHRA SAHIB AND SHED ON OPEN GYM IN STADIUM IN VILLAGE PANJOKHRA SAHIB BLOCK AMBALA-II + 4 WORKS	01.09.2026 07.09.2026	51.25 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0171-2551368 prexeeng.krk@hry.nic.in 5125343
7	PANCHAYATI RAJ, KURUKSHETRA	CONSTRUCTION OF BALMIKI CHAUPAL , VILLAGE - SANGHORA, BLOCK - BABAIN	01.09.2026 08.09.2026	9.71 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9896224357 prexeeng.krk@hry.nic.in
8	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, CHARKHI DADRI	REGARDING REQUIREMENT OF MATERIAL IN STORE UNDER JURISDICTION OF LWS (M) SUB DIVISION NO. 2, CHARKHI DADRI FOR FLOOD DEWATERING & 1 MORE WORK	CLOSING DATE 07.09.2026	15.21 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01250-220058 xcnlwsmech@gmail.com
9	BPS GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN KHANPUR KALAN SONPAT	REGARDING PUBLISHING OF ADVERTISEMENT FOR TENDER FOR CMC OF WATER PURIFIER (54 NOS.) INSTALLED IN BPS GMC FOR WOMEN, KHANPUR KALAN + ONE OTHERS WORKS.	02.09.2026 08.09.2026	EMD 20000	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9416803361 bpsgmc.purchase@gmail.com
10	KALPANA CHAWLA GOVT MEDICAL COLLEGE KARNAL	E-TENDER FOR SUPPLY MEDICINE AND CONSUMABLE (CAP, NITROFURANTOIN, TAB. PREGABALIN WITH METHYLCOBALAMIN, TAB. RANITIDINE ETC.) AT KCGMC, KARNAL	08.09.2026 15.09.2026	EMD 10000	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9896154463 director.keghe-hry@gov.in
11	FOREST DEPARTMENT, HISAR	SUPPLY OF LIVE FISH FINGERLINGS ROHO, KATLA, GOLDEN AND MURGUL ETC AT DEV BHOOMI COMMUNITY RESERVE, VILLAGE KALWAN, DISTT. JIND	01.09.2026 07.09.2026	4.19 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01662259233 dwlohisar@gmail.com
12	FOREST DEPARTMENT, HISAR	DIGGING OF KACHA POND, DESILTING OF POND, SOIL FILLING AROUND THE TREES AND EARTHEN MOUND AT DEV BHOOMI COMMUNITY RESERVE, VILLAGE KALWAN, DISTT. JIND	01.09.2026 07.09.2026	5.81 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01662259233 dwlohisar@gmail.com
13	CIVIL SURGEON, SIRSA	REQUEST TO ADVERTISE E-TENDER OF ORTHO IMPLANT & INSTRUMENTS 2026-27 DISTRICT SIRSA	03.09.2026 15.09.2026	EMD 1 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9416255807 cpsirsa@gmail.com
14	WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT, PANJRI PLANT, GHARAUNDA, KARNAL	RATE CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF HDPE BAGS FOR THE YEAR 2026-27	01.09.2026 08.09.2026	4.50 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01662259233 panjriplantwcdgharaunda@yahoo.co.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT www.etenders.hry.nic.in

No. 48889/HRY

 TAMILNADU MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED No.417, Pantheon Road, Egmore, Chennai-600008. Phone:28191890/28190259; Fax: 044 -28190636; Mail: equippment.tnmisc@tn.gov.in						
Sl.No	Online Tender no with qty/ Document Cost	Sale Period	Pre bid	Submission	Opening	
1	E1555/WPS/RC/TNMISC/ENG/2026, dt: 01.09.2026 Water Purification System (8) – Rs.5,725/-	07.09.2026 to 21.09.2026	15.09.2026 11.00 AM	22.09.2026 11.00 AM	22.09.2026 12.00 Noon	
2	E1555/EYE/RC/TNMISC/ENG/2026, dt: 01.09.2026 Streak Retinoscope (28), Direct Ophthalmoscope (147) & OCT Low End (28) – Rs.5,725/-	07.09.2026 to 21.09.2026	15.09.2026 11.30 AM	22.09.2026 11.00 AM	22.09.2026 12.00 Noon	
3	E1557/EYE/RC/TNMISC/ENG/2026, dt:01.09.2026 RETACAM (5) – Rs.5,725/-	07.09.2026 to 21.09.2026	15.09.2026 12.00 Noon	22.09.2026 11.00 AM	22.09.2026 12.00 Noon	
4	E1558/HAO/RC/TNMISC/ENG/2026, dt: 01.09.2026 - Hot Air Oven (32) – Rs.2,290/-	07.09.2026 to 21.09.2026	15.09.2026 12.30 PM	22.09.2026 11.00 AM	22.09.2026 12.00 Noon	
5	E1559/CATH/CON/RC/TNMISC/ ENG/2026, dt: 01.09.2026 - Various types of Cathlab Consumables - Rs.5,725/-	08.09.2026 to 08.10.2026	17.09.2026 11.00 AM	09.10.2026 11.00 AM	09.10.2026 12.00 Noon	



GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF
RURAL WORKS ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR
 Email Id.: crew_bbsr@yahoo.com

25001/1070/2627

Letter No 31044

"e" Procurement Notice for bridge works in Odisha
(Online-03 (Bridge) / 2026-27 dt. 31.08.2026)

Dated. 31-8-26

1 Name of the work 2 Total No. of Road 3 Estimate cost 4 Class of Contractor 5 Period of completion 6 Other details	Construction of bridge work 11 (Eleven) nos Rs 1122.02 to 4681.06 lacs "A" Class, "Special" Class & "Super" Class as applicable. As mentioned in Column 7 of T.C.S.
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Procurement Officer

Bid Identification No.
Online-03 (Bridge)/2026-27

No. of bridge works
11 (Eleven) nos

Availability of tender online for bidding	
From	To
11.09.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	03.10.2026 Up to 5.00 P.M.

Chief Engineer, Buildings & Bridges, Rural Works, Odisha, Bhubaneswar

Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which will be available in website www.tendersosissa.gov.in

Sd/-

**Chief Engineer (Buildings & Bridges),
Rural Works, Odisha, Bhubaneswar**

OIPR- 25001/25123/1/26-27/0014

COURT FLAGS DISCREPANCIES IN ACCIDENTAL DEATH REPORT

Six years later, Bombay HC orders CBI probe into Disha Salian’s death

Omkar Gokhale
Mumbai, September 2

SIX YEARS after Disha Salian’s death, the Bombay High Court on Wednesday ordered a fresh investigation by the CBI, saying that the Mumbai Police inquiry had “raised more questions than it answers” and that an FIR was necessary to establish whether a cognisable offence had been committed.

At the same time, the court made it clear that the CBI must not treat anyone as an accused unless the investigation throws up sufficient grounds for reasonable suspicion.

Disha, a former manager of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput, on the night between June 8 and 9, 2020, died after falling from a residential building in Malad, Mumbai. Six days later, Rajput was found dead at his Bandra residence. The bench of Justice Sarang V Kotwal and Justice Ranjitsinha R Bhonsale directed the CBI to appoint an investigating officer, record the statement of Salian’s father Satish Salian and investigate “all aspects sur-



Disha Salian’s (right) father Satish Salian at Bombay HC. AKASH PATIL

rounding the circumstances” in which she died.

The court also flagged 10 circumstances in the case records that, it said, required a thorough investigation, including a belated spot panchnama, discrepancies in the accidental death report and unexplained police presence at the building before Salian’s death was reported.

The HC said the Mumbai Police had “sufficient opportunity to investigate the offence” but had not registered an FIR despite allegations pointing to a

cognisable offence. Instead, the police had proceeded under Section 174 of the CrPC, which the court found “inadequate and insufficient”.

The court directed the Malvani police station to hand over all relevant papers and articles to the CBI officer and said the investigation should be conducted under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023. “Nobody shall be treated as an accused, unless in the opinion of the IO there are sufficient grounds to raise reasonable sus-



picion against him depending on the material collected under the investigation,” the HC said, adding that it was making “no observations against any particular individual”.

The court said the CBI should file an appropriate report before the competent court if an offence is made out. If the investigation finds that no offence was committed, the CBI should file a summary, against which Disha’s father would have the right to file a protest petition.

The court also said the fresh

investigation was necessary to ensure that evidence, if any, was not destroyed or lost with the passage of time. It observed that an investigation that had already continued in two stages for six years “cannot go on for an inordinately long time”.

Disha’s father had initially raised concerns over attempts to malign his daughter’s name amid speculation surrounding her death. In 2025, however, he approached the HC through advocate Nilesh Ojha, alleging a cover-up in the investigation and seeking registration of an FIR and a fresh probe.

Opposing the plea, Mumbai Police, represented by Chief Public Prosecutor Shishir Hiray, said its investigation had concluded that Salian died by suicide.

It also told the court that the findings of a Special Investigation Team constituted in 2023 were consistent with those of the earlier investigation and found no foul play. The police said the investigation did not substantiate allegations of sexual assault.

Jaishankar commences trip to Ukraine, Poland

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, September 2

IN A diplomatic tightrope walk, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar is headed to Ukraine on a bilateral visit on Thursday even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi continues his engagements with Russia.

Announcing the visit on Wednesday, a Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson said Jaishankar “will undertake an official visit to Ukraine and the Republic of Poland from 3-5 September 2026”.

“...EAM will hold bilateral consultations with his counterparts, Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha of Ukraine, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski of Poland,” the spokesperson said.

“The visit will focus on enhancing bilateral relations and also provide an opportunity to exchange views on regional developments and issues of mutual interest,” the spokesperson added.

This is Jaishankar’s first standalone visit to Ukraine, which has been at war with Russia since February 2022. His last visit, in August 2024, was as part of the official del-

egation accompanying Modi. In contrast, Jaishankar has visited Russia at least 10 times since 2019.

The EAM’s visit to Ukraine comes at a time when Prime Minister Modi is engaging Russian President Vladimir Putin twice in the span of a fortnight.

The development assumes significance in the wake of an Indian being killed during Russian attacks on the Ukraine capital on Tuesday, making it the second such death in the country. The safety of Indian nationals in the war-torn region has been a cause of concern for New Delhi, and it has raised the issue with both Moscow and Kyiv.

In fact, after five Indian seafarers were killed in July last year, India and Ukraine had a diplomatic conversation. The latter had then proposed a conversation between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries.

India has always advocated dialogue and diplomacy to bring an end to the Ukraine-Russia war. That said, the visit could also be aimed at another proposition that India has fielded — i.e. to participate in rebuilding Ukraine in the post-conflict future.

India raps Pakistan over ‘destruction of century-old Hindu temple’

Express News Service
New Delhi, September 2

INDIA ON Wednesday unequivocally condemned the reported destruction of a Hindu temple in the Narowal region of Pakistan, demanding that Islamabad promptly investigate the incident and hold those responsible fully accountable.

New Delhi said that Pakistan must take immediate measures to restore the “desecrated temple” and fulfil its primary obligation to guarantee the safety, security and well-being of all its minority citizens.

“We have noted...the disturbing reports of the destruction of a historic Hindu temple in village Siraj, Narowal, Pakistan. We unequivocally condemn this reprehensible act of vandalism against a century-old minority place of worship,” the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. “The apparent apathy of authorities and failure to protect this century-old temple is alarming,” Jaiswal said.

● RESTORED MASTERPIECE WILL BE SCREENED AT FRANCE’S FESTIVAL LUMIERE IN LYON, FOLLOWED BY A SPECIAL SCREENING DURING BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

Meena Kumari classic Pakeezah gets a facelift, set for world premiere in October

54 years after its grand premiere in Mumbai, Kamal Amrohi’s classic will return to the big screen in a restored version

Alaka Sahani
Mumbai, September 2

NEARLY 54 YEARS ago, the film cans for *Pakeezah*’s premiere arrived at Mumbai’s Maratha Mandir in a palanquin and the screening was attended by its director Kamal Amrohi, lead actor Meena Kumari and many prominent film personalities.

After a two-year restoration process, spearheaded by the Film Heritage Foundation (FHF), the cinematic masterpiece will have the world pre-

miere of its restored version at France’s Festival Lumière in Lyon in October, followed by another special screening during the BFI London Film Festival.

The Indian classic was conceptualised in the mid-1950s as a grand tribute to the beauty of Amrohi’s wife and muse, Meena Kumari.

Set against the exquisite backdrop of Lucknow’s twilight era of nawabs, *Pakeezah* showcases a career-defining performance by Meena Kumari as the tragic courtesan Sahibjaan.

Due to a number of technical and personal reasons as well as budgetary constraints, the film remained in production for 15 years.

Filming began in black-and-white in 1956 before shifting to Eastmancolor in 1958. Production slowed due to casting shifts, script revisions, and Amrohi’s perfectionism that proved expensive.

In 1964, the film’s production stalled when Amrohi and Kumari separated due to personal differences.

The project suffered a



After multiple roadblocks, *Pakeezah* hit theatres in 1972

major blow when Kumari was diagnosed with liver cirrhosis in 1968.

A year later, the project was miraculously revived when actors Sunil Dutt and Nargis viewed the existing footage and convinced an ailing Kumari to complete the shoot.

The production faced further tragedy when legendary cinematographer Josef Wirsching died in 1967.

A rotating collective of India’s top cinematographers stepped in to complete the work and meticulously match his visual aesthetic.

Similarly, music composer Ghulam Mohammed passed away in 1968 after composing the film’s iconic songs.

Legendary Naushad was brought in to compose the final background score.

Pakeezah finally hit theatres on February 4, 1972, arriving just as Indian cinema was shifting away from the refined, Urdu-inflected studio melodramas of the mid-century toward gritty, urban action blockbusters,” says a press note by the FHF. Kumari passed away on March 31, 1972.

Following her tragic death and overwhelming critical acclaim, the film emerged as a box office sensation.

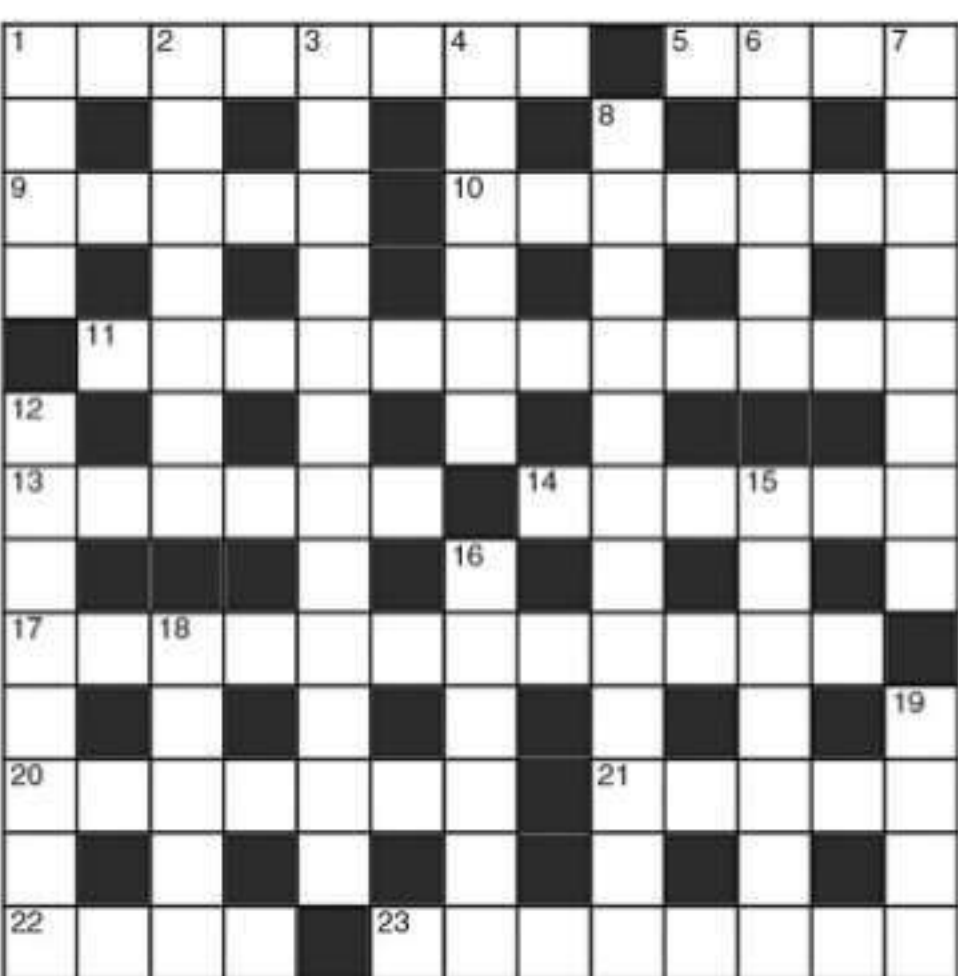
Recounting the process of its restoration FHF director Shivendra Singh Dungarpur says: “When I went to inspect the original camera negative, I

saw that it had almost melted. The other film elements we had to work with were not in good condition, with faded colours, scratches and mould ... During our research, we discovered original film stills which helped a great deal.”

The restoration team collected an interpositive (IP) and a CinemaScope print found at the Ramnord Lab. They also secured access to a colour reversal internegative preserved by the NFDC-National Film Archive of India.

These materials helped in the restoration of the 153-minute film. *Pakeezah*’s restoration was carried out by FHF in association with the Amrohi family.

● CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**

1 If rebuffed stay home (8)

5 ‘The Church’ incomplete as address for a priest (4)

9 A number enter with a measure (5)

10 End of clues or anagram (7)

11 Minor role in yet another swindle (6,6)

13 Result strangely in a glossy appearance (6)

14 Not quite a fifty majority (6)

17 He’s generally responsible for moving scenes (4,8)

20 It’s hell for nine at sea (7)

21 Provide one part of a television (5)

22 Painter involved in yoga (4)

23 All right for light and water (4,4)
- DOWN**

1 Colour and become servile (4)

2 Put right - a slipping bandage? (7)

3 Written evidence of class distinction - or otherwise! (6,6)

4 Resolve to settle (6)

6 Compelled to jump (5)

7 Weather men caught in a flurry of sleet (8)

8 Communal study of US coal is very involved (6,6)

12 Blundering on stage perhaps (8)

15 Turns in revue do appear to be unpaid (7)

16 Animal that’s shy up to a point (6)

18 High attic required by youth leader (5)

19 Check key lubricant (4)

SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD 6083 **ACROSS:** 1 Reintstate, 8 Arena, 9 Capital, 10 Rig out, 11 Athens, 12 Flaggging, 15 Sanskrit, 18 Evolve, 20 Averse, 21 Habitat, 22 Exile, 23 Tailoress **DOWN:** 2 Exact, 3 Noised, 4 Transfer, 5 Eating, 6 Deposit, 7 Castigate, 11 Apostates, 13 After all, 14 Inherit, 16 Kismet, 17 Hosier, 19 Vials

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective circles below. Select the letters in the shaded circles and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

Stoop and you’ll be stepped on; stand tall and you’ll be ____ - Carlos A. Urbizo (4,2)

DIVAO

●●●●●●●●

CLEATS

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ADELNH

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SOLUTIONS: Avoid, Cetus, Castle, Handle ANSWER: Stoop and you’ll be stepped on; stand tall and you’ll be shota-

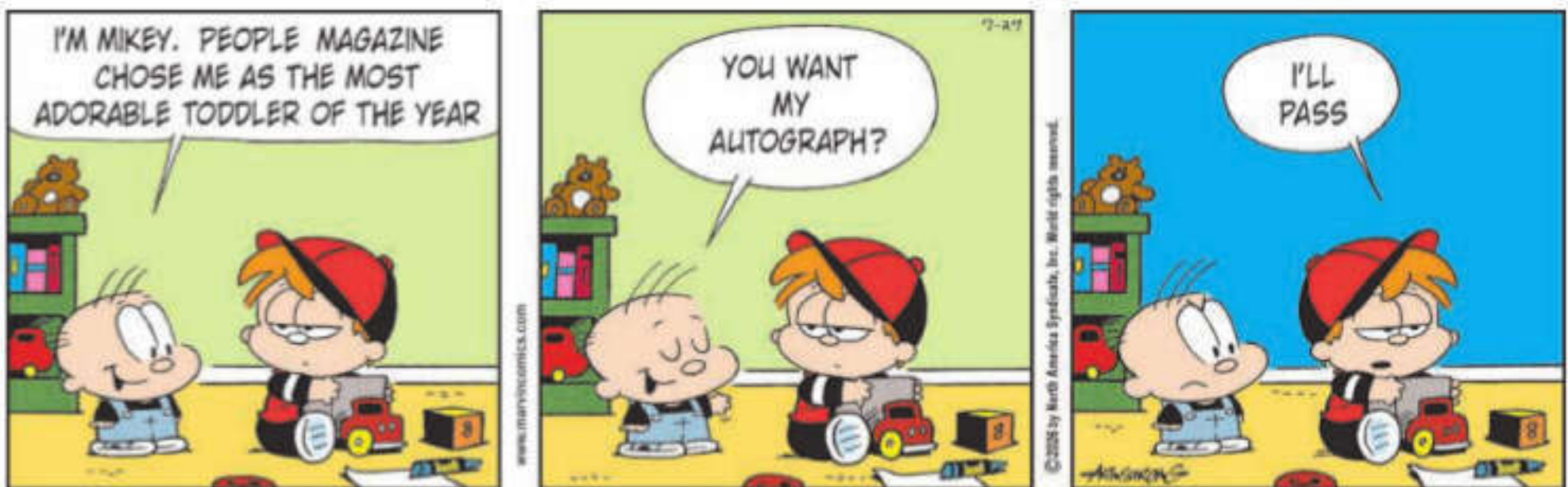
● OVER THE HEDGE



● CALVIN & HOBBS



● MARVIN



DIFFICULTY LEVEL 3s INSTRUCTIONS

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SUDOKU 6429

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 6428

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

SC: Mishra only pro tem BCI Chairperson until new Bar body is in place

Express News Service
New Delhi, September 2

THE SUPREME Court on Wednesday said that Bar Council of India (BCI) Chairperson Manan Kumar Mishra's position was only "pro tem" until a freshly constituted lawyers' body elects its office-bearers and directed that it has to take any policy decision in consultation with the Attorney General (AG) R Venkataramani and Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta.

A three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, also comprising Justices Joyimalya Bagchi and V Mohana, was hearing pleas challenging the continuation of Mishra as BCI Chairperson after the expiry of the tenure of the last Council, and the April 2025 BCI notification extending his term until 2030.

Representing the petitioners, Senior Advocate Madhavi Divan said the tenure specified by the BCI Rules is two years, and the April 2025 notification regarding the extension of Mishra's term does not say under which clause it was issued.

Referring to the proviso to Section 4(3) of the Advocates Act, she said the provision intends to prevent an administrative vacuum and allows last Chairman or Vice Chairman to

continue until the new Council is in place, but has been used to avoid elections and perpetuate the existing office-holders.

Justice Bagchi said the notification cannot go beyond the Rules. "If the rule holds, it can't extend beyond 2027. On the face of the rule, notification can't override a statute and empower a body to give additional tenure," he said. The CJI said the concerns raised by the petitioners would be addressed if the elections are completed soon.

Underlining the need to involve the AG and SG in policy decisions, Justice Bagchi told BCI counsel Senior Advocate Guru Krishnakumar: "You should also bear in mind that you are like a pro tem Chairman till a fresh election of the BCI, pursuant to the elections already conducted in the State Bar Councils, takes place. So, it is not a situation where he is democratically elected and continues to be so. His term is co-terminus with the elections which are imminent. Because the new Bar Councils are about to be constituted. So, in this situation... day-to-day functioning is left to the pro tem Chairman. But whenever a policy decision is taken, a permanent ex-officio member, like the Attorney General, must be involved."

Nepal PM thanks India for aid after minister's 'compensation' claim

India sends fifth instalment of 5-tonne relief material to Nepal

Divya A
New Delhi, September 2

INDIA ON Wednesday dispatched the fifth tranche of over 5 tonnes of essential medicines to flood-ravaged Nepal, alongside an 11-member rescue team. Nepalese Prime Minister Balen Shah thanked India for rapid assistance, also stating in Parliament that around 4,000 people remain missing a week after flash floods struck Rasuwa district. PM Shah's statement comes after Nepal Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal had said that Nepal should not view post-disaster assistance simply as charity, but as an issue of "justice and compensation".

"The fifth Indian aircraft has departed for Nepal. It is carrying an 11-member rescue team with specialised equipment, and 5.5 tonnes of essential medicines," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in a post on X on Wednesday morning.

India has already delivered 68.5 tonnes of relief materials to Nepal, along with a team of doctors and paramedics, a technical



India has already delivered 68.5 tonnes of relief materials to Nepal, along with a team of doctors and paramedics. X/DRS/JAISHANKAR

contingent and equipment for search and rescue operations.

The first tranche of relief material was sent by India hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Shah on August 26, the day flash floods struck the Himalayan nation. The floods

thanked India and China for their rapid emergency assistance, highlighting the role of both neighbours in the ongoing rescue and relief operation. However, his acknowledgement comes after Nepal's Foreign Affairs Minister Shisir Khanal called for a shift from conventional humanitarian aid towards "climate compensation" from major emitters, including India, China and the US.

Indian teams have been involved in efforts around hydro-power tunnels and in forensic work linked to the large number of casualties and search for the missing. Shah said as many as 11,993 people have been rescued so far, while 3,916 people are still missing.

In an interview with a Nepalese media outlet, Khanal argued that Nepal's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions is negligible but the country faces severe consequences from a changing Himalayan environment. He has said Nepal should not view post-disaster assistance simply as charity, but as an issue of "justice and compensation".

"We are shifting our diplomatic framework from 'aid' to 'justice and compensation'. This is not a matter of charity; it is a matter of legal and moral liability," the Foreign Minister was cited as saying by Nepali media.

In the interview, Khanal said India, China, and the US have a "historical responsibility to compensate vulnerable nations like Nepal".

India to help rebuild Trishuli school

India will rebuild the school that was washed away in Bidur town of Nepal. The principal of the school had evacuated around 900 students to a higher area minutes before the raging currents obliterated the campus. On Tuesday, India's Ambassador to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, met with Rajendra Dawadi, the principal of Tribhuvan Trishuli Secondary School in Bidur, Nuwakot.

During the meeting, Srivastava conveyed that India will support the complete reconstruction of the school. Originally established in the 1950s with Indian assistance and designed by an engineer involved in the construction of the Trishuli hydropower plant, the school's newer building was constructed in 2022 through grant funding under the High Impact Community Development Programme (HICDP).

In a post on X, Srivastava commended Principal Dawadi's swift decision to ring the school bell and clear the premises on August 26 averted a massive human tragedy.

Mumbai Port orders safety probe after crane overturns at Indira Dock

Express News Service
Mumbai, September 2

THE MUMBAI Port Authority (MbPA) has ordered a detailed investigation into the overturning of a shore-based mobile crane during heavy-lift cargo operations at Indira Dock on Sunday evening, and directed the operators concerned to take corrective and preventive measures, the port authority said in a press statement.

The incident occurred around 7.15 pm at BPS Berth while the crane was being used for project cargo operations alongside M/V Vienna. The crane overturned towards the vessel, following which a fire broke out.

The MbPA Fire Brigade, with assistance from the vessel's crew, brought the fire under control, the release said. Two crane operators were injured and evacuated to hospital for treatment. The affected area was subsequently secured.

Senior MbPA officers have been monitoring the situation. The site has been inspected by the statutory safety authority concerned, according to the statement.

The port authority said representatives of the vessel, P&I and insurance agencies, the operations and maintenance operator and other stakeholders have been engaged for surveys and assessment of the incident, as well as for the safe retrieval and removal of the affected crane.

MbPA said it was ensuring that the operators undertake necessary corrective and preventive measures to ensure safe and compliant cargo operations and prevent a recurrence.

The authority added that the investigation would examine any possible negligence, dereliction, violation of safety requirements or other non-compliance.

If lapses are established, action will be taken against the persons, operators or agencies found responsible in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

NTA looks for exam centres, seeks help from technical education body

Gayathri Mani
New Delhi, September 2

AS PART of a plan to identify and develop testing centres to conduct computer-based examinations for NEET-UG next year, the National Testing Agency (NTA) has asked the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to collect information from government institutions on their IT infrastructure and available space.

Following NTA's directions, the AICTE wrote to the Vice Chancellors of state-run technical universities, directors and principals of AICTE-approved government-run higher education institutions earlier this week. This comes amid the ongoing overhaul of the NTA — the nodal autonomous body that conducts NEET-UG and

other entrance tests for higher educational institutions — after the paper leak earlier this year. The government has said that the NEET-UG exam will move from pen-and-paper mode to computer-based testing from next year.

The NEET-UG paper leak prompted the Union Education Ministry to cancel the first entrance exam on May 3, in which around 22 lakh candidates appeared. The cancellation sparked nationwide protests and compelled Dharmendra Pradhan to resign as Education Minister.

According to an official order, NTA wrote to AICTE on August 5 and sought information on the availability of computing infrastructure and vacant space in government institutions, which can then be

considered for being developed as Standard Testing Centres for entrance exams.

"NTA conducts various national level examinations in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode. With the progressive migration of examinations mode and the requirement for a wider geographically distributed network of testing centres, NTA is assessing the availability of suitable infrastructure in Government institutions across the country," AICTE said in a communication to the Vice Chancellors of state-run institutions.

All AICTE-approved institutions, including engineering colleges, polytechnic institutes, government university departments and other state-run technical or management institutions, have been requested to provide information about

their infrastructure.

The AICTE has also shared a format with the institutions. They will need to provide details of the number of functional computers/computer systems available, IT infrastructure and systems, networking and internet connectivity, availability of power backup and the availability of CCTV and related facilities. Details on vacant space have also been sought.

"The information is required only in respect of government colleges/institutions approved by AICTE. Institutions are requested to ensure that the information furnished is accurate, complete and duly verified by the competent authority of the institution," it said. The institutions have been asked to submit the details to AICTE by September 15.



Students' protest

Police use water cannons to disperse SFI activists during a protest march towards the State Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday. The demonstration was organised to raise demands related to education policy reforms and student welfare issues. PTI

Man stabbed outside Gujarat court as murder suspects turn on one another

Brendan Dabhi
Ahmedabad, September 2

AMAN was stabbed in the stomach on a court's premises in Gujarat's Kutch district after he and four murder accused people got into an altercation on Wednesday morning, the police said.

"It was fortunate we were on scene and managed to apprehend the attacker. Otherwise we would have had a murder on the court premises," said M J Christian, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Bhuj.

It took three police officers along with few other men to apprehend the attacker on the sessions court premises in Kutch.

Christian told *The Indian Express* the suspects were out on bail in a 2024 murder case and that the victim was a friend of one of them. "We moved him to GK General Hospital for treatment. We are waiting for him to recover to give a statement, following which an FIR would be filed in this case," he added.

Christian said he arrived at the court between 11 and 11.30

am to give a statement in a case. As soon as he stepped out of his vehicle, he noticed an altercation in the lane leading to the back of the courthouse towards the parking area.

Christian found a man brandishing a large knife, which he allegedly used to stab the victim. The police managed to subdue the attacker in the nick of time and made him drop the knife.

Videos that have since gone viral show police and others hitting the attacker in an attempt to make him let go of the weapon.

Surat gangster arrested for BJP worker's murder in May

Surat: Three months after a young BJP worker was fatally assaulted by a group of men, Surat police said they have arrested a notorious gangster from Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district for his alleged involvement in the murder. This was the fourth arrest in the case.

Jayesh Dalal, 21, who was a youth wing leader at Surat's BJP unit and a resident of Dindoli, was attacked in Udhna on May 18. Jayesh succumbed to his injuries later at a hospital. A murder case was registered at the Dindoli police station after a complaint by the victim's mother, Jayshree Dalal.

Police arrested Milind Koli, Kishan Parmar and Panakaj Patil, all residents of Dindoli, a couple of days after the murder. During interrogation, the trio disclosed that they killed Jayesh on the instructions of Sagar Sonavne alias Manyu Dukkar, the gangster. ENS

Tiger escapes cage, kills worker at Rajasthan biological park

Hamza Khan
Jaipur, September 2

IN A freak accident, a 42-year-old labourer, identified as Sugna Devi, was killed by a tiger at Jaipur's Nahargarh Biological Park Wednesday morning. The incident has prompted the forest department to suspend an official.

Devi and other women labourers had entered an enclosure at the park to cut grass when the cage of tiger Shivaji, located inside the enclosure, was opened, allowing the animal to escape and attack Devi.

Sugna's sister Kamla said, "There were seven of us — three were cutting grass and four of us, including me, were removing it. She was carrying the cut grass on her head and saw that someone had opened the tiger's cage. She immediately threw the grass and ran towards us. We took the help of the fence to jump outside the enclosure. We shouted but no one heard us."



Relatives mourn the death of Sugna Devi in Jaipur. PTI

While five of the women climbed the fence to escape, another climbed a tree. The women said Sugna too tried to escape by climbing the fence but was pulled down by the tiger, which mauled her to death. Following her death, Devi's family and relatives staged a protest, demanding compensation.

Deputy Conservator of Forests Dr Ashish Vyas said the cage had been opened by Hansa, in

charge of the Tiger Enclosure, as it was time to move the tiger to the display area.

Vyas said in view of the seriousness of the incident, Hansa was suspended "prima facie for negligence in duty and failure in following the safety protocol".

"An Assistant Conservator of Forests-level officer had also been appointed as investigating officer to conduct a detailed probe into the incident, he said.

Keralam CM slams cleric over remarks on women; IUML tiptoes around row

Shaju Philip
Thiruvananthapuram, September 2

KERALAM CHIEF Minister V D Satheesan Wednesday came out strongly against remarks by cleric A P Aboobacker Musliyar over the presence of Muslim women in the public sphere, despite its ally IUML's tacit support for the latter.



Keralam CM V D Satheesan

Referring to Eid Milad-un-Nabi marked last week, Musaliyar, who is popularly known as 'Kanthapuram', said women should not mingle with men in public places or platforms, and that Islamic celebrations should uphold "religious values and discipline". "Exhibiting young women in public places and among men (who are not related to them) is un-Islamic and such celebrations cannot be allowed," he said in a written directive issued to the community.

"What the Quran teaches is that women should remain quietly confined to their homes. If women enter the public arena, there will be great destruction," the cleric added.

As his remarks evoked a backlash, including from women of the community, various Muslim leaders and scholars, including those organisationally opposed to Kanthapuram, put their weight behind him. The IUML, which often acts as a buffer against orthodox elements dominating the community, also sought to justify the cleric's remarks.

IUML state chief and religious leader Panakkad Sayyid Sadiq Ali Shihab Thangal said: "He (Kanthapuram) might have meant women's safety. What is more important is the unity of the community as well as society. The IUML stand is to remain close to that. Kanthapuram stated (what he did) as a religious leader. Restrictions could be for the benefit of women. In modern society, women are the most targeted," Thangal said.

Satheesan was unequivocal in his comments Wednesday, saying Kanthapuram's stand "is not suitable for a progressive Kerala". "Neither the Congress nor the government can agree to this stand. It may have been okay to state this in the 19th century, but not in the 21st century. Women should be part of the mainstream, taking part in all activities. We have a progressive stand on this," the CM said.

On Kanthapuram citing the Quran, Satheesan said: "The Quran is being misinterpreted. Prophet Muhammad's first wife Khadija was a businesswoman. Another wife, Aisha, led troops... In the royal assembly of Caliph Umar, it was a woman who questioned the decision to reduce the Mahr amount (for wives)."

The CM's denunciation of

the cleric's stand drew sharp protests from the community and its leaders. Kerala Muslim Jamaath, a body of organisations owing allegiance to Kanthapuram, said Satheesan should apologise to the Muslim community for his 'Quran is being misinterpreted' remark.

Pro-IUML Muslim cleric's body SAMASTHA's president Jifri Muthukoya Thangal said: "Do not belittle those who speak on religious matters. Those related to religion will speak about religious matters..."

The cleric's remarks came in the wake of the active participation of women in festivities marking last week's Eid Milad-un-Nabi. During the recent Onam celebrations, too, Muslim women had been at the forefront of the festivities.

The IUML, which has been fielding women for local polls, nominated a Muslim woman during this year's Assembly polls. Fathima Tahliyya became the party's first Muslim MLA. Her candidature too was opposed by clerics, as well as a section of the SAMASTHA.

Rs 170 cheese garlic naan lands Goa cop in trouble

Express News Service
Panaji, September 2

DISPUTE OVER a Rs 170 garlic naan led Goa Police to initiate a departmental inquiry against a sub-inspector accused of abusing and threatening an employee of a restaurant in North Goa.

The incident was reported after a restaurant owner in Porvorim alleged misconduct by the police official. Police said the sub-inspector and his friend had gone to the restaurant for a meal and, after the meal, got into an argument with the staff over the "excessive" price of a cheese garlic naan. A purported

CCTV video of the incident went viral on social media, showing the police official and another man confronting a staffer at the restaurant.

In the purported clip, the police official allegedly hurled abuses at the restaurant staff and threatened the owner with police action for keeping the restaurant open past 11 pm.

A police officer, requesting anonymity, said, "The sub-inspector argued with a staffer over the food bill, specifically questioning why the cheese garlic naan was priced at Rs 170. When the staff tried to reason with him, he and his friend hurled abuses and threatened

the owner."

The issue was flagged in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday by Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao. Terming the incident "shocking", Congress MLA Alemao demanded the suspension of the police official.

"Yesterday in the House, we discussed the deteriorating law and order situation and today this allegation has come of police high-handedness in a restaurant in Porvorim," he said.

Responding to the issue, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said an inquiry had been initiated.

In a statement, the Goa Police said: "PSI Viraj Sawant,

posted at Porvorim police station, has been attached to GRP, Altinho for his alleged misbehaviour with hotel staff and further departmental action is initiated."

It added: "Goa Police reiterates that misconduct, corruption and violation of service discipline will not be tolerated. Appropriate action will be taken against any police personnel found violating the law, service rules or the standards of conduct expected of members of the force. The disciplinary proceedings are being conducted in accordance with the prescribed rules and principles of natural justice."



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BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Thank you for quashing the FIRs, but a question

ALL THE FIRs ... are hereby quashed.” With that order by a three-judge bench, led by Chief justice of India Surya Kant, a welcome moment of closure was reached on Tuesday. The story began with the students’ protests at Jantar Mantar against the NEET paper leak. It saw a brutish crackdown by the police on the march by mostly young protesters demanding a hearing from the people’s representatives in Parliament. These columns have strongly and consistently argued for the freedom to protest peacefully, which is part of the constitutionally guaranteed right to free speech and expression, and against its criminalisation by the government. And yet, rewind to Tuesday’s quashing of FIRs by the Court, acting on the request of governments at the Centre and some states, and a question continues to hang in the courtroom: If Tuesday’s quashing is an admission that a punishing state unfairly targeted citizens for exercising their democratic right to protest, isn’t the manner of the quashing problematic — because it seems selective? The cases being closed is the right thing to do, but are they being closed for the right reason? Does the government find it expedient to close them against one set of protesters while letting those against other protesters linger on, making the process their punishment? The question is, basically, this: What about the protesters left out of Tuesday’s frame?

Because the story of the April protests by factory workers in Noida demanding higher wages has played out very differently. There, as this paper has reported, a police crackdown saw up to 200 people taken into custody, including two under the stringent NSA. The court stepped in to grant relief in 84 per cent of the cases — on Wednesday, the Allahabad High Court quashed the NSA detention of a student activist, terming the state’s case “concocted”. But they fell one by one, for reasons ranging from lack of specific evidence to treating a crowd as the accused. There was no blanket relief — the average period a protester spent in custody was 53 days. Cases related to the 2019-2020 protests against a discriminatory citizenship law unleashed prolonged legal battles across various courts. In UP, the government continued to harass the accused, naming and shaming them in public hoardings, attaching properties by undue process, ignoring the court’s rebuke that it had become both complainant and adjudicator. Cases from the farmers’ protests of 2021 are still pending. As are those slapped against individuals across the country, for the “crime” of disagreeing with the powers that be.

Tuesday’s quashing of FIRs against students will be a valuable moment if it expands the area of freedom for all — if it means that henceforth, the government will be more tolerant of free speech and the Court will give the benefit of the doubt to the vulnerable individual, not the government. It will be unfortunate if it only means that the decision to file an FIR and the decision to quash a protest depends on whether the protester is seen as “us” or “them”.

Cauvery needs a distress-sharing pact

THE OPENING of the Mettur Dam’s sluice gates by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Tuesday will provide some relief to Cauvery Delta farmers. In a normal year, the dam opens on June 12, and its gates are shut on January 28, giving the region’s agriculturists a 230-day irrigation window. This schedule is, however, contingent on the monsoon and the release of water in the Cauvery’s upstream by Karnataka. The Tamil Nadu government has ascribed this year’s delay to the deficit in the southwest monsoon and Karnataka’s failure to honour its water-sharing obligation under the Supreme Court’s 2018 verdict. The dispute between the lower and upper riparian states ignited political tensions in the past three months, and the matter went to the Supreme Court, but the impasse wasn’t resolved. With the rainfall deficit narrowing in August, the Tamil Nadu government has leeway to release water for 45 days.

The Cauvery Management Authority, set up to oversee the implementation of the 2018 verdict, has worked during normal monsoon years. But the Court did not codify a formula for water-sharing in years when the rains play truant. Its emphasis on sustainable water use was lost on the two states, and the dispute flared up again in 2023 — the first below-par monsoon after 2018.

The Tamil Nadu government has said that it will continue legal efforts to secure its share of the Cauvery’s waters. Karnataka’s push for the Mekedatu Dam on the river has reignited old fears . The DK Shivakumar government’s argument that the dam would primarily serve Bengaluru’s water needs while allowing better regulation of releases hasn’t found any takers in Tamil Nadu. The fact is, the Cauvery today has to meet the competing demands of agriculture and urbanisation. Therefore, rather than lean on the judiciary, Cauvery-dependent states would do well to come together and plan for the efficient use of the river’s waters. Solutions ranging from disincentivising water-intensive crops to encouraging decentralised water management will require inputs of hydrologists, economists, agri-scientists and farmers’ organisations. Representatives of the two states will need to sit together, understand each other’s fears and shed confrontationist attitudes.

For the dog, it’s a toxic relationship

OVER 30,000 years ago, a subset of grey wolves set in motion the longest toxic relationship in history. It began with eating a few scraps, scavenging at the edge of *Homo sapiens* camps. Those first tentative steps towards a bipedal ape turned gradually into a rewarding symbiotic relationship — humans and dogs hunted together, offered each other protection and even childcare. Symbiosis turned to companionship, to affection and loyalty and now, to viral content about “fur babies”. But all the marketing about love of dog cannot hide the cruelties of man toward his best friend.

Kindred Companion Sciences, a US-based biotech start-up, claims to have created the first hypoallergenic dogs by using the CRISPR technique to edit their genes. The tweak, though, may have unintended consequences. After all, human beings have been “gene edited” dogs since they were first domesticated. And many, if not most, “purebreds” suffer from diseases and deformities as a result. Yet, the dachshund with a bad back and the pug on the verge of a heart attack do not hold it against their “owner”.

Between *Homo sapiens* and *Canis familiaris*, then, is an abusive friendship. A dog will accept its people as they are, warts and all, and it is a rare pooch that bites the hand that feeds it. That hand, though, might want its genes edited to avoid an allergy. Perhaps that’s less cruel than breeding programmes of the past and present. But let’s not call it love, or its victims “fur babies”.

13 crore gone, in a few months. A new solution for population problem – SIR

FOR DECADES, India worried about population explosion. Every Census brought alarming headlines. There were Five-Year Plans, family-planning programmes, red triangles, slogans and seminars on population stabilisation. Demographers warned us that Indians were multiplying too fast.

We need not have worried. The solution seems to have arrived from an entirely unexpected quarter: the Election Commission of India. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls appears capable of achieving in a few months what decades of population policy could not. Delhi had about 1.45 crore electors before the SIR. Its draft roll has come down to about 97.5 lakh — a fall of nearly 48 lakh, almost one-third. Maharashtra has gone from about 9.78 crore to 7.71 crore, leaving more than 2 crore names out of the draft. Karnataka, too, has seen more than a crore names excluded at the draft stage.

Across SIR’s three phases, more than 13 crore names have reportedly been left out of draft rolls. Admittedly, these are not all final deletions. Claims and objections will restore many names. But why allow such technicalities to spoil a great national achievement?

If electoral-roll arithmetic is treated as demography, India’s population problem may already be solving itself. Perhaps we are no longer 1.45 billion people. Perhaps we have quietly slipped to 1.2 billion. Another round or two of intensive revision and the much desired 1-billion mark may be within reach.

Think of the benefits. Water availability per capita will rise. Hospital beds per thousand population will improve. Housing shortages will decline. Teacher-pupil ratios will look healthier. Even per capita GDP can increase substantially without the inconvenience of increasing GDP. The Planning Com-

mission — had it survived — might have wanted to study the model. There is, however, a serious question hidden here.

Electoral rolls are not prepared afresh once in a generation. They are supposed to be continuously updated. There are annual revisions, Booth Level Officers (BLOs), political-party agents and elaborate procedures for additions, deletions and corrections.

If this machinery has been functioning reasonably well, how do we suddenly discover that nearly one-third of Delhi’s electorate requires exclusion from a draft roll, or that more than 2 crore names in Maharashtra have to disappear at one stroke?

Either the earlier rolls (with which EC conducted the 2024 general election) were astonishingly unreliable, or the present exercise requires an extraordinary explanation. Neither possibility is particularly reassuring.

We have seen before how massive exercises involving citizenship, identity and documentation can acquire a life of their own. The Assam NRC is an instructive example. After years of verification under Supreme Court supervision, enormous administrative effort and expenditure of about Rs 1,600 crore, the final list in 2019 excluded 19.06 lakh people.

The result, however, produced an unexpected political problem. Estimates widely circulated at the time suggested that a large proportion of those excluded were Bengali-speaking Hindus, rather than only Muslim migrants. NRC authorities never published an official religion-wise break-up. But the political dissatisfaction was unmistakable. The Assam government itself questioned the outcome and sought re-verification. Seven years later, the exercise remains in limbo.



S Y QURAISHI

If this machinery has been functioning reasonably well, how do we suddenly discover that nearly one-third of Delhi’s electorate requires exclusion from a draft roll, or that over 2 crore names in Maharashtra have to disappear?

The dimag is a public good, it’s worth protecting



PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI

IN HIS Pulitzer Prize-winning *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963), Richard Hofstadter traces a suspicion of the expert to a populist strain that equated learning with elitism and plain speech with virtue. This resentment of and opposition to the life of the mind, he argues, was not a product of McCarthyism alone; it was embedded in American culture, in its material pragmatism that measured worth in utility and profit, its populist politics and religious evangelism.

Hofstadter was writing during the Cold War but the cyclical antipathy to the *dimag* — the mind — or what is born of it — *dimagi*, the intellect — is not an American phenomenon alone. In *Age of Anger* (2017), Pankaj Mishra situates the global turn against expertise within a much older resentment — the sense, cultivated since the Enlightenment’s uneven arrival in the postcolonial world, that rationalist elites have hoarded the fruits of modernity for themselves.

That resentment travels easily through a stratified society, attaching itself to old hierarchies of caste, language, and privilege, exacerbated by elite gatekeeping. In India, over the last decade, a confrontational majoritarian political project, a compliant echo chamber, and the digital public square have recast the expert as a nebulous figure, an adversary often to the national mood of *vikas*.

The damage this does to public life — the hollowing out of institutions that once mediated between knowledge and power — is profound. But institutional erosion alone does not explain why so many people are willing to accommodate it. This is especially paradoxical in a country that adores degrees: The IIT rank, the medical seat, the government service examination.

Perhaps the answer lies in what it does not respect, and sometimes, resents. The degree’s original purpose: Independent thought. We are at home with intellect that has been institutionalised, monetised, and made obedient, not the one that is unruly, curious, that asks questions, that says no.

Consider just one example: Competitive examinations. The defining feature of most of them is not that they are hard, but that they are hard in a specific way. They reward speed and retention under constraints of time and pressure. A student preparing for them is not being trained to weigh conflicting evidence or unresolved questions. They are being trained to eliminate ambiguity as

fast as possible, because ambiguity costs marks and marks cost a seat that a few hundred thousand others also want. The degree is a mobility instrument — it moves a family across a caste line, a class line, a marriageability threshold, a generation’s worth of precarity. So the ability to shoehorn oneself into its requirements is useful, especially in an uncertain job market. It is, however, not the same skill as independent thought. And after years of selecting for the first, there is no obvious reason a society would reward the second once the exam is over, especially if the costs are disproportionately high.

What happens when inquiry is treated as an obstacle to advancement? Citizens come to mistake confidence for truth and doubt for weakness. The *dimagi* becomes subservient to the *jugaadu* in the republic of the glib and the obsequious. And yet there is virtue in treating the mind’s slow, unglamorous work — research, revision, imagination — as a public good worth protecting, the way clean air or an independent judiciary is a public good. Its value lies in the possibilities it keeps open: The questions not yet answered, the arguments not yet settled, the futures not yet foreclosed.

Jonathan White in *In the Long Run: The Future as a Political Idea* (2024), argues that democracies survive on the conviction that alternatives to the present exist and can be reasoned towards rather than simply awaited or feared. That conviction has always been produced by argument — by thinkers willing to sketch what has not yet happened and defend it against opponents. Take away that work of thinking, and what remains is a politics of pure reaction: A “now or never” urgency that treats every problem as an emergency to be solved through directives rather than to be worked through.

A nation that cannot argue about its future — that treats the economist’s dissent, the historian’s revision, the stand-up comic’s satire as noise — loses not just the capacity to correct itself but the possibility of imagining something different from what it has. A society that treats its *dimag* with suspicion forfeits the very faculty by which futures are imagined into being. It contracts into an eternal present, governed by whoever promises the most confident escape from it.

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Germany’s fourth World Cup hockey title is warning for India



MIHIR VASAVDA

FOR DECADES, hockey’s greatest numbers belonged to Asia. India owned the most coveted record: Eight Olympic gold medals. Pakistan built an equally formidable legacy at the World Cup, winning four titles — in 1971, 1978, 1982 and 1994 — a record that stood for 32 years. For decades, the neighbours defined world hockey. On Sunday, Germany changed that. By winning the 2026 World Cup, they equalled Pakistan’s record. It was a landmark achievement and completed another chapter in the rise of European hockey.

There was a time when an India-Pakistan match was a contest between the sport’s historical superpowers. India had their extraordinary Olympic dynasty; Pakistan developed a similar World Cup pedigree. Between them, they won five of the first eight World Cups — India’s only World Cup triumph came four years later in 1975, when they beat Pakistan in Kuala Lumpur. Today, that rivalry is fragile, with India not losing to their arch rivals in a decade. The global dominance, meanwhile, has long waned. For both, Pakistan have not won the World Cup since 1994 and were knocked out early this time. India, despite remaining Asia’s strongest men’s side and winning Olympic bronze medals at Tokyo and Paris, arrived at this World Cup chasing a second title 51 years after the first. They finished eighth.

Look at the World Cup’s history and the geographical movement becomes clear. Asia has five titles — four for Pakistan and one for India. Europe now has seven, with Germany’s fourth taking the continent ahead. Australia, meanwhile, have three.

European hockey built systems capable of sustaining it: Stronger domestic competitions, professional structures, deeper player pathways, sophisticated coaching and a wider pool of nations capable of producing elite teams. Asia has struggled to maintain the same momentum. Pakistan’s decline is the most dramatic. A country that once produced hockey heroes almost as a matter of national identity now finds itself trying to rebuild the foundations . The resources, talent and public interest remain greater in India, and the national team is still capable of winning major medals. But the gap between being the best team in Asia and being the best team in the world is increasingly obvious.

That makes the timing of Germany’s achievement particularly interesting. In less than three weeks, the Asian Games begin in Aichi-Nagoya. For decades, the Asian Games were another stage on which India and Pakistan could measure their supremacy. India will still be among the favourites. But the tournament can no longer be viewed simply through that old prism. Germany have equalled Pakistan. The Netherlands remain Olympic champions. Belgium have won a World Cup and the Olympics within the last decade. Australia remain a perennial power. Spain, the surprise finalist in this World Cup, are showing that the European pool continues to deepen.

The Asian Games offer an immediate opportunity to reassert continental supremacy. But the bigger task is beyond Nagoya. If India does not strengthen the ecosystem that produced its extraordinary Olympic legacy, the rest of the world will keep coming for the records that once seemed untouchable. And eight, for all its grandeur, is still just a number.

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The Asian Games offer an immediate opportunity to reassert continental supremacy. But the bigger task is beyond Nagoya

40 YEARS AGO

September 3, 1986



PM for immediate sanctions

THE PRIME MINISTER, Rajiv Gandhi, called upon non-aligned countries to work out a package of measures to help frontline states meet the aggression by the South African government. He ordered India’s full support for the measures to end apartheid.

NAM report criticised

PRIME MINISTER Rajiv Gandhi’s report to the non-aligned summit as outgoing chairman of the movement came in for adverse comment

outside the conference for not giving a full account of the happenings in the last three years. Particular notice was taken of the report not having made any mention of the US bombing of the Libyan capital and the team of NAM foreign ministers visiting Tripoli.

DTC scraps scheme

IN THE face of violent resistance by residents of a number of trans-Jamuna colonies, the Delhi Transport Corporation decided to do away with the “route rationalisation” scheme introduced in the area on August 30. A state-

ment issued by the DTC said the Minister for Surface Transport, Rajesh Pilot, had ordered that DTC routes in the trans-Jamuna colonies be restored to the earlier position.

Deadly collision in Black Sea

THREE HUNDRED and ninety-eight passengers are dead or missing after the marine accident in the Black Sea, a Soviet government enquiry commission has reported. Seventy-nine bodies have so far been recovered from the sea, and 319 passengers remain to be traced.



Mountains bind India, China, and Nepal to a shared destiny. They need to honour it



THAROORTHINK
BY SHASHI THAROOR

THE RECENT catastrophe that struck Nepal offers a devastating reminder of the fragile, interconnected ecological reality of Himalayan Asia. A sudden collapse of ice and rock high in the mountains above the border region transformed within minutes into a violent surge of water, mud, and debris, sweeping through settlements, crushing critical infrastructure, and claiming over a thousand lives. The shockwaves of this tragedy were felt immediately in Kathmandu, where I happened to be visiting, along with various diplomats, politicians, and global observers gathered for pre-planned commitments.

During a high-profile conclave hosted in the capital by a leading Indian television news channel, the gravity of the situation completely reshaped the agenda. Addressing the audience, Rabi Lamichhane, the leader of the ruling Rashtriya Swatantra Party, made a poignant observation that cut through standard diplomatic platitudes. He noted, almost in passing, that whatever the prevailing geopolitical frictions, strategic rivalries, or sovereign boundary disputes among India, China, and Nepal, all three nations unavoidably share a single, unified mountain system. His remarks underscored a shared sentiment reverberating across Kathmandu: This tragedy was not merely an isolated localised accident, but a stark manifestation of accelerated global warming. It is a bitter irony that Nepal, whose greenhouse gas emissions are virtually negligible, bears the most brutal, immediate consequences of global climate change, while its vast, highly industrialised neighbours, especially to the north, account for a substantial portion of the atmospheric warming driving Himalayan glacial collapse.

Glaciers do not recognise international boundary lines, nor do glacial lakes, river basins, or atmospheric currents. When a glacial lake bursts, a landslide dams a transboundary river, or an ice-rock avalanche releases mil-



ILLUSTRATION: C R SASIKUMAR

lions of cubic metres of meltwater, creating a “barrier lake” that could burst at any time, the ensuing deluge flows downstream across sovereign frontiers. Yet, despite this undeniable physical unity, regional governance of the Himalayan biome remains deeply fragmented. The current crisis demonstrates the urgent necessity of establishing an institutionalised tripartite mechanism among India, Nepal, and China dedicated exclusively to ecological protection, real-time hydrological information-sharing, and joint climate adaptation efforts.

Designing such an institutional framework requires a clear-eyed assessment of the region’s historical track record regarding ecological transparency. Cooperation between upper-riparian and lower-riparian states in the Himalayas has historically been uneven, reactive, and constrained by national security secrecy. Both India and Nepal have repeatedly expressed deep dissatisfaction with the quality, frequency, and timeliness of hydrological and geological data shared by China.

China controls the Tibetan Plateau, the crucial source of headwaters for Asia’s major river systems, including the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra), the Indus, and the upper tributaries of the Ganges, such as the Bhothe Koshi and Karnali. Over the years, Beijing’s approach to sharing hydrological data during the monsoon season has been governed largely by transactional, bilateral MoUs rather than automatic, open-data commitments. Lower-ripar-

It is a bitter irony that Nepal, whose greenhouse gas emissions are virtually negligible, bears the most brutal, immediate consequences of global climate change

ian nations have often been left in the dark during critical moments.

For instance, during previous incidents involving natural dams formed by massive landslides in Tibet, both Indian authorities in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, as well as downstream Nepali communities, faced terrifying delays in receiving actionable flow rates or structural assessment data from Chinese monitoring stations. Similarly, when flash floods and artificial lake formations occurred along upper transboundary tributaries like the Pareechu River or the Bhothe Koshi, downstream countries were often forced to rely on delayed commercial satellite imagery rather than immediate, official hydrological alerts from Beijing. Even existing bilateral mechanisms between India and Nepal, while more operational, have frequently suffered from administrative friction, inadequate instrumentation in remote high-altitude zones, and a lack of integrated early-warning architecture spanning the higher Himalayas down to the Gangetic plains.

If a tripartite environmental mechanism is to succeed where past arrangements have stumbled, it must transcend political posturing and operate on a purely technical, life-saving imperative. This requires three distinct pillars of engagement.

First, information-sharing must be transformed from a discretionary political courtesy into an automated, real-time protocol. High-altitude hydrometeorological stations, seismic sensors, and auto-

mated water-level gauges situated across Tibet, northern Nepal, and the Indian Himalayan region must feed into a shared regional data grid. Downstream communities in Nepal and India cannot afford to wait hours for administrative clearances in foreign capitals when a glacial outburst flood can travel downstream in a matter of minutes. Real-time satellite data, telemetry, and flood hazard modelling must be made accessible to emergency responders across all three nations simultaneously.

Second, joint ecological research and risk mapping must replace isolated national assessments. Thousands of potentially dangerous glacial lakes are scattered across the Hindu Kush-Himalayan range, many of them expanding rapidly as global temperatures rise. Mapping these hazards, assessing the structural stability of hanging glaciers, and predicting destabilising landslips requires joint scientific expeditions, cross-border remote sensing analysis, and shared ecological modelling. Establishing a joint scientific council under a tripartite banner would allow researchers to pool expertise.

Third, feasibility-based joint action must be pursued on the ground. Where high-risk glacial lakes threaten settlements across borders, joint engineering interventions (such as controlled siphoning, artificial drainage channels, or structural reinforcement) must be undertaken collaboratively. Coordinated disaster response drills and cross-border environmental conservation projects can build functional trust among military and civilian disaster response agencies that otherwise view each other through a lens of geopolitical suspicion.

The Himalaya is warming at a rate significantly higher than the global average, threatening the water security, safety, and livelihoods of over a billion people downstream. Nations can negotiate political boundaries, but they cannot negotiate with physics, geology, or changing atmospheric temperatures. As Lamichhane pointed out, the mountains bind India, China, and Nepal to a shared destiny. Establishing a dedicated, transparent tripartite mechanism for environmental cooperation is an absolute necessity for survival in an age of climate crisis.

The writer is a fourth-term Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for Thiruvananthapuram and chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs

Controversy over GDP numbers is unwarranted



Soumya Kanti Ghosh

INDIA’S FIRST-QUARTER GDP numbers have been caught in a crossfire, with a slugfest of unending salutes between die-hard supporters and opponents on issues such as the interpretation of the base year. Globally, GDP revisions typically occur for two major reasons: Periodic baseline changes to reflect modern economic structures, and retrospective data updates after economic events. While developed economies generally experience minor routine adjustments, emerging markets frequently witness dramatic revisions due to the inclusion of informal or rapidly expanding techno-digital sectors and ever-changing consumer preferences.

While the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has come out with its set of explanations, we provide some more food for thought for settling this issue.

Last year, when the NSO had released the first quarter FY26 GDP numbers (base: 2011-12), the nominal GDP for the quarter was Rs 86.1 lakh crore. In the latest release (base: 2022-23), the Q1 FY26 GDP number has been revised downwards to Rs 80 lakh crore. Alongside, the latest Q1 FY27 GDP number is at Rs 88.3 lakh crore.

Some are now ascribing a 2.6 per cent growth in nominal GDP for the latest quarter instead of 10.3 per cent by calculating the yearly growth rate using Rs 88.3 lakh crore (we call it series A for the sake of clarity) over Rs 86.1 lakh crore (we call it series C). This is a sign of intellectual dishonesty.

If anyone truly wants to compare current nominal GDP numbers over the previous unrevised base of the first quarter of last year, then Rs 88.3 lakh crore (new base, series A released in August) should be estimated over Rs 80.4 lakh crore (new base, released in June), which comes out to 9.7 per cent growth (as against 10.3 per cent). Hypothetically, even with this nominal growth (by adjusting the deflator), the real growth for Q1 FY27 would be 7.4 per cent (as against the released 7.8 per cent), still good enough in view of the exogenous challenges during the quarter.

Comparisons need to be made on the same base, using the same method. The 2.6 per cent number being touted is neither

the official real growth rate nor a like-for-like comparison. It is a hybrid comparison between a current-year level of the new series with an old-series previous-year level. That may make for a dramatic talking point, but it does not provide a meaningful growth rate for a reality check. Another situation may arise when instead of being revised downwards, the numbers are revised upwards. But why did this unwarranted confusion arise this time?

Every year, MoSPI revises its previous year’s GDP estimates, reconciling them against the corresponding annual revised estimates. These revisions are released in February. In the current year (this time on August 31), the National Accounts Statistics has also incorporated revised numbers of previous years in the quarterly data itself for the sake of more transparency to align with the base revisions carried out in CPI, IIP, WPI and PPI. This is perfectly legitimate. This base alignment ensures that the GDP deflators and volume estimates remain consistent with the updated price and production indices.

The reported Q1 FY27 growth number does not stand alone. The composition gives it credibility. Real GVA grew 8.2 per cent, which is a cleaner reading of underlying activity. GST collection till August was at Rs 10.42 lakh crore, up 11 per cent (Q1 FY27 up 8.6 per cent). Domestic passenger vehicle sales were up 25.6 per cent, tractor sales 19 per cent, IIP 6.2 per cent, steel output 4.8 per cent, cement 8.8 per cent, and exports 17 per cent till July. Net FDI for Q1 FY27 was at \$7.8 billion as compared to \$4.75 billion last year. These are surely not signs of an economy expanding at only 2.6 per cent.

The World Bank notes that countries revise national accounts to improve accuracy and comparability, and that larger revisions may be needed when new methodologies or a new reference year for constant-price series are introduced. It also cautions that rebasing can create breaks unless historical data are consistently linked. For example, the latest Q1 FY27 number will only be finalised by February 2029. Base revisions add an extra layer to this complicated process. Interestingly, the base year revision this time has reduced the size of the GDP. Thus, the argument of GDP getting bigger because of base year revisions is meaningless.

The writer is member, PM Economic Advisory Council, member, 16th Finance Commission and group chief economic adviser, SBI. Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Food warnings

THE PROPOSED red-label system is welcome, but India’s nutrition crisis needs more than warning stickers (‘Red label for salt, sugar and fat is a good start’, *IE*, September 2). It could combine front-of-pack warnings with simple colour-coded nutritional scores, restrictions on junk-food advertising aimed at children, and healthier school canteens. However, regulation must avoid turning nutrition into a luxury, since healthier alternatives are often costlier.

Bablu Gupta, Lucknow

Nalanda’s memory

THE AUTHOR rightly argues that India’s engagement with Central Asia must extend beyond strategic calculations to knowledge, culture and civilisational connections (‘In Bishkek, a lesson from Nalanda’, *IE*, September 2). I believe this offers an important opportunity for Bihar. The revived Nalanda University’s growing international character and emphasis on educational diplomacy provide a natural platform for deeper academic and cultural engagement with Central Asia.

Ashok Rajpath, Patna

Bishkek alignment

THE ALIGNMENT of leaders at the Bishkek summit on artificial intelligence and climate security is encouraging at a time when both technological and environmental changes are reshaping the global order (‘Take Bishkek to BRICS’, *IE*, September 2). AI is creating new opportunities, but its rapid expansion also requires responsible regulation and safeguards. Climate change, meanwhile, is emerging as an important security concern. Extreme weather events, water shortages, food insecurity and damage to infrastructure can place additional pressure on economies. Greater cooperation in climate adaptation, disaster management and early-warning systems can help.

Rukma Sharma, Jalandhar



Irfanullah Farooqi and Suraj Gogoi

JASON ARDAY’S death has raised pertinent questions about academic excellence and integrity, institutional practices pertaining to diversity and inclusion, and criticism in general. A sociologist of education, Arday was only 37 when he was appointed in March 2023 as a full professor in the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, making him the youngest Black professor in the university’s history. However, the very day he joined, there was a Freedom of Information request inquiring into his credentials.

Arday did not speak till he was 11, started reading and writing when he was 18 and battled with a range of disabilities. However, during his stint at Cambridge, Arday was subjected to unrelenting scrutiny. What stood out were charges of plagiarism, something that recently gained massive traction after accusations made by Nathan Cofnas, a self-described “race realist”. As the campaign against him turned abusive, Arday resigned from his position, stating that it was not to be taken as an acceptance of the charges but as something he had to do for his well-being. Ten days later, he was found dead.

Dalits in Indian academia are always managing themselves, projecting a certain image to keep hasty criticism at bay. If they stray a millimetre from the socially sanctioned script, disgrace of a kind that exists solely for them befalls them

The public shaming Arday had to face urges us to think about the parallels between race and caste. Criticism of Arday was firmly rooted in the excellence narrative. While many questioned his scholarly credentials due to the plagiarism charges, a few dismissed him based on what they saw as the lack of excellence in his scholarship. He did not deserve, in their view, to be a Cambridge professor. Dalits at Indian universities — students and teachers — have struggled against this excellence narrative for several decades, with much of their labour going into constantly proving their merit.

The appeal of the integrity narrative can hardly be overstated. Arday was painted as a fraud. Academics, too, were quick to dismiss his integrity. However, the campaign against him was more about the violator and less about the violation. In the case of Dalits, too, the slightest evidence of them cutting corners leads to them being crushed under the integrity narrative. In societies where race and caste continue to determine the majority’s standing, we ought to be mindful of the unethical foundations of such concerns.

To question someone’s academic credibility is one thing but to violate their dignity is anything but

responsible criticism. When asked what the blueprint is to become an academic, Arday remarked, “If you are Black or Asian, it is: How much can you suffer?” Black people and Dalits are forced to hold on to whatever dignity is left with them, enduring everyday racism and casteism. They know that what routinely bypasses the social gaze will be unforgivable in their case.

Dalits in Indian academia are always managing themselves, projecting or living up to a certain image so as to keep criticism at bay. If they stray a millimetre from the socially sanctioned script, disgrace of a kind that exists solely for them befalls them. Arday, too, was subjected to criticism that led to a specific kind of humiliation. It was directed at him as a Black person, not as an academic.

In the days before his death, the fixation on Arday’s life took a ghoulish turn. The disproportionate focus has been rightly attributed to his racial identity. This media frenzy was justified as being in “public interest”. Perhaps one should also ask, what kind of public and in whose interest?

To be Black, to be a Dalit, or any kind of minority, is a costly thing in society. Even in educational institutions, many of the marginalised continue to pay with their life.

The writers teach at IIM Kozhikode

When academia becomes the site of othering

Chinese overcapacity is a problem for the world

China’s rise has created a form of “absolute advantage” in manufacturing. Its success reflects not only low-cost production but also scale, supplier networks, infrastructure, technological capabilities, and state-supported industrial ecosystems. This allows it to manufacture goods ranging from textiles and machinery to electronics, solar PV, batteries, and EVs at competitive prices. This has far-reaching implications.

First, China’s rise has produced significant economic gains for both developed and developing countries. Low-cost Chinese manufactured goods reduce the prices of consumer goods, machinery, clean technology products and intermediate inputs, thereby supporting industrial transformation and infrastructure development in developing economies.

Second, China’s low-cost mass manufacturing advantage creates asymmetric pressures on developing countries to build do-

mestic manufacturing capabilities. Producers in developing countries face challenges in competing with Chinese producers, creating a “late industrialisation dilemma”. However, this gradually weakens incentives and capabilities to foster domestic upstream industries. The key question is not whether Chinese imports are efficient and competitive, but whether import dependence thwarts capability building and upgradation in manufacturing value chains.

Third, China’s absolute advantage in

The key question is not whether Chinese imports are efficient and competitive, but whether import dependence thwarts capability building and upgradation in manufacturing value chains

both low-cost and high-end manufacturing is transforming the geography of global value chain networks. Today, it occupies a dominant and critical position across multiple stages of the manufacturing value chain networks. In the EV sector, it controls critical nodes — 65 per cent of lithium refining, 70 per cent of cobalt refining, and over 80 per cent of battery manufacturing. This creates a peculiar paradox in the globalisation of production, where China is the most competitive and its sheer dominance generates significant strategic vulnerabilities for countries that rely excessively on a single supplier.

Fourth, China’s excess industrial capacity poses challenges for India in its quest for self-reliance. Chinese imports have impacted MSME-led domestic manufacturing, undermining India’s manufacturing imperatives. China accounts for roughly 17 per cent of India’s imports, with dependence on solar PV modules, telecom components, electronics

and APIs. India’s electronics industry faces a shortage of printed circuit boards due to geopolitical headwinds and supply-chain impediments, impacting downstream manufacturing. India also faces a pincer dilemma. Chinese export curbs could restrict access to key inputs such as solar wafers, cells and batteries, while its PLI scheme for solar and EV is challenged in the WTO for violating local content rules aimed at augmenting domestic manufacturing capabilities.

A global dialogue is needed on gradually rebalancing the Chinese economy in partnership with the US and other major economies. Given the scale of the challenge and the Chinese economy’s size and broader international ramifications, a globally coordinated approach, similar to the 1985 Plaza Accord, could be considered.

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On BCCI's menu: Roadmap for 2027 WC, injury management

Women's Asia Cup: Return to basics fuels Charani's rapid rise

Chandigarh

