



Lovepreet's lifts silver

Weightlifter Lovepreet Singh's Commonwealth Games record-breaking silver medal headlined an eventful day for India, while discus thrower Seema Kaliramma bagged a bronze medal and Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, along with two compatriots

P6

Want to feel depressed? Watch Parliament sessions

Do you want to slip into a state of depression? The easiest way is to switch on your television and watch how increasingly unaccountable and irresponsible many of our public representatives have become. Follow it up by watching prime-time television debates

P4

Institutional bets on warehousing rise 53% in H1 2026

Institutional Investments in warehousing and industrial segment of Indian real estate rose 53 per cent in January-June to \$49 million, according to Vestian. US-based real estate consultant Vestian on Tuesday said in a statement that the leasing of warehousing

P7

Yami Gautam speaks about career struggles

Yami Gautam talked about one of the darkest times in her career, saying that she almost quit Bollywood after a few failures and then her two successful movies made her realize her stardom.

P8

THE Hans India



Simultaneously published from Hyderabad | Warangal | Tirupati | Vijayawada | Visakhapatnam | Khammam | Kurnool | Delhi: RNI No: DELENG/2017/74095

Follow @ [thehansindia](#) / [thehansindiaweb](#) / [thehansindia](#) / [TheHansIndiaWeb](#) / [thehansindia](#)

WINDOWS

Former Army chief Gen Vishwa Nath dies at 96

NEW DELHI: Former Army chief Gen Vishwa Nath Sharma (ret'd) died on Friday at the age of 96, the Indian Army said. Gen Sharma was the Chief of the Army Staff from June 30, 1988 to June 30, 1990, and saw action as a major during the 1965 Indo-Pak War in the Lahore Sector. He commanded the Armoured Regiment and held important staff and instructional appointments. Post 1965 war, he was promoted to the rank of a brigadier. He commanded a Mountain Brigade in an insurgency-affected area and was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) in 1977 for distinguished service, according to his profile on the Army's website.

School bus driver held for molesting 15-year-old

NOIDA: A private school bus driver here has been arrested for allegedly molesting a 15-year-old student during a sports trip to Meerut around four months ago, police said on Friday. An FIR has been registered against the driver at the Knowledge Park police station in Greater Noida, and further investigation is underway, they said. According to the police, the driver had accompanied the school's sports team, which also included girl students, to Meerut for a sports competition. Preliminary inquiry revealed that the alleged molestation occurred inside the bus while the team was returning from Meerut, the police said. "The incident took place approximately four months ago. Based on the complaint lodged by the victim, a case was registered against the bus driver under relevant legal provisions, and he has been arrested," a police spokesperson said.

Omar Abdullah, wife agree to dissolve marriage

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court informed that Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir Omar Abdullah and his estranged wife Payal Abdullah have agreed to part ways and have filed an application invoking Article 142 of the Constitution seeking dissolution of their marriage on mutual consent, reports Live Law. Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal submitted before a bench comprising Justice PS Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe that the parties have "embraced freedom".



Whether a word is parliamentary or unparliamentary depends on who says it

Modi, Burnham push India-UK ties to new heights

► The two PMs discussed the situation in West Asia and agreed to work together towards deescalation and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz

► We agreed to work together across sectors such as technology, innovation, defence, security, clean energy, education and people-to-people ties: Modi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Andy Burnham vowed on Friday to take the India-UK comprehensive strategic partnership to

"new heights" and maximise the benefits of the newly operationalised trade deal during a phone conversation covering key aspects of bilateral ties. It was the first phone call between the two leaders after Burnham became the prime minister



on July 20 succeeding Keir Starmer.

The two prime ministers discussed the situation in West Asia and agreed to work closely together

towards deescalation and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, according to a British readout. In a social media post, Modi said he congratulated Burnham on

assuming the charge of the top office and conveyed his best wishes for a successful tenure. "We agreed to work together across sectors such as technology, innovation, defence, security, clean energy, education and people-to-people ties and take the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to new heights," he said. "We will also collaborate closely to fully harness the trade and investment opportunities presented by the recently operationalized India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, for

the shared prosperity and well-being of both our people," Modi said. The mega trade pact, being billed as one of the biggest trade deals of modern times, came into effect on July 15.

The pact, firmed up in July last year after three years of negotiations, secures zero-duty market access for nearly 99 per cent of India's exports to the UK.

The British readout said Burnham began the conversation by reflecting on the strength of the UK-India partnership and the significant impact it has had on

local communities across the UK. "The prime minister set out his ambitions to further enhance the UK-India relationship, including through the UK-India Vision 2035 framework and strong people-to-people links," it said. Burnham praised the contribution Indian communities in the UK make to the fabric of UK society, with Modi noting the links between the two leaders' own home cities of Manchester and Ahmedabad, in Gujarat, which he called the "Manchester of India", it said.

IB officer murder case

Former AAP councillor Tahir, 4 others get lifer

Delhi CM welcomes life sentences in Ankit Sharma murder case; slams AAP; 'Sense of justice' but fight not over, Ankit Sharma's family seeks 'rarest of rare' punishment

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Friday sentenced former AAP councillor Tahir Hussain and four others to life imprisonment for the murder of IB officer Ankit Sharma during the 2020 Delhi riots. Additional Sessions Judge Praveen Singh pronounced the sentence to all five accused, saying they fell to the "level of being animals" while relentlessly assaulting Sharma. Special public prosecutor Madhukar Pandey had submitted that Sharma was brutally killed and was not shown any mercy by the convicts, so they should not be given any leniency. Those who are asking for mercy today should have shown mercy themselves. No mercy was



reformation. The judgement was pronounced in the physical presence of Hussain and others amid tight security. The courtroom was packed with lawyers and senior Delhi Police officials including Crime Branch's Joint Commissioner and DCP.

Earlier, Delhi Police had sought death penalty for all five accused, saying they fell to the "level of being animals" while relentlessly assaulting Sharma. Special public prosecutor Madhukar Pandey had submitted that Sharma was brutally killed and was not shown any mercy by the convicts, so they should not be given any leniency. Those who are asking for mercy today should have shown mercy themselves. No mercy was

shown from anyone's side. No one even took Ankit to the hospital. They are asking for mercy after committing such a brutal murder, Pandey had said.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta welcomed the court's decision sentencing Hussain and five others to life imprisonment and accused the AAP leadership of backing Hussain despite his arrest. "Today, the people of Delhi demand answers from the Aam Aadmi Party. Tahir Hussain was arrested on charges of murder, yet even after that, Mr Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia stood in his support! They kept trying relentlessly to save him! Why? Will Mr Kejriwal tell the people of Delhi? Was it under their patronage that people like Tahir Hussain conspired to incite riots?" she said in a post on X.

"After almost six years of fighting this case, our family finally feels that we have received a sense of justice, but we will fight for death penalty," Ankit's brother Ankur Sharma told PTI.

10 killed in Bhiwandi building collapse

HANS NEWS SERVICE
THANE

At least 10 people were killed and three others injured after a four-storey residential building, tagged as 'dangerous' in 2020 by the local civic body and currently undergoing repairs illegally, collapsed in Bhiwandi town of Maharashtra's Thane district, officials said on Friday. Hectic efforts were on to rescue three other residents believed to be still trapped under the rubble, several hours after the collapse, they said. A portion of

the Kohinoor Building in the Balaji Nagar area of the powerloom town, around 50km from Mumbai, came crashing down at 11.20 pm on Thursday. Rescue workers from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Thane Disaster Response Force (TDRF), and the municipal fire brigade pulled out ten bodies as heavy machinery and sniffer dogs were deployed to look for survivors under the debris of the four-storey structure, said the officials of the district disaster management cell. The structure comprised 48 rooms, 12

on each floor. Around 9 pm on Thursday, residents heard "loud cracking sounds" emanating from the building, an official said. Fearing the worst, locals immediately helped evacuate many families to other locations.

However, while some occupants were still making their way out, the 'B' wing of the building caved in, he said. The officials said five of the deceased were identified as Shamim Shaikh (32), Ranjeet Singh (45), Miraj Rasul Shaikh (34), Santosh Kumar Pandey (42) and Shamim Ansari (30).

DU prof sent into forced retirement for sexual abuse

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A faculty member of the Delhi University's Department of Political Science has been given compulsory retirement following the recommendations of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) over an alleged sexual harassment complaint, officials said on Friday.

The recommendations were accepted by the university's Executive Council (EC) at its meeting held on Thursday, an official said.

"Following an ICC recommendation, the profes-



sor's penalty was compulsory retirement. The original complaint pertained to a student allegedly being harassed," the official told PTI.

According to the official, the complaint is at least a year old, and the ICC report was cleared and accepted by the EC during Thursday's meeting.

"The university has a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and will continue to implement measures aimed at ensuring a safe and secure environment for students and staff," the official said.

Under the University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations and the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, Internal Complaints Committees are empowered to inquire into complaints of sexual harassment and recommend action to the competent authority.



Trump mulls \$100K fee for students keen to work in US

TEXAS: The United States is planning to impose a \$1,00,000 fee on visas issued to international students for working in the US after graduation from an American university, The Wall Street Journal reported.

The Trump administration move comes after a US court struck down a proposal to levy a \$1,00,000 fee on H-1-B visas.

According to The Wall Street Journal, the Department of Homeland Security is mulling the high fee on Optional Practical Training (OPT) visas which are an extension of F-1 visas issued to students.

The OPT programme allows foreign graduates to work for one to three years on their student visas in areas directly related to their studies.

Roughly 4,19,000 foreigners were working on OPT in 2024, the latest year for which data are available.

Tech companies, which conduct most of the recruitments from US universities, opposed the \$1,00,000 fee on H-1-B visas.

A DHS spokeswoman said in a statement: "No policies should be considered final until formally announced. At DHS we are always having conversations about how to use all tools in our arsenal to protect the integrity of our legal immigration system."

In addition to the H-1B and student visas, officials at the State Department are also weighing attaching a \$1,00,000 bond on applicants for green cards outside the US, redeemable only after they move to the US and become citizens.

Cabinet extends PM-KISAN for 5 yrs

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Union Cabinet on Friday approved extension of the PM-KISAN scheme for the next five years till the 2030-31 fiscal with an outlay of Rs 3,15,614 crore. Launched on February 24, 2019, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at providing assured income support to farmers nationwide. Under the scheme, each eligible farmer family receives annual financial assistance of Rs 6,000.

This is disbursed in three equal instalments of Rs 2,000 through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanism into Aadhaar-seeded bank accounts. Briefing media, Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Cabinet has extended the PM-KISAN scheme for five years till 2030-31. The total outlay stands at Rs 3,15,614 crore.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the Union Cabinet's decision, saying it will help farmers meet their needs



related to seeds, fertilisers, and farming while improving their economic condition. Modi also welcomed the Cabinet's approval of the expanded Khelo India Scheme and the enhanced budget for Assistance to the National Sports Federations (ANSFs), with a combined outlay of Rs 36,441 crore over the next five years. "We are committed to the empowerment and pros-

perity of our farmer brothers and sisters across the country. In this direction, today approval has been given to extend the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme until 2030-31. This will not only help farmers meet their needs related to seeds, fertilisers, and farming, but also improve their economic condition," he said in a post on X in Hindi.

Opposition MPs enact donation theft at Parliament complex

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A saffron-clad Independent MP Pappu Yadav along with other Opposition MPs enacted 'theft' of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya in Parliament complex on Friday.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi were part of the protest against the theft of donations, as well as police crackdown

As part of a skit, the MPs, including Rahul Gandhi, put money inside the boxes, as Yadav slipped money into his pockets to symbolise the alleged theft at the Ram Temple; VHP, seers condemn Oppn's saffron-robe protest outside Parliament, seek MPs' expulsion

against student agitators during their July 20 march to Parliament.

The Indian National Development Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) MPs demanded



Home Minister Amit Shah's resignation and questioned his absence from House proceedings. Protesting in front

of Makar Dwar of Parliament, the lawmakers raised such slogans as 'Amit Shah istifa do', 'Amit Shah sadan

mein aao' and 'chadhawa chor, gaddi chorh'.

The MPs kept donation boxes in front of the Makar Dwar steps and Independent MP Rajesh Ranjan, known as Pappu Yadav, dressed in saffron, sat with the boxes.

As part of a skit, the MPs, including Rahul Gandhi, put money inside the boxes, as Yadav slipped money into his pockets to symbolise the alleged theft at the Ram Temple.

The VHP condemned a

"skit" to highlight the alleged theft of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, claiming the demonstration insulted Hindu religious sentiments. Several prominent seers and office-bearers associated with the Ram temple and Ayodhya's religious institutions also hit out at the protest and demanded the expulsion of the MPs involved, and urged President Droupadi Murmu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to cancel their membership.

‘MY FATHER, A COP, WAS NEARLY LYNCHED AT SITE’

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE daughter of a Delhi Police SI who sustained injuries during the clash between police and protesters in Delhi, says, “Before joining the police, my father served as a Marine Commando in the Indian Navy. He dedicated 15 years of his life to the Indian Navy. “My father was present at the main protest site. He was on the front line near the barricades, where there was a large crowd. Whenever my

‘When I opened social media, I saw that my father was being called a criminal. The very next day, I came to know that the people who had attacked my father were approaching the Supreme Court to wash away their crimes and were filing complaints against him and all the police personnel’

father came home at night, he used to say that the protest no longer seemed like a student protest. Many anti-social elements had become involved in it. “The very next day, on the 25th, my father was pulled by a rowdy mob and was almost lynched near the stage at Jantar Mantar.

This happened on the 25th at around 2 pm. He remained unconscious at RML Hospital for about four hours. Around 10 pm, his colleagues brought him home, and his uniform was completely stained with blood. “It was extremely painful for us to see him in that condi-

tion...When I opened social media, I saw that my father was being called a criminal. The very next day, I came to know that the people who had attacked my father were approaching the Supreme Court to wash away their crimes and were filing complaints against him and all



the police personnel. “I felt very hurt and decided that I should also seek justice for my father. I received support from other police families, and we went to the Supreme Court. We requested an advocate to pre-

sent our case before the Hon-orable Supreme Court. The advocate assured us that we, too, have equal rights as citizens of this country and that we would also get justice”. Her mother says, “The moment he returned home late on the night of July 20, injured as he was, was incredibly painful and traumatic for both me and my two-year-old daughter. I am accompanied here by other family members of Delhi Police personnel, and we wish to share our ordeal with you”. Another family member of a Delhi Police of-

ficial who sustained injuries during the clash alleged that the protest was disrupted by “mischievous elements”. “This was not a student protest; rather, there were mischievous elements who tried to sabotage and discredit the students’ protest and shatter the dignity of Parliament,” the family member said. “These miscreants should be punished for their actions and not spared, while the students should be let off after their records are processed,” the family member added.

FIR against woman over abusive remarks on PM transferred to Delhi

According to the complaint, the alleged remarks lowered the dignity of the office of the Prime Minister and had the potential to create enmity in society and disturb public peace

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A Zero FIR registered in Noida against a woman over alleged objectionable slogans targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the CJP-led protest at Jantar Mantar has been transferred to Delhi for further investigation, an officer aware of the matter said on Friday. The FIR was registered on July 29 on a complaint alleging that the woman used abusive language against

Modi during the demonstration held over the NEET paper leak on July 23. According to the complaint, the alleged remarks lowered the dignity of the office of the prime minister and had the potential to create enmity in society and disturb public peace. The case has been registered under Sections 352 (intentional insult to provoke breach of peace), 353(1) (public mischief) and 356(1) (criminal defamation) of the Bharatiya



Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) as a Zero FIR and has now been transferred to Delhi Police,

which has jurisdiction over the area where the alleged incident took place.

A senior Delhi Police officer, requesting anonymity, said the police will examine the contents of the Zero FIR, discuss the matter internally and seek legal opinion before deciding the future course of the investigation after receiving the FIR copy. “The investigation will be conducted strictly in accordance with the law and all prescribed guidelines,” the officer said. A source said that the transferred FIR would come to Parliament Street Police Station.

Aap BJP ke ho kya? Rahul to police kin

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

LEADER of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday retorted with “Aap BJP ke ho kya” when asked about a press conference being held by family members of Delhi Police personnel who sustained injuries during the clashes linked with the July 20 student protests in New Delhi. Family members of the injured police personnel, including an Assistant Commissioner of Police, a Sub Inspector and others, had this morning held a press conference, recounting their ordeal and appealing for justice. The wife of a Delhi Police ACP who sustained injuries



during the clashes said the incident had been traumatic for her family. “The moment he returned home late on the night of July 20, injured as he was, was incredibly painful and trau-

matic for both my two-year-old daughter and me. I am accompanied here by other family members of Delhi Police personnel, and we wish to share our ordeal with you,” she said.

NCR expands KAVACH 4.0 network to 636 km

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

NORTH Central Railway (NCR) has achieved a major milestone in railway safety by successfully commissioning the indigenous KAVACH 4.0 Train Collision Avoidance System on the 64-route kilometre Mirzapur-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Junction section. With this, the KAVACH-protected network in Prayagraj Division has expanded to 636 route kilometres, reinforcing Indian Railways’ push for safer, technology-driven operations. KAVACH is an indigenous Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system designed to prevent Signal Passed at Danger (SPAD) incidents, enforce speed restrictions, avoid collisions and provide real-time operational information to loco pilots. Using RFID tags, UHF radio communication and microprocessor-based technology, the system continuously exchanges information between locomotives, stations and trackside equipment. If a train crosses a signal at danger or exceeds the permissible speed, KAVACH



first issues visual and audio warnings before automatically applying brakes if required. It also ensures safe train separation and supports operations even during dense fog. Earlier, KAVACH 4.0 had been commissioned on the Chiprana-Tundla (175 km), Tundla-Panki Dham (207 km) and Kanpur-Prayagraj (190 km) sections. The latest addition creates a continuous KAVACH-enabled corridor of about 636 km from Chiprana to Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Junction, excluding the Prayagraj-Mirzapur stretch. The project also marked several technical firsts, including the commissioning

of KERNEX-manufactured KAVACH on a WAG-9 freight locomotive and integration with nine Electronic Interlocking stations. A total of 1,824 RFID tags were installed, three new communication towers were built, and extensive field trials were conducted using the Brahmaputra Express and Purushottam Express. NCR said work on the remaining sanctioned sections is progressing rapidly, with phased commissioning expected to further enhance safety and support Mission Raftar on the vital Delhi-Howrah High Density Rail Corridor.

UP trade show to boost global trade, manufacturing

Greater Noida to host mega event from September 25 to 29; over 2,400 exhibitors, 550 global buyers from 85 countries expected

HANS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW

UTTAR Pradesh is gearing up to showcase its industrial strength and export potential on the global stage with the fourth edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPTS) 2026, scheduled to be held at the India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida, from September 25 to 29. Reviewing preparations on Friday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the event would be a significant step towards making Uttar Pradesh a leading hub of global trade, manufacturing and exports. This year’s theme, “UP for Global Growth: Innovation, Manufacturing and Exports,” reflects the state’s ambition to attract global investors and expand exports. The event is expected to feature over 2,400 exhibitors, 1.5 lakh registered B2B buyers, 4.5 lakh B2C visitors, and more than 550 international buyers from 85 countries. The government is targeting over 4,000 MoUs, proposed investments worth ₹3,200 crore, and business

enquiries exceeding Rs 13,500 crore. More than 27 sectors, including ODOP, ODOC, MSMEs, electronics, defence and aerospace, agriculture, tourism, startups, EVs, textiles, handicrafts and healthcare, will be showcased. Special knowledge sessions will focus on Artificial Intelligence, electronics manufacturing, digital trade, global Free Trade Agreements, food processing, road safety, labour codes and e-commerce. The CM also directed officials to enhance international outreach, strengthen infrastructure, security and EV bus services, and promote Uttar Pradesh’s cultural heritage through daily performances. During the review, progress of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Employment and Industrial Area Development Scheme was also assessed. BVG Group, TCS and Hiranandani Group have expressed interest in the project, which aims to establish 17 skill development centres in the first phase, train 10 lakh youth annually, and achieve 80% placement for trained candidates.

44 arrested in city in anti-crime crackdown



HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

DELHI Police has arrested 44 people, including three proclaimed offenders, in 34 criminal cases during a 72-hour crackdown in the northwest district, an official said on Friday. Police also claimed to have traced five missing persons. The drive targeted street crime, organised criminal activities, cyber fraud, illegal liquor trade, gambling and habitual offenders across the district, they said. Police said the five traced persons included four minors and one person with intellectual disability, all of whom were safely reunited with their families. “Among the major cases, teams arrested a 28-year-old alleged burglar from Ashok Vihar and recovered stolen gold and silver jewellery from his possession. The ac-

cused, identified as Chandan alias Rahul, is a listed bad character with 34 criminal cases,” a senior police officer said. In another case, three men were arrested within eight hours of a robbery reported in the Subhash Place area. Police recovered the complainant’s robbed cash, documents and a stolen scooter with a country-made pistol. A suspected snatcher was also arrested in Mukherjee Nagar, leading to the recovery of five stolen mobile phones and a stolen motorcycle. Police said his involvement was established in 10 snatching and theft cases, while he has a criminal history of 41 cases. The district’s cyber team also arrested two men in separate cyber fraud cases. One of them, arrested from West Bengal, is accused of cheating and sextortion through matrimonial websites involving over Rs 14 lakh.

DUSU VP Jhansla continues sit-in

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

DELHI University Students’ Union (DUSU) Vice-President Rahul Jhansla has been on a sit-in protest for the past four days, while five students continued their indefinite hunger strike for the second consecutive day on Thursday as part of the “DU Satyagraha”, alleging that the university administration had failed to respond to their demands, according to members. Jhansla claimed that a delegation representing the Delhi University Vice-Chancellor visited the protest site, near the arts faculty in north campus, which according to Jhansla, represents the dharna site of DU campus or “Jantar Mantar of DU”. Jhansla added that the delegation of professors urged the students to end the hunger strike, but instead of addressing their demands, threatened them with administrative action. “The Vice-Chancellor has not yet responded to our demands. A delegation representing him asked us to call off the hunger strike but threatened administrative action against those participating in it,” Jhansla alleged. Declaring the protest venue as the “Jantar Mantar of Delhi University”, Jhansla said students who could not participate in the recent protests at Jantar Mantar could now join the agitation on the DU campus.

Shraddha Walkar murder case

High Court refuses to fix timeline for conclusion of trial

Walkar, who was in a live-in relationship with the accused, was allegedly strangled by Poonawala on May 18, 2022

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court on Friday refused to set a timeline for the conclusion of trial in the Shraddha Walkar murder case against accused Aaftab Amin Poonawala, stating that the proceedings were already happening on a day-to-day basis. “It is clear that the trial court is making every en-

deavour to conclude the trial as soon as possible. No further directions are required as the trial is going on a day to day basis,” Justice Madhu Jain said while dealing with a petition filed by the deceased’s brother. Walkar, who was in a live-in relationship with the accused, was allegedly strangled by Poonawala on May 18, 2022. According to the 6,629-page chargesheet filed by



Delhi Police, Poonawala allegedly dismembered her body, kept the body parts in a fridge, and disposed of the pieces in desolate places across the city over several days to avoid getting caught.

The body parts were discovered later. The counsel for the petitioner contended that the case was proceeding in a tardy manner and at this rate, the trial was not likely

to conclude in the coming years. Senior advocate Amit Prasad, appearing for Delhi Police, informed that the trial court was already taking up the case on a day-to-day basis, except on Saturdays and Sundays. He said out of more than 200 witnesses, testimonies of 157 had already been concluded. On a request by the senior lawyer, the court requested the ministries of home affairs and external affairs to expeditiously facilitate the examination of certain overseas witnesses, as and when required by the trial court.

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਐਂਡ ਸਿੰਧ ਬੈਂਕ

(ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਆਗਮ)

ਪੰਜਾਬ & Sind Bank

(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Jai Stambh Chowk, K.K. Road, Raipur - Chhattisgarh-495001

Email: r0298@psb.bank.in

Whereas

APPENDIX IV Rule-8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

The undersigned being the authorized officer of the Punjab & Sind Bank, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice as below mentioned date calling upon the borrower/s to repay the amount mentioned in the notice with interest and expenses therein within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules on the date mentioned below. The borrower, guarantor/s in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Punjab & Sind Bank for the due amount as mentioned below with subsequent interest and expenses there on.

The borrower's/guarantors attention is invited to provisions of sub-section 8 of section 13 of the act, in respect of time available redeem the secured assets.

S. N.	Name of Borrower/ Guarantor	Description of the property	Demand Notice Amount/ Date
1.	Borrower- M/s. Prakriti Greens (Partnership Firm), Regd. office Address - D-6, Avni Vihar, Daldal Seoni, Morwa, Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001.	Property 1: All the part and parcel of "Residential Property bearing Plot No.70, Nagar Nigam No 88/KV/70 situated at Kailash Vihar Gailana, Hari Parvat Ward, Tehsil & District- Agra, U.P. Reg. vide sale deed Dated 29.12.1989 At Book No. 1, Volume No. 3877 Pages 104 to 108 Serial No. 5060, in the Name of Smt. Vasundhara w/o Anil Kumar and Shri Anil Kumar S/O Late Sh Gaya Singh. Area 139.34 Sq Mtr. Bounded as under: North: Property No.71, South: Property No.69, East: Road of Samli, West: Property No. 60.	17/04/2026 ₹ 3,17,33,470.00 + interest and other charges w.e.f. 13/04/2026 Posse. Notice Date
2.	Partner- Mr. Suyash Bharadwaj S/O Mr. Avadh Naresht Bharadwaj, Address- H. No. 49, Green Avenue, Daldal Seoni, Near FCI, Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001	Property 2: All the part and parcel of "Industrial Diverted Property bearing Khasra No. 385/2 at Village- Boriyajhar, PH No 45, R.I.C. Mahasamund, Chhattisgarh, Registered in the office of Sub registrar Mahasamund, Chhattisgarh, Sale Deed dated 28.08.2018 vide Book No. A1 Volume No. 9044, Serial No. 1670 Page 340 to 358 in the name of M/s. Prakriti Greens through the partner Shri Om Bahadur Jauhri S/O Madan Lal Jauhri, Area 0.27 Hect/29062.53 Sq. ft. Bounded as under: North: Road, South: Bhagwati & others, East: Govindram, West: Bhagwati & others. TYPE OF POSSESSION: SYMBOLIC	28/07/2026
3.	Partner- Miss Megha Bharadwaj D/O Mr. Avadh Naresht Bharadwaj, Address - H. No. 49 Green Avenue, Daldal Seoni, Near FCI Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001		
4.	Partner- Mr. Om Bahadur Jauhri S/O Madan Lal Jauhri, Address - Arum 1601, Paramount Floravilla, Sector 137, NOIDA, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh - 201301, 5. Guarantor- Mr. Anil Kumar S/O Late Gaya Singh, Address: 70, Kailash Vihar Agra, Runkata Agra, Uttar Pradesh- 282007, 6. Guarantor- Smt Surbhi Yadav D/O Sh. Anil Kumar, Address: 70, Kailash Vihar, Khandari Bypass Road Agra, Uttar Pradesh-282007.		

Date : 31.07.2026, Place : Raipur (C.G.)

AUTHORISED OFFICER, PUNJAB & SIND BANK



Govt, CJP must have meaningful engagement

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Delhi state government's announcement against pursuing any further adverse legal action against the NEET (UG) examination irregularities' protestors is some progress, and it can possibly cool tempers on both sides. Still, it is not a very reasonable decision. It doesn't provide immunity to those with criminal antecedents. It may be recalled that the Delhi police filed cases against those who were allegedly involved in the violence that broke out during Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP's) July 20 'Chalo Sansad' march from Jantar Mantar to the Parliament. Police personnel also reportedly identified 2,873 people through CCTV footage who allegedly attacked them and van-

dalised vehicles during the march. Almost a 1000 among them are said to have criminal records. The reasonableness of this decision is questionable. Who decides whether the behaviour of a protestor is lawless? The police and other official agencies have proved to be partisan; they have done everything to kill or curtail the stir; they shut down 16 Metro stations in central Delhi and blocked the internet in the area. Worse, there are reports that the protestors, even minors, are being detained or arrested in different parts of the country.

The Supreme Court had to step in; on Tuesday, it ordered the release of all under-18 protestors, who were arrested during the agitation. Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, whose

cockroach remark led to the launch of CJP, directed the authorities to preserve the digital and personal data of the agitators. This is not to say that no agitator did anything wrong; a small section of them attacked cops, injuring many. The guilty should face the consequences, but the government's attitude has stiffened since the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan as the union education minister. This reflects the repressive measures adopted by the Narendra Modi government in the aftermath of the end of the stir. In such a situation, it is difficult to determine the truth about the violence that was unleashed. What both sides, the government and the CJP, need to do is lower the temperature so that meaning-

ful dialogue can be furthered in the interests of students. Prolonged confrontation, mutual distrust, and increasingly hostile rhetoric are unlikely to produce durable solutions. Instead, they risk deepening political polarisation while diverting attention from the substantive issues that originally brought thousands of students onto the streets. A democratic society must be able to distinguish between legitimate dissent and criminal conduct.

Peaceful protest is an essential constitutional right, and its exercise should not automatically invite punitive action. At the same time, acts of violence, vandalism, or assault cannot be justified under the guise of public protest and should be addressed through fair, trans-

parent, and evidence-based legal processes. For the government, rebuilding public confidence requires more than announcing limited legal relief. It demands credible assurances that investigations into alleged offences will be impartial, that no innocent protester will be harassed, and that due process will be followed without political bias. Equally, organisations leading the agitation have a responsibility to ensure that demonstrations remain peaceful and disciplined, preventing fringe elements from hijacking a movement centred on students' concerns. Responsible leadership on both sides is essential to prevent further escalation. Only by replacing confrontation with communication can both sides contribute to an outcome that protects democratic values while addressing the genuine anxieties of the country's youth.

LETTERS

Rise in tech startups augurs well

PROPOS "More tech-enabled startups tap equity market as concerns ease" (July 31). More Indian startups are choosing to list on the stock market—18 did so last year, raising over Rs 41,000 crore, while another 28 are waiting. This shows growing confidence given the profitability rate they have achieved. Investors, especially ordinary retail shareholders, are slowly losing their fear of such companies. This shift from traditional businesses to tech startups is good for India, as it attracts foreign investment and aligns with a global AI-driven economy. But founders must price their shares fairly and deliver on their promises. Public listing is not an exit strategy; it is a tool for faster growth.

K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

A major boost to entrepreneurial culture

PROPOS "More tech-enabled startups tap equity market as concerns ease" (THI, July 31). India's start-up success should not remain concentrated in a few metropolitan centres. Smaller cities and towns possess talented entrepreneurs who often lack access to funding, mentoring and incubation support. Expanding digital infrastructure, improving access to venture capital and strengthening local innovation hubs can help bridge this gap. Public listing by successful startups should inspire a wider entrepreneurial culture across the country. Inclusive growth will ensure that the benefits of innovation reach every region, creating employment, encouraging local enterprise and contributing to balanced national development.

K Sakunthala, Coimbatore-641671

Take up financial literacy campaigns

THIS is with reference to "More tech-enabled startups tap equity market as concerns ease." The renewed interest in startup IPOs is encouraging, but retail investors should approach these offerings with careful evaluation rather than market enthusiasm. Many technology companies have promising ideas but limited profitability, making valuations difficult to assess. Investors must study financial statements, cash flows and business sustainability before subscribing. Companies, in turn, should provide clear disclosures without overstating future growth prospects. Financial literacy campaigns can also help first-time investors make informed decisions. Healthy capital markets depend on responsible companies as well as informed investors.

S M Jeeva, Chennai-32

Listing brings greater responsibility

PROPOS "More tech-enabled startups tap equity market as concerns ease". Listing on the stock market brings greater responsibility. Investors expect listed startups to maintain high standards of corporate governance, transparent accounting and ethical leadership. Strong internal controls, independent boards and timely disclosures are essential for preserving public confidence. Rapid expansion should never compromise financial discipline or compliance. Sustainable success ultimately rests on credibility.

Pon Arun Kumar, Tiruchengode (TN)-637211

A beacon of hope for H-1B visa holders

I refer to the report on Senator Alex Padilla's bill proposing a Green Card path for long-term US residents, including Indian H-1B visa holders. For decades, skilled immigrants have driven innovation and economic growth, yet laws that have not been changed since 1986 leave thousands in legal limbo. Modernizing the registry rule to grant permanent residency to those living in the US for seven-plus years is a compassionate, practical step. The lawmakers should support this vital bill to ensure stability for hardworking families.

Aahana Misra, Hyderabad

Anti-Paper Leak Bill is a welcome move

STRONG laws are necessary to prevent examination malpractices and protect students, who have worked diligently. The proposed penalties and faster investigations under the Anti-Paper Leak Bill can help restore confidence in the examination system. However, authorities should also strengthen security, improve digital monitoring, and ensure the law is implemented fairly and effectively. This reform can create a transparent and trustworthy environment for students across the country.

Himasri Nanmpapaneni, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com

RAISE YOUR VOICE

Do you have any civic issues? Are any roads in your locality damaged? Do you have any complaints against govt departments? Are any private companies taking you for a ride regarding sales and service? The Hans India will publish your complaints, concerns and grievances in these columns on every Wednesday. Mail the details along with relevant photographs if any, to hanspeoplesvoice@gmail.com -Editor

BENGALURU ONLINE

Cop's son among 9 held in hydro ganja racket

TUMAKURU: In a startling case, the son of a police officer, whose father had been involved in creating awareness against drug abuse, has been arrested for allegedly running a hydro ganja trafficking network in Tumakuru. The racket was unearthed after police received a confidential tip-off through a QR code-based public information system introduced to combat narcotics.

The breakthrough came after a tip was received on July 10 through the QR code initiative launched by Tumakuru Sub-Division Deputy Superintendent of Police Chandrashekar. The system allows members of the public to anonymously share information on drug-related activities while ensuring their identity remains confidential.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

Want to feel depressed? Watch Parliament sessions



DO you want to slip into a state of depression? The easiest way is to switch on your television and watch how increasingly unaccountable and irresponsible many of our public representatives have become. Follow it up by watching prime-time television debates and the descent into despair will be even faster.

It is indeed a sad story. They do not allow Parliament to function, and the party spokespersons repeat the same, often illogical, arguments on television night after night. Ironically, leaders who constantly demand accountability from the government seem to forget that accountability is expected of everyone. No opposition or ruling party can dictate how Parliament should function or how television anchors should conduct debates. Politics cannot become a daily exercise in shifting the goalposts.

Barring the discussion on reforms to plug examination paper leaks, particularly NEET—which itself was hardly productive—and the bill on Vande Mataram, there has been virtually no meaningful legislative business during the monsoon session so far.

Having covered Parliament for long, I have never witnessed any Opposition behaving in this manner. There were always sharp confrontations, heated exchanges, protests and even walk-

PARLIAMENT NEEDS ACCOUNTABILITY FROM BOTH SIDES

outs. Proceedings were occasionally stalled for a day or two. But there was also a willingness on both sides to negotiate. After consultations with the Speaker, a workable understanding would emerge, and Parliament would get back to business.

Today, however, disruption has become the objective rather than the means.

The Opposition insists that the Prime Minister and the Home Minister must be physically present before any discussion can begin. That would have been understandable had they used this demand to compel the government to agree to discussion on law and order and the alleged police excesses during the student protests. Instead of cornering the government through a structured debate backed by facts, pointed questions and supplementary interventions, they prefer to stall proceedings altogether. Parliament cannot be treated this way.

Question Hour is among the most effective parliamentary instruments available to Members of Parliament. It enables them to raise issues about the state and their constituency, seek answers from ministers and hold the government accountable. This is followed by Special Mentions, through which MPs draw attention to pressing public concerns. Both have been sacrificed at the altar of political confrontation.

The decorum of Parliament is steadily eroding because of the "my way or the highway" approach. Whenever the Opposition is questioned about repeated disruptions, the standard response is that running



Parliament is the government's responsibility. Does that absolve the Opposition of all responsibility? Is it not equally their duty to question, challenge and expose the government through informed debate? Why prefer posting comments on X rather than confronting ministers inside Parliament?

Unfortunately, this has become a familiar pattern not just in Parliament but also in several State Assemblies. Between 2014 and 2019, Andhra Pradesh witnessed repeated disruptions by the YSRCP, accompanied by daily theatrics outside the Assembly. In Telangana, during the BRS regime, the Assembly adopted the practice of suspending members even for minor disruptions, and now they themselves protested on several occasions. Contrast that with what is happening in Parliament today, where disruptions continue for days with virtually no consequences. Perhaps Parliament should seriously consider a "no work, no pay" policy and recover the day's expenditure from all parties, including the ruling party, whenever applicable.

For the past two weeks, taxpayers' money has been wasted while Parliament has remained largely dysfunctional. Ironically, the biggest loser is the Opposition itself. Instead of cornering the government over its omissions and commissions, it is allowing the government to escape scrutiny because debates are simply not taking place.

Even when discussions are held, they rarely remain focused. The debate on NEET reforms was a classic example. Much of the Opposition's intervention revolved around rhetoric rather than presenting a credible roadmap for reforming the examination system. This only makes the government's job easier.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra resorted to an unnecessary personal remark when she referred to IIT Madras Director Dr V Kamakoti as a "gaumutra expert". Rahul Gandhi, while strongly criticising the government, neither endorsed nor specifically challenged the provisions of the proposed reforms, nor did he place a concrete alternative before the House. Instead, the debate descended into

exchanges involving words such as "idiots." Such language may generate headlines, but it contributes little to parliamentary discourse.

It was equally unfortunate to hear the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, invoke Manusmriti in a debate where it had little relevance and remark that the Home Minister would be "dragged out" of his room. Although he later clarified that he was referring to public anger, such language was unbecoming of a leader of his stature. The Rajya Sabha is often described as the House of Elders. Its members should set standards of parliamentary conduct, not lower them. Equally disturbing were the comments made by Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) spokesperson Saurav Das, who argued that there was nothing wrong with the filthy remarks made against the Prime Minister by one of the protesting girls. According to him, anyone aggrieved could seek legal recourse by filing a defamation case. Such responses only encourage the normalisation of abusive political discourse. God save the country if such Gen Z comes to power in future.

What was even more disappointing was the complete absence of empathy for the policemen injured during the June 20 protests. Nearly 250 policemen were reportedly injured. When questioned by the media, Rahul Gandhi responded by asking whether the journalist was from the BJP while one of his party spokespersons remarked that policemen were merely doing the job they were paid for. Does it mean they don't deserve sym-

pathy? What kind of attitude is this?

The Opposition also appears obsessed with pellet guns while ignoring the larger challenge of maintaining law and order. Even the Supreme Court has observed that there cannot be a blanket ban on their use. Did Congress governments never authorise their use in Jammu and Kashmir? Were crowd-control measures not employed during protests at JNU and elsewhere?

Parliament cannot be reduced to a stage for political theatre. The Congress, in particular, appears to have drifted away from parliamentary traditions established by leaders such as Indira Gandhi and several other stalwarts who combined sharp criticism with substantive debate. They fought governments fiercely, but they also recognised the sanctity of Parliament.

The ordinary citizen is left wondering whether the nation's representatives are interested in solving problems or merely producing political spectacle. In the process, the genuine concerns of students are getting buried beneath a battle for political credit.

If the Opposition believes that disruption alone will propel it to power, it is making a serious miscalculation. Public confidence is earned not through slogans, social media posts or daily headlines, but through constructive engagement, informed debate, credible alternatives and a clear long-term vision for the country. Parliament was created to hold governments accountable, not to make accountability itself a casualty.

(The author is former Chief Editor of The Hans India)

Fraud on court: Judges, advocates and the fiduciary crisis

CHOLLETI

INDIA'S courts are experiencing a crisis of institutional confidence — not from judicial malfeasance, but from structural vulnerabilities that permit conduct appearing to compromise impartiality. A lawyer defends one side, then appears against it. A judge's child receives hundreds of government cases through prosecutors appearing before the same judge. No rules forbid it. No mechanism stops it. This is not merely a governance failure but a betrayal of the foundational compact between courts and citizens — one playing out in quiet procedural rooms, far removed from grand courtroom drama.

The Kakinada Episode-Fraud named:

Advocate S Pranathi represents landowners from Kakinada in a property dispute. Months later, as the State's Special Government Pleader, she switches sides and opposes them. Her husband, Meka Rahul Chowdary, steps in to argue her abandoned brief. The Kakinada Municipal Corporation simultaneously reverses its own legal position without explanation. The Andhra Pradesh High Court on July 28 — in Review Petition No. 2 of 2026 in WP Nos. 11254 of 2013 and 13428 of 2015 — examined the docket orders, vakalatnamas, and the conduct of the counsels involved, and found evidence of collusion, professional misconduct, conflict of interest, and "a deliberate attempt to commit fraud on this court."

The court was unsparing: "The Counsel appearing for the State and its instrumentalities have failed in discharging their fiduciary duty." It ordered a criminal probe by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), calling for a report within twelve weeks. This case is a symptom — not an exception. It illuminates four interconnected failures: the collapse of professional ethics among advocates; unspoken nepotism in government counsel appointments; absence of meaningful recusal standards for judges, and inadequacy of the Bar Council disciplinary machinery.

The oath forgotten:

The Advocates Act, 1961, and Bar Council of India Rules prescribe unambiguous standards.

They demand respect for courts, impose fiduciary duty — loyalty, confidentiality, undivided allegiance. An advocate who switches sides, or whose spouse argues the opposite brief, violates this core compact. Under Section 35, State Bar Councils can punish misconduct with reprimand, suspension, or permanent removal from the roll.

Yet disciplinary action remains slow and inconsistent. In March last year, the Bar Council of India issued a directive against advocates advertising through social media influencers — a development that would have been inconceivable a generation ago, and one that speaks to how far institutional drift has gone. When the Bar Council is issuing social media advisories instead of conducting disciplinary proceedings against ethical violations, the profession's moral compass has drifted dangerously off course.

When family becomes the conflict:

Beyond individual misconduct lies a systemic question: whether children of sitting judges receiving government counsel appointments creates an appearance of institutional conflict that a democracy cannot afford to ignore. Last December, the Delhi High Court heard public interest litigations by the First Generation Lawyers' Association, challenging preferential allotment of lawyers' chambers to relatives of retiring advocates — a practice the court found prima facie violative of Article 14. In the same month, the government was asked to explain its empanelment of over 650 advocates as Central Government counsel in the Supreme Court, several reportedly enrolled only in 2024–2025, many yet to clear the All India Bar Examination.

In August 2025, the Allahabad High Court in Jubeda Begum v. UPSRTC decried an "entitlement culture" in state counsel appointments, recalling the Supreme Court's 1991 ruling in Kumari Shreilekha Vidyarthi v. State of U P that mandated transparent, merit-based procedures. Justice Ajay Bhanot observed that "modes of appointment which accord weight to accidents of inheritance and neglect achievements of merit cannot be countenanced." The human cost is felt by the first-generation lawyer — the son of a farmer, the daughter of a schoolteacher — who watches

In Rajasthan, the government amended its eligibility criteria to accommodate the son of a senior official as Additional Advocate General, notwithstanding the mandatory ten-year practice requirement. When the nepotism allegation surfaced publicly — ahead of PM Modi's visit to Jodhpur in August 2024 — the appointee resigned. Contrast this with Justice Sujoy Paul, who in early 2024 voluntarily sought transfer from the Madhya Pradesh High Court to the Telangana High Court because his son practised in the same court.

the doors of patronage remain closed while they swing open for the well-connected.

The recusal question-Justice must be seen:

No episode illustrates the tension between judicial privilege and public confidence more sharply than the Delhi High Court recusal controversy of 2026. Former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, appearing in person in the CBI's revision petition against his discharge in the excise policy case, sought recusal of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma on the ground that both her children were empanelled as Central Government counsel — work allocated through the same senior law officers appearing against him in her court.

In April, Justice Sharma dismissed the recusal applications, holding that her children's professional engagements created no financial or personal stake in the outcome, and that accepting such grounds would require "a large part of the judiciary" to recuse in similar cases.

The observation, while judicially defensible, sits uneasily alongside principle. The Restatement of Values of Judicial Life, adopted by all Supreme Court judges in 1997 under Chief Justice J S Verma, urges that where close relatives of a judge may gain undue advantage, the judge should — in the interests of the appearance of justice — opt for transfer. This is a voluntary ethical code with no

enforcement mechanism. The asymmetry is stark: Rule 6 of the Bar Council Rules prohibits advocates from practising before courts where a close relative serves as a judge — but that obligation binds the advocate, not the judge.

In Rajasthan, the government amended its eligibility criteria to accommodate the son of a senior official as Additional Advocate General, notwithstanding the mandatory ten-year practice requirement. When the nepotism allegation surfaced publicly — ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jodhpur in August 2024 — the appointee resigned. The system responded not to principle, but to political pressure.

Contrast this with Justice Sujoy Paul, who in early 2024 voluntarily sought transfer from the Madhya Pradesh High Court to the Telangana High Court because his son practised in the same court. That act of quiet integrity, barely reported, is precisely the standard the system needs — and rarely demands.

The way forward:

None of these amount to an indictment of the judiciary or the Bar. The overwhelming majority of advocates serve with dedication, and most judges discharge their duties with independence. The system is not broken — but its foundations are being tested in ways that demand structural response, not merely individual virtue.

India needs a binding, transparent, and institutionally reviewable judicial recusal framework. It needs merit-based, publicly disclosed criteria for government counsel empanelment. It needs the Bar Council's disciplinary machinery to function with the urgency this moment demands. And it needs ordinary litigants — carrying nothing but faith in the court's impartiality — to have that faith restored. The Andhra Pradesh High Court's order is, in one sense, proof that the system can work: a judge saw fraud, named it, and acted. That is reason enough for measured hope. The question now is whether the institutions around that judge will do the same.

(The writer is with the Cholleti BlackRose Chambers, Hyderabad, and writes on economy, politics and law)



"I thought I would win gold after snatch but it was up to God. A little disappointed that I couldn't lift in my final attempt in clean and jerk. I have lifted more in training."
- Lovepreet Singh, Indian weightlifter

COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2026

Lovepreet lifts silver

Seema bags discus bronze; Neeraj, Rohit, Yashvir in javelin final

GLASGOW

WEIGHTLIFTER Lovepreet Singh's Commonwealth Games record-breaking silver medal headlined an eventful day for India, while discus thrower Seema Kaliramna bagged a bronze medal and Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, along with two compatriots, advanced to the men's javelin throw final. Lovepreet produced the performance of his career, setting a Games record of 176kg in snatch before finishing with a total of 388kg (176kg+212kg), just one kilogram behind New Zealand's David Andrew Liti (389kg).

The Punjab lifter carried a commanding 10kg lead into the clean and jerk but Liti overturned the deficit with a Games record lift of 223kg in his final attempt after Lovepreet failed to complete a courageous 217kg lift that

would have secured gold.

"I thought I would win gold after snatch but it was up to God. A little disappointed that I couldn't lift in my final attempt in clean and jerk. I have lifted more in training," said Lovepreet.

The silver improved Lovepreet's bronze winning effort from the previous Games in Birmingham and completed India's weightlifting campaign with eight medals -- one gold, six silver and one bronze.

India added another athletics medal through Seema Kaliramna, who committed three successive fouls but clinched bronze in the women's discus throw with a

best effort of 58.65m.

The 27-year-old, who made a successful return to competition after motherhood last year and is also pursuing a PhD, produced her medal-winning throw in the third round before fouling her final three attempts.

Fellow Indian Nidhi Rani finished fourth with a best effort of 55.67m. Jamaica's Samantha Hall won gold with a Games-leading throw of 61.66m, while Canada's Julia Tunks claimed silver with 60.67m.

Neeraj Chopra, Rohit Yadav and Yashvir Singh all progressed to men's javelin throw final despite difficult, gusty conditions that prevented any athlete from breaching the automatic qualifying mark of 84m. Chopra finished fifth with 79.61m, while Rohit (78.37m) and Yashvir (78.36m) placed ninth and 10th respectively as all three Indians advanced. "The conditions were not the best for javelin throwers. It was not only cold but also windy... nobody was able to decode the wind," Chopra said after qualification.



Lovepreet Singh

Indian boxers dominate

Jadumani, Arundhati, Jaismine, Preeti, Ankush storm into finals

Glasgow: Arundhati Choudhary stunned defending champion Rosie Eccles of Wales in a split decision in women's 70kg class, while world champion Jaismine Lamboria (women's 57kg), Preeti Pawar (women's 54kg), Ankush Panghal (men's 80kg) and Jadumani Singh (men's 55kg) also sailed into the Commonwealth Games final as Indian boxers produced a dominant display here on Friday.

Arundhati beat her Wales opponent 4-0 in a messy and ill-tempered women's 70kg category semifinal as the Indian held on to her good show in the first two rounds, forcing Rosie to receive a standing count during that time.

Jaismine was so dominant in her 57kg semifinal bout that she won in a Referee



Ankush Panghal and Preeti Pawar

Stops Contest (RSC) decision after the Lesotho boxer received her third standing count in the closing seconds of the second round.

Jadumani Singh also entered the men's 55kg final after beating P P M Haoseb of Namibia in a unanimous 5-0 decision in the semifinals. Meanwhile, Preeti out-punched Zambia's Catherine Mwape 5-0 while Ankush Brushed aside Joshua Ofori

by a similar margin.

The 22-year-old from Bhiwani, Preeti, who is an Asian Games bronze medalist, powered to a 5-0 win to set up a clash with Canada's Scarlett Delgado.

Ankush was equally dominant against Ofori, who resorted to repeated clinching after being comprehensively outboxed in the opening two rounds sealed a one-sided 5-0 verdict.

Triple jump: Chithravel, Prabhu pounce into final

GLASGOW

THERE was better news in the men's triple jump as national record holders Chithravel (16.41m) and Prabhu (16.26m) advanced to Saturday's final after finishing second and third in qualification. Tejaswin Shankar also remained in medal contention in the men's decathlon, ending the opening day in second place with 4,339 points after five events, just 14 points behind Canada's Damian Warner (4,353).

The Indian's standout per-



formance came in his pet high jump event, where he cleared 2.15m for 944 points, while his 7.82m effort in long jump earned him 1,015 points.

However, Animesh Kujur missed the men's 200m final after clocking 20.65 seconds to finish sixth in his semifinal, while Vishal TK also bowed out after placing sixth in his 400m semifinal with a time of 46.33 seconds.

The Indian pair stays unbeaten in lawn bowls. The Indian men's pair of Navneet Singh and Dinesh Kumar registered their third successive win, edging Botswana in a tie-break after the teams split the opening two sets.

The Indians dominated the first set 9-2 before Botswana levelled the contest by winning the second set 4-3.

Navneet and Dinesh, however, held their nerve in the tie-break to preserve their unbeaten record and strengthen their hopes of reaching the knockout stage.

Unnati, Tanvi enter semis of Taipei Open

TAIPEI: India's Unnati Hooda and Tanvi Sharma won their respective women's singles matches to enter the semifinals of the Taipei Open badminton tournament here on Friday.

Kiran George, however, lost his men's singles quarterfinal match against Japan's fourth seeded Yudai Okimoto 21-12 21-10 in 33 minutes. Hooda clinched a straight-game 23-21 21-16 victory over compatriot Devika Sihag to reach the last four stage, while Tanvi got the better of Thailand's Supanida Katethong 21-15 18-21 21-14 in a gruelling 54-minute quarterfinal clash.

Earlier in

the day, the all-Indian quarterfinal contest between Hooda and Sihag started with a fiercely contested first game, where the former held her nerve to win it 23-21. Hooda was off to a great start, racing to an 11-3 lead before Sihag staged a spirited comeback to level the scores at 21-21. However, Hooda held her composure in the closing stages, winning the next two points to clinch the opening game. In the second game, the third seeded Hooda maintained her momentum and capitalised on her leads to wrap up the match 21-16 against eighth seed Sihag in 42 minutes.

The 18-year-old Hooda will next face the winner of the quarterfinal between Chinese Taipei's Chiu Pin-chian and Vietnam's Nguyen Thuy Linh.

Bumrah to play in Lanka Test series

NEW DELHI: India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been cleared to play next month's two-Test series against Sri Lanka by the BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

Bumrah was picked subject to fitness as he had suffered an impact injury during the recent ODI series against England. He had to sit out of the third ODI at Lord's due to the injury.

"Jasprit Bumrah has recovered from his impact injury. He has cleared the fitness Tests mandated by the COE. Hopefully he will be available for both games as he is integral to the team's plans," a senior BCCI official told PTI on con-



ditions of anonymity.

The two-Test series against the islanders will get underway on August 15 in Galle, and the second match will be played in Colombo from August 23.

India need to win seven of their remaining nine Tests of this World Test Championship cycle in order to remain in contention for a summit clash berth.

'Delhi protesters identified via fingerprints on stones'

Will suggest CM Fadnavis to recommend Patil's name for the Nobel Prize in the field of scientific research: Raut; Uddhav speaks to Abhijeet Dipke, assures him of Opposition's backing

MUMBAI

MAHARASHTRA Bharatiya Janata Party minister Chandrakant Patil has claimed the Delhi Police have collected the fingerprints of protesters from even the smallest stones allegedly used during the CJP agitation in the national capital, which will be linked to the Aadhaar numbers for their identification.

The remark made by the Higher and Technical Education Minister at a Press conference in western Maharashtra's Kolhapur, drew



mocking comments from Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut, who said he would suggest Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to recommend Patil's name for the Nobel Prize in the field of scientific research.

The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) led a month-long protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi over examination pa-

per leaks. The demonstration escalated into clashes, barricade breaches, and stone-pelting.

The most intense violence broke out on July 20, when thousands of protesters attempted a 'Sansad Chalo' march to Parliament, leading to clashes in which demonstrators as well as security personnel were injured.

Shiv Sena-UBT chief Uddhav Thackeray on Friday spoke with Cockroach Janta Party founder Abhijeet Dipke over phone, and assured him of the Opposition's support.

Thackeray also asked Abhijeet's mother about his marriage plans. A video of the conversation was shared on social media.

Sena (UBT) leader Chandrakant Khaire visited Dipke's residence here, and facilitated a conversation between him and Thackeray, a former Maharashtra Chief Minister, over a video call.

"I was there for an hour at his place. Uddhav Thackeray assured that the entire Opposition stands unitedly with Abhijeet Dipke," Khaire told reporters.

The CJP leader told Thackeray that he will keep fighting for students till their demands are fulfilled.

Major dead, 2 Lieutenants injured as SUV hits camel

JAISALMER: An Army officer of Major rank was killed and two Lieutenant-rank officers were injured after their private SUV collided with a camel and overturned near the Jaisalmer Military Station late Thursday night.

The deceased has been identified as 30-year-old Major Hamza Arif, a resident of Indore, Madhya Pradesh. According to officials, the officer had been married only a month ago.

The accident occurred approximately 6 km from the district headquarters when a camel suddenly appeared in front of the officers' private SUV as they were returning to the military station from Jaisalmer city. The impact caused the vehicle to overturn five times and drag for nearly 100 meters before crashing near the military boundary wall. The camel also died on the spot.



Upon receiving news of the crash, Army personnel and officers rushed to the scene to rescue the three trapped officers from the mangled remains of the vehicle. They were rushed to the military station, where Major Hamza Arif succumbed to his injuries during treatment. The two other officers, identified as Lieutenant Abhinav Rathore and Lieutenant Ayushman Gusain, sustained injuries and are currently undergoing treatment at the Military Hospital.

According to ASI Jagdish Charan of the Sadar Police Station, the police received a late-night report that a vehicle had overturned after colliding with a camel on the road past the War Museum. Upon reaching the site, they found a dead camel by the roadside, which was subsequently moved. A private SUV was also found severely damaged near the military boundary wall.

Kerala govt to withdraw cases against NEET protestors

KOCHI: The Kerala government has decided to withdraw all cases registered in connection with protests held across the state in support of the NEET agitation in Delhi, Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala said on Friday. Speaking to reporters in Thiruvananthapuram, Chennithala said the decision was taken following requests received from Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Chief Minister V D Satheesan. He said several youth organisations and political parties had organised demonstrations across Kerala expressing solidarity with the protests over alleged irregularities in the NEET examination. "Several cases were registered in connection with those protests. We received many requests seeking withdrawal of these cases. The chief minister forwarded all those representations to me, and I have directed the DGP not to proceed further with any of these cases," Chennithala said.

Suvendu alleges Rs 15K cr revenue leak under Mamata

BIRBHUM

WEST BENGAL Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Friday alleged an around Rs 15,000 crore revenue leak in Birbhum district over the past 15 years, and said it would not have been possible without the support of the previous dispensation.

Multiple government departments were either complicit or remained silent under directions from the "highest level", he alleged during a press conference.

His allegations came against the backdrop of police recovering Rs 28.5 crore in cash and 15 kg of gold from absconding stone trad-



er Tullu Mondal's residence in West Bengal's Birbhum as part of a wider crackdown on alleged illegal mining and revenue leakages in the district.

Police suspect a substantial portion of the cash rep-

resented revenue allegedly siphoned off. The district has for long been under the scanner over allegations of illegal quarrying and organised crime linked to stone trade.

Targeting his predecessor Mamata Banerjee, Adhikari said, "An organised racket siphoning off revenue for years... cannot function without the concurrence of the head of the institution."

"Without the support of former chief minister Mamata Banerjee, it is impossible for such a large racket to have operated for so long. Institutional corruption happens only when the head of the institution encourages corruption."

Fadnavis calls for evacuation of dangerous buildings

NEW DELHI

MAHARASHTRA Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday said authorities should evacuate "dangerous" buildings with greater persuasion and, if necessary, use force to save lives, following the collapse of a dilapidated structure in Bhiwandi that killed nine.

Speaking to reporters, Fadnavis said the Bhiwandi building had been classified as a C1 structure, which means it was unsafe for habitation.

"It is very unfortunate. It was a C1-category building. The local municipal commissioner informed me that around 25 people had already been evacuated. Despite this, the contractor continued the repair work, after



which the incident occurred," he said. Fadnavis expressed condolences

to the families of those who lost their lives and said the state government

would provide financial assistance to the next of kin of the deceased.

He said he had directed the municipal commissioner to initiate legal action against the contractor.

Explaining the classification, the chief minister said a C1-category building is considered dangerous and unfit for occupation.

"Life is important. Saving lives is equally important. People living in C1-category buildings should be evacuated with greater persuasion and insistence.

If required, some force can also be used to evacuate them from such dilapidated structures. However, there are some restrictions as per the court orders. Still, I feel saving life is also important," he said.

GCCs, tech power office leasing to record high in H1

Six major cities clock 41.6 mn sft absorption, up 7% year-on-year

National Insights

- Bengaluru leads with 32%
- Pune captures 15.4%
- Delhi-NCR contributes 15%
- Hyd leads GCC leasing at 73%
- Technology sector drives 35% demand

NEW DELHI

OFFICE space absorption across India's six major cities reached a record 41.6 million sq. ft in H1 2026, up 7 per cent YoY, a report said.

The report from international real estate advisory firm Savills India said that new supply remained stable at 23.7 million sq. ft. in the first half, easing 5 per cent YoY.

Consequently, India's total Grade A office stock now stands at 872.7 million sq. ft as of Q2 2026. However, the



overall vacancy rate at June-end declined to 13.2 per cent from 14.7 per cent the corresponding period last year.

"India's office absorption is projected to remain close to last year's record levels, supported by steady occupier activity," the report noted.

"The office market experienced a period of moderation in H1 2026 as occupiers adopted a more measured approach amid geopolitical uncertainties and evolving global economic conditions," said Naveen Nandwani, MD, Commercial Advisory and Transactions, Savills India.

"While this slowdown is real and reflects cautious decision-making, it should be viewed as a strategic pause rather than a structural shift. India's office market continues to be underpinned by strong GCC expansion, a deep talent pool and sustained corporate confidence," Nandwani said.

As businesses rethink their real estate strategies, the firm expects demand to become

more selective and quality-driven, paving the way for the next phase of growth, he added.

Bengaluru reinforced its position as India's leading office market, capturing 32 per cent of the total office space absorption in the first half of 2026. Pune followed with a 15.4 per cent share, while Delhi-NCR contributed 15 per cent to the total leasing.

Technology continued to dominate office leasing activity, accounting for 35 per cent of total absorption, while flexible workspaces and BFSI followed with 18 per cent and 15 per cent share, respectively. Large-sized office transactions accounted for 53 per cent of the total leasing volume. GCCs leased 20 million sq. ft., accounting for 48 per cent of India's total office absorption.

While Hyderabad city recorded the highest GCC share, accounting for 73 per cent of total leasing by GCC firms, Bengaluru stood at the second position with 65 per cent share.

Institutional bets on warehousing rise 53%

Investments touch \$49 mn as leasing activity remains resilient

NEW DELHI: INSTITUTIONAL Investments in warehousing and industrial segment of Indian real estate rose 53 per cent in January-June to \$49 million, according to Vestian.

US-based real estate consultant Vestian on Tuesday said in a statement that the leasing of warehousing and industrial space rose 16 per cent annually to 22 million sq ft in the first half of 2026 across seven major cities -- Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Chennai, Kolkata, Pune, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. The consultant stated that the leasing activity remained resilient during the first half of 2026, indicating healthy occupier demand.

The demand was primarily driven by 3PL (third-party logistics), consumer goods & services; and engineering and manufacturing sectors, it added. Leasing activity increased on the back of sustained man-



ufacturing expansion, robust domestic consumption and ongoing infrastructure upgrades.

Institutional investments in warehousing reached \$49 million during the first half of this year, up from \$32 million in the year-ago period. Despite the increase, Vestian pointed out that the sector continued to account for just 1 per cent of the total institutional investments during H1 2026. This reflects a cautious investment environment. Shrinivas Rao, CEO of Vestian, said, "India's warehousing sector is undergoing a structural transformation, evolving beyond traditional priorities such as supply chain optimisation, operational efficiency, and proximity to demand centres." He noted that sustainability has emerged as a key differentiator, with occupiers increasingly seeking Grade-A green warehouses that align with their ESG commitments and long-term business objectives. "Backed by supportive government policies and sustained infrastructure development, this transition is expected to accelerate further, reinforcing the sector's appeal to both global occupiers and long-term institutional investors," Rao said.

Hyderabad's housing supply rises 2.9% in Q1

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD'S residential market recorded a mixed performance in the April-June 2026 quarter, with buyer demand declining 6 per cent quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) even as new housing supply expanded by 2.9 per cent and the rate index rose a further 2.4 per cent, among the strongest price gains recorded across major Indian cities this quarter, according to the Magicbricks PropIndex AMJ 2026 report. Buyers remained strongly oriented toward larger housing configurations. 3 BHK homes accounted for 53 per cent of total buyer demand during the quarter, the highest share recorded among major cities in the report, and 57 per cent of available inventory, well above the national average, where 3 BHK homes make up 46 per cent of active supply. Prasun Kumar, CMO, Magicbricks, said, "Hyderabad continues to distinguish itself as one of India's most mature and future-ready residential markets. While demand saw a temporary moderation this quarter, buyer preferences clearly point to a structural shift toward larger homes and premium living."

Mall space shortage deepens as fresh supply falls 57%

NEW DELHI

FRESH supply of retail spaces in shopping malls declined 57 per cent to 0.9 million sq ft during January-March across seven major cities due to delays in construction activities, according to Anarock. Real estate consultant Anarock reported that gross leasing of retail spaces in malls stood at about 4.1 million sq ft in the first half of the year as against just 0.9 million sq ft of new completions of retail spaces. The seven major cities are -- Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata. Anuj Kejriwal, CEO - Retail & CEO - Europe, Middle East & Africa at Anarock Group, said, "The supply problem is cumulative and escalating - data of India's top seven cities over the past 16 years shows a persistent mismatch between Grade A retail supply and leasing demand."

While new mall completions fluctuated sharply on a year-on-year basis, he noted that the leasing demand has steadily absorbed available Grade A space, pushing vacancy rates lower.

"We now have a chronically supply-constrained market where retailers' biggest challenge is not drawing shoppers but finding the right spaces to serve them in," Kejriwal said. In 2023, the top seven cities added 5.3 million sq ft of new Grade A retail supply against gross leasing of 6.5 million sq ft.

BIZ BRIEFS

SBI Card partners with Google Pay

SBI Card, a pure-play credit card issuer and Google, jointly announced the launch of 'Google Pay Flex SBI Card' as part of the Flex by Google Pay offering. Salil Pande, MD, SBI Card, said: "At SBI Card, our focus is on creating best-in-class products that make transactions simpler, seamless, and more relevant for our customers. Launch of the Google Pay Flex SBI Card is a significant step in that direction."

SSI Mantra logs milestone

SSI Innovations International has conducted a robotic telesurgery between Hospital Internacional de Colombia and Mohak Bariatrics and Robotics, Indore, spanning an approximate 22,000 km fibre network distance. The robotic sleeve gastrectomy was remotely performed from Colombia by Dr Sudhir Srivastava, Founder, Chairman and CEO of SSI Innovations International, along with Dr Victor Raúl Castillo Mantilla and Dr Jonathan Caceres Prada.

Dell expands its portfolio

Dell Technologies has expanded its premium consumer portfolio in India, with the launch of new models across XPS, Dell and Alienware, lineup. The new launches include, ultra-light XPS 13, AI-powered Dell 145 and 16S laptops, and upgraded Alienware 15 gaming laptop. The range targets students, professionals, creators, and gamers, combining AI capabilities, premium design, strong performance, sustainability, and expanded nationwide availability with attractive pricing and offers.

Modi, UK PM Burnham pledge to deepen strategic partnership

LEADERS AGREE TO EXPAND COOPERATION ACROSS TECHNOLOGY, DEFENCE AND CLEAN ENERGY WHILE LEVERAGING THE INDIA-UK TRADE PACT

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Andy Burnham on Friday vowed to take the India-UK comprehensive strategic partnership to "new heights" and fully harness the trade and investment opportunities presented by the recently-operationalised bilateral trade deal. Modi and Burnham discussed key aspects of the two-way ties during a phone conversation. In a social media post, Modi said he congratulated Burnham on assuming the charge of the top office and conveyed his best wishes for a successful tenure. "We agreed to work together across sectors such as technology, innovation, defence, security, clean energy, education and people-to-people ties and take the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to new heights," he said. "We will also collaborate closely to fully harness the trade and investment opportunities presented by the recently operationalized India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, for the shared prosperity and well-being of both our people," Modi said. A British readout said Burnham began the conversation by reflecting on the strength of the UK-India partnership and the significant impact it has had on local communities across the UK. "The prime minister set out his ambitions to further enhance the UK-India relationship, including through the UK-India Vision 2035 framework and strong people-to-people links," it said.

Burnham praised the contribution Indian communities in the UK make to the fabric of UK society, with Modi noting the links between the two leaders' own home cities of Manchester and Ahmedabad, in Gujarat, which he called the "Manchester of India", it said.

It has released data on sectoral deployment of bank credit for June 2026, collected from 41 select scheduled commercial banks which together account for about 95 per cent of the total non-food credit. Advances to agricultural and allied activities registered a year-on-year growth of 16.8 per cent compared to 6.8 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of the previous year. "Credit to industry recorded a robust y-o-y growth of 19.2 per cent (6.3 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of last year)," RBI said. All sub-sectors -- 'Micro and Small', 'Medium' and 'Large industries' displayed a broad-based expansion.

Among major industries, credit to infrastructure, all engineering, food processing, textiles, construction, basic metal and metal products, petroleum, 'coal products and nuclear fuels' and 'chemical and chemical products' marked buoyant year-on-year (y-o-y) growth. However, 'rubber, plastic and their products' and 'wood and wood products' segments witnessed marginally subdued growth. According to the data, loans to the services sector registered a growth rate of 21.4 per cent y-o-y (8.8 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of the previous year), supported by accelerated growth in segments such as non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), commercial real estate, and trade.

Also, credit to the personal loans segment recorded a growth of 15.8 per cent, as compared with 11.7 per cent a year ago. While segments such as vehicle loans and housing grew steadily in double digits, credit card outstanding registered a decelerated growth, the RBI said.

Digit Life enters retirement segment

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

Go Digit Life Insurance Limited (Digit Life Insurance), a new-age life insurance company, announced its entry into the retirement segment, launching two variants of Digit Life Pension Plan, a general annuity plan.

The plan will give customers a choice between two distinct retirement income solutions. Digit Sukoon will offer 100 per cent guaranteed annuity, while Digit Boss will combine guaranteed annuity with a variable annuity portion linked to the Nifty 50 Index.

Designed to deliver income for life, the plan is available for both individual and group customers and will also be available on its app and website.

Sabyasachi Sarkar, MD, Digit Life Insurance, said: "Retirement planning needs are changing rapidly, and customers today are looking not just for lifelong income, but for solutions that reflect their own financial priorities: certainty for some, and a measured participation in market-linked upside for others. "With Digit Life Pension Plan, we are bringing both these needs together in one product architecture, while giving customers the flexibility to tailor payouts and retirement income structures in a way that makes the most sense to their individual needs."

Star Health's Q1 profit rises 25%

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

STAR Health and Allied Insurance Company posted a net profit of Rs550 crore for the quarter ended June 2026 (Q1-FY27), a 25 per cent increase YoY (Year-Over-Year). Underwriting profit for Q1-FY27 was Rs111 crore against Rs16 crore for a year ago. The company attributed it to healthy premium growth and operating efficiencies.

The company recorded Gross Written Premium (GWP) of Rs 4,287 crore during Q1 FY27, representing a growth of 19 per cent YoY. On the same basis, fresh retail health GWP for the quarter stood at Rs 730 crore, a 37 per cent YoY increase.

Maruti Suzuki Q1 profit slips 9.1% despite record sales

NEW DELHI

THE country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Friday reported a 9.11 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit at Rs 3,446.9 crore in the first quarter ended June 2026, hit by high material costs, despite posting record quarterly vehicle sales.

The auto major, which had posted a net profit of Rs 3,792.4 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal, said its board also approved four CBG (compressed biogas) projects in the first phase with a budget of Rs 561 crore.

Total revenue from operations was up 35.9 per cent at Rs 52,469.8 crore in the first quarter as against Rs 38,605.2 crore in the same period of 2025-26 fiscal, Maruti Suzuki



India said in a regulatory filing.

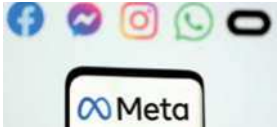
Total expenses in the quarter under review were higher at Rs 50,000.3 crore as compared to Rs 35,585.4 crore in the year-ago period, the company said. Cost of materials consumed in the first quarter shot up to Rs 32,013.2 crore from Rs 21,936.8 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal, it added.

"Material costs had started to increase in the quarter and were seriously aggravated during the war..." the company said, adding that it had an impact on its bottomline.

Govt to question Meta's global team over algorithmic bias

NEW DELHI: The government will question Meta's global team - summoned after the social media company briefly restricted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Facebook post - on issues relating to algorithmic bias, the platform's algorithmic processes and their role in public order, sources said on Friday.

The questioning next week comes against the backdrop of the government's summons to Meta's top executives after Prime Minister Modi's recent Facebook post addressing India's youth and promising stringent action against paper leaks was briefly restricted on the platform. While the US-headquartered social media giant had attributed the incident to a technical glitch and apologised, the Ministry of



Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) had found the explanation "inadequate". The company had said that the content was removed "in error" and was restored on the platform. Government sources on Friday pointed out that the matter is not just about technical aspects, but about "national security and public order".

Sources said that Meta's global team - expected in Delhi sometime in the middle of next week - will be "categorically" asked to clarify on issues around algorithmic bias, how their algorithm operates, and the company's role in public order.



‘Declassified: Operation Sindoor’ to reveal the untold story behind India’s counter-terror mission

INDIA'S high-profile military operation, code-named Sindoor, will see its declassified version when the documentary series Declassified: Operation Sindoor uncovers the events around it in detail. The project's teaser trailer was unveiled earlier this week (August 5th), with the series scheduled to air on August 15th, on Discovery and discovery+.

Declassified: Operation

Sindoor follows the events leading up to, during, and following the operation, from the first preparations to its tactical and military implications. The documentary series will provide first-hand insight from defence officials, analysts, soldiers, and journalists.

It was a dawn attack on nine terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan Administered Jammu and Kashmir conducted under Opera-

tion Sindoor. The Ministry of Defence confirmed that the attack targeted terror camps and that it was a well-planned surgical strike. The operation came in response to the Pahalgam terrorist attack that killed 25 Indian citizens and one Nepalese national, with India claiming to have retaliated due to Pakistan's unwillingness to act against the perpetrators. Moreover, according to defence ministry officials,

the operation sent out a strong message to Pakistan that India would respond to cross-border terrorism despite the tension between the two nations, as both countries possess nuclear weapons. The series will feature several prominent military leaders, including General Anil Chauhan, Lt. Gen. Rajiv Ghai, Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, General Upendra Dwivedi, Lt. Gen. Pratik Sharma, Air

Chief Marshal A. P. Singh, and others.

"The declassified series will present an inside view into one of India's most powerful military operations, giving viewers unparalleled access to the people who made it happen," said Sai Abishek, Head of Factual Entertainment, Lifestyle, and Kids – South Asia, Warner Bros. Discovery. "Declassified: Operation Sindoor marks the debut of



our new franchise, Declassified, which will delve deeper into some of the most significant moments in history, revealing never-before-told

insights and first-hand perspectives only available to us."

Declassified: Operation Sindoor will go further than

simply recounting history, offering additional crucial information about the Sindoor operation for those interested in the subject.

‘I’m Game’ trailer: Dulquer Salmaan steps into the high-stakes world of gambling

THE I'm game trailer has been out today, introducing the audiences to a stylish crime thriller centered around gambling and featuring Dulquer Salmaan in the lead role. The film is directed by NahasHidayath, the man behind the blockbuster RDX, which sees its dubbed version on the way as well. Although primarily a Malayalam movie, I'm Game will be released across India in various dubbed languages.

The trailer sees Dulquer Salmaan playing a gutsy gambler who seems to control the flow of both high-rolling markets as well as underground matches. The I'm Game trailer showcases the protagonist's luxurious lifestyle, but also delves into his psyche, where the psychiatrist (played by KayaduLo-



har) seems to have a differing opinion about the man's thoughts.

As the 90-second promo-scope unravels, it becomes clear that I'm Game is primarily set in places associated with gambling activities – be it inside a high-class casino, a rowdy cricket stadium, or a corporate office space. Moreover, it seems

that the game and money are at the center of virtually everything that happens in the film. NahasHidayath appears to have taken a different route this time around as compared to the highly successful RDX. While the director managed to pull off an excellent action entertainer with the former project, I'm Game sees him attempting to

make a commercial film that touches upon a rather controversial topic.

The I'm Game trailer may not indicate a substantial emotional quotient, but the very fact that such a film is being made in Malayalam suggests that the movie possesses a certain degree of appeal. The film has impressive cast that includes names like Mysskin, Antony Varghese, Samyuktha Viswanathan, Vinay Forrt, and Kathir apart from the lead pair of Dulquer Salmaan and KayaduLohar. Jimshi Khalid has been handling the camera, while the music has been composed by Jakes Bejoy. Notably, the film is set to release during the Onam holiday, which makes it even more anticipated as one of the biggest Malayalam movies of the year.

Mammootty wraps shooting for Dhanush’s ‘OM’

THE makers of Dhanush's upcoming project OM have announced another good news as the team confirmed that Malayalam superstar Mammootty has completed his part of the shoot for the much-anticipated action entertainer directed by Rajkumar Periasamy.

MammoottyKampany shared a video on social media welcoming the veteran actor back in Kochi after wrapping up his portions for the film. Earlier, director Rajkumar Periasamy had stated that in the film, Mammootty has played a character named Karthikeyan, which has a great impact on the story. The team has been busy with the shoots as the film has been progressing at a rapid pace after wrapping up the crucial portions in Malaysia. During the trip, the cast and crew celebrated the actor's National Award along with National Award-



winning singer Dhanush, director Rajkumar Periasamy, and editor Kalaivanan on the sets of the film.

As the makers had announced that the film will hit the theatres on October 16, as per the latest reports, the release date might get postponed. Though the report stated that an official confirmation might be out any day

now, neither the makers nor the team have confirmed the report yet.

Besides, the film also stars Bollywood legend Naseeruddin Shah apart from the National Award-winning Dhanush in the lead. With the title 'OM: Chapter 1', it is anticipated that the makers will roll out the subsequent parts of the film too which

will take the story forward.

The first look of the film that went viral on social media introduced Dhanush as a woodcutter involved in the illegal trade of red sanders being chased by the police. The action-filled promos promise to deliver a mass entertainer that will see Dhanush's old avatar back on the big screen. As Wunderbar Films unveiled the title of the film, they mentioned that it is one of the most expensive projects that Dhanush has ever been a part of and promised the fans that it marks the return of Dhanush's classic hero persona.

Starring Sai Pallavi and Sreeleela, the film features music by Sai Abhyankkar, cinematography by EzhilArasu, editing by Kalaivanan R, and costumes by Kavya Sriram. With Mammootty completing his shoot, the fans are excited to know more about Dhanush's OM.

All set for ‘Agadha’ trailer launch



Agadha makers have announced that the trailer of Agadha is all set to be unveiled on August 3 at 12 PM, which will create more hype around the film's worldwide release. After the great response to the teaser and posters of the film, the makers are now ready to take the audience deeper into the supernatural world of Agadha with a mysterious look.

For the announcement, a new poster of the film has gone viral, which features a female ascetic in the middle of a mysterious forest. The new poster of Agadha promises to deliver unexplored mysteries of the divine world with a blend of supernatural forces, thrill, and much more.

Agadha is a mystic divine thriller directed

by M.S.Raju, known for his association with Tollywood. The film is also Raju's self-written venture, as he has written the story and screenplay for Agadha, which marks his passion project.

Agadha has been produced by Kasi VisalakshiBalusu under Sri Adi Varaha Productions LLP, while the film is presented by Ajay K. R. This pan-Indian flick is being simultaneously made in 5 languages, including Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi, and is all set to release worldwide on August 14. With its intriguing teaser, Agadha created a massive mystery and horror-packed vibe around its release date, which has now fetched the film a great response from the viewers. Thus, the makers are now confident that Agadha trailer will leave the audience more thrilled than ever. With such an amazing concept, Agadha is indeed one of the most anticipated films of this year.

Vicky Kaushal to gain 25 kilos for his next!



AFTER the massive success of Chhaava; Vicky Kaushal is set to board on his most challenging role. The actor will play the lead role in the mythological film Mahavatar, where he will essay the role of the legendary Parashurama.

The actor will reportedly transform his body to gain more than 25 kilos to match the legendary figure of the character in the mythological story. Vicky Kaushal will once again work with celebrity fitness trainer TejasLalwani for his fitness and nutritionist needs. The two had worked together before for Chhaava. The actor's transformation will begin soon for the project. The actor has been working out extensively for the historical drama and has undergone a strict diet. The film will begin its shoot in December 2023, and the pre-production work is already underway.

The film is directed by Amar Kaushik, who has given some hit films in the Stree Franchise. The project has already created a lot of intrigue among the movie buffs as it will mark the directorial debut of Amar Kaushik in the mythological genre while his co-star Vicky Kaushal will be seen playing one of the most legendary and iconic characters in the Indian Mythology.



THE makers of Toxic: Fairytale for GrownUps have released a mesmerizing picture starring Kiara Advani ahead of the film's release, adding another compelling chapter to the promotional adventures of one of Indian cinema's most anticipated films. The poster celebrating Kiara's birthday showcases the actress in a majestic and glamorous look that has fans buzzing about her global stardom.

Starring Yash, Toxic has been making waves since its announcement, and the fairytale actioner is all set to create a historic footprint in the filmography of the year, with its larger-than-life appeal and star-studded cast. The much-awaited film is all set to release globally on August 26th and has been garnering tremendous attention for every bit of its promotional content that has been unveiled so far.

Toxic, directed by Geethu Mohandas, has been entertaining movie buffs with its intriguing teasers, theatrical trailer, and chart-dominating songs Tabaahi and Madhoshi, giving a glimpse into the extravagant world of the film. With the exciting content released, the film has successfully captured the audience's attention with its promising action-packed narrative and fantastical treatment of the story.

Besides the star-studded lead pair of Yash and Kiara Advani, the film also features Nayanthara, Tara Sutaria, Huma Qureshi, and Rukmini Vasanth in prominent roles. With its current rate of progress, Toxic is bound to be one of the highest-grossing films in the country.



Kiara's dazzling poster from 'Toxic' unveiled

Yami Gautam speaks about career struggles

YAMI Gautam talked about one of the darkest times in her career, saying that she almost quit Bollywood after a few failures and then her two successful movies made her realize her stardom.

Speaking in one of her recent interactions, the actress opened up about considering quitting movies. She said that there was a time when everything seemed to be going wrong and she failed to get good roles. This made her to think about quitting as she was fed up with the failures and disappointments. Yami Gautam said everything turned around

for her with the Uri: The Surgical Strike and Bala fame and both of them made her realize that she was one of the most bankable stars in the industry.

Talking about her upcoming projects, Yami Gautam was recently seen essaying the role of ShaziaBano in Dhurandhar: The Revenge, the much-anticipated super hit film directed by her husband Aditya Dhar. The actress is all set to be a part of NayiNaveli, the supernatural drama directed by Balaji Mohan. The film revolves around an ideal bride who appears to have changed everybody's life in Meerut and her suspicious brother-in-law who starts doubting if she is a human or a ghost. The actress will be seen sharing screen space with Rajesh Dubey in the film which promises to give the audience another powerful performance from Yami Gautam.

