

NEWS IN BRIEF

**TMC MP KOEL
MALICK RESIGNS
FROM RAJYA
SABHA**

Diary Times Desk : The saga of setbacks for the former ruling party of West Bengal, Trinamool Congress, continued on Thursday with another leader, Rukmini Mallick, resigning from her Rajya Sabha membership. Rukmini, popularly known as Koel Mallick, tendered her resignation from the Rajya Sabha to Chairman CP Radhakrishnan on Thursday. She resigned with immediate effect.

Mallick is the fourth TMC MP to quit the party's membership. Earlier, Sukhendu Shekhar Ray, Shushmita Dev and Prakash Baraik had resigned. From the Lok Sabha.

**VHP ALLEGES
CONSPIRACY AFTER
CLASS 2 STUDENT
TOLD TO 'RECITE'
KALMA AT
HYDERABAD
SCHOOL**

Diary Times Desk : The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Thursday demanded action against a private school in Hyderabad where a Class 2 student belonging to the Hindu faith was allegedly asked by a teacher to learn an Islamic verse, urging the state government to ascertain whether this was part of a "conspiracy". A controversy erupted after parents of a Class 2 student at a private school in Hyderabad alleged their six-year-old son was asked to learn an Islamic verse as part of his homework. Claiming that there is widespread anger among the people of Hyderabad over the incident, VHP international president Alok Kumar demanded the state government conduct a thorough investigation into the matter to identify those involved. "There is widespread anger among the people of Hyderabad over this incident, and rightly so. We want the state government to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter to identify those involved. It should not be taken lightly. The government should ascertain whether this was the act of a single teacher or part of an organised conspiracy. "The truth must be brought out. At the same time, it is essential that harmony between the two communities is not disturbed. Those found guilty.

**INDIA JAPAN
NEWS****PAKISTAN LODGES PROTEST WITH JAPAN OVER REFERENCE TO
CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM IN INDIA-JAPAN JOINT STATEMENT**

Diary Times Desk : Pakistan has formally lodged a strong diplomatic protest with Japan over its decision to explicitly refer to "cross-border terrorism from Pakistan" in the India-Japan Annual Summit Joint Statement, underscoring Tokyo's growing alignment with New Delhi's long-standing position on terrorism emanating from across the border. Confirming the development on Thursday, Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Ambassador Tahir Andrabi said Islamabad had made a strong démarche to the Japanese government, objecting to the language used in the joint statement issued after the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit earlier this month. "We have expressed our concerns to Japan through diplomatic channels. In fact, a strong démarche has been made," Andrabi said during the weekly media briefing in Islamabad. "The Japanese government's endorsement of such one-sided formulations ignores the undeniable contribution and sacrifices made by Pakistan," Andrabi said, while adding that Japanese officials had assured Islamabad there was "no shift" in Tokyo's policy towards Pakistan.

The diplomatic protest came at least a fortnight after India and Japan issued a joint statement on July 2 during Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to New Delhi that carried one of the strongest formulations yet by Japan on terrorism affecting India. The two leaders -- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Takaichi -- had unequivocally and strongly condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations, including "cross-border terrorism from Pakistan". They also strongly condemned the April 22, 2025 terrorist attack in Pahalagam and the November 10, 2025 terror attack in Delhi, while taking note of the UN Security Council Monitoring Team's reference to The Resistance Front (TRF).

The joint statement called for the perpetrators, organisers and financiers of the attacks to be brought to justice and urged concerted action against UN-designated terrorist groups, including Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Al Qaeda and ISIS. It also stressed the need to eliminate terrorist safe havens, choke terror financing networks and halt the cross-border movement of terrorists. The reference to "cross-border terrorism from Pakistan" was seen as a diplomatic gain for India, reflecting increasing international acceptance of New Delhi's position that Pakistan-based terror infrastructure remains a key regional security concern.

India has long accused Pakistan of sheltering and supporting terrorist groups responsible for attacks on Indian soil, including LeT and JeM and multiple times urged the international community to hold Islamabad accountable for dismantling terror infrastructure operating from its territory.

**KEJRIWAL, OTHER OPPOSITION LEADERS VISIT WANGCHUK AT JANTAR MANTAR;
BACK JULY 20 PARLIAMENT PROTEST**

Diary Times Desk : The Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) protest at Jantar Mantar received support from various Opposition leaders on Thursday, as activists observed a one-day solidarity hunger strike with Sonam Wangchuk and students demanding examination reforms and accountability for paper leaks. A Samajwadi Party delegation led by MPs Dimple Yadav, Dharmendra Yadav, Mohibbullah Nadvani and Lakshmi Kant Nishad, along with SP State President Naresh Uttam and MLA Dr Ragini Sonkar, visited the protest site and extended support to the movement. Dimple Yadav praised Sonam Wangchuk's determination and the students continuing their hunger strike, saying the Samajwadi Party stands firmly with the youth. She called on students, young people and Opposition parties to join the July 20 Parliament March and assured support both on the ground and inside Parliament. Dharmendra Yadav described repeated paper leaks as a national crisis affecting millions of students and pledged the party's full support. Farmer leader Rakesh Tikait also joined the protest, urging demonstrators to continue their movement peacefully. He said farmers stand with the youth, expressed confidence in the success of the campaign.

**ONE DEAD, AROUND 100 FEEL SUFFOCATED
IN CROWD SURGE DURING RATH YATRA IN
PURI**

Diary Times Desk : One person died and many others fell ill in a temporary crowd surge during the Rath Yatra celebrations in Odisha's Puri on Thursday, official sources said. In an unrelated incident, another person died of cardiac arrest, they said. Lakhs of devotees joined the annual Rath Yatra festival in the seaside temple town. The 'Pahandi' ritual, the ceremonial procession of the sibling deities -- Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath -- is currently under way. Health department officials were yet to react to the death and injuries. Inspector General Fire Services Umashankar Dash said there was a heavy rush of people at Grand Road or Bada Danda on which the chariots roll down to Shree Gundicha Temple, considered the birthplace of the deities. "So far, we have rescued almost 100 people who felt suffocated in the crowd. We have taken them to temporary hospitals and ambulances. That has given relief to devotees," Dash told reporters. Meanwhile, BJD president Naveen Patnaik said he was saddened by the news of the "loss of lives" at Bada Danda during Rath Yatra. I pray for the eternal peace of the souls of the devotees who have lost their lives and for the swift recovery.

**GOVT LISTS BILLS TO AMEND FCRA ACT,
INTRODUCE PREVENTION OF INSULTS TO NATIONAL
HONOUR ACT**

Diary Times Desk : A Bill to make any insult or obstruction to the singing of the National Song Vande Mataram a punishable offence and another bill seeking to make "delayed registration" of birth and death more stringent have been listed by the government for introduction in the Lok Sabha during the Monsoon Session beginning July 20. The Lok Sabha secretariat said that the government has also listed the consideration and passing of the contentious Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026. This Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha during the Budget session but did not come up for consideration and passage, ostensibly due to opposition from certain quarters in Kerala, where Assembly elections were due around that time. A bulletin issued by the Lok Sabha secretariat said the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026 is listed for introduction, consideration and passing. The Bill seeks to amend the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 and sources said that the government wants to make any insult or obstruction to the singing of the National Song Vande Mataram a punishable offence through this. Another Bill listed for introduction, consideration and passing is the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026. The Bill seeks to further amend section 13(3) of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 (as amended in 2023) "in order to make provisions of delayed registration more stringent".

UREA POLICY

**INDIA POST ALLOWS REFUND
OF POSTAGE FEE ON
CANCELLED BOOKINGS**

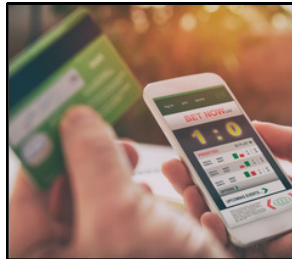
Diary Times Desk : India Post has allowed a refund of the postage fee upon cancellation of bookings done online or through the counter, an official notification said on Thursday.

Senders who have self-booked postal articles via the web portal or mobile application can cancel the booking and claim a postage refund before the article is accepted by the post office, according to the notification.

"In case of an item booked at the Post Office counter, the sender may request cancellation of the booking at the Post Office or the Post Office may cancel the booking for incorrect data entry, on the same day of the booking," the notification said.

The refund of postage shall be admissible in accordance with the administrative instructions issued by Department of Posts from time to time upon cancellation of postal item booking.

The new rule allows refund of postage, special fee, and air surcharges to the sender in the event of suspension of services in accordance with the administrative instructions issued from time to time.

**ED QUESTIONS TV HOST SHEFALI
BAGGA IN MAHADEV BETTING
APP CASE**

Diary Times Desk : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday questioned television host Shefali Bagga as part of its ongoing money laundering investigation into the multi-crore-rupee Mahadev online betting app case, officials said. The central agency recorded her statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after she deposited at its zonal office in the capital city of Chhattisgarh.

Bagga's residence in Delhi was raided by the ED on May 30 from where the ED seized Rs 30 lakh in cash, an amount alleged to have been earned by her from the promotion of betting apps that are illegal in India, officials said. Bagga was an associate of a man identified as Khanjan (Jagdish Kumar) Thakkar who reportedly runs and promotes betting apps in the country and also runs their financial operations through hawala, the ED alleged. Bagga was not immediately available for a comment. The ED suspects Bagga was the face of some betting apps that are being operated from Dubai and London.

DHAR IDOL DISCOVERY: HERE'S WHY ANCIENT IDOLS OF GODDESS GAYATRI ARE RARE



Diary Times Desk : A 12th-century sculpture — long worshipped as Goddess Saraswati — from Dhar in Madhya Pradesh was recently identified as Goddess Gayatri. Fresh digital documentation and high-resolution 3D mapping of the red sandstone sculpture at Bhopal's State Museum had helped archaeologists decode iconographic clues that went unnoticed for centuries. Ancient idols of Goddess Gayatri are extremely rare because she was originally worshipped as a divine mantra rather than a physical deity. Historically, the Gayatri Mantra itself was viewed as the embodiment of the Goddess, meaning physical representations were deemed unnecessary in early Vedic traditions. "In ancient India, Gayatri was primarily worshipped as the personification of the sacred Vedic hymn rather than as a concrete, anthropomorphic figure. The sound and intent of the mantra were the focus of devotion," archaeologist Ramesh Yadav said. "Iconography of the goddess of wisdom often overlaps with Saraswati. Since both embody knowledge.

SONAKSHI SINHA BACKS SONAM WANGCHUK, QUESTIONS GOVT'S SILENCE OVER HUNGER STRIKE

Diary Times Desk : Actor Sonakshi Sinha on Thursday came out in support of Sonam Wangchuk, who has been on a hunger strike for 19 days, asking why the government has not yet initiated dialogue with the activist who is fighting for the future of the country's children. Wangchuk has been on hunger strike after joining the Cockroach Janata Party's (CJP) protest demanding education minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation over alleged irregularities in the NEET examination on June 28. In a video message, posted on her Instagram page, the "Dahaad" star said she could not remain silent, especially at a time when others have chosen not to say anything. "I've never made a public statement like this before, but I can't stay silent any longer. We all know Sonam Wangchuk. We know what he has done for the country, his achievements, and the many honours he has received. For the past 18 days, he has been on a hunger strike without food.

SC VOICES CONCERN OVER CBSE'S THIRD LANGUAGE POLICY FROM CLASS 9 ONWARDS

Diary Times Desk : The Supreme Court on Thursday voiced concern over the introduction of a third language in Class 9 under the CBSE curriculum, observing it would increase the stress level of students and suggesting it be introduced in Class 5 or Class 6 so that students can cope with it. A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and R Mahadevan orally asked the Centre to not introduce a third language in Class 9. "Union of India please don't have a third language from Class 9 level. It would unnecessarily increase the stress level of students. If you want to introduce a new language, then please do it at Class 5 or Class 6 level but not at Class 9 level. Class nine is full of stress, it starts from Class 8 onwards," Justice Nagarathna told the counsel, appearing for the Centre, and asked her to convey the feeling of the court to the government. The remarks were made during the hearing of the Tamil Nadu government's plea against a Madras High Court directive to facilitate the establishment of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) in every district of the State. The Tamil Nadu government has consistently opposed the setting up of JNVs, over concerns with regard to the three-language policy curriculum followed by.

AHEAD OF NC'S DELHI PROTEST, SRINAGAR MP RUHULLAH MEHDI TARGETS OMAR ABDULLAH OVER STATEHOOD DEMAND



Diary Times Desk : Ahead of the National Conference's scheduled statehood protest in Delhi on July 20, party rebel MP Syed Aga Ruhullah Mehdi has sharpened his attack on party Vice-President and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, alleging that the CM wants statehood restored only to get "power back." Mehdi, who represents Srinagar in the Lok Sabha, has for some time been criticising the National Conference for "deviating" from the issues it promised during the election campaign. He said the Chief Minister had sought votes before the elections on the promise of protecting the dignity of the people. "Today, he doesn't talk about respect. Instead, he is seeking restoration of statehood because the DGP doesn't come to salute him," Mehdi said. Mehdi also accused those demanding statehood of acting as "agents of BJP". "Today, tell me who is an agent of BJP, who is trying to normalise BJP's agenda," he said. Speaking at a separate event, the Srinagar MP asserted that he had not deviated from the party's agenda. "On the contrary, the party is deviating from the agenda," he said. Mehdi claimed it was part of BJP's strategy to normalise the post-2019 status quo by focusing the discourse on statehood. He said that before the Assembly election, he had campaigned for his colleagues on the promise of working to restore constitutional guarantees that were taken away in 2019, when Article 370 was abrogated.

'URGENT NEED TO COLLABORATE': NSA DOVAL AS BIMSTEC SECURITY CHIEFS ADOPT MARITIME NORMS

Diary Times Desk : Warning that the region faces an increasingly volatile security environment marked by geopolitical conflicts, terrorism, cyber threats and disruptions to global supply chains, National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval on Thursday called for greater cooperation among BIMSTEC nations as the grouping adopted key maritime norms to strengthen regional security. Addressing the 5th meeting of BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs in New Delhi, Doval said there was an "urgent need" for member states to collaborate and take decisive action to address common security challenges through dialogue and collective efforts. "We are meeting today in the backdrop of a challenging global landscape. We are witnessing conflicts and geopolitical uncertainties. We are also facing multi-domain security threats amplified by rapid technological advancement. Disruptions in global supply chains have also resulted in economic hardship for all our countries," Doval said. "In this setting, there is an urgent need for us to collaborate, take decisive actions for our mutual benefit, and find solutions through mutual discussions and deliberations to the problems that we are all facing," he added.

MAHARASHTRA GOVT TO WAIVE RS 48,000 CRORE PENDING FARM POWER DUES: FADNAVIS

Diary Times Desk : Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has announced that the state government will waive around Rs 48,000 crore in pending electricity dues of farmers to facilitate fresh agricultural power connections. Addressing a function organised to felicitate him over the recently announced farm loan waiver scheme on Wednesday, Fadnavis said the government had already waived electricity bills for agricultural pumps up to 7.5 horsepower. However, many farmers continue to face difficulties in obtaining new power connections because outstanding dues from previous years remain in their names. "To resolve this issue, the government will take a decision to waive the earlier pending electricity dues amounting to Rs 48,000 crore," he said. Farmers felicitated the chief minister at Yashwantrao Chavan Centre here on Wednesday for announcing the Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Farmer Loan Waiver Scheme, under which loans of up to Rs 2 lakh will be waived. Fadnavis said the scheme would benefit 56 lakh farmers with a total outlay of Rs 36,585 crore. He added that restrictions applicable.

2013 SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE:
TARUN TEJPAL RAISES DOUBTS
ON VICTIM'S
'CONTRADICTION'
STATEMENTS

Diary Times Desk : Tehelka magazine's founder-editor Tarun Tejpal on Thursday raised doubts before the Bombay High Court on the "contradictory" statements made by the victim in connection with the sexual assault case filed against him in 2013. While a court at Mapusa in Goa had acquitted Tejpal of all charges in 2021, the state government had challenged the acquittal. The Goa bench of the Bombay High Court on Thursday began hearing the final arguments on the government's appeal. The case stems from allegations made by a former female colleague of Tejpal, who accused him of sexually assaulting her inside a hotel elevator on November 7 and 8, 2013, during an event organised by Tehelka magazine in Goa. A division bench comprising Justices Dr Neela Gokhale and Amit Jamsandekar began hearing the final arguments on the government's appeal.

JHARKHAND: MAN STRANGLES
WIFE WITH WIRE, GAMCHA OVER
SUSPICION OF EXTRA-MARITAL
AFFAIR



Diary Times Desk : A man allegedly strangled his wife to death with an electric wire and a gamcha in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharswan district on suspicion of having an illicit relationship with another man, police said on Thursday.

The body of a 30-year-old woman was found in Khajurbagan in Sini outpost area on July 14, they said. SP Manoj Swargari said an SIT was formed to probe the case and the identity of the body was established. Her husband was immediately taken into custody for interrogation.

"The husband broke down during interrogation and confessed to the crime. He told the investigators that he suspected his wife of having an illicit relationship with another man," the officer said. He hit her head with a sharp weapon, then strangled her to death with an electric wire and a 'gamcha', he said.

REMOVE PRADHAN, MAKE SONAM WANGCHUK
EDUCATION MINISTER: KEJRIWAL TO PM MODI



Diary Times Desk : Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to remove Dharmendra Pradhan and appoint activist Sonam Wangchuk as Union Education Minister, as he extended support to the students' protest at Jantar Mantar over examination paper leaks. Addressing the gathering at the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP)-led demonstration, where Wangchuk has been on hunger strike for 19 days, Kejriwal accused the Centre of failing to ensure accountability in examination leak cases and warned the government against ignoring the concerns of students. "I urge the Prime Minister to remove Dharmendra Pradhan and appoint Sonam Wangchuk as the Union Education Minister," Kejriwal said. Recalling his own experience of appearing for the IIT entrance examination, Kejriwal said students devote years of hard work to competitive exams but repeated paper leaks "shatter the confidence of an entire generation".

PROJECT CHEETAH: CONCERNS EMERGE
OVER RTI ACT 'VIOLATIONS',
'IRREGULARITIES' IN TRANQUILLISATION

Diary Times Desk : Withholding details about Project Cheetah's implementation due to national-security and foreign-relations concerns, violations of the RTI Act and irregularities in the tranquillisation process of cheetahs in the Kuno National Park are some of the issues that have been raised by wildlife activist Ajay Dubey in a letter to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). The NTCA oversees Project Cheetah. "Recent actions by the local project authorities — who have systemically blocked public access to basic animal welfare, veterinary data and administrative expenditure — render the project's governance both unacceptable and legally untenable," the letter says. It highlights that Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Uttam Kumar Sharma functions as both the de-facto public information officer (PIO) and the first appellate authority (FAA) within the Project Cheetah administration.

ASSAULT ON LAWYER: SUPREME COURT TRANSFERS PROBE TO DELHI POLICE
CRIME BRANCH

Diary Times Desk : The Supreme Court on Thursday transferred the probe into an assault on an advocate in the National Capital last week to the Delhi Police Crime Branch following allegations that the local police were exerting pressure on him to enter into a settlement with the accused. Taking note of injury on a vital part of advocate Pankaj Sharma's body, a Bench led by CJI Surya Kant also directed the Delhi Police to book the accused for an offence of attempt to murder. "Thus, we direct that Section 109 (attempt to murder) and 118 (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt by dangerous weapons or means) of BNS be added. Since there are allegations concerning the probe by the local police, we direct the Commissioner of Police to transfer the case to the Crime Branch," said the Bench, which also included Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Joymalya V. Mohana. The Bench left it open to the new Investigating Officer (IO) to add more offences to the FIR, if he deemed fit.



TRAI LIKELY TO TWEAK
REGULATION FOR SPAM DATA
SHARING BY CALL MANAGEMENT
APPS SOON

Diary Times Desk : The ongoing row between TRAI and Truecaller has brought into sharp focus the regulator's proposed amendments to the Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference Regulations (TCCPCR), which would among various provisions, require call management apps to share user-reported spam information with telcos. The tweaks to TCCPCR -- the regulations governing commercial communications -- could be finalised soon, possibly over the coming few weeks, according to people familiar with the matter. Currently, spam reports flagged by users remain with the apps and are not shared with telecom service providers. The proposed change will be made through an amendment to TCCPCR. TRAI had released a consultation paper on March 13, 2026, seeking stakeholder feedback on the draft Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2026.

EXCISE CASE: HC GIVES FINAL 2 WEEKS TO
KEJRIWAL, SISODIA TO RESPOND TO CBI'S
PLEA AGAINST DISCHARGE

Diary Times Desk : The Delhi High Court on Thursday granted a final opportunity to AAP leaders Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and Durgesh Pathak, asking them to respond within two weeks to the CBI's plea against a trial court order discharging them in the liquor policy case. Justice Manoj Jain deferred hearing on CBI's revision petition after none appeared for the discharged accused persons due to work abstention by high court lawyers, and listed the case for hearing arguments on behalf of the investigating agency on August 17 and 18. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the CBI, said the three AAP leaders were earlier given several opportunities by the high court to file their replies, and the case has been "sufficiently delayed." "In any case if I am giving a date, we will make it clear that they would be at liberty to file a reply," Justice Jain responded. The judge added that a time frame shall be fixed for hearing submissions on behalf of the discharged accused.

MAMDANI HAILS MANDELA'S LEGACY;
MENTIONS UMAR KHALID ALONG WITH
OTHERS



Diary Times Desk : Hailing South African icon Nelson Mandela, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani has said that the anti-apartheid leader lives in every protest for justice and every march with a righteous demand, while mentioning the imprisonment of activist Umar Khalid among others.

Mamdani made these remarks during a keynote address on Mandela's legacy at Nelson Mandela Global Leadership Forum held at the New York City town hall on Wednesday. "Madiba lives in every protest for justice, every call for democracy, every march with a righteous demand," Mamdani said.

Highlighting Mandela's struggle, Mamdani said that almost everyone claims they opposed apartheid and they stood with Madiba. "Eventually, almost everyone will claim they oppose so much of the injustice that they justify today. But justice is not measured by where we stand after history has issued its verdict. It is measured by where we stand when the verdict is still being rendered," he said. Mamdani, who is of Indian origin, mentioned the detention of Palestinian paediatrician Hussam Idris Abu Safiya in Israel and several other cases, including Khalid's case. "Why must we wait as Umar Khalid enters his 6th year of captivity in Delhi? A political prisoner jailed under the same manufactured charges of terrorism that were once levelled against Madiba," Mamdani said. In January, it emerged that Mamdani had written a note for Khalid, recalling his words on "bitterness" and the importance of not letting it consume one's self.

PIYUSH GOYAL LEADS HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO FINLAND FOR STRENGTHENING
TRADE AND INVESTMENT TIES

Diary Times Desk : Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Thursday commenced his official visit to Finland by leading a high-level Indian delegation comprising senior business leaders and government officials to strengthen bilateral trade, investment and industry cooperation. The visit witnessed the signing of two institutional Memoranda of Understandings (MoUs), ministerial-level discussions, and extensive engagements between Indian and Finnish industry across key sectors. The visit builds on the elevation of India-Finland relations to a Strategic Partnership in Digitalisation and Sustainability during the State Visit of President Alexander Stubb to India in March 2026 and follows the conclusion of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement on 27 January 2026. On the first day of the visit, Goyal held bilateral discussions with Dr Sakari Puisto, Minister of Economic Affairs of Finland. The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in financial markets, innovation, enterprise financing, and expanding bilateral trade and investment.



WEST ASIA WAR: US AIRSTRIKES HIT
NORTHERN IRAN AS IT DISABLES SHIP TRYING
TO RUN BLOCKADE



Diary Times Desk : The United States intensified its strikes targeting Iran early Thursday, hitting targets further north as American forces also fired into a ship it accused of trying to break its naval blockade on the Islamic Republic. Iran retaliated with missile and drone fire targeting Bahrain and Kuwait before dawn. Days of back-and-forth strikes by the US and Iran across the Middle East -- and renewed threats to the Strait of Hormuz -- have shredded the interim deal to end the Iran war and could tip the region back into all-out war. Already, Iranian officials say US strikes have killed more than 35 people and wounded more than 300 others. Strikes also reached into areas around Iran's capital, Tehran, for the first time of this latest round of violence.

'PATIENT ON PATH TO RECOVERY...':
INDIAN EMBASSY ON HEALTH PROGRESS
OF VIETNAM BOAT TRAGEDY INJURED

Diary Times Desk : The Indian Embassy in Vietnam on Thursday shared the health progress of the patient currently undergoing treatment at Ho Chi Minh City following the boat tragedy in Phu Quoc and said that he is on the path to recovery. The Embassy shared the details in a post on X and also thanked the Vietnamese medical teams and authorities for their prompt care and assistance. "We thank the medical teams at the hospitals at Phu Quoc and Ho Chi Minh City as well as Vietnamese authorities for the care and assistance provided. We will continue to monitor. Let us keep him in our prayers for an early recovery," the Embassy wrote. Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Indian Ambassador to Vietnam, Tshering W. Sherpa, met Le Hoai Trung, Politburo Member and Foreign Minister of Vietnam, on Wednesday. During their meeting, Foreign Minister Trung expressed profound condolences on the tragic boat accident near Phu Quoc island.

MAN TRIES TO HUG CHINESE
COMEDIAN, THEN CLAIMS HE'S
INDIAN BEFORE ADMITTING
HE'S PAKISTANI

Diary Times Desk : A Chinese stand-up comedian has attracted widespread attention online after a live performance featured an unexpected interaction with an audience member. During her set, a man approached the stage and appeared to try to hug her, prompting the comedian to firmly push his hand away and question him in front of the crowd. When asked where he was from, the man replied that he was from India. The comedian, mentioning that her boyfriend is Indian, casually asked him which Indian state he belonged to. Faced with the follow-up question, the man acknowledged that he was actually from Pakistan. The comedian later shared a video of the encounter on social media with the caption, "Wait till the end," suggesting there was an unexpected twist in the exchange. The clip quickly gained traction, prompting discussions across social media platforms about identity, travel, and the reasons some people may conceal their nationality. Many users praised the comedian's quick thinking, noting that her follow-up question exposed the inconsistency in the man's claim.

WILL TEMPLE STAY OR MAKE
WAY FOR MOSQUE? UK'S
OLDEST HINDU TEMPLE
REACHES FINAL SHOWDOWN
IN LONDON COURT TODAY

Diary Times Desk : Thousands of Hindu families across three English counties are bracing for a verdict that could decide whether their only temple survives or gets handed over for a mosque redevelopment. The battle over one of Britain's oldest Hindu temples is heading into its final stretch. On Thursday, the UK High Court will hear closing arguments in a judicial review that could determine whether the 40-year-old Bharat Hindu Samaj (BHS) temple in Peterborough, a city about 120-km north of London, keeps its home or loses it for good. A ruling is expected soon after the hearing wraps up at 11 am UK time (3:30 pm IST). At the center of the dispute is the New England Complex, a former school building that has housed the BHS temple for four decades. Peterborough City Council decided to sell the site and the winning bidder wasn't the temple trust that had used the building for years, but the United Kingdom Islamic Mission (UKIM), which wants to convert the property into a mosque and Islamic centre. The temple's trustees say the sale process was rushed, unfair, and never accounted for the community that depends on the site.

US SENATORS TABLE BILL SLAPPING 100% TARIFFS ON INDIA FOR BUYING RUSSIAN OIL

Diary Times Desk : A bipartisan group of US Senators has introduced a legislation proposing tariffs of up to 100 per cent on imports from India, China and three other countries over their continued purchase of Russian oil, marking Washington's latest attempt to intensify economic pressure on Moscow over the Ukraine war. The legislation targets the five largest buyers of Russian oil – India, China, Slovakia, Hungary and Azerbaijan – while exempting 15 European countries that continue to import Russian natural gas.

Lawmakers argued that gas purchase by those nations accounted for only a small share of their energy requirements and that they were steadily reducing their dependence on Russian supplies. The Bill significantly scales back an earlier proposal that sought to impose punitive tariffs of up to 500 per cent on countries importing Russian energy. Instead, it authorises US President Donald Trump to impose tariffs ranging from zero to 100 per cent, depending on the circumstances. The measure, one of the last major legislative initiatives backed by the late Republican Senator, Lindsey Graham, has been introduced along with Democratic Senator Richard Blumenthal, who urged Congress to move quickly on the proposal.

Announcing the Bill, Blumenthal said the White House had agreed to the revised framework before Graham's death. "Now is the time for this sweeping sanctions Bill," Blumenthal said, describing it as far broader than a tariff measure. According to Blumenthal, the legislation will impose "full blocking sanctions" on key sectors of the Russian economy, including its energy, financial and defence industries, while also targeting Russian President Vladimir Putin, oligarchs and other influential business figures. He said the tariff provision had been "narrowly crafted" to apply only to the five largest importers of Russian oil. Speaking to reporters, one of the lawmakers said the exact tariff rate – anywhere between zero and 100 per cent – would be determined with the objective of strongly discouraging continued purchase of Russian energy by the targeted countries.

CHINA DEMOLISHES ANCIENT TIBETAN FORTRESS, SPARKS CONCERNS OVER CULTURAL ERASURE

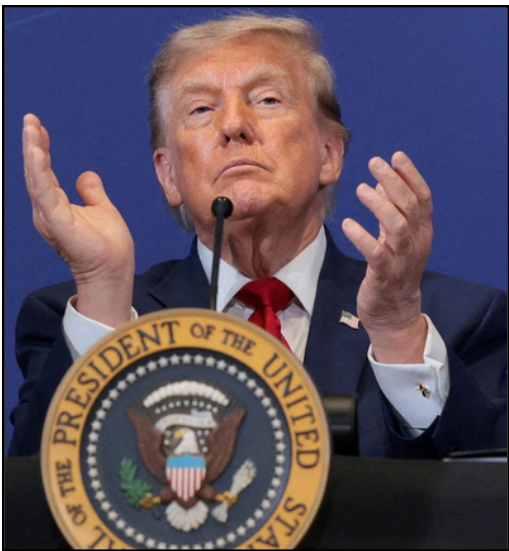
Diary Times Desk : Chinese authorities have reportedly demolished a centuries-old fortress in Tibet's eastern Gyalrong region, triggering widespread criticism from Tibetans in exile and raising concerns over the preservation of the region's cultural heritage. Videos widely shared on social media show heavy machinery tearing down the historic stone structure, which is believed to date back to the era of the Tibetan Empire, as reported by Phayul. According to Phayul, the footage began circulating online earlier this week, capturing a bulldozer dismantling the ancient fortress. The exact timing of the demolition remains uncertain due to the strict information controls imposed inside Tibet. However, online reports suggest the destruction occurred shortly after Beijing began enforcing its controversial.

LEBANON MOVES TO END HEZBOLLAH'S MILITARY ARM, FM YOUSSEF RAGGI CALLS IT "SOVEREIGN DECISION"

Diary Times Desk : Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Raggi on Thursday declared that ending Hezbollah's military presence is a "sovereign Lebanese decision," marking a decisive shift in the country's efforts to consolidate state authority. Reflecting on his remarks delivered at the French Senate, the Foreign Minister reaffirmed the sovereignty of Lebanon and announced that the nation will not return to duality. He announced the exclusion of "weapons" outside the state's authority. "From the French Senate, I reaffirmed that Lebanon has made its choice: there will be no return to dual authority, and there is no longer any place for weapons outside the authority of the state or for decisions taken outside its constitutional institutions," he wrote in a post on X. "The decision to end Hezbollah's military presence is a sovereign Lebanese decision."

TRUMP HAILS RELEASE OF US CITIZEN HELD IN IRAN AS 'GOODWILL' GESTURE

Diary Times Desk : U.S. President Donald Trump has called the release of a U.S. citizen held in Iran a "gesture of goodwill", even as conflict raged for a fifth night across the Middle East. Trump said in a post on Truth Social on Wednesday that an American who was "wrongfully detained" under the Biden administration in 2024 had been allowed to leave Iran. "She is now safely outside of Iran, and in good condition. The United States of America appreciates this gesture of Goodwill by Iran," Trump wrote. Human rights attorney Jared Genser identified the American as Dena Karari. "Dena is now safe and traveling back to the United States," Genser wrote on X, thanking Trump for his efforts to free her. Iran has neither confirmed nor denied that Karari has been released. The release came despite U.S. military strikes across Iran aimed at reopening the vital Strait of Hormuz shipping lane, and amid escalating threats from Trump that he will bomb Iran's power plants, bridges and energy infrastructure.



MEA ORGANISES VIDESH SAMPARK PROGRAMME IN COLLABORATION WITH RAJASTHAN GOVT

Diary Times Desk : The Ministry of External Affairs organised its Videsh Sampark Programme in collaboration with the Government of Rajasthan on Thursday as part of its outreach initiative with the States and Union Territories to strengthen cooperative federalism. According to the MEA, the Programme was co-chaired by Sripriya Ranganathan, Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA, and V Srinivas, Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, in Jaipur. Senior officials from the ministry and the Government of Rajasthan, the Regional Passport Officer, Jaipur, business leaders, recruiting agents, and stakeholders from the education sector also participated in the event. Reflecting on the details of the programme, the MEA stated that it featured comprehensive discussions on a wide range of issues, including diaspora engagement and welfare initiatives of both the MEA and the Government of Rajasthan, with particular emphasis on the welfare of Indian nationals abroad, including students. Deliberations also covered the Ministry's initiatives relating to consular, passport, and visa services; collaborative efforts to promote safe and legal migration and mobility.

FUGITIVE IN ZIAUR RAHMAN ASSASSINATION CASE ARRESTED BY BANGLADESH DETECTIVES

Diary Times Desk : The Detective Branch (DB) of Bangladesh police has arrested a suspect in connection with the assassination of Bangladesh's former president Ziaur Rahman.

In May 1981, Zia was assassinated by gunfire at the Circuit House in Chattogram. Due to the connection with the assassination, Major Mojafor Hossain was accused at that time, and he has remained a fugitive since then. The Bangladesh government announced a reward for his capture.

After more than 45 years after the assassination, the detective branch announced that they have arrested Major Mojafor.

"Based on intelligence from our investigation, we have arrested a suspect connected to the Ziaur Rahman assassination, named Major Mojafor Hossain. We will provide further details to the press shortly", a DB official told ANI over the phone. He did not elaborate.

The former president Ziaur Rahman was the father of the current prime minister of Bangladesh, Tarique Rahman. President Zia was the husband of Bangladesh's former Prime Minister, Khaleda Zia.

MILLIONS OF DEVOTEES JOIN IN JOYFUL CELEBRATION AS ISKCON BANGLADESH HOSTS MASSIVE RATH YATRA FESTIVAL

Diary Times Desk : The Rath Yatra festival, organised by ISKCON Bangladesh, began on Thursday across 128 locations in Dhaka. A grand procession was carried with large crowds of devotees pulling three decorated chariots containing the idols of Lord Jagannath, his brother Baladev, and his sister Subhadra on day 1 of the festival, which will continue till July 24. People were seen dancing, singing the "Hare Krishna" Mahamantra, and playing traditional musical instruments like mridangas (drums) and kartals (cymbals). Various groups were involved, including children and musicians on trucks. Banners for the "Shobhayatra" (procession) were visible. Devotees take prasadam and seek Jagannath's mercy, believing it will lead them to Golokadham. The procession moves through the wet streets of Dhaka, filled with a festive and spiritual atmosphere. Speaking with ANI from the procession, General Secretary of ISKCON Bangladesh Srmat Bhaktimoy Nitai Swami said that the procession started at Swamibag and will conclude at the Dhakeshwari National Temple. He expressed elation over the large footfall, estimated to be over 5 lakh.



TWENTY NATIONS GATHER IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA FOR EXERCISE PITCH BLACK 2026

Diary Times Desk : The Royal Australian Air Force's premier air combat exercise, Exercise Pitch Black, will take to the skies over northern Australia from July 20 to August 7. According to the Defence department, upto 100 jet aircraft will soar into action, supported by more than 2,500 personnel from 20 nations across RAAF Bases Darwin, Tindal and Amberley. This major exercise has been held in Darwin since 1983 and will feature for the first time Japanese Air Self-Defense Force F-35 Lightning II and Indonesian T-50I Golden Eagle jets, as well as embedded personnel from Finland and Sweden. Pitch Black 2026 will include aircraft from the United States, Japan, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Republic of Korea, India, Singapore, Germany, France and Spain, as well as embedded personnel from New Zealand, Fiji, Canada, Brunei, Malaysia, Finland and Sweden, the release stated. Air Commodore (AIRCORE) Matthew McCormack, Exercise Commander of Pitch Black 2026.

INDIA-NEPAL DISCUSS DEEPENING TIES, ADVANCING AGENDA IN PRIORITY SECTORS

Diary Times Desk : India and Nepal held discussions on further deepening the longstanding ties and advancing the shared agenda in priority areas during a meeting between the Ministry of External Affairs' Additional Secretary Munu Mahawar and Nepal's Foreign Secretary Amrit Bahadur Rai. Sharing the details of the meeting in a post on X, Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the leaders reviewed the progress of ongoing bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on advancing the shared agenda in priority sectors. "Reaffirming the longstanding friendship and multifaceted partnership between Nepal and India, they also discussed ways to further deepen institutional collaboration and maintain the momentum of high-level engagement," the post further noted. As New Delhi and Kathmandu continue to expand their longstanding cooperation across all avenues, on Wednesday, the two partner countries held the 13th meeting.

BIMSTEC SECURITY CHIEFS REAFFIRM REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION AT 5TH MEETING



Diary Times Desk : The 5th Meeting of the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs, chaired by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval on Thursday, reaffirmed the member states' commitment to strengthening regional security cooperation, with discussions focusing on counter-terrorism, cyber and maritime security, disaster management and emerging security threats. According to an official statement, NSA Doval hosted National Security Advisers and Heads of Delegations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. "BIMSTEC bridges South Asia and Southeast Asia, two of the most significant and vibrant regions of the Indian Ocean. Over the years, BIMSTEC has deepened cooperation in regional security, disaster management, transport and trade connectivity, technological issues, and people-to-people contacts," the statement said. During the meeting, BIMSTEC Secretary General Indra Mani Pandey presented a comprehensive overview of cooperation in the security sector and briefed member states on the progress made across various sectors. The National Security Advisers and Heads of Delegations discussed "practical and result-oriented solutions" to combat

PAKISTAN FUEL CRISIS DEEPENS AS POLICY DELAYS DEEPEN SUPPLY CONCERNS

Diary Times Desk : Pakistan is facing the risk of another fuel supply crisis as shrinking petrol reserves, delayed imports, and policy bottlenecks raise concerns over the country's energy security, as reported by The Express Tribune. According to The Express Tribune, industry officials have warned that petrol inventories have fallen to nearly 379,000 tonnes, including supplies from local refineries, leaving enough stock for only about two weeks at the current rate of consumption. Demand has surged significantly during the first half of July, with daily petrol sales exceeding projections and last year's figures, driven by expectations of another increase in fuel prices. The rise in consumption has intensified pressure on already limited reserves, while delays in scheduled fuel imports have added to uncertainty. Although shipments carrying around 153,000 tonnes of petrol are expected to arrive in the coming days, at least one planned cargo failed to receive approval last month, and another import involving multiple oil marketing companies was reportedly cancelled, further tightening supply.

BALUCH NATIONAL MOVEMENT ACCUSES PAKISTANI STATE OF MILITARY CRACKDOWN, DISPLACEMENT IN GWADAR

Diary Times Desk : The Baloch National Movement (BNM) has raised serious concerns over the security situation in Balochistan's coastal Jiwani region. It claimed that Pakistani authorities are seeking to erase local communities, alleging that an ongoing military operation has left residents cut off from essential supplies and subjected to widespread rights violations, as reported by The Balochistan Post. According to The Balochistan Post, the BNM claimed that Jiwani town and nearby villages in Gwadar district have remained under heavy military restrictions for nearly a week. The group alleged that strict movement controls have disrupted the supply of food, medicines and other necessities, creating hardships for residents. The party further alleged that five people died while in custody during the operation and that more than 60 individuals had been forcibly disappeared. It also claimed that several homes in the Panwan area were demolished, while hundreds of families were displaced as security forces expanded their presence in the region. BNM argued that the intensified military deployment

ZANZIBAR PRESIDENT HUSSEIN ALI MWINYI TO VISIT INDIA FROM JULY 17-20, MEET EAM JAISHANKAR AND VICE PRESIDENT



Diary Times Desk : President of Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, Hussein Ali Mwinyi, will pay an official visit to India from July 17 to 20, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a media advisory issued on Thursday. According to the MEA, President Mwinyi, accompanied by his wife, First Lady Mariyam Mwinyi, will arrive in Chennai on Friday, July 17, before travelling to New Delhi on Saturday, July 18. On Sunday, July 19, President Mwinyi is scheduled to meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Vice President CP Radhakrishnan. He will also pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi by laying a wreath at Rajghat. President Mwinyi is scheduled to depart India on Monday, July 20. Zanzibar is a semi-autonomous archipelago off the coast of Tanzania in the Indian Ocean, famous for its powdery white-sand beaches, vibrant spice plantations, and the UNESCO World Heritage maze of Stone Town.

REGIONAL SECURITY: AJIT DOVAL CHAIRS 5TH BIMSTEC SECURITY CHIEFS' MEETING IN NEW DELHI

Diary Times Desk : National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on Thursday chaired the fifth BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs' meeting, hosting top-level intelligence and security officials from across the Bay of Bengal region to reinforce regional stability. The high-level gathering brought together delegates from the seven member nations of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), which includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The delegates gathered for a joint family photo, with discussions centring on counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and strengthening regional maritime cooperation. BIMSTEC Secretary General Indra Mani Pandey attended the meeting along with delegations from all member countries. Nepal was represented by Home Secretary Raj Kumar Shrestha. Thailand's delegation was led by Chatchai Bangchaud, Secretary General of the National Security Council.

CHINA'S ETHNIC UNITY LAW AIMS TO ERASE UYGHUR IDENTITY, SAYS UYGHUR ACTIVIST

Diary Times Desk : China's newly enforced Ethnic Unity and Progress Law has drawn sharp criticism from Uyghur activists, who argue that it institutionalises forced assimilation and further threatens the identity, language and culture of non-Han ethnic communities. Speaking at the 19th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) in Geneva, Dolkun Isa, President of the Uyghur Center for Democracy, stated that the legislation, which came into force on July 1, 2026, marks a significant escalation of Beijing's policies toward Uyghurs, Tibetans and other non-Han groups. Addressing the UN forum, Isa said the law creates a legal framework for promoting a single national identity while further marginalising ethnic languages, religious practices and cultural traditions. He argued that the legislation strengthens state control over education, public life and the transmission.

"URGENT NEED FOR US TO COLLABORATE, TAKE DECISIVE ACTIONS": NSA AJIT DOVAL AT 5TH BIMSTEC SECURITY MEETING

Diary Times Desk : National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval on Thursday underscored the need for closer regional cooperation to tackle evolving security challenges, saying the current global landscape marked by conflicts, geopolitical uncertainties and technological disruptions requires BIMSTEC member states to work together and take "decisive actions" for their mutual benefit. Addressing the fifth BIMSTEC National Security Advisers' Meeting, Doval said, "We are meeting today in the backdrop of a challenging global landscape. We are witnessing conflicts and geopolitical uncertainties. We are also facing multi-domain security threats, amplified by rapid technological advancements. Disruptions in global supply chains have also resulted in economic hardship for all our countries." "In this setting, there's an urgent need for us to collaborate, take decisive actions for our mutual benefit, and find solutions to mutual discussions and deliberations to the vexed problems that we are all facing," he added. Highlighting the significance of the Bay of Bengal grouping, Doval said BIMSTEC unites two of the world's most dynamic regions and represents a population of 1.7 billion people, around 22 per cent of the global population, with a combined GDP of nearly USD 5 trillion. "We are united by the Bay of Bengal, not just geographically, but also through deep civilizational and cultural legacies that have evolved over a millennium of shared history," he said.



COMMON STANDARDISATION FRAMEWORK WILL BE WIN-WIN FOR ALL: PRALHAD JOSHI AS INDIA HOSTS 5TH BRICS NSBS MEETING

Diary Times Desk : Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New and Renewable Energy, Pralhad Joshi on Thursday said that the finalisation and signing of long-pending BRICS Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of standardisation would be "mutually beneficial" and "a win-win for all", as India hosted the 5th Meeting of Heads of BRICS National Standardization Bodies (NSBs) in Bengaluru under its BRICS Chairship 2026. India is hosting the two-day meeting on July 16-17, bringing together heads of National Standardization Bodies (NSBs) from the 11 BRICS member countries to strengthen cooperation in standardisation. "As you know, the heads of the National Standardization Bodies from the 11 BRICS member countries have gathered in Bengaluru for the 5th BRICS Heads of National Standards Bodies meeting, and India is chairing this meeting," Joshi said while inaugurating the event. He said BRICS brings together eleven member countries--Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"HOPE TO SEE INDIAN COMPANIES BUILDING AN AIRPORT IN ISRAEL AS WELL": ISRAELI ENVOY TO INDIA REUVEN AZAR

Diary Times Desk : Israeli Ambassador to India Reuven Azar on Thursday expressed hope that Indian companies would soon undertake airport construction projects in Israel after two Indian airports were recognised among the World's Most Beautiful Airports 2026 by Prix Versailles. Responding to a post on X by the Indian Embassy in Israel, Azar said, "Hope to see Indian companies building an airport in Israel as well soon!"

His remarks came after the Indian Embassy in Israel highlighted the inclusion of Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, Guwahati, and Navi Mumbai International Airport in the World's Most Beautiful Airports 2026 list. It added, "Proud to see Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, Guwahati and Navi Mumbai International Airport featured among the World's Most Beautiful Airports 2026 by prestigious Prix Versailles."

JIO FINANCIAL SERVICES Q1 NET PROFIT JUMPS 156% TO RS 830 CRORE, TOTAL INCOME RISES 141%

Diary Times Desk : Jio Financial Services Limited (JFSL) on Thursday reported a 156 per cent year-on-year (YoY) rise in its consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 830 crore for the first quarter of financial year 2026-27, driven by strong growth across its lending, payments, asset management and insurance businesses.

According to the company's unaudited financial results for the quarter ended June 30, 2026, consolidated total income (excluding dividend) stood at Rs 1,496 crore, registering a 141 per cent YoY increase.

The company's Pre-Provisioning Operating Profit (PPOP), excluding dividend income, rose 38 per cent YoY to Rs 505 crore. Profit Before Tax (PBT), excluding dividend income, increased 18 per cent YoY to Rs 461 crore, while PBT including dividend income grew 131 per cent YoY to Rs 970 crore. JFSL's consolidated shareholders' equity stood at Rs 1.37 lakh crore as of June 30, 2026. During the quarter, the company received the second tranche of Rs 5,934 crore from the promoter group, taking the cumulative capital infusion to Rs 9,890 crore.

CBDT ROLLS OUT NEW FEATURE LETTING TAXPAYERS VIEW FOREIGN ASSET DATA ONLINE

Diary Times Desk : The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has introduced a new facility allowing taxpayers to view information about their foreign assets and income directly through the Annual Information Statement (AIS) on the Income Tax e-Filing portal, in a move aimed at making compliance easier rather than triggering scrutiny.

Sources in the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) told ANI that the data comes from more than 100 partner countries that share financial account details with India each year under international information-exchange agreements. This can include foreign bank accounts, custodial holdings, investments, and related income such as interest and dividends. Currently, the AIS reflects data for calendar years 2022 to 2024, with 2025 figures expected by September or October 2026, once received from partner nations.

STOCK MARKETS CLOSE FLAT AMID GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES, FLUCTUATING OIL PRICES

Diary Times Desk : Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed almost unchanged on Thursday, as profit-taking in blue-chip stocks such as HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries offset gains in IT shares amid geopolitical tensions. The 30-share BSE Sensex edged up 1.44 points to settle at 77,186.87. During the day, it climbed 394.26 points, or 0.51 per cent, to 77,579.69 but pared gains towards the end of the session. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 5.75 points, or 0.02 per cent, to end at 24,072.75. Fluctuating oil prices and weak Asian market trends also weighed on domestic equities, according to an expert. Among Sensex shares, InterGlobe Aviation, HCL Technologies, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tech Mahindra were the major winners.



INDIA NEEDS DEBT FINANCING OF RS 130-140 LAKH CRORE BY 2031 TO FUND ECONOMIC GROWTH: CRISIL

Diary Times Desk : India will need debt financing of Rs 130-140 lakh crore between fiscals 2027 and 2031 to fund corporate capital expenditures, working capital demands, and retail credit consumption, as per Crisil's latest Indian Debt Market Yearbook. According to the analysis, banks alone might not be able to fulfil India's expanding financing demands, thus the country's debt capital market will need to play a significantly bigger role in supporting the government's Viksit Bharat 2047 agenda. It projects that India Inc. will spend between Rs 145 and Rs 155 lakh crore on capital projects between FY27 and FY31, which is around 50 percent more than the preceding five fiscal years. The report notes that the infrastructure and industrial sectors will need long-term debt of Rs 57-61 lakh crore, while corporate working capital and retail lending through non-bank lenders will require an additional Rs 70-80 lakh crore.



AIR INDIA REVAMPS MOBILE APP; CAN DEPLOY INDIA-SPECIFIC INNOVATIONS: AIRLINE OFFICIAL

Diary Times Desk : Air India has revamped its mobile application with new features that will help with quicker responses to travellers as well as allow deployment of India-specific innovations in the payment system. The main enhancements in the app pertain to assistance during flight disruptions, payment system updates and in-house internet booking engine, according to Air India. The enhanced mobile app would provide greater ease of booking and allow the airline to respond more quickly to the needs of the customers, the airline's Chief Digital and Technology Officer Satya Ramaswamy told PTI. In a release on Thursday, Air India said the app has been downloaded nearly 17 million times and serves over 1,00,000 users daily. In case of flight disruptions, support would be provided to the passengers with the hotel accommodation and transportation assistance contextually from the home screen, the airline said.



RBI BARS BANKS, NBFCs FROM SELLING ACQUIRED STRESSED ASSETS BACK TO DEFAULTING BORROWERS, RELATED PARTIES

Diary Times Desk : The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued final prudential norms for banks, small finance banks (SFBs) and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), prohibiting them from selling specified non-financial assets (SNFAs) acquired during the resolution of stressed loans back to the defaulting borrower or its related parties.

The RBI issued the amendments under the Resolution of Stressed Assets Directions, 2025 for commercial banks, small finance banks and NBFCs. The new norms will come into effect from October 1, 2026.

Under the amended directions, an SNFA refers to an immovable asset acquired by a lender in full or partial satisfaction of its claims on a borrower. For banks, the definition also includes non-banking assets (NBAs) acquired under the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

The RBI said, "A SNFA shall not be sold back to the borrower or its related parties. Related parties shall have the same meaning as defined in the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016."

RBI DIRECTS BANKS NOT TO RECOGNISE UNREALISED INTEREST AS INCOME ON ACQUIRED STRESSED ASSETS

Diary Times Desk : The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued final directions for commercial banks, small finance banks (SFBs) and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), directing them not to recognise unrealised interest and charges as income when they acquire specified non-financial assets (SNFAs) in resolution of stressed loans. The directions follow the finalisation of the Prudential Norms on Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFA), after examining stakeholder feedback received on the draft directions issued on May 5, 2026. The amended directions will come into force from October 1. "Any accrued but unrealised interest and / or charges from the extinguished exposure pertaining to periods prior to acquisition of an SNFA.

PIYUSH GOYAL DISCUSSES TRADE, INVESTMENT, INDIA-EU FTA WITH FINLAND MINISTERS

Diary Times Desk : Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal held separate meetings with Finland's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Riikka Purra and Minister of Economic Affairs Sakari Puisto, discussing ways to strengthen bilateral economic ties and exploring how the proposed India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement (FTA) could further boost trade and investment between the two countries.

In a post on X, Goyal said he met Finland's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Riikka Purra and discussed strengthening economic and financial cooperation between the two countries.

"Pleased to meet Finland's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Ms. Riikka Purra. We discussed strengthening economic and financial cooperation, enhancing trade and investment ties, and expanding collaboration in digitalisation and emerging sectors," Goyal said.

He added that both sides "also explored opportunities to further deepen India-Finland engagement under the India-EU FTA." In a separate post on X, Goyal said he held "productive discussions" with Finland's Minister of Economic Affairs Sakari Puisto on expanding cooperation across several high-growth sectors.



MARUTI SUZUKI TO CHALLENGE RAIPUR CONSUMER PANEL ORDER ON E20-COMPATIBLE CAR REPLACEMENT



Diary Times Desk : Maruti Suzuki on Thursday said it will challenge the order of the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Raipur, which directed the company to replace a customer's vehicle with a new E20-compatible model, asserting that the car involved in the case was already compatible with E20 fuel. In a statement issued after the Commission's order, the automaker said, "The car in this case was an E20 compatible car, fully equipped to handle E20 fuel and so disclosed in the owner's manual." Maruti Suzuki further contested the findings of the Commission, saying, "There is evidence of contamination in the fuel collected from the customer's vehicle. Several other relevant facts have also not been reflected in the order."

The company said it would pursue legal remedies against the ruling. "Maruti Suzuki will take necessary steps to challenge the impugned order before the appropriate higher forum in accordance with law," the company said. Reiterating its commitment to customers, the company added, "Maruti Suzuki remains fully committed to quality, safety and customer satisfaction through robust engineering, processes and systems." Earlier in the day, the Raipur District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission directed the manufacturer to replace the complainant's vehicle with a brand-new one after it suffered severe engine damage allegedly due to the use of E20 fuel. The Commission held the vehicle manufacturer and the dealer liable for deficiency in service, observing that the vehicle's engine was not compatible with E20 petrol. It said that if a replacement vehicle is not provided, the manufacturer must refund the full purchase price of Rs 20.50 lakh. The Commission also directed the opposite parties to jointly pay Rs 1 lakh as compensation for mental harassment and Rs 10,000 towards litigation expenses. The order is to be complied with within 45 days, failing which interest at the rate of 7 per cent per annum would apply on the delayed amount.

CM MANN TAKES RS 500-CRORE JIBE AT CONGRESS, TARGETS SUKHBIR BADAL OVER SACRILEGE ISSUE

Diary Times Desk : Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday took a swipe at the Congress party with a Rs 500-crore jibe, alleging that the Opposition's politics revolves entirely around the CM's chair.

Targeting the grand old party, Mann said the Congress remains consumed by internal power struggles. "One day they project one leader, the next day another. Their politics revolves only around the chair. One of their own leaders has publicly admitted that it costs Rs 500 crore to become the Chief Minister in their party. The obvious question is, where will such money come from?" he asked. Mann said such money ultimately comes from the pockets of ordinary people, adversely affecting welfare-oriented governance. "The money will be recovered from the people. When politics becomes so expensive, it is public welfare that suffers the most," he said.

MASKED BIKE-BORNE GUNMEN OPEN FIRE OUTSIDE CLOTH MERCHANT'S SHOP IN FEROZEPUR'S ZIRA

Diary Times Desk : Panic gripped the main bazaar area in Zira after two masked motorcycle-borne miscreants allegedly opened fire outside a cloth merchant's shop in an incident which took place on Thursday afternoon.

As per information, the bullet struck the glass frontage of the shop. However, no one was injured and there was no other reported loss in the incident.

Shop owner Brij Lal said he had no enmity with anyone and never received any threat. The motive behind the firing remains unclear.

Senior police officials, including Zira DSP Jaspal Singh, rushed to the spot soon after the incident was reported. Police teams inspected the area and launched an investigation. The DSP said efforts were under way to identify the accused and that the CCTV footage from nearby locations was being examined. He said further action will be taken based on the findings. It is pertinent to mention here that earlier on June1, two unidentified motorcycle-borne assailants had killed.

CHARANJIT CHANNI, SUKHJINDER RANDHAWA MEET VENUGOPAL, SAY WILL ABIDE BY HIGH COMMAND DECISION

Diary Times Desk : Amid infighting in the Punjab Congress, former state chief minister Charanjit Channi and former deputy chief minister Sukhjinder Randhawa met party leaders here on Thursday, professing adherence to the party high command's decision. The two leaders, part of a faction challenging the party's decision to retain Amarinder Singh Raja Warring as the Punjab unit chief, met AICC general secretary, Organisation, KC Venugopal, for talks. The two also paid a courtesy visit to party general secretary Randeep Surjewala, saying they share a personal relationship with him. Channi's meeting with Rahul Gandhi, however, could not happen on Thursday. Channi and Randhawa have raised a banner of revolt against Warring, who has been asked by the high command to continue as party chief ahead of assembly election in the state early next year.

**PUNJAB NOTIFIES MAJOR AMENDMENTS TO BUILDING RULES, PROMOTES MIXED-USE PROJECTS**

Diary Times Desk : To streamline urban development and encourage integrated townships, the Punjab government has notified the Punjab Urban Planning and Development Building (Amendment) Rules, 2026.

Through the amendments, the housing department has introduced detailed provisions for mixed-use developments, ease approval processes through self-certification and update construction norms for residential and commercial buildings.

A key highlight of the new rules is the formal definition and regulatory framework for "mixed-use project or site" — described as a single, integrated development on one parcel comprising multiple land uses that are physically and functionally interconnected. Such projects will be permitted on sites with a minimum area of 8,000 square metres and an approach road of at least 24 metres.

The maximum ground coverage allowed is 45 per cent, while Floor Area Ratio (FAR) ranges from 1:2.5 (for 24m road) to 1:3.0 (30m road), with no upper limit for wider roads subject to airport clearance and other norms. Maximum height has no restriction except airport-related clearances.

TRAFFIC ADVISORY FOR PM MODI'S JALANDHAR VISIT ON JULY 17: 31 DIVERSION POINTS, NO-FLY ZONE FROM 12 PM TO 8 PM

Diary Times Desk : In view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jalandhar on Friday, July 17, massive traffic diversions will be in place. Traffic will be diverted at 31 locations across the district from 8 am to 8 pm. The Jalandhar Rural and City police have implemented a special traffic diversion plan to strengthen security arrangements, ensure smooth traffic flow, and minimise public inconvenience.

General traffic coming to Jalandhar from Dasuya, Tanda, Hoshiarpur, Phagwara, Nakodar, Kala Sanghian, Kapurthala, and Subhanpur will be diverted via designated alternative routes marked in green on the traffic diversion map issued by the Rural police. Under the plan, red-marked roads will remain completely closed to general traffic. Green-marked roads will serve as designated diversion routes. From 12 pm to 8 pm on July 17, Jalandhar has also been declared a no-fly zone. Heavy traffic was witnessed on the Jalandhar-Phagwara highway and at PAP Chowk throughout Thursday, as vehicles headed to the Jalandhar Cantt venue for the event. Highway traffic was held up for 15 minutes to 30 minutes at various points and service lanes due to movement of buses, VVIP vehicles.

LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING AMONG PEOPLE OF HARYANA, CHANDIGARH, PUNJAB: PM AHEAD OF HIS VISIT

Diary Times Desk : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said he is looking forward to visiting Haryana, Chandigarh and Punjab on Friday to participate in various programmes linked to railways, healthcare, connectivity and education, which will have a very positive impact on the lives of people, especially the youth. During the tour, Modi will lay the foundation stone and dedicate to the nation various development projects worth more than Rs 26,000 crore and flag off India's first hydrogen train. He will also address gatherings in Chandigarh and Haryana's Jind. "I look forward to being among the people of Haryana, Chandigarh and Punjab to participate in various programmes linked to railways, healthcare, culture, connectivity, education and more. These works will have a very positive impact on the lives of people, especially our Yuva Shakti," he said in a series of posts on 'X'. The prime minister said from Jind that he will flag off India's first hydrogen-powered train, which will connect Jind and Sonapat. "India becomes one of the select group of nations that have such trains. This will go a long way in ensuring that India adopts clean technology in the railway sector," he said.

OVERLOADED TRUCKS POSE
THREAT TO PUBLIC SAFETY,
DAMAGE ROADS & BRIDGES IN
KANGRA

Diary Times Desk : The unchecked movement of overloaded trucks on roads in Kangra district continues to pose a grave threat to public safety while inflicting extensive damage to the road infrastructure, including bridges and culverts built at enormous public expenses. Despite clear provisions under the Motor Vehicles Act, trucks and tippers transporting sand, gravel, grit and other construction material from stone crushers and industrial units routinely operate with loads far exceeding the prescribed limits. While most rural, district and internal road bridges in the hill state are designed to withstand loads of only 12 tonnes to 15 tonnes, many heavy vehicles are frequently found carrying between 20 tonnes and 30 tonnes. A senior official of the State Transport Department admits that overloading is one of the biggest challenges for the enforcement agencies. Trucks carrying sand, gravel, bricks, cement, marble, clinker, steel, tiles and other construction materials are among the worst offenders.

HARYANA CM IN KALKA ON
JULY 17: TRAFFIC ADVISORY
ISSUED, CHECK DIVERTED
ROUTES

Diary Times Desk : Commuters in Kalka and those heading to Shimla, Panchkula and Chandigarh have been advised to use alternative routes from 1 pm to 4 pm on Friday during Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini's visit to Kalka.

According to an advisory issued by the Panchkula Police, due to VIP movement and security arrangements in the Kalka area, normal traffic will be affected on Kalka Main Market, Rambagh Road, Gandhi Chowk and Railway Road from 1 pm to 4 pm on Friday. Drivers heading towards Himachal Pradesh on the national highway have been advised to divert from Mallah Mor and use the Parwanoo bypass road instead of entering Kalka city and the main market, so that traffic pressure within the city is reduced and movement remains smooth. Additionally, all shopkeepers in Kalka main market have been requested not to park their vehicles on the roadside and to use only designated parking spaces. This will help maintain traffic order.

BJP ENDS 23-YEAR DROUGHT, WINS TOP POSTS OF KULLU ZILA PARISHAD

Diary Times Desk : The BJP has made a historic comeback by clinching both posts of chairman and vice-chairperson of the Zila Parishad after 23 years. The results declared on Thursday marked the end of a long-standing Congress dominance in the Zila Parishad. The BJP-backed Thakur Dass was elected chairman while Neena Devi secured the post of vice-chairperson. They achieved a decisive victory, securing 10 votes each in the 14-member House. The victory is particularly notable as it breaks a long-standing political tradition in Kullu. Since 2003, the Congress had continuously occupied the chairman's post. In the previous Zila Parishad elections, the BJP had managed to secure a clear majority by winning nine seats. The Congress could only manage to win four seats, while one Independent candidate was also elected to the House. Leveraging this numerical advantage, the BJP comfortably won the top posts. Meanwhile, BJP workers and leaders celebrated the party's historic victory.



HIMACHAL STATE COOPERATIVE BANK
SUSPENDS BANKING SERVICES FROM JULY 17
TO JULY 22

Diary Times Desk : The Himachal Pradesh State Cooperative Bank has announced a planned and temporary suspension in all its banking services from July 17 onwards at 5 pm to July 22 till 10 am. Vinay Singh, Managing Director of the bank, said, "This brief pause is necessary to achieve a crucial technical transition as the bank is migrating its entire core operations to the globally recognised 'Finacle' Core Banking software platform. This strategic shift is a major step toward the modernisation of the bank, aimed at providing our valuable customers with a more secure, faster, and better banking experience." "During this downtime period, the bank's branch banking, ATM services, internet and mobile banking, UPI services, IMPS, NEFT, RTGS, RuPay debit card services and AEPS will remain completely suspended," he added. He said the bank deeply respected the trust of its customers and expressed regret for this temporary inconvenience. He further said all customers were humbly requested to plan their essential financial needs, cash withdrawals, and bill payments before 5 PM on July 17 and complete any urgent transactions in a timely manner. "We assure all of our customers that all banking services will resume fully with the new 'Finacle' software from July 22.

FIR AGAINST ORGANISERS AFTER MEDIA
REPORTS ON ILLEGAL RAVE PARTY IN
KULLU'S PARBATI VALLEY

Diary Times Desk : The police have taken cognisance of news published in these columns on July 16 under the headline "Fresh rave party planned in Parbati valley despite HC warning" and have registered a case under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita against the contact mobile number provided for registration on various social media platforms for the event scheduled to be held in the forest near Pulga from September 5 to 7. Kullu SP Madan Lal Kaushal confirmed that FIR No 64/2026 had been registered in the Manikaran police station based on the advertisements circulating on social media. "Further investigations are underway as to how this gathering was being publicised without permissions," he stated. In a decisive move to curb unauthorised gatherings in the scenic Parbati Valley, local law enforcement has launched a strict crackdown on illegal rave parties, particularly in the Manikaran Valley region. The action comes amid growing concerns about drug use and public disturbances at these unpermitted events. In a significant appeal to the community, the SP urged residents and visitors to report any information about planned.

CM SUKHU LAUNCHES FREE COACHING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE CONSTABLE
ASPIRANTS

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has announced a comprehensive free training, physical coaching and guidance programme for candidates aspiring to join the Himachal Pradesh Police as constables. The initiative has been launched to enhance employment opportunities for the state's youth and equip them with the skills and preparation required to succeed in the recruitment process. The decision follows the advertisement issued by the Himachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (HPPSC) on July 9, 2026 for the recruitment of 800 constables. The Chief Minister has directed the Director General of Police to organise structured training programmes through all Armed Police Battalions across the state. The programme would provide free coaching for the written examination, physical efficiency test preparation, detailed guidance on the recruitment process, personality development, discipline, motivational sessions and mentoring by experienced police officers and professional trainers. The Chief Minister said the initiative reflects the state government's commitment to ensuring that every deserving candidate has an equal opportunity to compete, regardless of economic or geographical constraints. He said that the programme would be particularly beneficial for aspirants from rural, remote and tribal areas, where access to quality coaching and training facilities is often limited.



Seafarers' safety : Tracking dashboard is a welcome step

THE escalation of hostilities in West Asia, particularly the attacks on commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, has prompted India to establish a real-time operational dashboard for tracking Indian seafarers. The move acknowledges the rapidly deteriorating situation, which has heightened the vulnerability of civilian maritime workers caught in geopolitical conflicts. India is one of the world's largest suppliers of skilled seafarers

With thousands serving aboard foreign-flagged vessels across international waters.

Their contribution to global trade and energy supply chains is indispensable.

Yet, they often remain exposed to security threats without adequate protection or coordination.



Brad Lendon

In this context, the government's "Seafarer First" approach marks a significant shift from reactive crisis management to proactive preparedness.

The government's "Seafarer First" approach marks a significant shift from reactive crisis management to proactive preparedness

and "zero" can mislead consumers and undermine informed decision-making. Those with allergies, diabetes and other dietary restrictions face similar challenges.

India's growing market for packaged foods demands a stronger regulatory framework. Front-of-pack information should be easy to understand, while manufacturers must be held accountable for claims that imply health benefits without adequate substantiation. Periodic audits, random testing and meaningful penalties for repeat violations are essential. Consumer education campaigns should become a permanent feature of public health policy. Schools, healthcare institutions and the media must help people understand how to interpret nutrition labels, identify misleading claims and make healthier choices. An informed consumer is often the best line of defence against deceptive marketing. Food businesses, too, have a responsibility that extends beyond legal compliance.



Hilary Whiteman

INDIA's democracy has long drawn strength from its ability to accommodate dissent

BRIDGE THE DIVIDE

WANGCHUK'S PROTEST DESERVES EMPATHY

NDIA's democracy has long drawn strength from its ability to accommodate dissent. It is this spirit that is being tested as educator and innovator Sonam Wangchuk's indefinite hunger strike over alleged irregularities in the examination system enters a critical stage. Reports of his deteriorating health — significant weight loss, falling blood sugar and increasing weakness — should prompt immediate concern, irrespective of one's political views or opinion on his demands. Wangchuk is not protesting for personal gain. The campaign by the Cockroach Janta Party, that he has endorsed, reflects the anxieties of lakhs of students and parents whose faith in competitive examinations has been shaken by repeated allegations of paper leaks and compromised processes.



HE IS NOT PROTESTING FOR PERSONAL GAIN; HIS HEALTH CANNOT BECOME THE PRICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE INACTION

Whether every allegation withstands scrutiny is a separate matter. What cannot be disputed is that public confidence in high-stakes examinations has suffered and deserves urgent restoration through transparent reforms and greater accountability.

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

STATEHOOD STALEMATE

CENTRE MUST CLARIFY ITS ROADMAP ON J&K

TWO years after assuming office as Jammu and Kashmir's first elected Chief Minister since the Union Territory was created in 2019, Omar Abdullah has shifted from patient persuasion to open challenge. His warning of a protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar over the continued denial of statehood reflects growing frustration over a promise repeatedly made by the Centre but still awaiting fulfilment. His satirical reference to Donald Trump and the subsequent political uproar may have grabbed headlines, but the larger issue is far too serious to be reduced to social media sparring. The restoration of statehood is not merely a political demand of the National Conference. It concerns the federal compact, democratic accountability and the rights of nearly 14 million people.

The Centre has consistently maintained before Parliament and the Supreme Court that statehood would be restored at an appropriate time after the security situation stabilises. With Assembly elections held and an elected government functioning, the obvious question is: what remains to be done?

If empowered adequately, they can lead awareness campaigns, encourage families to seek timely intervention, coordinate with schools and health workers and support rehabilitation efforts without stigma.

Village-level vigilance committees can also help identify trafficking networks and alert law enforcement agencies. However, panchayat representatives need training, financial support and operational guidelines.

The government must strengthen de-addiction centres, expand mental health services and create employment and recreational opportunities for young people vulnerable to substance abuse. Himachal's experiment recognises an important truth: lasting change begins not in government offices but in villages, where collective responsibility can become the strongest antidote to addiction. If supported with sincerity and resources, panchayats may well become the agents of change and frontline defenders of a healthier generation.



Helen Regan

Omar Abdullah has shifted from patient persuasion to open challenge by warning a protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar

PABLO PICASSO: A STYLE GUIDE

Diary Times Desk : Born Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso, on 25 October 1881, in Málaga, Spain, Picasso is one of history’s most influential artists. He devoted his life to art for nearly 80 years, producing more than 20,000 paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, ceramics, books, theatre sets and costumes, in a vast range of styles.

Each major period of Picasso’s art was seemingly defined by the events around him, from his personal tragedies and impassioned love affairs to the socio-political upheavals of Europe. As a result, Picasso’s body of art emerges as a timeline of his own experiences.

Here we explore the major styles that defined Picasso’s career — illustrated with works offered at Christie’s. Emerging from a time of immense hardship in the artist’s life, Picasso’s Blue Period lasted from around 1901 to 1904. Central to the onset of the Blue Period was the suicide of his close friend and fellow artist, Carles Casagemas. As Picasso said, ‘It was thinking about Casagemas’s death that started me painting in blue.’

At the age of only 21, the young artist found himself poor and depressed. He restricted his palette to cold, sombre colours that evoked dreamlike mystery and sorrow. Living between Barcelona and Paris, Picasso painted powerful portraits of his friends, as well as the poor and abandoned, to explore the themes of human misery and social alienation that weighed upon him so heavily during these years.

Picasso’s Rose Period began once he had fully settled in Montmartre and was living at the Bateau-Lavoir among other bohemian artists and writers. While the Blue Period was characterised by loneliness and grief, the Rose Period possesses a haunting poetry, with a cast of harlequins, acrobats and circus performers depicted in vivid earth tones, pinks, reds, and oranges.

The veil of despair that tinged his earlier period had been lifted as Picasso embarked on a new relationship with the French artist and model Fernande Olivier. Later works from the Rose Period, such as the portrait of writer and patron Gertrude Stein (1905-06), signal the emergence of Cubism and demonstrate Picasso’s early interest in Iberian sculpture.



COLLECTING GUIDE: TOP BURGUNDY WINE PRODUCERS

Diary Times Desk : Burgundy boasts at least two millennia of winemaking history. The stories of the sixteen domaines below extend from a Puligny family extant since the reign of Le Bien-Aimé to a Vosne resurrection still less than a quarter-century old. They are by no means the only domaines in the region worth collecting — vigilant collectors will be happy to discuss the merits of more than one hundred fifty producers — but they are the names whose bottles consistently reward time in the cellar, remain stubbornly consequential in the marketplace and are most thoroughly chronicled by astute critics and collectors.

Domaine de la Romanée-Conti was constituted as a Société Civile in 1942 when Edmond Gaudin de Villaine sold half his shares to Henri Leroy, formalising co-ownership of an estate Jacques-Marie Duvault-Bloch had assembled from 1869 onward. The 25 hectares are almost entirely Grand Cru: they include the monopoles Romanée-Conti (1.81 ha) and La Tâche (6.06 ha), plus Richebourg, Romanée-Saint-Vivant (leased 1966, purchased 1988), Grands Echézeaux, Echézeaux, Corton, Montrachet, a leased Corton-Charlemagne from 2019, a soupçon of Bâtard-Montrachet and a handful of prime Premier Cru parcels in Vosne. Aubert de Villaine retired in January 2022 after nearly half a century at the helm; Bertrand de Villaine and Perrine Fenal (Lalou Bize-Leroy’s daughter) now co-direct, with Alexandre Bernier (ex-Chanson) as winemaker. The vineyards have been farmed organically since 1985 and biodynamically since 2007, with Biodyvin certification in 2017. Clive Coates MW writes of the eponymous monopole, ‘the scarcest, most expensive — and frequently the best — wine in the world.’ Keep an eye out for the domaine’s rare Bourgogne Hautes-Côtes de Nuits bottlings as well as other, more accessible projects from the de Villaine family, including Domaine A. & P. de Villaine in the Côte Chalonnaise, Hyde de Villaine in California and Domaine de Triennes in the Var.



YOUR HOROSCOPE

17-07-2026



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: DEFENDING CHAMPIONS ARGENTINA REACH FINAL BY BEATING ENGLAND 2-1

Diary Times Desk : No "Hand of God" this time. Argentina didn't need it. Instead it was the hallowed feet of Lionel Messi and the unbreakable spirit of a team that has repeatedly fought back at this year's World Cup that is now one step away from back-to-back titles. Trailing 1-0 going into the 85th minute, Argentina rallied for a 2-1 victory over England on Wednesday with goals from Enzo Fernandez and substitute Lautaro Martinez. "I dreamed it, I swear. I told Alexis (Mac Allister) that I was going to score. I told him that I was going to come on and I was going to win it," Martinez said. "I can tell you this team keeps showing what it's made of." At the final whistle, Messi fell to his knees in celebration while England players collapsed in disbelief - again.

MITHALI BACKS SMRITI FOR ODI CAPTAINCY, SHAFALI FOR T20

Diary Times Desk : Smriti Mandhana is more suited to lead India in the longer formats after Harmanpreet Kaur's tenure ends while the much younger Shafali Varna can be handed the reins of the T20 side following another pre-mature exit from the World Cup, former captain legendary Mithali Raj said. Harmanpreet, 37, led India to a path breaking ODI World Cup title last year but under her leadership, the team has not been able to crack the code in ICC events in the T20 format, dating back to 2018.

The selectors may finally move on from her following the Asian Games in Japan in September-October. In an interview with PTI, women's cricket icon Mithali said time has come to groom more leaders in the national set up, she also wants more clarity over players' roles in the side and improvement in the fitness department that is adversely impacting India's pace attack and fielding, which was way below par in the recent T20 World Cup. "Yes, we did not qualify for the semi-finals for the second time in a row but that cannot be the only reason or criteria to come to conclusion that you need to change the leader. Because I believe that there are few boxes that one need to actually see if the player ticks those boxes.

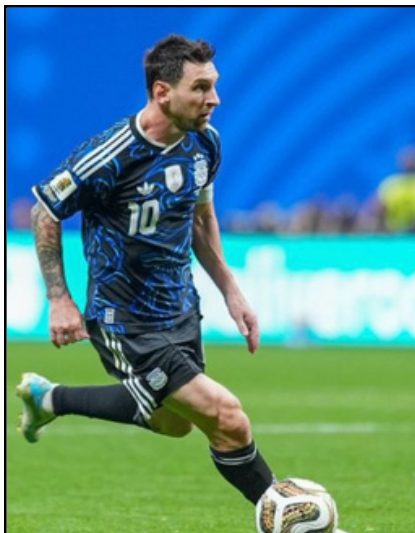
MINISTRY ASKS IOA TO PROBE SEXUAL HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION COMPLAINTS FILED BY ASUNTA LAKRA

Diary Times Desk : Sports Ministry has asked the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to form an independent committee to probe former hockey player Asunta Lakra's allegations of sexual harassment and institutional intimidation. She had also claimed that Hockey India secretary general Bhola Nath Singh had threatened her with 'consequences' for raising sexual harassment of girls in Jharkhand at the hand of coach Sudhir Golla.

"The Sports Ministry has directed the IOA to form a neutral, fair and transparent committee to probe the allegations made by the ex-India hockey captain Asunta Lakra," a ministry source told the media on Thursday. Further, the ministry has also sought a clarification from the Hockey board on the issue, separately. The IOA officials confirmed the development and said they will form the committee in some time and have started the process to identify members of the committee. "We have to identify a chairperson and see to it that the majority is of women members, including those who have legal background. We have started the process and the proceedings will start when everything is in place," an IOA source told The Tribune.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026: MESSI CELEBRATES ARGENTINA'S WIN, SAYS 'WE DUG DEEP TO PUT IN ANOTHER GREAT PERFORMANCE'

Diary Times Desk : Argentina captain Lionel Messi shared his joy on social media after his team completed a dramatic comeback to defeat England 2-1 in the FIFA World Cup 2026 semifinal in Atlanta on Wednesday. In a post on Instagram, Messi celebrated Argentina's qualification for the World Cup final, praising the team's resilience and performance while thanking supporters for their continued belief in the squad. "WE'RE IN THE FINAL!!!! We dug deep once again to put in another great performance. A huge thank you to everyone who believed in this group!!! Let's go Argentina!!!!", he said. The result sent Argentina into the World Cup 2026 final, where they will face Spain on Sunday, July 19 (local time), while England's hopes of reaching their first World Cup final since 1966 came to a heartbreaking end. Defending champions Argentina produced a stunning late comeback in the semifinal. The first half was a tightly contested battle, with both teams fighting for midfield control and creating limited clear chances. England eventually broke the deadlock in the 55th minute when Anthony Gordon finished Morgan Rogers' cross to put the Three Lions ahead.

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS FELT LIKE THE RIGHT FRANCHISE DESPITE EMOTIONAL RAJASTHAN ROYALS EXIT: SAMSON**

Diary Times Desk : India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson has revealed that leaving IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals after more than a decade long association was one of the toughest decisions of his career.

But the strong bond he shared with Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Ruturaj Gaikwad made his move to Chennai Super Kings an easy transition.

"Moving on from RR was a very big decision for me. I believe that after playing for a team for some time, you start to feel like this is your team and nobody can remove you. But, I always had the awareness that there is a limited time for everyone at one place," Samson, who led the Royals for five years before moving to CSK through a trade ahead of IPL 2026, told JioStar's 'Superstars'.

"You do your part, and you move out and after the end of IPL 2025, a point came when I felt that I should move on. I told myself that the boys are ready, and RR is ready to play without Sanju Samson. That is when I thought of leaving," he added.

FIFA WORLD CUP: ENGLAND COACH THOMAS TUCHEL HAS 'NO REGRETS' OVER STRATEGY

Diary Times Desk : England suffered yet another World Cup disappointment at the hands of Argentina, 2-1, on Wednesday in Atlanta. However, head coach Thomas Tuchel expressed "no regrets" over the strategy that led them there.

After controlling much of the early play and taking a 1-0 lead in the 55th minute, England seemingly went into a shell, attempting to pack the back end and protect its lead while losing the aggressiveness that got it the lead in the first place.

Argentina scored twice in the closing moments of the game, in the 85th and 92nd minutes. "You can discuss this with a million coaches (but) I have to make a decision on the pitch," Tuchel told the BBC. "I analysed the match and I did it a certain way so that's my responsibility. In the moment, no regrets. The team gave everything and we were very, very close. "It's not the moment to analyse the full tournament, we just went out because we lost a crucial match." In addition to adopting a more defensive posture, England's late substitutions were also defensive in nature.