

NEWS IN BRIEF

NIRAV MODI'S EXTRADITION TO HAPPEN AFTER ONGOING LEGAL PROCEEDINGS END: MEA

Diary Times Desk : India on Tuesday said fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi would be extradited from the United Kingdom once ongoing legal proceedings are completed. Modi is wanted in India to stand trial on fraud and money laundering charges in an estimated USD 2 billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) loan scam case. India has been raising with the UK the issue of his extradition. "The legal proceedings in the matter are on, and once those legal proceedings are completed, then he will be extradited to India."

PM MODI NEWS**MODI HELPED STOP PUTIN FROM USING TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN UKRAINE: POLISH DEPUTY FM**

Diary Times Desk : Prime Minister Narendra Modi played a key role in dissuading Russian President Vladimir Putin from using tactical nuclear weapons during the Ukraine war in late 2022, Poland's Deputy Foreign Minister Władysław Teofil Bartoszewski said here on Monday, describing Modi as one of the few global leaders capable of influencing the Russian President. Addressing a joint press briefing with Poland's Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Technology Michał Baranowski after the India-Poland Joint Economic Commission meeting, Bartoszewski said India's longstanding ties with Russia and Modi's personal stature gave New Delhi unique leverage in efforts to end the conflict.

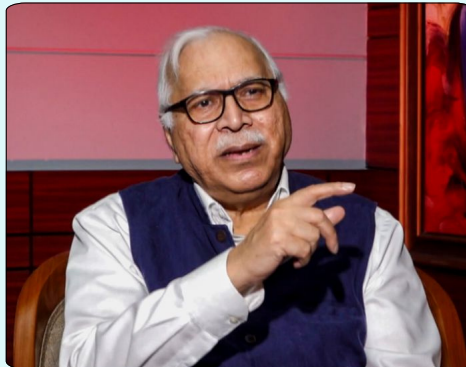
"Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a very well-known world statesman, who is very respected. India has a long-standing relationship with the Russian Federation and, before that, with the Soviet Union. President Putin actually pays attention to what Prime Minister Modi tells him," Bartoszewski said.

I mentioned the role Prime Minister Modi played in stopping Putin from using tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine at the end of 2022. Prime Minister Modi is one of the few people who can actually exert some pressure and influence on President Putin, and that is clearly something India could do to help stop this conflict," he added.

On India's aspirations for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, Bartoszewski reiterated Poland's support, saying Warsaw backed a larger and more representative Security Council. We certainly support India in this quest," he said, while noting that reform remained difficult because any change required the unanimous consent of all permanent members, each of whom holds veto power. The Polish Deputy Foreign Minister also signalled growing defence cooperation between the two countries. He said both sides were working towards signing an agreement on the exchange of classified information, a prerequisite for deeper military collaboration. He said Poland had received interest from India in acquiring Polish defence platforms, while Indian companies were also exploring opportunities to manufacture military equipment in Poland. The Minister cited ongoing cooperation in drone production and discussions on satellite projects, including a proposed \$1 billion satellite programme involving Indian manufacturing. Highlighting Poland's defence modernisation, Bartoszewski said the country had secured a €44-billion European Union loan, with the bulk of the funding earmarked for Polish arms manufacturers while encouraging technology partnerships with foreign companies, including from India.

ELECTION COMMISSION 'VERY UNFAIR' TO OPPOSITION, ITS CREDIBILITY HAS TAKEN 'SEVERE BEATING': EX-CEC QURAISHI

Diary Times Desk : Former chief election commissioner SY Quraishi on Tuesday alleged that the current Election Commission has been "very unfair" to opposition parties and asserted that the poll body's image and credibility have taken a "severe beating". Quraishi, who served as the CEC between 2010 and 2012, said that the commission's legacy of being one of the country's most credible institutions has been eroded, and that he was "very sad" about it. In an exclusive interview with PTI Videos ahead of the launch of his new book 'India and I: A Hundred Memories, Not a Memoir', the former CEC said his policies helped opposition parties, particularly BJP. The book, published by Hachette India throws light on 100 episodes from Quraishi's life. Quraishi served as the 17th CEC and introduced major electoral reforms, including Voter Education Division, Expenditure Monitoring Division and India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIDEM). Asked about allegations that the current EC has been unfair to the opposition and a letter by 24 opposition parties to Chief Justice Surya Kant, "Well, that again is a very painful chapter because as I've written, my declared policy was to be with."

**MOB ASSEMBLED TO TARGET HINDUS, ANKIT SHARMA FACED SAVAGE ASSAULT: COURT ORDER CONVICTING TAHIR HUSSAIN**

Diary Times Desk : Tahir Hussain was a member of a heavily armed mob that assembled with "animus against Hindus" to commit rioting, loot and arson and murdered Ankit Sharma with a "savage and relentless assault", a Delhi court has said in its verdict convicting the former AAP councillor and four others for the sensational killing of the Intelligence Bureau officer during the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots. Additional Sessions Judge Praveen Singh, who acquitted Hussain and other convicts of the charge of criminal conspiracy (IPC Section 120B), said that while the damaged and diverted CCTV cameras in the area suggested that "a conspiracy might have been afoot", the prosecution failed to establish when, where and how such a conspiracy was hatched. In the 320-page detailed order dated July 13 made available on Tuesday, the court, which had acquitted six of the 11 accused, said members of the unlawful assembly surrounded and dragged the officer towards Chand Bagh Pulia. His body was later found in a drain there. "Tahir Hussain was a member of a large crowd and unlawful assembly which, with animus against Hindus, had assembled at Chand Bagh Pulia with a common object to commit rioting."

SC IMPOSES RS 3 LAKH COST ON INFLUENCERS SAMAY RAINA, RANVEER ALLAHBADIA FOR 'MISCONDUCT'

Diary Times Desk : Taking strong exception to the conduct of comedian Samay Raina and YouTubers Ranveer Allahbadia and Ashish Chanchlani, the Supreme Court on Tuesday imposed a cost of Rs 3 lakh each on them for taking it for a ride. "We have no reason to doubt that Samay Raina has taken the court for a ride. He is in brazen violation of undertakings given before this court. The misconduct is sought to be compounded by stating that a compliance affidavit was filed yesterday; however, no affidavit has been filed," a Bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said. "They think that sitting outside the country they're beyond (our) jurisdiction... Let them suffer now. If this is not arrogance, then we have to change the Oxford dictionary also," a Bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said after it was informed that Raina had not invited any disabled persons to his show despite its earlier order. "In public life, the more you respect others, the more respect you earn. You don't humiliate people," noted the Bench – which also included Justice Joyymalya Bagchi and Justice V Mohana while hearing a plea filed by Cure SMA India Foundation. The Foundation accused Raina of making insensitive remarks over the high cost of treatment for SMA and ridiculing a person with such a disability. The top court had earlier asked comedians Raina and others to hold two programmes/shows per month about the success stories of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to generate funds.

PASSPORT**PASSPORT A DOCUMENT TO REGULATE DEPARTURE OF INDIAN CITIZENS FROM COUNTRY: MEA**

Diary Times Desk : The Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday said a passport is issued to regulate the departure of "Indian citizens" from the country, citing provisions of the Passports Act, 1967, amid continuing discussions over the legal status and purpose of the travel document. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said an Indian passport is issued by the Government of India after due verification under an established process laid down in the Passports Act, 1967, and the Passports Rules, 1980.

"An Indian passport is a document that, as per the Passports Act, 1967, is issued by the Government of India to regulate the departure from India of citizens of India. It is issued after due verification laid out by an established process," Jaiswal said.

He added that the issuance of passports to Indian citizens and other eligible individuals is governed by the Passports Act, 1967, and the Passports Rules, 1980.

The remarks came weeks after the government stated that a passport is primarily a travel document and should not be construed as proof of citizenship, a position that had triggered political reactions and public debate.

CANADA COP'S NIJJAR REMARKS CONSISTENT WITH US INDICTMENT: INDIA

Diary Times Desk : India on Tuesday said remarks by a senior Canadian police official on the Hardeep Singh Nijjar murder case were consistent with the recent US federal indictment that attributed the assassination to members of the Lawrence Bishnoi organised crime syndicate, while at the same time asserted that any extradition request from Washington would be dealt under established legal and judicial processes. Responding to questions at the weekly media briefing, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said New Delhi had taken note of comments made by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Deputy Commissioner Lisa Moreland following last week's coordinated crackdown on transnational organised crime networks "We have noted the remarks made by the RCMP Deputy Commissioner. These remarks are consistent with the recently unsealed US indictment which attributes responsibility to the members of the Lawrence Bishnoi organised crime group," Jaiswal said.

"Let us not pass any order that can cause tension," a three-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant told senior advocates AM Singhvi, Huzefa Ahmadi and Meenakshi Arora after they sought restoration of status quo ante on behalf of Muslim petitioners.

The refusal to order status quo ante means Hindus will continue to have exclusive access to Bhojshala Complex.

The bench — which also included Justice Joyymalya Bagchi and Justice V Mohana — however, ordered allocation of separate open space for Muslims adjacent to the disputed complex for Friday prayers as an ad hoc measure. The top court directed that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) shall not carry out any structural changes on the site without its permission. It also issued notice to the Centre, the MP Government, Hindu Front for Justice and ASI on petitions.

FARM LEADER CHARUNI ISSUES WARNING TO CENTRE AS WANGCHUK'S HEALTH WORSENS



Diary Times Desk : The protest at Jantar Mantar seemed to get widened into a broader political campaign on Tuesday afternoon, with Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU-Charuni) president Gurnam Singh Charuni leading a delegation of farmers to the protest site, even as organisers claimed activist Sonam Wangchuk's health had deteriorated further due to hunger strike. The farm leader issued a warning that if the government continued to ignore the agitation and the situation escalated, the responsibility would rest with the government. According to the latest health bulletin released by the doctors on Tuesday, Wangchuk has lost 8.25 kg weight. They said his blood sugar levels had repeatedly fallen below 70 mg/dL and that he was suffering from constant dizziness, severe muscle loss and visible weakness. "Despite his condition, the government has not sent a single representative to initiate a dialogue. It shows how insensitive our leadership is," Abhijeet Dipke, founder of Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) said, speaking exclusively with The Tribune.

WEST BENGAL ALLOTTED OVER RS 8,500 CRORE UNDER VB-G RAM G TILL MARCH 2027

Diary Times Desk : Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday said over Rs 8,500 crore would be provided to West Bengal under the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (VB-G RAM G) till March 31, 2027. Recalling his earlier visits to the state, he said development had once remained stalled in the state with central schemes failing to reach people effectively. "The Centre and the state government are now working in close coordination to transform West Bengal's infrastructure landscape. Infrastructure projects worth more than Rs 82,000 crore are currently under implementation across sectors, including roads, highways, railways, metro rail and pipelines," Chouhan said. The agriculture minister also announced an interim approval for one lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin for West Bengal. He stated that due to heavy rains, beneficiary surveys could not be completed within the scheduled timeline.

INDIA SUMMONS IRANIAN ENVOY AFTER MISSILE STRIKE KILLS INDIAN SEAFARER, INJURES 10 ABOARD UAE TANKERS

Diary Times Desk : India on Tuesday summoned Iran's Deputy Chief of Mission in New Delhi and lodged a strong protest after attacks on two commercial vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz left an Indian seafarer dead and 10 others injured, as New Delhi strongly condemned the targeting of civilian shipping. In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said it was deeply concerned over the attacks on MT Al Bahiyah and MT Mombasa, which together had 30 Indian seafarers among their combined crew of 46. According to the MEA, one Indian national aboard MT Al Bahiyah was killed while another was injured. Of the 18 Indians on MT Mombasa, nine sustained injuries, including two who are reported to be seriously injured. "Our Mission and Post in the UAE are closely monitoring the situation and are in touch with the UAE authorities to ensure all possible assistance to the affected Indian seafarers," the MEA said, adding that Iran's Deputy Chief of Mission was summoned on Tuesday morning and a "strong protest" over the attacks was lodged with him. The ministry extended condolences to the family of the deceased sailor and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

SC ASKS SIT TO FILE STATUS REPORT IN RAM TEMPLE, AYODHYA, DONATION ROW



Diary Times Desk : The Supreme Court on Monday issued a notice to the Centre, UP Government and the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust on three PILs seeking an independent probe by the CBI under the top court's direct supervision into the finances of the Trust following allegations of misappropriation of donations at the Ram Temple, Ayodhya. A Bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice V Mohana directed the special investigation team (SIT) set up by the UP Government to file a status report, mentioning the composition of the SIT, in a sealed cover and posted the matter for hearing on Monday. The order came after Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta submitted on behalf of the Centre and the UP Government that the SIT set up by the state government was already probing the case. The Bench did not agree with Mehta's request to defer the issuance of notice to the Trust at this juncture. Earlier, the Supreme Court had refused urgent listing of these petitions during the partial working days. The first PIL, filed by Narendra Kumar Goswami, a petitioner-in-person, has sought a CBI probe into the matter and an audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of the finances of the Trust, which manages the temple.

M A BABY ATTRIBUTES LEFT'S POOR KERALA SHOW TO CANDIDATE SELECTION, CAMPAIGN LAPSES

Diary Times Desk : CPI(M) General Secretary M A Baby on Tuesday alleged that the BJP-led government at the Centre was aiming to secure a two-thirds majority in Parliament as part of its efforts to transform India into a "Hindu Rashtra". He also said that the Centre's contention that a passport is not proof of citizenship was similar to measures taken in Nazi Germany. The Left leader was addressing a press conference in the national capital following a meeting of the party's Central Committee, which reviewed the LDF's poor performance in the recent Kerala Assembly elections. "The Central Committee found that the party committed mistakes in both its election campaign and the process of selecting candidates. It also found that the Left-led LDF government in the state failed to effectively convince the public why it stood with the people and what it was doing in their interest," Baby said. He said the panel also observed serious shortcomings in the behaviour and working style of the party's leaders. The document prepared by the party called for corrective measures, stressing that leaders must speak to people with humility and patiently listen to their concerns.

FIRST ROUND OF INDIA-MALDIVES FTA NEGOTIATIONS CONCLUDE SUCCESSFULLY

Diary Times Desk : The first round of negotiations for the India-Maldives Free Trade Agreement (FTA) concluded successfully, marking a major step towards expanding bilateral trade and investment engagement. The negotiations were held in virtual mode from June 29 to July 7 2026. During the first round, negotiating teams from both sides engaged in text-based discussions across eight technical sessions covering eight policy areas. Both sides made substantive progress across the negotiating tracks and reached broad convergence on several issues. On July 8, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal met his Maldivian counterpart, Mohamed Saeed, Minister of Economic Development, Transport and Trade of the Maldives. The Ministers reviewed the progress of ongoing bilateral economic initiatives, including the India-Maldives FTA negotiations. As India and the Maldives commemorate 60 years of diplomatic relations, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expedite the conclusion of the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) and the FTA. They also agreed to further deepen cooperation in tourism, startups, digital payments, MSMEs and trade to unlock new opportunities for both countries.

MAN SETS HIMSELF ABLAZE OUTSIDE KANPUR POLICE STATION; SHO AMONG FOUR COPS INJURED DURING RESCUE

Diary Times Desk : A 32-year-old man set himself ablaze outside a police station on Tuesday after submitting a complaint against his wife, leaving four police personnel who tried to rescue him with burn injuries. Mahesh Pasi, who had reached the police station around noon and lodged a complaint alleging that his wife had assaulted him and was unwilling to live with him, is in a critical condition, police officials said. Shortly after submitting the complaint, Mahesh went outside the Maharajpur police station, poured flammable liquid over himself, set himself on fire and ran back into the station premises, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) Shiva Singh said. Station House Officer Janardan Singh, the duty officer and two constables immediately rushed to his rescue. They wrapped him in a blanket, extinguished the flames and shifted him to the burn unit of Ursula Hospital, she said.

NASHIK FAMILY TARGETED AFTER DEFENDING WOMAN'S HONOUR, CHASED 20 KM BY MOB

Diary Times Desk : At least nine people have been taken into police custody after a family out on a picnic, was allegedly abused and chased for around 20 kilometres by men near Bhavli Dam in Nashik district and their car was repeatedly attacked when a woman from the family resisted alleged sexual harassment, police said on Tuesday. Nashik (Rural) SP Dhondopant Swami said police have expanded the investigation beyond the accused initially named in the FIR. "After an FIR was registered, we conducted a thorough analysis, including video review and technical investigation, and have so far identified nine accused individuals. While the original FIR named six or seven suspects, we have expanded the scope to include those who provided shelter or acted as associates. We have now taken 9 accused persons into custody. Further legal proceedings are currently underway," the Nashik (Rural) SP told reporters. According to the woman's complaint, her family of eight persons had visited Bhavli Dam on July 12 when two men allegedly passed remarks on her and harassed her. An argument broke out after she confronted them. "Our family of eight people had visited Bhavli Dam on 12th July. As I was there, two men aged 20-25 made comments at me and harassed me.

INDIA EXPECTS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO HOLD PAKISTAN ACCOUNTABLE FOR 'EGREGIOUS ABUSES' IN POJK



Diary Times Desk : India on Tuesday described the ongoing protests in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) as a "direct consequence" of Islamabad's decades-long "systemic exploitation and administrative oppression" in areas under its "forcible" occupation. PoJK has been witnessing massive protests since last month over inflated living costs, alleged administrative apathy and political discrimination and atrocities against minorities. There are reports of severe police brutality in which several protesters have been killed and many injured. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a media briefing that New Delhi expects the international community to hold Pakistan "fully accountable" for the "egregious abuses and misdeeds" in PoJK. "The ongoing protests in PoJK are a direct consequence of Pakistan's decades-long systemic exploitation, denial of fundamental rights, and administrative oppression in areas under its illegal and forcible occupation," he said.

180-GRAM TUMOUR REMOVED FROM 75-YEAR-OLD MAN'S HEART IN INDORE

Diary Times Desk : Doctors in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city have given a new lease of life to a 75-year-old man by removing a 180-gram tumour that had been growing in the right side of his heart for nearly four decades. According to the doctors, this tumour, which is approximately 9.5 centimetre-long, 5.5 centimeter-wide, and four centimeter-high, might be the largest right atrial myxoma surgically removed in the country. Dr Vineet Pandey, Director of the Department of Cardiac Surgery at Medanta Hospital, said on Tuesday that the septuagenarian patient had been suffering from shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, swelling in the legs and abdomen for some time, and his liver function tests were found to be abnormal. The patient's heart tumour appeared small upon initial examination, but after it was removed through a surgical procedure, it was found to be approximately 9.5 centimeters long, 5.5 centimeters wide, and four centimeters high, weighing approximately 180 grams, he said.

HOMEBUYERS' FRAUD CASE: CBI FILES 16TH CHARGESHEET AGAINST NOIDA BUILDER, BANK OFFICIALS

Diary Times Desk : The CBI has filed its 16th chargesheet in the ongoing investigation into alleged large-scale homebuyers' fraud cases, accusing a Noida-based real estate company and officials of two private sector banks of conspiring to cheat buyers and investors through fraudulent means, officials said on Tuesday. The chargesheet has been filed before the Special Judge for Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cases at the Rouse Avenue District Court in New Delhi, an official statement said. The CBI said it has chargesheeted "Saha Infratech Pvt. Ltd., its director and officials of HDFC Bank Ltd. and ICICI Bank Ltd. in connection with alleged fraudulent activities relating to a housing project situated at Noida." The investigation revealed that the accused builder company and its directors, "in conspiracy with bank officials and other private persons, allegedly induced homebuyers/investors through false assurances and fraudulent representations and obtained financial benefits by resorting to illegal and deceptive means," the agency said.

BSF DG HOLDS SECURITY REVIEW MEETING IN SUNDARBAN REGION, TAKES STOCK OF FENCING WORK

Diary Times Desk : BSF Director-General Praveen Kumar on Tuesday during a security review meeting in the Sundarban delta region, took stock of the progress of fencing project. Kumar, who was on a tour of the highly sensitive coastal areas along the Indo-Bangladesh boundary in the deep Sundarban delta and adjacent areas from July 11 to July 14, emphasised on better inter-agency coordination for a stronger border security grid, sources aware of details said. He also reviewed the operational readiness of troops deployed in the area, besides border security grid. As part of public outreach, the BSF DG met with local residents and government officials posted in the area. Kumar also stayed with the brave Seema Praharis and interacted with troops deployed on the border. At present, out of the 4,097 km of the international border between India and Bangladesh, 2,217 km falls under the jurisdiction of West Bengal. According to Ministry of Home Affairs data, 569 km in West Bengal is unfenced, of which 456 km is fit to be fenced.

DAL KHALSA SEEKS INTERNATIONAL PROBE AFTER US MOVES TO EXTRADITE LAWRENCE BISHNOI IN NIJJAR CASE

Diary Times Desk : Following reports that United States Justice Department will seek the extradition of incarcerated gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, Sikh organisation Dal Khalsa has demanded an independent international investigation into the 2023 killing of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. According to the US move, which directly links Bishnoi to Nijjar's assassination in Canada, Dal Khalsa said it reinforces the belief within the Sikh diaspora that the conspiracy to eliminate the activist was orchestrated from New Delhi. Reacting to the developments, the radical Sikh separatist group strongly condemned what it called a growing nexus between organised crime syndicates and state authorities. Speaking on the issue, Dal Khalsa leader Paramjit Singh Mand said an unsealed US indictment charging Bishnoi and his fugitive associate Goldy Brar with directing Nijjar's murder validates the group's long-held position.



US TO BE 'GUARDIAN' OF STRAIT OF HORMUZ, WILL CHARGE 20% TOLL FOR SAFE TRANSIT: TRUMP

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump on Monday said he would probably "take over" the Strait of Hormuz and the US should be "reimbursed for controlling" the vital waterway by way of a 20 per cent toll on eligible cargo. The development comes as the two countries witnessed their fourth round of military aggression last night, triggering fears that the peace MoU signed between them on June 17 is effectively dead and that West Asia is headed for another crisis.

In an interview to Fox News on Monday, Trump said, "We're going to keep the Strait, and we'll probably run it. We'll become the guardian of the Strait of Hurmuz. Maybe we'll call it the 'guardian angel of the Strait'. And we should be reimbursed for that."

Later, Trump posted on social media, saying: "As a matter of fairness, the US will be reimbursed at a rate of 20 per cent on all cargo shipped for any country and all costs incurred in providing safety and security in this very volatile part of the world. The process and arrangements will begin immediately." The Ministry of External Affairs was yet respond to this development. Immediately after Trump's announcement, international crude oil prices jumped by 5 per cent, with benchmark Brent rising to \$80 per barrel. Following the US-Iran conflict, India diversified its crude import basket. West Asia's share in India's crude imports fell to around 22 per cent in June, according to Kpler data, down from 60-70 per cent before the Iran conflict. India is now sourcing larger volumes of crude from Russia, the US, Venezuela and West Africa.

2 SPANIARDS GORED AS SAN FERMIN BULL RUN FESTIVAL CONCLUDES

Diary Times Desk : Spain's famed San Fermin festival concluded with two gorings during the eighth and final bull run held on Tuesday. An 18-year-old from Pamplona was gored in his thigh on the first turn of the course, when a bull plowed into a small group of scrambling runners, ramming two men into the cobblestones and flipping a third over its horns. A 46-year-old man from central Spain took a horn in his thorax on the final stretch where the course narrows upon entering the bull ring where the bulls will be killed by bull fighters later in the day. Both men were taken to a local hospital for care. A further eight runners, including an 86-year-old British man, needed medical treatment for minor injuries. The six fighting bulls and accompanying steers need just two-and-a-half minutes to complete the 875-metre (957-yard) course from the pin to the bull ring. Their speed often catches runners by surprise with over a thousand people crammed into the narrow street course.

TRUMP BACKS AWAY FROM THREAT TO CHARGE TOLLS IN STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Diary Times Desk : President Donald Trump took a day to reverse his plans to charge a 20% toll on cargo going through the Strait of Hormuz, saying that Middle Eastern countries will instead make investment and trade deals with the US. "Based on highly productive conversations with Middle East leadership, I have decided to replace the 20% United States Reimbursement Fee with Trade and Investment Deals that the various Gulf States will be making into the United States," Trump said on social media. The president said the investments "will be MASSIVE," though it's unclear if these would be new commitments relative to what Trump announced after a visit last year to the Middle East.

WHO SAYS IT HAS LESS THAN HALF FUNDING NEEDED TO FIGHT EBOLA

Diary Times Desk : The World Health Organization (WHO) has received less than half the funding it needs to fight the Ebola outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, a WHO official said on Tuesday, urging donors not to abandon the country at a critical stage of the epidemic. The global health agency has received about 40% of its \$115 million appeal to tackle the Bundibugyo outbreak, for which there is no proven treatment or vaccine. At least 1,926 people have been infected and 702 have died, government data show. "This outbreak requires resources that match the scale of the challenges that we are facing. And this is not a burden DRC can be allowed to carry alone," Chikwe Ihekweazu, head of the WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, told reporters in Geneva after a visit to the worst-hit province of Ituri. Ihekweazu said the response had reached a critical point, with intensified efforts needed to detect and isolate patients after cases spread this week to two new provinces. "It's a bit like a marathon."

INDIAN KILLED AS IRANIAN MISSILES STRIKE UAE TANKERS IN STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Diary Times Desk : The UAE Ministry of Defence on Tuesday said that its two national tankers, Mombasa and Al Bahiyah, were struck by two Iranian cruise missiles while transiting the southern shipping lane of the Strait of Hormuz in Omani territorial waters. In a statement, the UAE MoD said that the attack killed one Indian crew member aboard the Mombasa and injured eight others, including six Indian nationals and two Ukrainians, four of whom sustained serious injuries. "The Ministry of Defence announces that the national tankers Mombasa and Al Bahiyah were targeted by two Iranian cruise missiles while transiting the southern shipping lane of the Strait of Hormuz, within Omani territorial waters. The attack resulted in the death of one Indian crew member aboard the Mombasa tanker and the injury of eight others, including four who sustained serious injuries. The injured comprise six Indian nationals and two Ukrainian nationals. The attack also caused material damage to both tankers as a result of the fires that broke out on board, which have since been brought under control," the post read.

DEATH TOLL FROM BANGKOK MUSIC BAR FIRE RISES TO 30

Diary Times Desk : The death toll from a huge fire in a Bangkok music bar has increased to 30, officials said Tuesday. More than 70 people remain hospitalised, with 24 of them in critical condition, according to Bangkok city officials. The blaze at the Rong Beer Na Ladprao bar, the city's deadliest in 17 years, broke out late Sunday in a northern part of the Thai capital. Firefighters needed half an hour to bring it under control. The bar, which in Thai calls itself a brewery or beer hall, claimed to accommodate as many as 600 customers. It was not clear how many were present Sunday night. An investigation into the cause of the fire and whether the bar was following safety regulations is ongoing. Most of the people who were killed were found trapped in windowless bathrooms where they may have sought to escape the flames, police said.



'20% TOO MUCH, WE WILL BE FAIR': IRAN HITS BACK AT TRUMP OVER HORMUZ 'GUARDIAN' CLAIM

Diary Times Desk : Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi on Monday hit back at US President Donald Trump over his recent remarks charging "20 per cent" for ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz, describing Tehran as the one and only "guardian" of the region.

In a post on 'X', Araghchi took a dig at Trump, asserting that Iran will always remain the "guardian" of the Strait of Hormuz. "POTUS is absolutely right. Whoever provides secure and safe passage of commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz should be compensated for this service. Iran has always been the GUARDIAN of the Strait and will remain so FOREVER. 20% is of course too much. We will be fair," said Araghchi. These remarks come in the backdrop of the renewed tensions between the US and Iran in the past few weeks. Earlier today, US President Donald Trump said that the United States is "reinstating" the Iranian blockade and said that the US will charge "20 per cent" to provide security to the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic gateway. In a post on Truth Social, Trump assured that the international maritime traffic through the critical shipping lane would not be closed to the rest of the world despite escalating regional tensions.



INDIA BACKS PALESTINE'S UN MEMBERSHIP, ANNOUNCES NEW PROJECTS AT DONOR GROUP MEET IN BRUSSELS

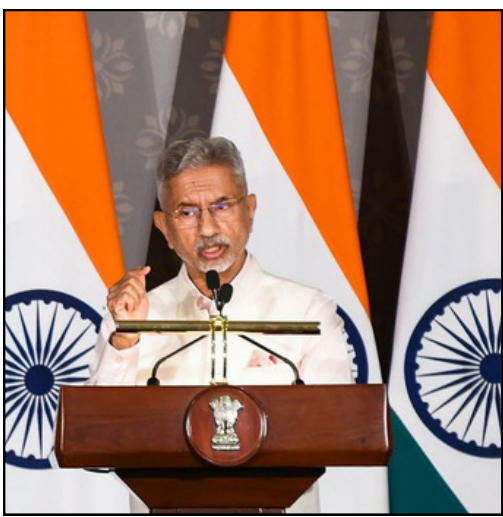
Diary Times Desk : India reaffirmed its support for a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict and announced a fresh package of development projects for Palestine, including initiatives in healthcare, education, rehabilitation and vocational training, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) informed on Tuesday. Representing India at the second Ministerial Meeting of the Palestine Donor Group (PDG) in Brussels on July 13, Secretary (CPV & OIA) in the MEA Sripriya Ranganathan reiterated New Delhi's longstanding support for the Palestinian people and backed Palestine's membership of the United Nations. Addressing the meeting, jointly organised by the European Commission and the Palestinian Authority, Ranganathan said India's development partnership with Palestine remained demand-driven and focused on healthcare.

CANADIAN FASHION MOGUL NYGARD PLEADS GUILTY IN QUEBEC SEX ASSAULT CASE

Diary Times Desk : Canadian fashion mogul Peter Nygard pleaded guilty to sexual assault and forcible confinement in Quebec, the latest conviction in the downfall of the founder of the once-global Nygard International clothing company. Nygard also faces US racketeering and sex trafficking charges. The 84-year-old on Monday appeared by video from an Ontario prison, where he is serving an 11-year sentence after a Toronto jury convicted him in 2023 of sexually assaulting four women. He also faces extradition to the United States on federal racketeering and sex trafficking charges. Quebec Crown prosecutor Jerome Laflamme said Nygard's plea came unexpectedly ahead of what had been scheduled as a 10-day judge-alone trial. "Mr. Nygard's change of heart was quite sudden," Laflamme told reporters, adding the complainant had been prepared to testify. Evidence presented by the prosecution.

ENERGY SECURITY IMPORTANT PART OF DISCUSSIONS DURING EAM JAISHANKAR'S VISIT TO GULF REGION: MEA

Diary Times Desk : Energy security was an important part of the conversations during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to four countries in the Gulf region and there were also discussions on developments in West Asia. Answering queries during the weekly media briefing, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the External Affairs Minister visited Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman earlier this month and had extensive discussions with the leadership, including at the highest level. "He also met with his counterparts in all four countries and discussed several issues that are of interest, including trade, energy, and investment. Energy was an important part of the conversation, and they also discussed the developments that are happening in West Asia and shared their perspectives on this particular issue. Energy security was an important part of the conversation that he had in the Gulf region," Jaiswal said.



WHO IS JORDAN BROWN? US CITIZEN HELD AT INDIA-NEPAL BORDER WHILE ALLEGEDLY TRYING TO CROSS WITHOUT VALID DOCUMENTS

Diary Times Desk : A 36-year-old US citizen has come under the scanner of Indian security agencies after he was detained while allegedly attempting to cross into Nepal through the India-Nepal border without valid travel documents.

The man, identified as Jordan Brown, was apprehended by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) during a routine patrol near border pillar number 516 in the Mainihwa area under the Sonauli police station limits in Uttar Pradesh's Maharajganj district on July 11, officials said.

Authorities said Brown claimed to be a resident of California, United States. According to police, he was unable to produce valid travel documents while trying to enter Nepal. Officials said multiple central intelligence and security agencies have questioned Brown. However, no evidence of suspicious or anti-national links has emerged so far. A senior police officer said agencies are independently verifying Brown's identity, travel history, previous foreign visits and the circumstances under which he entered India.

BODIES OF 15 INDIAN TOURISTS KILLED IN VIETNAM BOAT ACCIDENT REACH THEIR HOME STATES

Diary Times Desk : The bodies of the 15 Indian tourists who were killed in a speedboat accident off Vietnam's Phu Quoc Island reached their home states on Tuesday, the Indian Embassy in Hanoi said. Of the 15 victims, 10 were from Tamil Nadu, three were from Andhra Pradesh and two were from Kerala.

The bodies were flown to Mumbai in a Vietnam Airlines flight from Ho Chi Minh City. From Mumbai, the concerned state authorities coordinated with the victims' families to bring them home, officials said. "Our prayers are with the families of the deceased. We pray for strength to the families during these difficult times," the Indian Embassy said in a post on X on Tuesday. It also thanked the concerned authorities in Vietnam and those in the three south Indian states for their assistance. A speedboat carrying 32 Indian tourists and four local crew members capsized near Hon May Rut Ngoai off Phu Quoc Island on Saturday killing 15 tourists. The others were rescued. Of the 17 rescued tourists, 16 have returned to India, while one is hospitalised in Vietnam. The 49-year-old survivor suffered severe lung damage after nearly drowning, along with shock, multiple injuries.

POLAND BACKS INDIA'S PERMANENT UNSC BID, SEEKS TO DEEPEN DEFENCE TIES WITH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Diary Times Desk : Poland has reiterated its strong support for India's bid for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), while also pitching for deeper defence cooperation, including joint production of military equipment, drones and satellites, Secretary of State at Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Wladyslaw Teofil Bartoszewski told ANI. Backing India's long-standing demand for UNSC reforms, Bartoszewski said Poland supports New Delhi's aspiration to become a permanent member, but acknowledged that expanding the Council remains difficult as any structural change requires consensus among all existing members, each of whom has veto powers. "We do want India as a non-permanent member. We discussed with India also bigger changes in the structure of the Security Council of the United Nations. The problem is, and has always been, that in order to make changes, all members have to agree. And since every member has a veto, there's always somebody who doesn't want to change because they like to have a small club than a larger club... We certainly support India in this quest," he told ANI.



INDIA "IN TOUCH" WITH VIETNAM AMID ONGOING INVESTIGATION IN SPEEDBOAT TRAGEDY: MEA

Diary Times Desk : The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Tuesday said New Delhi is "in touch" with Vietnam following a speedboat accident near Phu Quoc Island that claimed the lives of 15 Indian tourists. The tragedy struck on July 11 when the tourist speedboat carrying 36 people, including 32 Indian tourists and four Vietnamese crew members, capsized near Hon May Rut Ngoai Island off Vietnam's Phu Quoc Island amid rough sea conditions. During a press briefing here, the MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal expressed condolences for the loss of lives in the tragic incident and expressed hopes for the swift recovery of one injured person, undergoing treatment in Vietnam. He affirmed that the Indian and Vietnamese authorities arranged the timely repatriation of the mortal remains of the 15 nationals to India. Very tragic incident. We conveyed our condolences.

IRAN TARGETING CIVILIAN, COMMERCIAL SHIPS IN HORMUZ "UNFORTUNATE"; US VIOLATED MOU: WEST ASIA EXPERT

Diary Times Desk : West Asia expert Waiel Awwad on Tuesday denounced the Iranian strike on a UAE oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz, which claimed the life of an Indian crew member, calling the attack against civilian and commercial ships "unfortunate," while blaming the US for violating the MoU signed between Tehran and Washington. An Indian sailor was killed, and six others were injured after a strike by Iran on the UAE oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday. Following the incident, India lodged a strong protest with Iran. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) summoned the Iranian envoys, including Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Mohammad Javad Hosseini, to convey New Delhi's serious concerns. Speaking with ANI, Awwad expressed his condolences and disappointment over the incident while slamming the US for violating the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Iran.

BANGLADESH: FLOODS DEVASTATE COMMUNITIES AS OXFAM SCALES UP RESPONSE



Diary Times Desk : Over 1.1 million people across Bangladesh have been badly affected by floods due to waterlogging and landslides triggered by heavy monsoon rainfall and upstream runoff since 4 July. Chattogram has borne the heaviest impacts on people's lives and livelihoods, while Cox's Bazar, including the Rohingya refugee camps, continues to face flooding, landslide risks and damage to essential services. "This is one emergency unfolding across two distinct contexts," said Anil Pant, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh. "The floods and their cascading impacts have severely disrupted people's lives and livelihoods. In Chattogram and other affected districts, families have lost homes, income and access to safe drinking water and sanitation. In Cox's Bazar, the danger is especially acute, as Rohingya families live in densely populated camps on fragile slopes, with limited space for safe relocation and heightened exposure to flooding and landslides." The floods have claimed dozens of lives, displaced thousands of people and damaged homes, roads, embankments, water points, latrines, cropland, fisheries and businesses. Many families have lost food stocks, bedding, cooking utensils.

UAE-INDIA CEPA COUNCIL OPENS APPLICATIONS FOR START-UP SERIES 2.0

Diary Times Desk : The UAE-India CEPA Council on Tuesday announced that applications for the second edition of the UAE-India Start-Up Series will open on 15 July 2026, marking the next phase of what has become India's largest bilateral start-up initiative. Following a record inaugural edition, which drew more than 10,000 applications from founders across India, Start-Up Series 2.0 will identify and support high-potential Indian start-ups seeking to scale into regional and global markets through Abu Dhabi, an official release by the UAE-India CEPA Council. The programme is delivered under the patronage of the UAE-India CEPA Council, the body established to translate the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two countries into tangible commercial and innovation outcomes. Building on the momentum of its first edition, the 2.0 series will feature a more rigorous selection process, deeper engagement with the UAE's and India's investment and corporate community, and a clearer route for founders to establish a base in Abu Dhabi, the statement mentioned.

BRAZIL ANTICIPATES FRESH US TARIFFS ON DOMESTIC PRODUCTS: REPORT

Diary Times Desk : Brazil's government is preparing for the possibility that the United States will confirm new tariffs on Brazilian products on July 15, despite an intensive diplomatic campaign by President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's administration to avert the move. Officials at the Planalto Palace believe Washington is unlikely to reverse course, citing what they describe as a "maximalist" approach to trade negotiations, according to a report by Brazil 247. The outlet, citing government sources, reported that Brazil has pursued multiple diplomatic channels in recent weeks, including four meetings with representatives of the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and several technical-level discussions. The Lula administration also submitted a roadmap for negotiations outlining proposals aimed at resolving bilateral trade concerns, as per the report.

Despite these efforts, Brazilian officials say the US has shown little indication that it intends to modify its position. While acknowledging that the United States enjoys a trade surplus with Brazil, Washington continues to allege the existence of practices it considers harmful to fair trade.

BRICS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW HIGHLIGHTS CONNECTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGICAL SOVEREIGNTY



Diary Times Desk : An international conference titled "Strengthening BRICS Connectivity: Fostering Cooperation" was held in Moscow during India's BRICS Chairship, bringing together policymakers, diplomats and experts from Russia, India, Brazil, China, South Africa, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iran and Ethiopia to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation across transport, trade, technology and resource security. The conference focused on enhancing the resilience of transport and trade corridors, securing critical supply chains and expanding technological cooperation, particularly in the field of artificial intelligence (AI). The recommendations formulated during the discussions are expected to contribute to the agenda for the upcoming BRICS Summit in September, as reported by TV BRICS. Addressing the gathering, Victoria Panova, Head of the BRICS Expert Council-Russia, described BRICS as a key platform capable of shaping a new model of global governance. She stressed that resilient transport connectivity, diversified supply chains and independent technological ecosystems are essential for ensuring the economic security of BRICS nations.

INDIA SAYS ITS POSITION CONCERNING SOUTH CHINA SEA CLEAR, DISPUTES SHOULD BE RESOLVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNCLOS

Diary Times Desk : India on Tuesday said that its position on the issue concerning the South China Sea is "clear and well-known" and emphasised the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight, consistent with international law as reflected in UNCLOS. Responding to media queries during the weekly press conference, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the ruling delivered by the Arbitral Tribunal ten years ago is a significant milestone and a basis for the peaceful resolution of disputes among the concerned parties. "Regarding the issue concerning the South China Sea, our position is clear and well-known. We emphasise the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight, consistent with international law as reflected in UNCLOS (the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), as well as other lawful uses of the sea and the maintenance of unimpeded trade," he said.

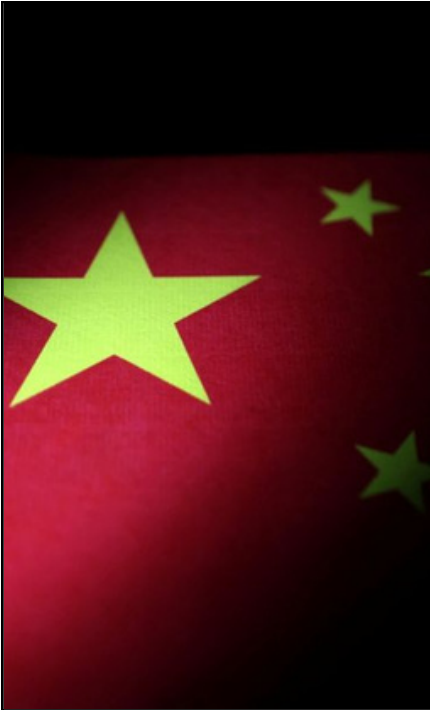
CHINA'S EXPANDING REACH RAISES ALARM AFTER HONG KONG ACTIVIST BLOCKED IN THAILAND

Diary Times Desk : A Hong Kong activist sought under the city's national security legislation was reportedly prevented by Thai authorities from boarding a flight to Canada for refugee resettlement, raising concerns over China's alleged transnational repression, as reported by Hong Kong Free Press (HKFP).

According to HKFP, the activist, Zhang Xinyan, had been scheduled to travel to Vancouver last week after completing the necessary refugee resettlement procedures. However, Canada-based activist Zang Xihong, also known by her pen name Sheng Xue, said Zhang informed her that Thai police intervened shortly before departure and stopped her from leaving the country. Zhang, 55, is a Chinese dissident and practitioner of Falun Gong, a spiritual movement outlawed by the Chinese government.

CHINA ACCUSED OF EXPANDING POLITICAL DETENTIONS AS TAIWAN WARNS CITIZENS AGAINST NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL

Diary Times Desk : Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has urged citizens to avoid non-essential travel to China after authorities recorded a sharp rise in reports of Taiwanese nationals allegedly being detained or going missing across the mainland. The government has received 385 reports of Taiwanese who were either detained or lost contact in China between the start of 2024 and Wednesday, highlighting growing concerns over cross-strait travel, as reported by The Taipei Times. According to The Taipei Times, the warning followed remarks by Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Deputy Minister and spokesperson Liang Wen chieh, who said that 10 new cases had been reported in just the past week. Official data showed a steep increase in such incidents, rising from 55 cases in 2024 to 221 in 2025, while 109 cases have already been recorded so far this year. The DPP accused Beijing of tightening political control through a broad network of national security laws and called on Chinese authorities to stop what it described as politically motivated actions against Taiwanese visitors. The party also warned that travellers could face intrusive questioning, mobile phone inspections, demands to disclose personal and professional relationships, and requests to connect with officials through WeChat. The party argued that recent cases indicate a systematic process in which Chinese authorities gather intelligence, identify individuals of interest, assess their political views and maintain long-term contact. It also pointed to a series of Chinese laws, including legislation on national security.



PAKISTAN ENERGY CRISIS DEEPENS AS LPG PRICING DISPUTE SPARKS SUPPLY SHORTAGE WARNING

Diary Times Desk : Pakistan could face a nationwide shortage of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) as importers warned that the existing pricing mechanism has made imports financially unsustainable, raising concerns over another potential energy crisis. The LPG Importers Association of Pakistan (LPGIAP) has urged the federal government to take immediate action to prevent disruptions in fuel supplies, as reported by Dawn. According to Dawn, LPGIAP Chairman Sheikh Mukarram Waheed wrote to Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik, cautioning that the country's LPG distribution network could be severely affected if the issue remains unresolved. He stated that immediate government intervention is necessary and called for an emergency meeting involving all relevant stakeholders to address growing concerns over LPG pricing. The association argued that the LPG prices notified by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) at the end of June fail to reflect the actual cost of importing the fuel.

ATTACKS ON COMMERCIAL VESSELS "MUST CEASE": INDIA LODGES "STRONG PROTEST" OVER HORMUZ STRIKES

Diary Times Desk : India on Tuesday strongly protested the strikes on commercial ships, describing them as aggressive acts directed at crew members that jeopardise the unhindered and secure passage of shipping traffic across global sea lanes such as the Strait of Hormuz.

The official response was released by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) soon after South Block called in the Iranian Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission in New Delhi to register a "strong protest" regarding the targeted strike on two ships navigating the Strait of Hormuz, an incident that resulted in the death of one Indian sailor and left multiple crew members wounded.

According to the official release, the MEA conveyed its "deep concern" regarding the restart of maritime strikes and the intensifying friction across West Asia, calling for a swift end to hostilities alongside a return to negotiations and diplomatic engagement to safeguard regional tranquillity, safety and stability. The ministry further underlined that strikes directed at commercial shipping vessels and non-military installations across the region "must cease" to ensure.

MARKETS SLUMP ON SURGING OIL, WEST ASIA FLARE-UP; SENSEX DROPS 561 POINTS

Diary Times Desk : Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled on Tuesday as a sharp surge in crude oil prices due to the renewed flare-up in West Asia dented investors' sentiment.

Fresh foreign fund outflows and the falling rupee also put pressure on the markets. After three days of gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 561.46 points, or 0.72 per cent, to settle at 77,054.94. During the day, it tumbled 614.92 points, or 0.79 per cent, to 77,001.48.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 158.95 points, or 0.66 per cent, to end at 24,052.05. From the Sensex pack, HCL Tech declined the most by 4.42 per cent. Bajaj Finserv, InterGlobe Aviation, State Bank of India, Mahindra & Mahindra and Larsen & Toubro were also among the major laggards. Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services, Sun Pharma, Tata Steel, Adani Ports and Eternal were the winners. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, surged 4.26 per cent to USD 86.85 per barrel. "Domestic equities came under renewed pressure as escalating West Asia tensions drove crude oil prices sharply higher, reviving fears that global energy supply will further delay a recovery.

GOLD FALLS RS 700, SILVER SLUMPS RS 8,900 IN DELHI

Diary Times Desk : Gold prices fell by Rs 700 to Rs 1.46 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday, and silver slumped by Rs 8,900, as subdued demand weighed on the domestic bullion market.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity dropped by Rs 700 to Rs 1,46,300 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) from Monday's closing level of Rs 1,47,000 per 10 grams. Silver also witnessed a sharper correction, tumbling Rs 8,900 to Rs 2,26,100 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes), according to the All India Sarafa Association. The white metal had closed at Rs 2,35,000 per kg in the preceding session. Traders said sluggish offtake from jewellers and industrial users kept precious metals under pressure despite resilient overseas prices. In the international markets, spot gold gained marginally to trade at USD 4,020.13 per ounce, and silver rose nearly 1 per cent to USD 58.06 per ounce.

INDIA-UK CETA TO COME INTO EFFECT FROM JULY 15

Diary Times Desk : The comprehensive economic and trade agreement (CETA) that was signed between India and the UK on July 25, 2025, after several rounds of negotiations will come into effect from Wednesday. Addressing the media in new Delhi, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agarwal said the CETA was India's "most aspirational" trade deal till date and it established a future-focused economic framework between two major nations. The agreement covers 30 chapters that include trade in products and services, digital trade, government procurement, MSMEs, innovation, labour, environment and gender. We call it a gold-standard and first-of-its-kind FTA because of its wide sectoral coverage and deep reduction in both tariff and non-tariff barriers," said Agarwal. He said the UK had proposed tariff liberalisation on 98.8 per cent of tariff lines, which covered 99.5 per cent of the value of Indian exports. Of this, 0.5 per cent of trade value had not been subject to tariff liberalisation, while 97.7 per cent of trade value would be fully duty-free.



BIEPA URGES CONSUMERS TO RELY ON FACTS AMID MISINFORMATION ON E20

Diary Times Desk : The Bharat Independent Ethanol Producers Association (BIEPA) on Tuesday expressed concern over the spread of misleading information about E20 petrol on social media, stating that claims linking the fuel to engine damage, poor mileage and excessive water consumption are not supported by scientific evidence, industry testing or real-world operating data. BIEPA said the growing volume of conflicting and unverified claims about E20 has created unnecessary confusion among consumers at a time when India's ethanol blending programme is delivering measurable economic, environmental and energy security benefits. The association said India's nationwide rollout of E20 petrol marks a significant milestone in the country's clean energy transition and urged consumers to rely on verified information from the government of India, vehicle manufacturers, oil marketing companies and scientific institutions rather than unverified online claims. According to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme has helped India save over Rs 1.90 lakh crore in foreign exchange since 2014-15 by reducing crude oil imports. The programme has also created a productive market for agricultural.



INDIA RELEASES FIRST TRIAL INDEX OF SERVICES PRODUCTION, 14 SUB-SECTORS SEE DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH

Diary Times Desk : The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the country's first trial Index of Services Production (ISP) for 19 sub-sectors on Tuesday, offering a monthly measure of short-term activity in the formal services sector for the first time. This is a significant step towards bolstering India's macroeconomic indicators. The first index covers April 2026 and represents about 60 per cent of India's services industry, using 2024-2025 as the base year. The ministry states that the sub-sectoral ISP is "an important milestone in strengthening India's statistical system and improving the measurement of the services sector," which accounts for over half of India's GDP. After evaluating the trial series' stability and broadening its scope, the overall Index of Services Production will be unveiled later. In April 2026, 14 of the 19 sub-sectors saw double-digit increase compared to the same month the previous year, and nearly all categories showed positive growth, according to the initial release, which demonstrated strong performance across the sector. Among the top achievers, accommodation and food services saw the largest rise at 37.2 per cent, followed by retail trade (30.8 per cent), administrative and support services (28.7 per cent) and real estate (27.7 per cent).



INDIA'S WHOLESALE
INFLATION RISES TO 9.87%
IN JUNE ON HIGHER FOOD,
METAL PRICES

Diary Times Desk : India's wholesale price inflation (WPI) increased to 9.87 per cent in June from 9.68 per cent in May, primarily as a result of higher costs for food items, basic metals, chemicals and mineral oils, as per the data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Tuesday.

According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the All India Wholesale Price Index (Base Year 2022-23) for all commodities increased from 109.9 in May to 110.2 in June.

The ministry claims that rising costs for food items, basic metals, chemicals and chemical products and mineral oils (including petroleum products) were the main reasons of the rise in wholesale inflation. Fuel and Power inflation decreased to 27.41 per cent from 30.33 per cent, while Primary Articles registered an annual inflation of 7 per cent, up from 4.99 per cent in May. The rate of inflation in manufactured goods remained unchanged at 7.48 per cent.

RBI GOVERNOR URGES
BANKS TO HARNESS AI,
STRENGTHEN
CYBERSECURITY AND
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Diary Times Desk : Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Tuesday asked banks to leverage advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), to improve operational efficiency, expand financial services and enhance customer experience, while emphasising the need for strong cybersecurity and robust internal controls.

The remarks came during the RBI's half-yearly meeting with the Managing Directors and Chief Executive Officers of Public Sector Banks and select Private Sector Banks held in Mumbai. The meeting was chaired by the Governor and attended by Deputy Governors Swaminathan J., Poonam Gupta, S. C. Murmu and Rohit Jain, along with Executive Directors overseeing supervision, regulation, enforcement, consumer education and protection, and financial inclusion.

INDIA-EU FTA LEGAL REVIEW ALMOST OVER, HUGE POTENTIAL FOR TRADE: GOYAL

Diary Times Desk : Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said the legal assessment of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is almost over and highlighted the enormous potential for trade, investment, technology, defense, tourism and innovation between India and the EU. Speaking at the India-Spain Business Forum, Goyal expressed optimism in the development of the India-EU FTA, while highlighting the expanding strategic cooperation between Spain and India. "India EU free trade agreement legal scrub should be over in another week or two," he said. Goyal reaffirmed that India's economy continued to grow at the highest rate in the world in spite of global geopolitical difficulties. "All the members are completely aligned in this partnership with India," Goyal said, adding that no member state had criticised the trade pact between India and the EU. He added, "There is also discontent or dissent back in India." Together, Europe and India account for almost 30 per cent of the world's trade and GDP. The minister stated that there is enormous potential to increase the current bilateral trade between Spain and India, which is less than USD 10 billion. In 2025-2026, it was USD 9.2 billion. "Let us sit and create a roadmap for the future," he added, citing tourism and education as areas where both sides can expand their cooperation.



PRICED OUT OF CHANDNI CHOWK? HARYANA'S 'NAMO CITY' ROLLS OUT
THE RED CARPET FOR DELHI'S TRADERS



Diary Times Desk : For nearly four centuries, Chandni Chowk has been the commercial heart of Old Delhi. Built as the principal market of the Shahjahanabad region in the national capital, it continues to attract traders, shoppers, and businesses from across the country. But behind its enduring appeal lies a growing struggle with congestion, ageing infrastructure, and logistics that traders say can no longer be ignored.

That debate has gained fresh relevance after the Haryana government invited Delhi's wholesale traders to invest in a proposed 5,000-acre 'Namo City' near the capital, promising modern infrastructure, dedicated commercial space, and faster approvals. While the proposal has sparked discussion, trader bodies say there has been no suggestion that Chandni Chowk itself is shifting.

"There has been talk for years about creating warehouses outside Chandni Chowk, but nothing has happened on that front. Nobody has notified us that our market is shifting," said Sanjay Bhargava, President of the Chandni Chowk Sarv Vyapaar Mandal. "It appears they are trying to create an alternate market where there will be both trading facilities and warehousing. At this stage, everything is only presumptive," he added. Bhargava said the conversation should be viewed in the context of long-standing planning proposals that were never implemented. According to him, successive master plans had envisaged institutional development and better planning for wholesale trade, but little had changed on the ground. "The biggest issue for traders today is logistics. Loading and unloading is a major problem. Chandni Chowk is heavily overcrowded. There are widespread illegal constructions. Even the courts have observed several times that Chandni Chowk is like a ticking time bomb," he said.

**PUNJAB'S CHAITANYA
DHALIWAL SELECTED FOR
INDIA'S U-20 WATER POLO
TEAM FOR AQUATICS
CHAMPIONSHIP**

Diary Times Desk : In a proud moment for Punjab, 19-year-old Chaitanya Dhaliwal, an emerging water polo player and goalkeeper from the Punjab Institute of Sports (PIS) Water Polo Centre, Jalandhar, has been selected to represent India at the Asian Age Group U-20 Aquatics Championship to be held in Thailand. Chaitanya has already won the Best Goalkeeper award at the Junior Nationals as well as the All India University Championships. His coach, Umesh Sharma, credited Chaitanya's exceptional reflexes, defensive skills and consistency under the crossbar for earning him a place in the national squad. Chaitanya has trained at the PIS Water Polo Centre in Jalandhar throughout his sporting journey under Sharma's guidance. The coach, who has mentored him for the past eight years, expressed confidence that Chaitanya's experience and dedication would help him excel at the continental championship and make the country proud.

**'SATLUJ CONTROVERSY
MUST END NOW': PUNJAB
BJP CHIEF APPEALS FOR
RESTRAINT**

Diary Times Desk : Punjab BJP president Kewal Singh Dhillon on Tuesday said the ongoing controversy over the film Satluj must come to an end, cautioning that reopening old wounds would serve no one.

In a statement, Dhillon said Punjab had already suffered enough pain and bloodshed, and that healing such wounds takes time.

He said the killings of Punjabis, irrespective of religion, must never be forgotten, but called for the memory of the victims to be honoured rather than used for political noise.

Dhillon made a specific appeal to the media to report on the matter with responsibility

and restraint, saying Punjab's peace must come first.

The statement comes amid a controversy surrounding the Punjabi film Satluj, which has revived debate over the state's turbulent past.

PM MODI'S PUNJAB VISIT: AAP ALLEGES 'DRUG TRADE AID' BY BJP-LED CENTRE

Diary Times Desk : Days ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Punjab visit, the Aam Aadmi Party has upped its ante against the BJP-led Centre, accusing it of deliberately ignoring Punjab and "aiding a gangster, lodged in Sabarmati Jail of Gujarat, to spread his drug business in the state". The state's ruling party has also accused the Central government of failing to act, as Punjab is being used as a "dumping ground" for drugs and arms. "The Centre is not even allowing our flagship health insurance scheme to be implemented in PGI, Chandigarh—a project set up for Punjab several decades ago. If this is not discrimination, what else is?" he said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit the state and its capital, Chandigarh, on July 17. He will be inaugurating healthcare projects in Chandigarh and a renovated railway station in Jalandhar, besides flagging off a train from Chheharta (Amritsar) to Varanasi. "Punjab and its youth are being deliberately targeted. Eighty percent of drugs being smuggled from across the International Border are being dumped in the state. That is why new drugs like ICE and cocaine are increasingly coming into Punjab."

**PSPCL MEETS RECORD POWER DEMAND OF 17,328
MW WITHOUT POWER CUTS: MINISTER**

Diary Times Desk : The Punjab government on Tuesday claimed to have imposed no power cuts during the peak paddy season while ensuring an eight-hour power supply to farmers in the state.

This year's highest power demand of 17,328 MW was met on Tuesday without any power cuts, claimed officials, even as the monsoon rain has been dismal this monsoon season.

"The Punjab government is ensuring uninterrupted power supply to consumers across the state while successfully meeting record electricity demand without imposing any power cuts," claimed Power Minister Tarunpreet Singh Sondh.

He said Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) successfully met a record power demand of 17,328 MW "today without any power cuts on any category of consumers".

The power minister disclosed that the state government had assured farmers of eight hours of uninterrupted power supply for agricultural purposes and, as a matter of fact, "farmers are presently receiving more than eight hours of supply."

**MONSOON TO REGAIN MOMENTUM IN
PUNJAB, HARYANA AFTER JULY 18**

Diary Times Desk : Monsoon activity over north-west India is expected to gather pace after July 18, with the weather department predicting fairly widespread rains over Punjab and Haryana along with the possibility of heavy rains at isolated places in these states.

Light to moderate rain is likely at isolated places from till July 17, at a few places on July 18 and at many places thereafter in the two states, according to a bulletin issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on July 14. Heavy rain is likely at isolated places on July 19 and 20. Hot and humid conditions are also expected to prevail over the southern parts of Punjab and Haryana till July 16. Over the past 24 hours, light to moderate rains were experienced at isolated places in these states, with the IMD terming the monsoon activity over the region as "weak". Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Hoshiarpur, Ropar and Nawanshahar districts in Punjab and Ambala, Fatehabad, Hisar, Jind, Nuh, Rohtak, Sirsa and Sonapat districts in Haryana received varying amounts of rain. In the month of July so far, Haryana has received 64.8 mm rainfall against the long period average (LPA) of 63.6 mm, marking a surplus of 2 per cent.

**AKAL TAKHT TO SET UP SHAHEEDI STHAL AT HARIKE PATTAN TO HONOUR
MILITANCY-ERA VICTIMS**

Diary Times Desk : Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargaj on Tuesday announced that a Shaheedi Sthal memorial would be established at Harike Pattan to commemorate those who lost their lives during the turbulent period in Punjab. He led a collective 'ardas' programme at Harike Pattan in memory of those who were forcibly disappeared and whose bodies were cremated as unclaimed or disposed of in rivers during the militancy years in Punjab. Jathedar Gargaj also urged Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) to undertake comprehensive documentation of all major incidents and killings that occurred between 1982 and 1995. He said preserving historical records was essential for future generations. The event comes amid renewed public discussion on the Punjab militancy era following the release and subsequent removal of the film Satluj, based on the life and work of human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khaira. Khaira's investigations had documented hundreds of alleged illegal cremations and enforced disappearances.

RAIN TO PERSIST IN PARTS OF HIMACHAL; YELLOW ALERT ISSUED FOR 3 DISTRICTS

Diary Times Desk : Light to moderate rainfall is expected to continue in parts of Himachal Pradesh on Tuesday, with the State Meteorological Centre issuing a yellow alert for Kangra, Chamba and Lahaul & Spiti districts. According to the forecast, these districts are likely to witness intermittent light to moderate rain through the day, while weather conditions are expected to remain largely dry across most other parts of the state. The Met department has also predicted a rise in minimum temperatures by 2°C to 3°C across Himachal Pradesh. Among the major towns, Shimla recorded a minimum temperature of 17.2°C, followed by Dharamshala at 18.8°C, Mandali at 16.9°C, Mandi at 22.9°C, Solan at 19°C, Kalpa at 13.2°C, Reckong Peo at 13°C, Bilaspur at 23.5°C, Una at 21.7°C, Kangra at 23.2°C, Bhuntar at 20.8°C, Chamba at 20.2°C, Keylong at 11.1°C and Nahan at 21.3°C. Kukumseri, in Lahaul and Spiti district, remained the coldest place in the state, recording a minimum temperature of 10.5°C.

RAIN TO INTENSIFY IN HIMACHAL FROM JULY 18; YELLOW ALERT ISSUED

Diary Times Desk : Rainfall is very likely to intensify across Himachal Pradesh from July 18 onwards, as the State Meteorological Centre has issued a yellow alert for the state. According to the centre, light to very light rain is expected to continue until July 17, after which the intensity of rainfall is likely to increase. While minimum temperatures are expected to remain normal, maximum temperatures are likely to rise by 2°C to 3°C over the next few days. Meanwhile, isolated parts of the state witnessed very light rainfall during the past 24 hours, while the weather remained mostly dry across Himachal Pradesh. The maximum temperature recorded in Shimla was 26°C, followed by Dharamshala at 31°C, Manali at 26.6°C, Solan at 30°C, Kangra at 33.2°C, Mandi at 34.4°C, Sundernagar at 33.6°C, Kufri at 21.2°C, Keylong at 23.3°C, Kalpa at 23.5°C, Narkanda at 24.2°C, Nahan at 29.9°C, and Chamba at 30°C. The state's highest maximum temperature of 36.2°C was recorded in Una, while the lowest minimum temperature of 10.5°C was recorded in Kukumseri, in Lahaul and Spiti district.

HIMACHAL CM SUKHU INAUGURATES SOLAR POWER PROJECT IN SOLAN

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu virtually inaugurated a 500-kilowatt ground-mounted solar power project in Gram Panchayat Mamlig of Solan district under the Green Panchayat Scheme here on Tuesday. Built at a cost of Rs 2 crore, the construction of the project began on December 23, 2024, and was connected to the electricity grid on February 24, 2026. The Chief Minister said the project was currently generating around 3,000 units of clean electricity every day and was expected to produce nearly 8 lakh units annually. "Under the power purchase agreement, the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited would purchase the electricity at Rs 3.50 per unit, providing the state with clean energy as well as a stable source of long-term revenue," he said. Sukhu said the project's biggest strength was its people-centric revenue-sharing model as 25 per cent of the income generated under this project would be used for development works in the gram panchayat, another 25 per cent on the welfare.

**3 WOMEN AMONG 7 HELD FOR POSSESSING CHITTA IN SEPARATE CASES IN KANGRA**

Diary Times Desk : Kangra Police have arrested seven persons, including three women, in a series of anti-drug operations conducted across the district over the past two days, recovering 49.48 grams of chitta (heroin) in separate cases. Kangra SP Kulbhushan Verma said a CIA team of Kangra apprehended three persons near Ecco Bridge in Jadrangal panchayat and recovered 13.9 grams of heroin from their possession. The police also seized a taxi allegedly used for transporting the contraband. The accused have been identified as Gaurav Sharma (25) and Ankaj Kumar (36), both residents of the Dharamsala subdivision, and Abhishek Kumar (30), a resident of Palampur. In another operation, a CIA team of Kangra Police arrested a man and a woman during a checking operation in Shahpur subdivision and recovered 33.01 grams of heroin from their possession. The accused have been identified as Vinod Kumar (24), a resident of Sujampur in Uttar Pradesh, and Sunita alias Veeri (45), a resident of Hoshiarpur district in Punjab. The motorcycle allegedly used by the accused was also seized. Earlier on Monday, the police recovered 2.57 grams of heroin following a tip-off and arrested two women in Palampur. The accused have been identified as Sandhya Devi (45), a resident of Palampur, and Hema Kumari (30), a resident of Mandi district.

STATE-OF-THE-ART DIGITAL STUDIO TO ENSURE QUALITY E-LEARNING IN HPU: HIMACHAL GOVERNOR

Diary Times Desk : Governor and Chancellor of Himachal Pradesh University (HPU) Kavinder Gupta here on Tuesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art Digital Studio/MOOCs Recording Studio at the university and said it would provide new impetus to digital and online education at the university and significantly support the provision of quality e-learning materials to students. The studio has been established under the PM-USHA (MERU) component at the Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE) of the university. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said the studio had been developed to create high-quality video lectures, online courses (MOOCs), e-content, webinars and digital learning materials. He said the studio is equipped with modern cameras, professional lighting, green screens and advanced audio-video recording facilities. "This facility is a significant achievement for the university in effectively implementing the National Education Policy-2020 and promoting digital education" he added. Congratulating the university family on the inauguration of the studio, he said the Vice-Chancellor of the university.

ARKI NAGAR PANCHAYAT POLLS: CONGRESS BAGS PRESIDENT'S POST, BJP SECURES VICE-PRESIDENT'S SEAT

Diary Times Desk : Congress-supported Seema Sharma was elected president of the Arki Nagar Panchayat, while BJP-supported Veena Thakur was elected vice-president in the elections held on Tuesday at Arki. The duo was chosen through a draw of lots after the election ended in a tie, with both candidates securing four votes each. Seema Sharma has been elected as the civic body's president for the second time. BJP-backed candidates had secured a majority by winning four seats in the elections held on May 17, while Congress-supported candidates managed to win only three seats. The ruling party, however, levelled the tally with the vote of local MLA Sanjay Awasthi. This brought both parties on par, prompting the Assistant Returning Officer to decide the winner through a draw of lots. Seema Sharma has been fortunate for the second time in this civic body election, as she had earlier won her seat through a draw of lots as well. With the post of president reserved for a woman, she was the Congress' sole candidate for the top post, while the BJP had three contenders. For the vice-president's post, BJP-supported Veena Thakur was pitted against Congress candidate Pradeep, and luck favoured Veena. The provision allowing the local MLA to vote in the civic body president's election helped the ruling Congress secure at least one of the two top posts in Arki and Parwanoo. The party had failed to secure a majority in either of the two civic bodies. Arki is the only civic body in the district where a Congress-supported president has been elected.



Why electric vehicles are a good option

A conflict thousands of kilometres away can make commuting to work costlier in Delhi, increase freight charges in Coimbatore, or inflate vegetable prices in Guwahati. Few countries illustrate the strategic vulnerability of oil dependence as starkly as India. The world's third-largest consumer of crude oil, India imports more than 90 per cent of its petroleum requirements. Domestic production has stagnated even as demand continues to rise with rapid urbanisation, rising incomes and expanding mobility.

WhatsApp has finally addressed a long-standing weakness. The change reflects the growing importance of digital privacy. A phone number today is more than a means of communication. It is linked to banking,

government services and countless online accounts. Sharing it with strangers can invite spam, scams and unwanted intrusion. Usernames give people greater control over their digital identity without compromising the platform's encrypted messaging. The move also brings WhatsApp in line with competitors such as Telegram.

As the world's largest messaging platform, with more than three billion users, it was only a matter of time before Meta closed this longstanding privacy blind spot. For professionals, freelancers, small businesses and content creators, the feature makes it easier to interact with clients and audiences while safeguarding personal information. Women and young users, often vulnerable to harassment, stand to benefit the most. The update, however, is no silver bullet. Impersonation and fake profiles could emerge as new challenges. Meta must back this feature with strong verification, effective reporting systems and swift enforcement against abuse.

Privacy is not merely about keeping messages secret. It is about deciding what personal information to share and with whom. WhatsApp's username feature marks a welcome shift towards user-centric privacy. In an era where personal data is increasingly exploited, giving individuals greater control over their digital identity is both timely and necessary.



Brad Lendon

Unlike oil, electricity can be produced from multiple domestic sources



Hilary Whiteman

The National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre at AIIMS has documented the misuse of pharmaceutical preparations

CURBS ON ALCOHOL-RICH MEDICINE LAUDABLE

According to him, the panel has found that "almost 99 per cent of stakeholders, particularly from civil society and various organisations, favour simultaneous elections." A balanced assessment of ONOE requires looking beyond political rhetoric to gauge its constitutional, administrative and democratic implications. The proposal continues to draw strong objections from some Opposition parties, constitutional experts and advocates of federalism. The challenge is to develop a mechanism that is acceptable to all concerned.

The case in favour of ONOE rests largely on economic efficiency and smoother governance. Frequent elections involve substantial financial costs, leading to repeated imposition of the Model Code of Conduct.



THE CENTRE'S DECISION TO TIGHTEN THE SALE OF ORAL MEDICINES WITH HIGH ALCOHOL CONTENT IS AN OVERDUE CORRECTION TO A LOOPHOLE THAT HAS LONG ENABLED MISUSE

The JPC has cited studies estimating that synchronised elections could save nearly Rs 7 lakh crore by reducing disruptions to administration, industry, tourism and public services. Supporters also argue that uninterrupted five-year cycles would enable governments to focus on long-term development, policy implementation and investment.

However, there is much more to elections than potential gains in terms of money and governance. ONOE risks diluting India's federal structure by subordinating state-level political priorities to national narratives.

The constitutional mechanism proposed to synchronise electoral cycles, particularly the possibility of curtailing or extending the tenure of legislatures or holding elections only for the remainder of a term, needs to be discussed thoroughly.

Concerns have also been raised about granting the Election Commission wider discretionary powers in managing synchronisation. Electoral convenience should not erode a level playing field. The onus is on the JPC to adopt a calibrated approach so that the reform ensures efficiency as well as democratic integrity.

INFA

KEY SAFEGUARD

ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY WITHOUT SKIPPING DUE PROCESS

CONCERNS raised by Opposition parties have prompted a joint parliamentary committee to recommend an important safeguard in the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill.

The panel has suggested that the proposed provision for the "removal" of the Prime Minister, chief ministers and ministers after 30 consecutive days in judicial custody be replaced with "suspension". This is an attempt to strike a much-needed constitutional balance. The reinstatement clause, depending on the outcome of the judicial proceedings, is an acknowledgement that accountability must coexist with due process. The original proposal, which sought automatic removal, invited criticism from the Congress and several regional parties for equating custody with guilt.

In a democracy governed by the rule of law, arrest is only the beginning of a judicial process, not its conclusion.

The periodic censure of civic bodies by the NGT underscores a larger truth: environmental governance cannot succeed when responsibility is diffused and penalties are treated as a routine cost of doing business. The state has shown that revival is possible.

The community-led restoration of the Kali Bein is proof that determined action can heal even severely degraded water bodies. But isolated successes cannot substitute for a comprehensive strategy that combines strict compliance, transparent public reporting and sustained investment in sewage and waste-treatment systems.

Punjab derives its very name from its waters. To allow these rivers to remain open drains is to imperil not only ecosystems and public health, but also the state's identity and future prosperity.

The time for reports and promises has passed. What Punjab now needs is the resolve to enforce the laws it already has. The problem is one of political will.



Helen Regan

The debate on the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025 is about safeguarding democratic institutions, not protecting individual politicians

THE FORGOTTEN GENIUS OF WILLIAM STOTT OF OLDHAM

Diary Times Desk : There is a curious circumstance about the painter William Stott of Oldham that catches the imagination. It concerns his death, which happened at sea. Stott died suddenly on a ferry crossing, and although the details are scant, it holds up well as an allegory for his life. Torn between the French avant-garde and the British establishment, the artist spent his career traversing two worlds, never finding solid ground in either.

It is perhaps for this reason that the painter, much celebrated on the Continent in his lifetime, has been largely forgotten since his untimely death in 1900. For a brief moment, as one of a group of intrepid artists, he transformed modern art in Victorian Britain. ‘Art for art’s sake’ was their pursuit, grounded in a belief, promoted by James McNeill Whistler, that great art should convey the atmosphere of things.

Stott’s landscapes and portraits capture precisely this quality: they are dreamy, delicate and subtle. A melancholy charm pervades the work. His best paintings are hypersensitive in texture. In Paris, he was championed for this en plein air directness; in London, he was criticised for its formlessness. Like Whistler, he could have cut his losses and abandoned the stuffy environs of the Royal Academy, but for all his modernity, Stott still wanted the approval of the British establishment. Regrettably, it was to elude him throughout his short career.

Born near Oldham in Lancashire in 1857, Stott was the son of a cotton-mill owner. Thanks to having three older brothers who were already employed in the family business, William’s desire to become an artist was encouraged by his father, who paid for him to study at Oldham School of Art, where he excelled. At the age of 21, he moved to Paris in search of the vie de bohème. It was a febrile time to be in the city. Impressionism was still causing outrage and attracting the outré celebrities of the day, Charles Baudelaire, Oscar Wilde and Whistler among them. Summers were spent in Grez-sur-Loing, the international artists’ colony south-east of Paris. It was here that Stott learned of the fin-de-siècle Symbolist movement, interpreting its ideas in landscapes that responded to nature and humanity’s place within it.



COLLECTING GUIDE: WORKS ON PAPER

Diary Times Desk : The phrase works on paper encompasses a diverse range of media – from drawings and paintings to prints and multiples. Traditionally, artists utilize paper to test out new strategies or think through a larger idea with the immediacy of pencil and charcoal. Oftentimes, this gives outsiders a more intimate glimpse into their creative process, as if the artist is giving you a personal tour of how their mind churns and sifts through ideas. More and more, artists are turning to the medium as a unique way to showcase these visualizations.

Artists known for working in a diverse range of media are prized for their works on paper. Monumental sculptor, Richard Serra captures the same physical intensity on paper through texture by thickly applying lithographic crayon, paintstick or charcoal. Painter, photographer and printmaker, Ed Ruscha implements a wide range of innovative materials – from gunpowder and blood to Pepto Bismol and caviar – in his paper works as a way to reflect contemporary American life.

On the other hand, Vija Celmins' photo-realistic paintings and drawings bring a sense of intimacy, allowing the viewer to engage closer to nature, almost as if it is under a magnified glass. While Cy Twombly gives viewers the chance to get a closer, sometimes more explicit, look at the artist's style and motifs used through his unique masterworks. Conversely, Sam Gilliam's works narrow in to his focus on coloration and form, as key precedents of his most acclaimed series, such as his drape paintings. Earlier, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, living close to the Louvre as a young boy, studied the works of the Old Masters, which informed some of his early pencil drawings. The spontaneity and mobility of working on paper perfectly suited Edgar Degas, who famously carried pencils and pastels to depict the delicate, fleeting movements of ballet dancers. Fernand Léger apprenticed in an architect's office before moving to Paris in 1900 to work as a draftsman.



YOUR HOROSCOPE

15-07-2026



- Aries**

Today, you will meet old friends, which will refresh old memories. Employed people may be fired from the job due to heavy arguments with colleagues in the workplace. People doing business should thank God for getting financial benefits from the advice of their spouse. Due to irritation in the eyes, you should consult an ophthalmologist.
- Taurus**

Today you will get success as your long pending legal proceedings will come in your favor. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family as employed people will get progress in their workplace. People doing business should make a budget and spend the money in order to get financial benefits. Housewives should change their food according to health and season.
- Gemini**

Today you should include yoga and meditation in your daily routine. For employed people, your responsibilities may increase due to promotion in the workplace. People doing business may suffer financial loss from any unknown person today. There may be difficulty in walking due to nerve pain problems.
- Cancer**

Today you will get relief from all your problems due to sudden financial gain. Employed people may have to get scolded by their boss due to being hasty in the workplace. People doing business may face increased difficulties in business due to arguments with business partners. As the problem of foot pain increases, you must consult a specialist doctor.
- Leo**

Today, you should offer water to Lord Shiva to avoid difficulties. A heated argument with HR in the workplace will spoil your whole day. Businessmen have to exercise patience, there are chances of improvement in business. Today, you may face stomach and pancreas problems due to eating too much fried food.
- Virgo**

Today you should take special control over your speech and behavior. People in employment will get success in the workplace with the help of friends. People doing business will get financial gain due to some special offer, your financial condition will be strengthened. Old diseases of elders in the house may emerge.
- Libra**

Today is going to be a busy day for you. Employed people will get a chance to work with senior officers due to advancement in their professional field. People doing business should avoid exchanging money with any unknown person today. Pregnant women may have to face problems due to changing weather.
- Scorpio**

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employed people may have to face mental problems due to extra workload in the workplace. People doing business may have to travel abroad in connection with business expansion. Diabetic patients should get themselves checked by a doctor in case of any problem today.
- Sagittarius**

Today you should take all important decisions of your career thoughtfully. Employed people may have to face some problems due to the start of a new job in the workplace. Due to financial gain for business people, you can invest in a new business. Problems like leg pain and headache may bother you.
- Capricorn**

Today you can invest especially in land and buildings. Employed people may have to travel long distances due to office work, due to which your health may deteriorate. People doing business may face difficulties in repaying business loans due to loss of money. High BP and cholesterol problems will increase the problems of your spouse.
- Aquarius**

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employees will be suspended due to indiscipline in the workplace. People doing business should solve all the problems of their customers in time. Due to worsening weather, problems related to cold and cough may increase in the family.
- Pisces**

Today your interest in creative work will especially increase. Employed people may be given an important project by their boss to handle important projects in the workplace. People doing business should control their speech and behavior with their customers. You should walk carefully on the road, problems may arise due to injury.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026: "THIS IS AS BIG AS IT GETS", HARRY KANE AHEAD OF ENGLAND'S WC SF CLASH AGAINST ARGENTINA

Diary Times Desk : England captain Harry Kane described the World Cup semifinal against reigning champions Argentina as a dream occasion, saying it was one of the biggest matches a player could experience. He expressed excitement for the challenge and hoped that facing such a strong opponent would bring out the best in England. England will face Argentina in the second semifinal of the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Atlanta on Wednesday (local time), with the Three Lions aiming to reach only their second World Cup final and their first since lifting the trophy on home soil in 1966. "I mean, what a game, what an occasion to play one of the best teams, the reigning world champions, in a semifinal of a World Cup," captain Harry Kane told ITV as per ESPN. "In these moments, I think back to being a kid and having dreams and what it'd be like to play in these games. This is as big as it gets, so I'm really excited for this week."

SPORTS MINISTRY WANTS PROPER INQUIRY INTO ASUNTA LAKRA'S COMPLAINTS AGAINST HOCKEY INDIA OFFICIAL

Diary Times Desk : The Sports Ministry has asked Hockey India to fully inquire into the allegations raised by former India women captain and now selector Asunta Lakra by its Internal Complaints Committee (ICC).

Asunta had claimed that HI secretary general Bhola Nath Singh had threatened her with consequences for raising sexual harassment of girls in Jharkhand at the hand of a coach, Sudhir Golla.

While, Asunta in her complaint letter wanted a constitution of an independent ICC into the allegations of sexual harassment, institutional intimidation, the ministry in its letter has merely asked the matter to be referred to the HI's ICC.

However, this time the enquiry will be keenly watched by the ministry in the hope that a proper enquiry, with sittings be held, a full report to be filed under the provision of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2023. "We are very serious about this matter. We will keenly watch how it unfolds and take appropriate action if the need arises," a sports ministry source told The Tribune on Tuesday.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026: "NO ANTI-LAMINE YAMAL PLAN", RABIOT SAYS, FRANCE FOCUSED ON 'SPANISH NATIONAL TEAM'

Diary Times Desk : France midfielder Adrien Rabiot stressed his side is not preparing a specific plan only for Spain's Lamine Yamal, stressing that France would focus on Spain's overall attacking threat, including their possession, movement, creativity, and ability to find spaces. France will take on an in-form Spain side that advanced to the last four after defeating Belgium 2-1 in the quarterfinals. Spain enters the contest on a 36-match unbeaten run and will be aiming to secure a place in the FIFA World Cup 2026 final. There is no anti-Lamine Yamal plan. We are focusing on the Spanish national team, not just one player. We know they are dangerous across the board: him, the attacking players, their possession, their ability to find spaces near the box, and their combination play. We have to be alert to all of that. I don't think we should focus solely on one individual," Adrien Rabiot said as per Goal.com. The winners of the semifinal will book their place in the title clash scheduled for July 19 (Local Time).

**JAPAN OPEN 2026: SINDHU MAKES WINNING START, DHRUV-TANISHA PROGRESS**

Diary Times Desk : Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu and the mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto advanced to the second round of the Japan Open after registering straight-game victories in their respective opening-round matches at the BWF Super 750 tournament here on Tuesday. The 2019 BWF Champion defeated Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching 21-14, 21-11 in just 36 minutes to make a confident start to her campaign, according to a press release. Dhruv and Tanisha also progressed with a 21-16, 21-14 win over Scotland's Alexander Dunn and Julie Macpherson. However, Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde bowed out in the mixed doubles after losing 11-21, 10-21 to top seeds Feng Yan Zhe and Huang Dong Ping of China. In men's doubles, Hariharan Amsakarunan and M.R. Arjun fought back to win the second game before going down 13-21, 21-17, 7-21 to Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsuan. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also exited in the opening round after retiring against Denmark's Daniel Lundgaard and Mads Vestergaard following the first game due to Satwik's recurring shoulder injury.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026: FOOD SERVICE TIMINGS FOR HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS IN BENGALURU EXTENDED FOR LATE-NIGHT MATCHES

Diary Times Desk : Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Tuesday that food service timings for hotels and restaurants in the city have been extended from 1.00 am to 3.30 am on July 14, 15 and 19 to enable fans to watch late-night FIFA World Cup matches. The decision has been taken following a request from the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI). The 2026 FIFA World Cup semi-finals are set to take place on July 14 (local time) and July 15, 2026. The matchups feature France vs Spain and England vs Argentina. "Football inspires millions across the world, and the FIFA World Cup is a celebration that fans eagerly look forward to. Following a request from the National Restaurant Association of India, our government has permitted hotels and restaurants in Bengaluru to extend food service timings from 1.00 am to 3.30 am on July 14, 15 and 19 to facilitate late-night match screenings," D K Shivakumar said in an X post. "This decision has been taken while ensuring that public safety, law and order, and the convenience of citizens remain our highest priorities. I urge everyone to enjoy the matches responsibly."