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Government renames Kanyashree as Kanyaratna



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE Kolkata, 14 August

The West Bengal government on Friday announced the launch of the Centre's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme in the state and renamed the existing Kanyashree programme as 'Kanyaratna'.

Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari made the announcements at a programme held at the Dhan Dhanya auditorium in Alipore on the occasion of 'Kanyaratna Day'.

The Chief Minister said schoolgirls would receive a one-time financial assistance of Rs 1,000 this year, while the amount would be doubled to Rs 2,000 annually from the 2027 academic year.

"The Kanyashree scheme has now been renamed Kanyaratna. Our little girls

are all gems. I want them to study better and grow up to become personalities like Matangini Hazra. The government will provide them with all possible support," Adhikari said.

According to the government, around 20.13 lakh schoolgirls will receive the Rs 1,000 assistance this year. The state has earmarked Rs 400 crore for the scheme, which, the Chief Minister said, would be transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries on Friday.

A dedicated helpline, 181, was also launched for schoolgirls to access assistance and information.

Adhikari said Bengal had formally joined the Centre's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' programme from Friday, bringing students under the ambit of various Central benefits.

The announcement marks a change in the state's approach to financial assistance for girl students after the change of government. Under the previous administration, Kanyashree provided annual financial assistance to schoolgirls, while eligible students pursuing higher education were covered under its K2 component and received a one-time grant of Rs 25,000 after completing higher secondary education.

The Chief Minister also announced that girl students pursuing higher education would receive the one-time Rs 25,000 assistance under the Swami Vivekananda Merit-cum-Means Scholarship.

The government said the measures were aimed at encouraging girls to continue their education and ensuring greater access to financial support from school through higher education.

Sealdah station to get mural on Partition



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE Kolkata, 14 August

Sealdah station that is a reflection of West Bengal with all kinds of passengers is also a window to the history of partition. To pay tribute to the victims of Partition, the ministry of culture organised a 'Bhumi Pujan' at the station today.

Last week, the ministry of culture announced plans to set up a statue in the memory of millions of people who had suffered during the partition days. Lakhs of people were uprooted and displaced and lost everything as a result of the Partition. As Sealdah station became the point of arrival of the displaced refugees from East Pakistan, it has been selected by the ministry to remind people of the horrors of Partition.

According to the state Urban Development and Municipal Affairs minister Agnimitra Paul, while moving forward in life, citizens of the country need to remember the pains that the people had to go through during Partition. "We should not forget the sufferings of those people who had to leave everything and come here. The statue that

LAST WEEK, THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE ANNOUNCED PLANS TO SET UP A STATUE IN THE MEMORY OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO HAD SUFFERED DURING THE PARTITION DAYS. LAKHS OF PEOPLE WERE UPROOTED AND DISPLACED AND LOST EVERYTHING AS A RESULT OF THE PARTITION.

would be installed here would remind the lakhs of people visiting the station about the horrors of Partition. The previous governments had tried to make us forget about those horrors. The mural is to pay tribute to those victims of the Partition," said the minister.

The Bhumi Pujan was later attended by BJP leaders Purnima Chakraborty and Tapas Roy, General Manager of the Eastern Railway Gitika Pandey and the Divisional Railway Manager of Sealdah, Rajeev Saxena.

Meanwhile, to commemorate the day as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, the Sealdah Division also organised an exhibition to highlight the immense suffering of the displaced families.

As learnt, the statue would be completed in two months.



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80th

Independence Day



Raju Bista
Member of Parliament, Dajeeling

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T E N D E R

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-Tender Notice
Ref.: NIET No. 08/-Tender of 2026-2027 of EE/RHD/PW/D
i) Patch repairing Work in stretches of Baruan Katpa Road to Sunur from Ch. 0.00 km to 4.00 km and Amari Rly. Stn. to Amari Village with a link to Ararih from 0.00 km to 2.13 km. Estimated Amount Rs. 945595.00. T. 16-2026, WBPWD, 5018580.1. ii) Patch repairing Work in stretches of Chhatra-Nagaram Road from 1.00 km to 4.00 km and 7.00 km to 11.30 km. Estimated Amount Rs. 945595.00. T. 16-2026, WBPWD, 5018580.1. iii) Patch repairing Work in stretches of Link Road from Bhatar Samanti Road to village Chhatra from Ch. 0.00 km to 4.00 km and Link road from B.K. road to Bhatar Samanti Road from Ch. 0.00 km to 3.350 km and Link Radhanagar Road to Bhatar Samanti Road from Ch. 0.00 km to 1.00 km and Replacement with HP Culvert in place of existing Damaged small Slab culvert at Ch. 2.150 km of Link road to Chhatra. Estimated Amount Rs. 1.9947.69.0.0. T. 16-2026, WBPWD, 5018580.1. Bid submission closing date will be 27-08-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 1 & 2). Bid submission closing date will be 03-09-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 3). Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Detailed information/download/upload will be available from the Website <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Brief NIT will be available from the website [www.tenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in) in the form of Engineer, Burdwan North Highway Division, P.W. (Roads) Directorate
ICA-116273/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
No. 155/WBSCST/A/0432/2026. Dated: 12.08.2026. e-Tender (ID: 2026, WBSWC, 1037709.1) is invited by the Administrative Officer, West Bengal State Council of Science & Technology, Dept. of Science & Technology and Biotechnology, Govt. of West Bengal, Rajan Chatterjee Bhawan, 26/1, 00 Block, Sector-1, Salt Lake, Kolkata-700064 from eligible bidders for the work "Selection of Agency for Digital and Social Media and Campaign". The tender document can be downloaded and submitted online through <https://tenders.wb.gov.in>. Bid submission start date is 17.08.2026 at 14:00 Hrs. Bid submission end date is 01.09.2026 at 14:00 Hrs. Sd/-A.O. WBSWC S.T. ICA-116223/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
Webel Technology Limited
(A Government of West Bengal Undertaking)
e-Tender Notice
e-Tender No. WTL/DUS/ND/26-27/7032 dated 14.08.2026
e-Tender is invited for Supply and installation of 10 GPS SFP Transceivers for network devices, firewalls and Load balancers for Directorate of Land Records and Survey. e-Tender documents can be downloaded from: <https://wbenders.wb.gov.in> & www.wtl.co.in Sd/- For Webel Technology Limited, P.W. Dte. (Commercial) ICA-116248/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
P.W. TENDER NOTICE
Executive Engineer-I, Burdwan Division, P.W. Directorate invites online e-Quotation for 1 (One) No. work vide N.I.E.T. No. 02 of 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018617.2. Bid Submission Start Date (Online): 18.08.2026 from 10:00 A.M. Bid Submission Closing Date (Online): 25.08.2026 upto 2:00 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.E.T. and Tender Documents may be downloaded from: <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer-I, Burdwan Division ICA-116248/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING OFFICER BARUIPUR POLICE DISTRICT NO-144
e-TENDER NOTICE
eNIT No. 02/SP, BRP PMT/2026-27
e-Tender is invited by the S.P. Baruiapur Police District, Baruiapur, Kolkata-700144 for eNIT No.02/SP, BRP PMT/2026-27 regarding "Hiring of 06 (Six) nos. of wooden launch for performing L&O duty and patrolling in riverine area under Baruiapur Police District" Details of N.I.T and tender documents may be downloaded from: <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Sd/- S.P. Baruiapur Police District ICA-116236/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
(NIT) No. 21/RKV/ARC/2026-27: The Economic Botanist-II, W.B. invites e-Tender for the following supplies: Name of the Supply: (01) Supply of DRY LOOSE cocopeat in its dust form for use in Agricultural purpose, EMD Rs. 22400/-, Bid submission start date 20/08/2026 from 12:00 noon; Last Date of bid submission 27/08/2026 upto 17:00 hrs. The Technical Bid Opening Date: 31/08/2026 at 12 noon. The bid forms and other details are available at the website <http://wbenders.wb.gov.in> Sd/- H.S. DAS, Economic Botanist-II ICA-116234/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
KMDA TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No. 48/SE-C/HR&BKMDA/W-28 (Part-VIII) of 2025-2026 (3rd Call)
Online Bids are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Circle-II, R&B Sector, KMDA, Block-A, 7th floor, Unnayan Bhawan, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata-700091, from bonafide, reliable, experienced & resourceful firms/individuals contractors, Consortium for the work, Sl. No. Name of the Work, Value of the work, Earnest Money, Time of Completion, (2) Repair and renovation work of Ashok Nath Shastri Road From: Goutam Sangha Club To: D.N. Kalishan on Ward No. 18 under Rajpur Sonarpur Municipal area, Tender ID: 2026, KMDA, 5018293.1, Rs. 95,50,414/-, Rs. 1,20,05,60/-, 60 days, Last date & time of Online Bid submission: 31.08.2026, Time: 14:00 hrs. for details contact the above office or visit both websites. (KMDA-402)
www.kmda.wb.gov.in ICA-116223/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
KMDA TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No. 48/SE-C/HR&BKMDA/W-28 (Part-VIII) of 2025-2026 (3rd Call)
Online Bids are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Circle-II, R&B Sector, KMDA, Block-A, 7th floor, Unnayan Bhawan, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata-700091, from bonafide, reliable, experienced & resourceful firms/individuals contractors, Consortium for the work, Sl. No. Name of the Work, Value of the work, Earnest Money, Time of Completion, (2) Repair and renovation work of Ashok Nath Shastri Road From: Goutam Sangha Club To: D.N. Kalishan on Ward No. 18 under Rajpur Sonarpur Municipal area, Tender ID: 2026, KMDA, 5018293.1, Rs. 95,50,414/-, Rs. 1,20,05,60/-, 60 days, Last date & time of Online Bid submission: 31.08.2026, Time: 14:00 hrs. for details contact the above office or visit both websites. (KMDA-402)
www.kmda.wb.gov.in ICA-116223/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
KMDA TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No. 48/SE-C/HR&BKMDA/W-28 (Part-VIII) of 2025-2026 (3rd Call)
Online Bids are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Circle-II, R&B Sector, KMDA, Block-A, 7th floor, Unnayan Bhawan, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata-700091, from bonafide, reliable, experienced & resourceful firms/individuals contractors, Consortium for the work, Sl. No. Name of the Work, Value of the work, Earnest Money, Time of Completion, (2) Repair and renovation work of Ashok Nath Shastri Road From: Goutam Sangha Club To: D.N. Kalishan on Ward No. 18 under Rajpur Sonarpur Municipal area, Tender ID: 2026, KMDA, 5018293.1, Rs. 95,50,414/-, Rs. 1,20,05,60/-, 60 days, Last date & time of Online Bid submission: 31.08.2026, Time: 14:00 hrs. for details contact the above office or visit both websites. (KMDA-402)
www.kmda.wb.gov.in ICA-116223/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
MEDICAL SOUTH CIRCLE TENDER NOTICE
The Superintending Engineer, South Circle, M.E. Dte. has published e-Tender for Survey, Geo-Technical Investigation, Planning, Design, Construction and Commissioning of Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) 200 KLD capacity in connection with the work "Construction of Whole sale Fish Market at Digha Mohana within Purba Medinipur, District" all complete with 5 (five) years Operation & Maintenance after 3 months trial run as per the tender Engineer-in-charge under PMSYS. Tender ID: 2026, MAD, 5018346.1, Last date of submission: 07.09.2026 upto 1.00pm. Interested Bonafide bidders are requested to download details from: <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Sd/- S.E. South Circle, M. E. Dte. ICA-116252/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender is invited by the Executive Engineer, Alipore Division, PHE Dte. On behalf of Governor, West Bengal vide Ref. No. WBPHE/EE/Net-25/AD/2026-2027 and Tender ID: 2026, PHED, 1037909.1 to 3 for the work of Sinking of big dike. replacement tubewell by D.R. Rig method at 1st, 2nd & 3rd tubewell site of Gurusapur W/S Scheme, Patharpatina block under Alipore Division, PHE Dte. Details will be available in the website [wbenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in). The last date for submission of tender is 31.08.2026 upto 02:00 P.M. Sd/- Executive Engineer, Alipore Division, PHE Dte. ICA-116244/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender is invited by the Commissioner of Police, Kolkata for Repairing and Reputing of Broken Portable Guardrail (Crowd Manager) with "Kolkata Police" Ref. No. WBPHE/EE/Net-25/AD/2026-2027 and Tender ID: 2026, PHED, 1037909.1 to 3 for the work of Sinking of big dike. replacement tubewell by D.R. Rig method at 1st, 2nd & 3rd tubewell site of Gurusapur W/S Scheme, Patharpatina block under Alipore Division, PHE Dte. Details will be available in the website [wbenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in). The last date for submission of tender is 31.08.2026 upto 02:00 P.M. Sd/- Executive Engineer, Alipore Division, PHE Dte. ICA-116244/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
FORENSIC AUDIT
Tender is hereby invited for Forensic Audit of IT Systems of the Food & Supplies Department, Government of West Bengal vide no. 2523 - FNS-19099/77/2026-IT SEC. Dated: 12-08-2026 as mentioned. 1. Name of Work: Forensic Audit of IT Systems of the Food & Supplies Department. 2. Location: Kolkata. 3. End date & time of Bid Submission: 19-08-2026 upto 5 PM. 4. Technical Bid Opening date: 21-08-2026. ICA-116223/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
P.W. TENDER NOTICE
Executive Engineer, PWD, Malda Division, invites e-Tender for the work of - Repair and improvement of Malda - Manikchak - Ratua - Samsi road (25.00 km) chainage 18.90 km to 20.10 km, 20.10 km to 26.70 km, 31.00 km to 31.5 km, 35.00 km to 37.00 km, 39.30 km to 39.90 km, 41.70 km to 42.00 km by repairing potholes, premix surfacing and seal coat at different stretches in the district of Malda under Malda Division, PWD. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018696.1, Estimated Amount: Rs. 18,58,931.00, e-NIT No. 13 of 2026-27 of the EE, PWD, Malda Division, Malda. Bid submission start date & time (online): 18/08/2026 from 11:00 A.M. Bid submission closing date & time (online): 01/09/2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 1 & 2). Bid submission closing date will be 02-09-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 3). Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Detailed information/download/upload will be available from the Website <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Brief NIT will be available from the website [www.tenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in) in the form of Engineer, Burdwan North Highway Division, P.W. (Roads) Directorate ICA-116259/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
Ref.: NIET No. 09/BHND/PW/D
2027 of EE/BHND/PW/D
i) Karjana Muratpur Natunhat Road from Ch. 2.00 km to 4.00 km and 9.00 km to 19.00 km Repairing by Bituminous Pot-holes and topping with Seal Coat. Estimated Amount Rs. 23,77,977.00. T. 16-2026, WBPWD, 5018680.1. ii) Kashnagar Natunhat Shreekhanda Road from 5.00 km to 8.00 km and 17.00 km to 28.50 km. Repairing by Bituminous Pot-holes and topping with Seal Coat. Estimated Amount Rs. 9,27,797.00. T. 16-2026, WBPWD, 5018680.1. iii) Guskara Kashnagar Road from 3.00 km to 9.00 km, Repairing by Bituminous Pot-holes and topping with Seal Coat. Estimated Amount Rs. 18,58,931.00, e-NIT No. 13 of 2026-27 of the EE, PWD, Malda Division, Malda. Bid submission start date & time (online): 18/08/2026 from 11:00 A.M. Bid submission closing date & time (online): 01/09/2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 1 & 2). Bid submission closing date will be 02-09-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 3). Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Detailed information/download/upload will be available from the Website <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Brief NIT will be available from the website [www.tenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in) in the form of Engineer, Burdwan North Highway Division, P.W. (Roads) Directorate ICA-116259/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
Tender Invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, Barrackpore Division, Govt. of W.B. vide NIT No. - WBPWD/EE/BKPD/NIT-07/2026-27 for the work of Repair of Ghoshpara Jaguli Road, Ghoshpara Road & Madhyamgram ROB under Barrackpore Division during the year 2026-27. Estimate Amount: Rs. 12,92,229.00, 10,24,634.00 & 9,99,222.00 respectively. Bid submission closing date will be 27-08-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 1 & 2). Bid submission closing date will be 02-09-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 3). Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Detailed information/download/upload will be available from the Website <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Brief NIT will be available from the website [www.tenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in) in the form of Engineer, Burdwan North Highway Division, P.W. (Roads) Directorate ICA-116273/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
P.W. TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No. 13 of 2026-27 of EE/BHND/PW/D (T. 16-2026) for the work of one year restoration of Road surface and main drain connection below VIP road at South side of K.N. Avenue and Other work is of Emergent patch Repairing at Bishnupur Bellaghat Road under Barasat Highway Division No-I in the District of North 24 Parganas; 8,99,222.00 respectively. Bid submission closing date will be 27-08-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 1 & 2). Bid submission closing date will be 02-09-2026 upto 11:30 AM (For SI. No. 3). Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Detailed information/download/upload will be available from the Website <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Brief NIT will be available from the website [www.tenders.wb.gov.in](https://tenders.wb.gov.in) in the form of Engineer, Burdwan North Highway Division, P.W. (Roads) Directorate ICA-116273/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
e-Tender for Security services for Smt. Chandra Chatterjee under Government Medical College & Hospital, Uluberia, Howrah. Details are available on the website <https://wbenders.wb.gov.in>. Bid submission start date: 17.08.2026 at 10 AM. Closing end: 31.08.2026 at 11 AM. Opening on: 02.09.2026 at 11 AM. ICA-116223/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
WEST BENGAL STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION
e-TENDER NOTICE
Ref: 742/CUM-322/Part/SWC/2023
Tender ID: 2026, WBSWC, 1036944.1
WBSWC invites e-Tender for selection of agency for providing manpower as multipurpose worker cum Weighbridge Operator (one operator in each Weighbridge) having requisite qualification as indicated in the tender document at warehouses managed by WBSWC as and when required basis and in addition to that Multipurpose Worker cum Weighbridge Operator to be provided also in other godowns to be taken over by WBSWC subsequently. Closing date of submission of bids is 31.08.2026 upto 12:00 pm for details visit website [www.wbenders.wb.gov.in](https://wbenders.wb.gov.in) Sd/- Secretary WBSWC. ICA-116233/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College invites e-Tenders for the Supply of Library Books. Tender Reference No.: JGC/NIT/BOOKS/03/2026-27. Dated: 02.07.2026. Bid Submission Start Date: 12.08.2026. Time of Tender Initiation: 15.08.2026 at 11:00 Hrs. Last Date & Time of Bid Submission: 31.08.2026 at 14:00 Hrs. Details are available at: <https://wbenders.wb.gov.in> & www.jgc.ac.in Corrigendum (if any): Not Applicable. Principal Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College. ICA-116193/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
P.W. TENDER NOTICE
Online bids are invited for the work under Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018603.1. Bid Submission end date: 31.08.2026 upto 14:00 hrs. For details please follow the website <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Sd/- EE, PWD, Malda Electrical Division ICA-116234/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
P.W. TENDER NOTICE
Executive Engineer, PWD, North 24 Prgs Electrical Division invite online e-Tender for the work of Temporary electrical installation work of approach roads to Baba Lokenath Mandir, Kachua Dham, North 24 Parganas for Birth Anniversary of Sri Sri Lokenath Brahmachari-2026 (02, 03 and 04 of September, 2026) at Kachua, under Baruiapur Police District, Baruiapur, Kolkata-700144. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD/EE/N24/EL/A-NIQ-48/26-27, Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018490.1. Bid Submission start date (Online): 13/08/2026, Bid Submission Closing date (Online): 27/08/2026. Corrigendum if any will be published website only. Details of NIT & tender documents may be downloaded from: <https://tenders.wb.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, North 24 Parganas Electrical Division. ICA-116266/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
P.W. (ROADS) TENDER NOTICE
The Executive Engineer, Malda Highway Division, P.W. (Roads) Directorate invites online e-Tender for the work of - 1. Alternative route to Balughat from Malda from 0.00 km to 2.00 km (in stretches). Potholes repairing work by MC-800 Cut Back bitumen under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 2. Bamangola Habibpur Road from 3.9550 km to 4.400 km (Right Side) Construction of unlined surface drain under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 3. Bamangola Habibpur Road from 3.9550 km to 4.400 km (Right Side) Construction of unlined surface drain under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 4. Bamangola Habibpur Road from 3.9550 km to 4.400 km (Right Side) Construction of unlined surface drain under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 5. Estimate for repairing of Agapur Road (From Ch. 3.00 km to 3.8300 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 6. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 7. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 8. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 9. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 10. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 11. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 12. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 13. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 14. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 15. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 16. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 17. 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Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 22. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 23. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 24. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 25. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 26. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 27. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 28. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 29. 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Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 38. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 39. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 40. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 41. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 42. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 43. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 44. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 45. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 46. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 47. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 48. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 49. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 50. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 51. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 52. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 53. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi Rashikpur Road (From Ch. 0.00 km to 8.540 km in stretches) of Gazole Highway Sub-Division under Malda Highway Division in the District of Malda during the year 2026-27. Tender ID: 2026, WBPWD, 5018540.1. 54. Estimate for repairing of Elakshi



Maha: Raj Thackeray urges MNS leaders to focus on Gen-Z in Pune

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Pune, 14 August

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray today asked party functionaries in Pune to focus on the younger generation and maintain regular contact with Gen-Z, signalling a greater emphasis on youth in the party's future political strategy.

In a meeting held with senior party leaders and office-bearers at the MNS office in Pune, he reportedly instructed assembly-level department heads to engage more closely with young people and understand their views, aspirations and concerns.

"Focus on Gen-Z and stay connected with Gen-Z," Thackeray told the party functionaries, according to sources familiar with the meeting. He also urged them to become more closely aligned with the younger generation and understand their thinking.

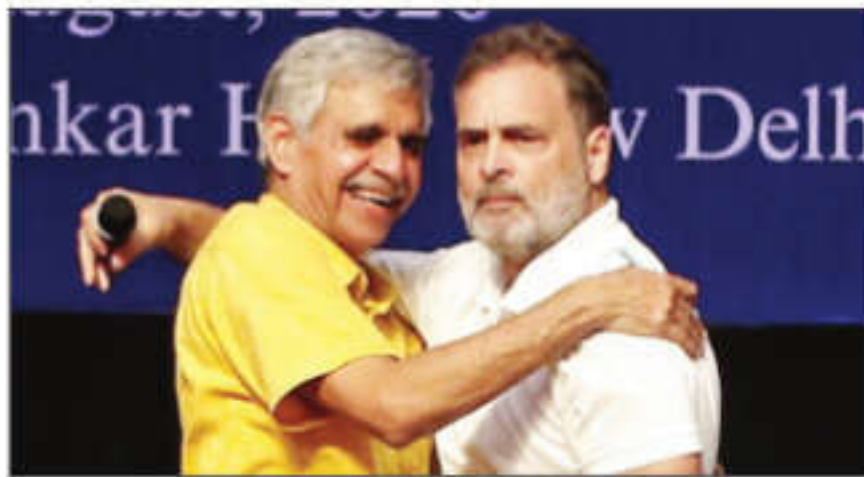
BJP leaders slam Rahul, Sandeep Dikshit over remarks on PM Modi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

BJP leaders on Friday launched an all-out attack on Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit over their remarks at a Congress event on Thursday, describing them as "crude, vulgar and uncultured".

Union Minister J P Nadda described Gandhi's position as Leader of the Opposition as "a misfortune" for the country. "To have such a Leader of the Opposition is the misfortune of the country's democracy. What could be more unfortunate for the Congress as well than having to accept Rahul Gandhi as its leader?" Mr Nadda said.

Reacting to Mr Gandhi's remarks at the Rachnatmak Congress National Convention, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey shared photographs of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi with Fidel Castro and Yasser Arafat,



along with a photograph of Rahul Gandhi hugging PM Modi in Parliament. Mr Dubey accompanied the images with a provocative caption mocking Gandhi. "Rahul Gandhi ji calls this choking sensation gastric fire, or is it the fire of lust?" he wrote. Education Minister Pralhad Joshi said: "Rahul Gandhi, when will you grow up? Running India requires mature leadership, not amateur dramatics. Calling a democratically elected government 'jokers and clowns' proves you are out of your depth."

Speaking at the convention,

Mr Gandhi said, "I don't know where he (PM Modi) got this idea from. Strange ideas get into people's heads. He thinks this is foreign policy," before giving Dikshit a hug.

Mr Dikshit then quipped, "Meloni samajh ke toh nahi pakda tha? (You didn't hug me thinking I was Meloni?)," referring to Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Mr Gandhi replied: "I haven't reached that stage yet," drawing laughter from the gathering.

Reacting to the exchange, BJP IT Cell chief Amit Malviya said the remarks by Mr Gandhi

and Mr Dikshit "reveal something far more disturbing than a mere 'locker-room conversation'".

Mr Malviya said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had, in 2024, expressed pain over the alleged "insult" to former Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit through what he described as baseless corruption allegations.

"Today, her son @SandeepDikshit shares the stage with @RahulGandhi and stoops to mocking the same Prime Minister," he said.

He also criticised the reference to a foreign leader, saying: "Turning a diplomatic gesture into a cheap punchline by dragging a foreign premier into domestic political mudslinging is beneath any serious political discourse."

BJP MP and spokesperson Sambit Patra said Gandhi's language and political conduct were "deteriorating day by day", describing the remarks against the Prime Minister and the Italian Prime Minister as "shameful".

SC quashes summons, criminal complaint against Rahul Gandhi over Savarkar remarks

PARMOD KUMAR
New Delhi, 14 August



The Supreme Court on Friday quashed the criminal complaint and the summons issued on 12 December 2024, by a Lucknow Magistrate Court against Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi over his remarks against Hindutva ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar during the Bharat Jodo Yatra on 17 November 2022.

The Court noted that the Uttar Pradesh government had not disclosed whether prior sanction had been granted for Mr Gandhi's prosecution as an elected Member of Parliament.

Quashing the summons as well as the criminal complaint, a bench comprising Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Sheel Nagu said: "We have heard learned counsel for the parties. In the affidavit filed by the respondent State of UP, there is no disclosure of sanction having been granted. In such view of the matter,

the orders passed by the Magistrate shall be quashed."

The criminal complaint had been filed before a Lucknow Magistrate Court over Mr Gandhi's remarks describing Savarkar as a British collaborator who received a pension from the colonial rulers.

Mr Gandhi had approached the Supreme Court against an Allahabad High Court order refusing to quash the summons issued by the Magistrate Court.

The High Court had declined to entertain Mr Gandhi's plea, observing that he had the remedy of approaching the Sessions Judge under Section 397 of the Code of Criminal Procedure instead of directly

invoking the High Court's jurisdiction.

On 25 April 2025, the Supreme Court had stayed the summons issued to Gandhi. While granting him relief, the Court had also admonished him over his remarks against Savarkar and cautioned him against making similar statements about freedom fighters.

A bench comprising Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Manmohan had said: "You have a good point on law and you will get a stay. But any further statement by him will be taken up suo motu. No words on our freedom fighters. They gave us freedom and we treat them like this?"

JPSC-JSSC protest: Students plan Tiranga Yatra, reject political tag

SHASHI SINGH
Ranchi, 14 August

The JPSC-JSSC Reform Forum announced a Tiranga Yatra in Ranchi on Independence Day as its indefinite agitation over alleged irregularities in recruitment examinations continues, while rejecting allegations that the movement has become a platform for any political party.

The forum appealed to students and the public to join the 15 August march, describing it as a demonstration of student unity and a democratic expression of their demands.

The students said their principal demands remained unresolved despite several rounds of talks with the state government. They reiterated their demand for a CBI investigation into alleged irregularities in JPSC and JSSC examinations and sought action wherever wrongdoing was established.

The forum also rejected the claim that 98 per cent of the students' demands had been accepted by the government. Representative Piyush Kumar said the major demands,

including cancellation of examinations and action over alleged irregularities, remained unresolved.

The students have particularly demanded cancellation of examinations conducted by TDPL, where they allege irregularities. These allegations have not been independently established.

The forum rejected the suggestion that the agitation had been taken over by the BJP. Representative Ravindra Paswan said the movement was not affiliated with any political party and alleged that both the ruling and opposition sides were attempting to give the agitation a political colour.

The students now want direct dialogue with Chief Minister Hemant Soren, arguing that he should personally hear their concerns and help find a solution.

The forum also raised the issue of police action during the 10 August march towards the Assembly and sought clarity from the government and police administration regarding the action and cases arising from the incident.

Tejashwi questions Bihar govt's ₹22,500 crore investment claim, flags company's ₹11 lakh capital



IMRAN MOJIB
Patna, 14 August

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Friday questioned the Bihar government's claim that a company plans to invest Rs22,500 crore in the nuclear sector in the state, alleging that the company is barely five months old and has total capital of only Rs11 lakh.

The Leader of the Opposition said: "You will be surprised and saddened to know that the company which the Bihar government claims is going to make the largest investment, Rs22,500 crore, in the nuclear sector was established only five months ago, in February 2026, and has total capital of just Rs11 lakh."

He further said: "The Bihar government should explain what kind of treasure this

Rs11 lakh company has suddenly found that it will now be able to invest thousands of crores of rupees in Bihar."

Accusing the government of misleading the people of Bihar, he questioned how a company could make such a massive investment claim in the presence of government officials and ministers without anyone questioning it.

Tejashwi also asked: "What if the company runs away?"

He said that if big companies come to Bihar, set up industries and businesses, and invest their own capital in the state, he would not only welcome them but also provide all possible assistance.

"But if shell companies are created, land is obtained from the government for Rs1, assets are created, and then the companies take subsidies from here and disappear, the people of Bihar will not tolerate it," he added.

Tejashwi asked, "The NDA government has been in power in Bihar for more than two decades. Despite this, why have you failed to create a situation in the state where investors have confidence in the Bihar government and its infrastructure? Why is no major company willing to make a large investment in Bihar?"

Heartfelt greetings to all fellow citizens on the 80th Independence Day

“ I extend my best wishes to all of you on this great festival of Independence. There's only one mantra for 140 crore Indians - Viksit Bharat. To build a Viksit Bharat, we will neither stop nor bow down, and we will build a Viksit Bharat in 2047. — Narendra Modi ”

Live telecast of the Independence Day celebrations from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Doordarshan Network from 6:30 AM onwards.

CBC 22201/13/0019/2627

BRIEFLY

GS Patil unanimously elected
Karnataka Assembly Speaker:

Bengaluru: Senior Congress legislator Gurupadagouda Sanganagouda Patil, popularly known as G S Patil, was on Friday elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, after the Opposition chose not to field a candidate. Pro-tem Speaker T B Jayachandra declared Patil elected through a voice vote amid the ongoing Monsoon Session, giving the ruling Congress a clear victory in the Speaker's election. Chief Minister D K Shivakumar proposed Mr Patil's name, while Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara seconded the candidature. The Opposition members stayed away from the election process and did not nominate a candidate, paving the way for Patil's unanimous election. The newly elected Speaker had submitted his nomination on Thursday in the presence of Chief Minister Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister Parameshwara, KPCC president B K Hariprasad and several ministers and legislators. Patil's election assumes significance as it comes shortly after the recent expansion of the Karnataka Cabinet and marks the first major change in the leadership of the Legislative Assembly.

Salim Ahmed elected Karnataka
Legislative Council Chairman:

Bengaluru: Congress candidate Salim Ahmed was on Friday elected Chairman of the Karnataka Legislative Council, securing 38 votes against 30 polled by the Opposition alliance candidate. The election was conducted at the beginning of the day's proceedings by interim Chairman Puttanna. After the result was announced, members of the ruling and Opposition parties escorted Ahmed to the Chair and congratulated him, stressing the need for the presiding officer to function in a non-partisan manner. Ruling party leader Yatindra Siddaramaiah congratulated Ahmed and said he had been associated with the Congress since his student days and had risen through various responsibilities entrusted to him by the party. Leader of the Opposition in the Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy said his personal friendship with Ahmed dated back four decades, though they belonged to different political ideologies.

TN Govt announces CM's Police
medals for 15 police officers:

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu government on Friday announced Independence Day Chief Minister's Police medals for 15 police officers, which included nine women officers. In recognition of the excellent work performed in criminal investigation and with a view to applaud the commitment and dedication to work, the 10 Police Officers/Personnel have been selected for the award of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Police Medal for Excellence in Investigation. Similarly, in recognition of the outstanding work done and the strong commitment to selfless Public Service, five Police Officers/Personnel have been selected for the award of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Police Medal for Excellence in Public Service. The recipients of the Medal will be given a gold medal weighing eight grams and a cash reward of Rs.25,000 each, an official release said. These Medals will be presented by Chief Minister Vijay at a function to be held in due course.

Madras HC *Vande Mataram* order
draws Madurai Bar objection

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Chennai, 14 August

The Madras High Court Registry has instructed the High Court, its Madurai Bench and subordinate courts mandating to sing or play *Vande Mataram* first followed by flag hoisting and recital of National Anthem during Independence Day celebrations, even as the Madurai Bench of Madras HC Bar Association (MMBA) objected to the omission of *Tamil Thai Vazhthu* from the celebrations. The circular issued by the High Court Registrar General said the decision was taken based on an advisory issued by the union Government under the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign 2026, which commemorates 150 years of *Vande Mataram*. The campaign is being observed nationwide from 9 to 17 August. According to the circular, Independence Day celebrations at the Madras High Court's Principal Seat in Chennai, the Madurai Bench, Tamil Nadu State Judicial Academy, its regional centres in Madurai and Coimbatore, district



judiciary units and the union Territory of Puducherry will include the singing or playing of *Vande Mataram*. The circular said: "It is hereby informed that on the Advisory issued by the Government of India under Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign 2026, commemorating 150 years of the National Song *Vande Mataram*, the Independence Day Celebrations organised by the Madras High Court at the Principal Seat in Chennai, Bench in Madurai, Tamil Nadu State Judicial Academy in Chennai, Regional

Meanwhile, the Madurai Bench Bar Association President C Arul Vaidevel said: "We were shocked to find that the circular had not included *Tamil Thai Vazhthu*, despite the Tamil Nadu Government recently issuing a GO on 12 August making it mandatory for all educational institutions and public sector organisations to first sing *Thamizh Thai Vazhthu*." In its representation to the Registrar General, the MMBA also referred to a recent union Home Ministry letter which, it said, clearly stated that there was no prohibition on playing or singing *Tamil Thai Vazhthu* in the High Court. "Omission of the song in the Independence Day celebrations hurts the feelings of all members of the Bar," he said. After submitting the representation, the Presidents and Secretaries of all Bar associations met Administrative Judge CV Karthikeyan on Friday morning and requested the inclusion of *Tamil Thai Vazhthu* in the Independence Day fete. He assured the advocates that their sentiments would be given due consideration and that *Tamil Thai Vazhthu* would be sung on stage.

Supreme Court stays Madras High
Court order scrapping jobs for
Karur stampede victims' families



UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, 14 August

The Supreme Court on Friday stayed the Madras High Court's order quashing a Tamil Nadu government order providing compassionate appointments to the families of victims of the Karur stampede tragedy. A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and K Vinod Chandran issued notice on the plea filed by the state government and others challenging the High Court judgment and passed an interim stay on its operation. Senior Advocates Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Tamil Nadu, defended the State's decision to provide compassionate appointments to Karur stampede victims'

families under Article 162. Singhvi questioned the Madras High Court's interference, noting that the government's policy had not been challenged. Advocate A Velan, appearing for a political party, opposed the policy, alleging a conflict of interest. Justice Pardiwala questioned the objection, asking why the government could not provide employment to a victim's surviving family members, particularly where the deceased was the sole breadwinner. Justice Chandran cautioned against bringing politics into the matter. The Madras High Court had earlier quashed the appointments, holding that they violated Articles 14 and 16 and could open the floodgates for similar claims.

TVK minister accuses DMK of surrendering to BJP, puts party on defensive

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Chennai, 14 August

Putting the principal Opposition DMK, senior Tamil Nadu minister and Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader CTR Nirmal Kumar on Friday charged the Dravidian major with surrendering to the BJP to protect itself from corruption cases. "Earlier they were in a secret pact, but now it is very open. DMK Parliamentary Party leader Kanimozhi taking part in the tea party hosted by Lok Sabha Speaker Om

Birla, which was boycotted by the INDIA Bloc, is proof of their coming together in the open," he told the media at the secretariat. He also cited DMK president MK Stalin's reasoning that whoever the party talks to is for the good, to drive home the point that the party had already made up its mind to team up with the BJP. Further, he pointed out that there has been no denial from the DMK about its senior parliamentarian Triuchi R Siva becoming a Union Minister. Dismissing Kanimozhi's

rationale that she had gone to discuss the seating arrangement for the DMK after parting company with the Congress, he said "If that was the case there are many avenues to do that. It is not necessary to attend the tea party of the Speaker. A letter to the Speaker is enough." "The DMK has become a vassal of the BJP in Delhi. They have supported the Assembly resolution opposing Delimitation, but had never made it clear as to whether they will vote against it in Parliament," he said adding

"It is habitual for the DMK to sacrifice the interests of the state to save their skin. It was how, Katchatheevu (the tiny islet in the Palk Strait) was ceded to Sri Lanka when Karunanidhi was the Chief Minister. Then it was the Sarkaria Commission probing corruption cases." Stung by the charge, the DMK turned the tables on Nirmal Kumar, with party Organisation Secretary RS Bharathi saying: "A person who has been with the RSS and BJP has no locus to speak about others. What he says



is an unadulterated lie. He has been with the RSS, then switched over to the AIADMK

and is now in the TVK. In a statement, he said "The party the party remained firm in its opposition to the BJP as ever," he said but justified the party's change in the position on delimitation. "We have accepted the Assembly resolution on Delimitation. We are for 'Fair Delimitation' and have sought a Constitutional Amendment." "We have made it very clear. If the suggestions put forth by us is included in the Bill, we will take a decision as to whether to support it or not," he explained.

NALSAR to consult Executive Council
on BCI inquiry into convocation row

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Hyderabad, 14 August

NALSAR University of Law has said it will consult its Executive Council on a request from the Bar Council of India (BCI) seeking an inquiry into persons involved in recent developments concerning the university's upcoming convocation. In a press release on Thursday evening, the Hyderabad-based university said it received a BCI letter directing the disallowance of enrolment of all graduating B.A., LL.B. (Hons.) students of the 2026 batch and seeking an inquiry report into those involved in the developments concerning the convocation. The university subsequently received another letter from

the BCI rescinding the directive to State Bar Councils disallowing enrolment of the graduating students. However, the university said the second letter retained the requirement that Vice-Chancellor Professor Srikrishna Deva Rao submit an inquiry report on the persons involved. NALSAR said, given the nature of the request, it would have to consider whether conducting such an inquiry would amount to a constitutional exercise of its powers. It said the matter would be placed before the Executive Council, the university's highest decision-making body, to assess whether such an inquiry would be constitutional and permissible under its governance

regulations. The outcome of the consultation with the Executive Council would be communicated to the BCI, the University added. It may be mentioned that on 10 August, a group of NALSAR Law University students urged the university to reconsider its decision to invite the Chief Justice of India (CJI) to its upcoming convocation, taking exception to his remarks during the hearing on alleged police excesses against students who marched towards Parliament on 20 July. The university has not yet finalised the date of the convocation. Traditionally, the CJI has been invited as the chief guest for the event.



Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar attends the Karnataka Legislative Assembly during the Monsoon Session, in Bengaluru, Karnataka, on Friday. AGENCIES

Monsoon Session

Siddaramaiah's back-row appearance sets off
fresh political buzz in Karnataka Assembly

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Bengaluru, 14 August

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's return to the Assembly on Friday, after staying away from the opening day of the Monsoon Session, triggered fresh political speculation, with his decision to sit in the last row of the ruling Congress benches becoming the talking point of the day. Siddaramaiah attended the second day of the session amid intense speculation over his reported dissatisfaction following the recent cabinet expansion. His absence on the first day had fuelled questions in political circles about whether he would continue to keep away from the proceedings. His arrival in the House

on Friday, however, ended the immediate uncertainty over his participation in the session. What drew particular attention was his choice of seat. Siddaramaiah, who occupied the front benches as Chief Minister and later as Leader of the Opposition, was seen sitting in the last row of the ruling party benches. The optics assumed significance as the former Chief Minister has now returned to the back benches after relinquishing the Chief Minister's post. Several Congress ministers and legislators approached Siddaramaiah and exchanged pleasantries with him. BJP State President BY Vijayendra also walked up to his seat and held a brief conversation with him, adding another

political dimension to the scene. Siddaramaiah's absence from Thursday's proceedings had come against the backdrop of reports of discontent over the cabinet expansion and speculation about the internal dynamics within the ruling Congress. His presence on Friday is being viewed as an attempt to put an end to speculation about his complete withdrawal from the Assembly, although his seating arrangement is likely to remain a subject of political discussion. Meanwhile, the Assembly witnessed a separate political flashpoint during the election of Gurupadagouda Sanganagouda Patil as Speaker. Patil was elected unopposed after the Opposition did not nominate a candidate.

Telangana Governor calls on people to draw
inspiration from freedom fighters, build Viksit Bharat



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Hyderabad, 14 August

Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Friday extended Independence Day greetings to the people of Telangana and the nation and called upon citizens to draw inspiration from freedom fighters and contribute to building a Viksit Bharat.

In his message on the occasion of the 80th Independence Day, the Governor urged people to remember with gratitude the sacrifices and valour of freedom fighters who fought for the country's independence. He said the freedom enjoyed today was the result of their courage and sacrifice and called upon citizens to discharge their responsibility towards safeguarding the country's independence, sovereignty and unity. The Governor stressed the need for collective efforts to build a stronger and self-reliant Atmanirbhar Bharat, while ensuring that the benefits of development reach all sections of society. He also called for greater focus on peace, fraternity and inclusive development.

Shukla said every citizen should contribute to building a prosperous and progressive India based on the values of unity, integrity and development. He called upon youth, women, farmers, workers, students and people from all sections of society to play an active role in the nation's progress. The Governor expressed hope that the Tricolour would always fly high with pride and that its three colours would continue to symbolise courage, peace and faith among the people. He called upon citizens to draw inspiration from the ideals of freedom fighters and rededicate themselves to the task of building a Viksit Bharat.

Messi visit row: ED begins preliminary probe into overseas money transfers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Thiruvananthapuram, 14 August

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has reportedly initiated a preliminary inquiry into large-scale financial transactions and overseas remittances linked to the previous LDF government's failed plan to bring football star Lionel Messi and the Argentina national football team to Kochi. The preliminary inquiry is reportedly aimed at determining whether there were any violations of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The ED's action is related to allegations of money being transferred abroad by the sponsor in connection with the proposed visit. A report submitted by the state Sports Department



Secretary has pointed to large-scale financial irregularities in connection with the proposed visit of Lionel Messi to Kochi. Based on the Sports Department Secretary's report,

the ED has now begun a preliminary investigation into the financial transactions and overseas remittances related to the failed plan to bring Messi to Kochi. Earlier, reports emerged

that the Reporter Broadcasting Corporation (RBC) had transferred crores of rupees abroad in connection with efforts to bring Messi and the Argentina national football team to Kochi. It is learnt

BASED ON THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT SECRETARY'S REPORT, THE ED HAS NOW BEGUN A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION INTO THE FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS AND OVERSEAS REMITTANCES RELATED TO THE FAILED PLAN TO BRING MESSI TO KOCHI.

that the ED will examine whether there were any violations of rules governing the transfer of money abroad. Based on the findings of the preliminary inquiry, the ED will decide whether a case should be registered under FEMA. The ED may also officially request the state government to provide the agency with a copy of the report prepared by the state Sports Department regarding the failed visit.

Mirwaiz alleges house arrest, questions 'normalcy' narrative**UNITED ENWS OF INDIA**
Srinagar, 14 August

Kashmir's chief cleric and Hurriyat chief, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, said that he was placed under house arrest on Friday and prevented from proceeding to the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar to offer congregational prayers. In a post on X, the Mirwaiz said the latest restrictions had been imposed on the eve of the holy month of Rabi-ul-Awwal - the third month of the Islamic calendar.

He also questioned the authorities' claims of normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir, saying that repeatedly preventing him from offering prayers at Srinagar's Jama Masjid undermined the official narrative.

"If the authorities themselves do not trust their own narrative of 'normalcy' enough to repeatedly prevent me from going to Jama Masjid, what credibility does that narrative have?" he said.

No official reason was immediately provided for the restrictions imposed on the Mirwaiz. Similar restrictions have been imposed on several occasions in the past, particularly on Fridays, preventing him from offering prayers and addressing the congregation at the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar. Meanwhile, Mirwaiz in a statement greeted Muslims across Jammu and Kashmir and the world on the arrival of the blessed month of Rabi-ul-Awwal.

Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid - the managing body of the grand Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta, Srinagar - has also announced that, as per the centuries-old tradition, Mirwaiz will deliver a special sermon at the historic Khanqah-e-Naqshband Sahib, Khwaja Bazar, Srinagar on Monday.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Barsha Sardar**, Father's Name - **Hapi Sardar**, of Vill - Roadpur, Adityapur, PS - Mandir Bazar, Dist - South 24 Pgs. Who has been missing since 12/07/2026, at about 15:00 hrs, Residential area under Mandir Bazar PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 17 Years (Approx), **Complexion**- Fair, **Height** - 5 Feet (Approx), **Wearing** - White check frock & Black Pant, **Language** - Bengali. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1250(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

On 27.07.2026 at about 11.00 hrs, a female named **Papita Das Panda**, **Wife of Rajkumar Panda**, of 1083E, Upen, Banerjee Road, PS - Parnashree, Kolkata - 700060, went missing from her residence. However it has been reported that, she has been kidnapped. **Description** of this missing person is: Age - 30 Years (Approx), **Sex** - Female, **Height** - 5'5", **Complexion** - Shyamla, **Face** - Round, **Built** - Healthy, **Religion** - Hindu, **Wearing** - Kurta, Orma and Leggings, **Mother Language** - Bengali, please inform whereabouts of the missing person, contact to the O.C. Missing Persons Squad, Detective Department, Kolkata Police, Lalbazar, Kolkata - 700001 (Telephone No. 033 - 2214 - 1835, 9874902710).

ICA-D1259(3)/2026

Chamoli: 7 dead as hydel project tunnel flooded after landslide**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**
Dehradun, 14 August

At least seven workers died after a section of an under-construction tunnel of the Tehri Hydropower Development Corporation's (THDC) Vishnugad-Pipalkoti hydropower project collapsed due to a landslide, resulting in water flooding the tunnel, in the Mayapur area of Chamoli district of Uttarakhand late Thursday night.

Although neither the Uttarakhand Disaster Management Department or any other government agency has confirmed the death figures, a doctor at the Chamoli District Hospital told the media that seven persons out of 19 brought here were declared dead while remaining were undergoing treatment. One of the rescued workers was referred to the Base Hospital Srinagar as his condition was unstable.

According to the State Disaster Management department, several workers were trapped



inside the tunnel as a stream of muck gushed into the under-construction three kilometres TRT tunnel due to a landslide above it.

The exact number of the trapped workers was not confirmed by the government agencies but a list shared by the Hindustan Construction Company (HCC) Limited, that

hired the workers, showed 28 names. A majority of the victims were from Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami who had been monitoring the rescue and search operation said that 18 workers were taken out from the tunnel till late night while efforts were being made

to rescue the remaining workers who are still trapped.

He said that no effort was being spared in providing medical care to the rescued workers. They have been provided immediate medical facilities, and specialised treatment, medicines, accommodation and food.

The Uttarakhand Chief Minister also spoke to the Chief Ministers of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh over phone and assured them all help to the workers affected in the disaster.

Mr Dhami informed the chief ministers of the two states of how the debris and water muck rushed inside the under-construction THDC tunnel resulting into the tragedy.

"Rescue and relief operation was started swiftly by NDRF and SDRF, State Disaster Management, state police and district administration on a war footing. As a result, 16 workers were safely rescued, and all necessary efforts were underway for rescue the remaining affected workers," said the Chief Minister.

Our blood has been sucked, says Omar Abdullah on Indus Water Treaty**UNITED NEWS OF INDIA**
Srinagar, 14 August

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said that Jammu and Kashmir had been deprived of its rightful share of water under the Indus Water Treaty, asserting that the region's 'blood has been sucked' because it was not allowed to fully utilise its own rivers.

Responding to remarks by Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif describing every single drop of water as Pakistan's 'red line', Omar said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir had repeatedly raised concerns over the issue and had been deprived of the benefits of their own water resources.

"Yes, our blood. This is what we have been saying - that our blood has been sucked. Thank God Sharif sahib has finally come to his senses. Our blood has been sucked. These are our rivers. We have first right on them," he told reporters in Srinagar.

India had placed the water sharing pact with Pakistan,



signed in 1960, in abeyance after the Pahalgam terror attack last year.

Chief Minister questioned Pakistan's claims of standing with the people of Kashmir, saying the country's position on the water issue contradicted its repeated expressions of solidarity with Kashmiris.

"Pakistanis say that they are very sympathetic to the Kashmiris. But when it comes to water, where was their sympathy when we were not allowed to use our rivers?" he

asked.

Omar said Jammu and Kashmir had borne the consequences of the treaty for decades, claiming that the region had been unable to fully utilise its water resources for development, drinking water projects and navigation.

"Punjab's three rivers were kept by India, and our three rivers were handed over to Pakistan. Since then, we have been suffering because of the Indus Water Treaty. We could not get drinking water from the Chenab. We could not build a dam on Tulbul and use it for navigation. We could not construct a major dam on any of our rivers and stop the water," Omar said.

Welcoming what he described as a shift in the debate surrounding the treaty, Omar said the agreement should remain suspended so that Jammu and Kashmir could finally benefit from its own resources.

AFFIDAVIT

I, DIPA BISWAKARMA DEB (Old Name), W/o Nilanjan Deb and D/o Manoj Kumar Biswakarma, resident of 13, Satyen Bose Road, Netaji Pally, Ward No. 37, Siliguri, Dist. Jalpaiguri - 734006 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from DIPA BISWAKARMA DEB (Old Name) to DIPA BISWAKARMA (new/Correct Name) and henceforth I shall be known as DIPA BISWAKARMA (New/Correct Name) in all purpose, vide affidavit no. 18AC 407116 sworn before the Notary Public at Siliguri on 07.08.26. DIPA BISWAKARMA (new/correct name) and DIPA BISWAKARMA DEB (old name) both are same and one identical person.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Smt. Ambika Ganguly Bhattacharyya, W/o. Smt. Rajib Bhattacharyya, D/o. Late Shyamprasad Ganguly of Shastri Nagar, Ward No. 41, Siliguri, District Jalpaiguri, PIN-734001 declared that, before marriage my name has been recorded as Ambika Ganguly in my educational records and school certificates. That after marriage, I am known as Ambika Ganguly Bhattacharyya as recorded in Aadhaar Card, Pan Card, Epic Card & Driving licence and other documents. That "Ambika Ganguly" and "Ambika Ganguly Bhattacharyya" refer to one and the same person. Onwards this day i.e. 1st day of August 2026, I will be known as Ambika Ganguly as per my previous records before marriage. Vide affidavit before the Judicial Magistrate 1st class at Jalpaiguri video no. 24636(B) on 30.07.2026.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sarita Devi Bothra, D/O- Late Sunder Lal Dakal, residing at Rainbow Apartment, Opp. of Senco Gold Jewellery, R.R.N. Road, P.S. Kotwali, P.O. & Dist. Cooch Behar, Pin-736101, W.B. do hereby solemnly affirm and declare vide an affidavit before the Court of the Executive Magistrate, Sadar, Cooch Behar on 07/08/2026 that in my Passport vide No. N0477705, wherein my name have been recorded wrongly as Sarita Devi Bothra in place of my original and correct name Sarita Devi Bothra. That said Sarita Devi Bothra and Sarita Devi Bothra pertains to one and same identical person & my original and correct name is Sarita Devi Bothra.

AFFIDAVIT

I, MOHAMMAD SALEEM, S/o Rafik Ahmad, Resident of Village Sunder Bahadurpur (34), P.O. Chauli, District Yamuna Nagar, Haryana-135102, do hereby that my name is MOHAMMAD SALEEM & My Date of Birth is 12/05/1959 as per my Aadhar Card no. 3349 1426 8384 & Pan Card No. HFGPS4209D. I am the father of MOH ANWAR & his Service No. 15815035F, Rank- HAV CLK (IM), my name & Date of birth has been mistakenly written / recorded in my son service Documents as MOH SALEEM & Date of Birth /12/1967 on 25/7/2026. Vide affidavit before the LD. Notary Public at Siliguri that I want to correct my name & Date of Birth is 12/5/1959 instead of MOH SALEEM & Date of Birth 1/12/1967.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Shyamala Barman, wife of Pradip Barman, R/O Vill. Kukhtikata, P.O. Kanfata, P.S. Mathabhanga, Dist- Coochbehar. I hereby inform the Affidavit of E.M. Court, Mathabhanga, dtd. - 12/08/2026, for the purpose of obtain my daughter's (Susmita Barman, D/O Pradip Barman) Birth Certificate, that she was born on 30/09/2008 at my own House.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Manu Barman, wife of Jaypati Barman, Resident of Kalagaon, P.O. Bhangamore, P.S. Mathabhanga, Dist. Coochbehar, I hereby inform the Affidavit of E.M. Court, Mathabhanga, dtd - 14/08/2026, for the purpose of obtain my son's (Pankaj Barman, S/o Jaypati Barman) Birth Certificate, that he was born on 28/05/2015 at my own House.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Lalit Barman, son of Naren Barman Resident of Vill. Daibhangi, P.O. Andharan Pakhihaga, P.S. Mathabhanga, Dist. - Cooch Behar. I hereby inform that Affidavit of E.M. Court Mathabhanga , Dtd. - 13/08/26, For The Purpose of obtain my daughter's (Shastami Barman) Birth certificate that she was born on 04/10/2011 at my own House.

AFFIDAVIT

I, 13770682A Haw. Dawa Tamang son of Passang Tamang, resident of Upper Kainjala, P.S. Pulubar and Dist. Darjeeling do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that Yasoda Tamang is my wife and her actual and correct date of birth is 12.11.1992 which has been correctly written in her Aadhar Card and in Voter identity card. That the date of birth of my wife Yasoda Tamang has been mistakenly recorded in the records of my service book as 09.11.1994. I am swearing this affidavit to change the date of birth of my wife Yasoda Tamang in the Records of my service Book from 09.11.1994 to 12.11.1992. Affidavit No. 285/26, dt. 14.08.2026. Before the Notary Public at Darjeeling.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

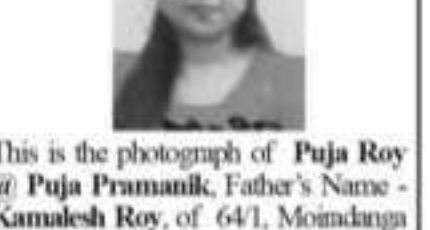
This is the photograph of **Saheba Khatun**, Father's Name - **Mir Ali Lashar**, of Golen Shatala Dolechpur, PS - Dankuni, Dist - Chandannagar Commissionerate, Hooghly District. Who has been missing since 05.06.2026, at about 06.00 hrs, Residence under Dankuni PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 16 Years, **Complexion**- Fair, **Height** - 5 Feet , **Wearing** - Violet colour bordia. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1252(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Taslima Khatoun**, of Dhubi Assam, Who has been missing since 07.05.2024, at about 10.00 hrs, Residential area under Anubhav Child Care Institute, Bose Para, Kotwali PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 17 Years (Approx), **Complexion**- Dark Skin, **Height** - 5 Feet (Approx), **Wearing** - Salwar Kamiz, **Language** - Bengali. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1251(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Puja Roy @ Puja Pramanik**, Father's Name - **Kamadesh Roy**, of 641, Mondnagar Road, Kol-36, Who has been missing since 16.07.2026, at about 17.10 hrs, Residence under Baranagar PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 25 Years (Approx), **Complexion** - Sallow, **Height** - 4 Feet 5 Inch (Approx), **Wearing** - Green Chaudar, **Language** - Bengali. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1258(3)/2026

পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার
পিতা-মাতা/অভিভাবকের
অনুমোদনের জন্য বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নাম: শিশু চরঞ্জিব, জন্ম: ২৮.০২.২০২০, পিতা: জি. প্রান্তিক দাস: ২৮.০২.২০২০, বর্তমান অবস্থান: আলুর আলুর গার্লস হোম, হোম, কলকাতা কাউন্সিল, ২৮/০২, মল্লিক রোড, কলকাতা-৭০০০০৭, উচ্চতা: ১৪৪ সে.মি.; গড়ের রং: শামলা, পনেরো পেশা: আলুর কাজ করা ছাত্র, মাতা: ৩০ তরিশ সখি চি.চি.ই. নম্বর: ৪২৪; তারিখ: ১২.১২.২০২৫। যোগাযোগের বিন্দু: বিজিডি ওইড যোগাযোগের ইউনিট, কলকাতা, প্রিন্স: শ্রীজি বিজিডি (সেগুম ডল), বি. এম.-৩, ওস্টার -১, স্টাফের সিটি, কলকাতা-৭০০০৬৪

আইসিডি-৩ ১৪৪৪ (৪)/২০২৬

 पंजाब नैशनल बैंक punjab national bank बनल का प्राने the bank you can BANK upon!		Asset Recovery Monitoring Branch, N.P. (Siliguri) United Bank Building, 2nd Floor, Hill cart Road, Siliguri-734001 [E mail: cs8289@pnbb.co.in, PHONE No. 9353-2432664] [APPENDIX- IV- A [SEE PROVISO TO RULE 8(6)]			
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical/ symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective borrower (s) and guarantor (s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.					
SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS					
Lo n g	A) Name of the Branch B) Name of the Account C) Name & Address of the Borrower / Guarantors Account	D)Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/ Owner's Name (mortgagors of property(ies))	E) Dt. Of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFESI ACT 2002 F) Outstanding Amount G) Possession Date u/s 13(4) of SARFESI ACT 2002 H) Nature of Possession	A) Reserve Price B) EMD (last date of deposit of EMD) C) Bid Increase Amount	D)Date / Time of E-Auction E) Details of the encumbrances** known to the secured creditors
1.	A) Subhashpally (217420) B) Mithu Kar C) Address: Mithu Kar W/o Ganesh Kar, Palash Sarani, Samar Nagar, P.O. Champasari, P.S- Pradhan Nagar, Dist. Darjeeling, Pin 734003 (WB) and Ganesh Kar, S/o. Gopal Chandra Kar, Palash Sarani, Samar Nagar, P.O. Champasari, P.S- Pradhan Nagar, Dist. Darjeeling, Pin 734003 (WB)	1) One Residential Flat measuring 1150 sq. ft. (including super built up area) covered by Registered Conveyance Deed no. 1-040305035/2023 dated 21/06/2023, registered in Book no. 1, Volume no. 9403-2023, pages from 98080 to 980907 at the second floor (back side), being flat no. 2A of the 30th/rd storied building named as 'Renuka Apartment' together with undivided proportionate share of land measuring 3 Katha or 5 decimal being R.S plot no. 36 & 37, recorded in R.S khatian no. 2/1, corresponding to L.R plot no. 286/351, L.R khatian no. 1707 J.L. no. 83 (105), situated within Mouza- Daknita, Pargana- Patharghata, P.S- Pradhan Nagar, A.D.S.R office- Siliguri-II, Sub-Division: Siliguri at Bagdogra, situated at Upal Nagar, Road no. 3, Ward no. 46, Dist. Darjeeling under Siliguri Municipal Corporation in the state of West Bengal. Boundary N- Land and House of Abhijeet Sen, E- 12 ft. wide SMC Road, E- Land of Amulya Roy, W- Land and House of Raj Kumar Yadav.	E) 16/09/2025 F) Rs. 34,65,369/- G) Amount as mentioned in 13(2) notice H) Symbolic	A) Rs. 35.40 Lac B) Rs 3.54 Lac (01/09/2026) till 4:00 PM C- Rs. 25,000/-	D) 02.09.2026 From 12:00 Noon to 4:00 PM E) Not known to Bank.
2.	A) Hill Cart road (044400) B) 1. M/s On Oil Industries (Prop. Sobha Gupta) 1. Prop. & Mortgagor: Smt. Sobha Gupta W/o Sh. Ajit Kumar Gupta At Patrim Jote, Matigara, Siliguri, Dist. Darjeeling (WB), Pin-734010	1) All that piece and parcel of land & building in the name of Smt. Sobha Gupta, measuring 2 Katha 8 chataks or 4.125 decimals vide registered sale deed no. 040306034 for the year 2023, registered in book-1, volume no. 0403-2023, pag from 116946 to 116987, recorded in R.S khatian no. 3/1, corresponding to L.R. Khatian no 4635, 4636, 4637 & 4638, L.R khatian no. 4844 (new) in R.S plot no. 106, 110 & 351 corresponding to L.R. Plot no. 580, situated at Mouza- Patrim, Pargana Patharghata, J.L. no. 77, Touzi no. 91, P.S- Matigara, A.D.S.R Bagdogra, Under Matigara-II, Gram Panchayat area, Dist. Darjeeling, Pin- 734010 in the state of West Bengal. Butted and Bounded as: N- 12'-0" wide non metal road, S- Land of Jay Gopal Barai & Others, E- Land of Omprakash Gupta, W- Land of Vendors.	E)- 16.12.2025 F)- Rs. 46,40,958/- + further interest and charges (amt. as mentioned in demand notice 13(2) G)- 06.03.2026 H)- Symbolic	A) Rs. 29,44,000/- B) Rs 2,94,400/- (01.09.2026) C) Rs. 25,000/-	D) 02.09.2026 From 12:00 Noon to 4:00 PM E) Not known to Bank
TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions: 1. The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS". 2. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove has been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. 3. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://baanknet.in on 02.09.2026 @ 12:00 Noon to 4:00 PM. 4. For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer https://baanknet.in & www.pnbbindia.in					
STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6)(91) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002					
Date: 10.08.2026 Place: Siliguri		Sd-Authorized Officer Punjab National Bank			

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions:
1. The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS".
2. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
3. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://banknet.in, on 02.09.2026 @ 12:00 Noon to 4:00 PM.
4. For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer https://banknet.in & www.pnbindia.in

Date: 10.08.2026
Place: SiliguriSd-Authorized Officer
Punjab National Bank

STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6)(91) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Smritikona Mondal @ Chhnu @ Priyanka**, Father's Name - **Late Rathindranath Halder**, of Subjagpur, PO - Nimpith, PS - Bakalbaha, Baripur Police District, Who has been missing since 17.04.2026, at about 20.00 hrs, Residence under Bakalbaha PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 33 Years, **Complexion** - Fair, **Height** - 5 Feet 2 Inch, **Wearing** - Saree, **Language** - Bengali. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1254(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Sunita Kumari**, Father's Name - **Nareesh Ray**, of 22 No. "J" Road, Belgachia, PS - Liluah, Dist - Howrah, Who has been missing since 11.01.2022, at about 9 PM, Residential area under Liluah PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 16 Years (Approx), **Complexion**- Sallow, **Height** - 5 Feet 6 Inch (Approx), **Wearing** - Black Jeans & Pink Sweater, **Language** - Bengali. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1247(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Mamani Paul**, Husband's Name - **Prasenjit Paul**, of Vill - Laikapur, PO - Taltoore, PS - Jamuria, Dist - Paschim Bardwan Who has been missing since 29.03.2026. Residence under Jamuria PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 24 Years (Approx), **Complexion** - Fair, **Height** - 4 Feet 8 Inch, **Wearing** - Nighty. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1255(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Najma Khatun**, Father's Name - **Md. Najmul Hoque**, of Vill - Habaspur Mathpara, PS- Bhagwangola, Dist- Murshidabad, Who has been missing since 19.03.2024, at about 07.00 hrs, Residential area under Bhagwangola PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 22 Years (Approx), **Complexion**- Fair, **Height** - 5 Feet (Approx), **Wearing** - Ash colour Nighty & Blue Veil, **Language** - Bengali. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1248(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Sarina Khatun**, Father's Name - **Jahurul Khatun**, of Vill - Chandnidaha, PS - Samsberganj, Dist - Murshidabad, Who has been missing since 03.02.2026, at about 02.00 hrs, Residence under Samsberganj PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 29 Years, **Complexion** - Fair, **Height** - 5 Feet, **Wearing** - Black Churidar. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1256(3)/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Rinki Kumari**, Father's Name - **Ranjeet Paswan**, of Chakpara Sitla Mandir Khurur Bari, PS- Liluah, Dist- Howrah, Who has been missing since 03.02.2026, at about 16.00 hrs, Residential area under Liluah PS, Description of this Missing person is: Age - 13 Years (Approx), **Complexion**- Fair, **Height** - 4 Feet 10 Inch (Approx), **Language** - Hindi. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-24506120.

ICA-D-1249(3)/2026

The Statesman

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Question of Justice

The end of Gautam Adani's criminal prosecution in the United States is a legal victory for the Indian billionaire, but it is not quite the exoneration that the headlines might suggest. Nor is it merely another episode in the long political argument over Adani. The more consequential issue is what the dismissal says about the exercise of prosecutorial power in a case that had acquired unusual political and financial significance.

The charges actually brought against Adani, his nephew Sagar Adani and former Adani Green Energy chief executive Vneet Jaain were securities and wire-fraud offences. The separate count alleging conspiracy to violate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, the US anti-bribery law, did not charge the three men. Neither did the obstruction-of-justice count. Those counts concern other defendants and remain to be dealt with. That distinction matters because the case was widely understood in India as an American bribery prosecution of Adani himself. The underlying allegations may have centred on an alleged bribery scheme, but the criminal counts on which Adani actually would have stood trial - had there been a trial - concerned alleged deception of investors and financial institutions. The dismissal therefore should not be presented as a court finding that the bribery allegations were disproved.

Nor was there a trial in which evidence was tested and witnesses examined. The charges against Adani have been dismissed with prejudice, meaning they cannot simply be revived, but the judge has explicitly distinguished prosecutorial discretion from a judicial determination of the merits.

More troubling is the manner in which the prosecution was abandoned. Judge Nicholas Garaufis approved the Justice Department's request but sharply criticised the process, describing it as highly unusual and questioning why a senior department official appeared to have negotiated the dismissal with Adani's lawyers without meaningful consultation with the prosecutors and investigators who had pursued the case.

That criticism should concern anyone who believes that the strength of the rule of law lies not merely in the eventual verdict but in the consistency of the process. The judge also examined whether Adani's pledge to invest \$10 billion in the United States had influenced the decision. He concluded that it had not, but recognised that the circumstances could affect public perceptions of equal justice. For India, the political consequences are likely to be sharper than the immediate legal ones. Adani's critics will see the episode as evidence of the extraordinary proximity between wealth, political power and access to institutions. His defenders will point to a case that ended without a trial or conviction and argue that continuing to treat him as guilty after the dismissal itself undermines due process. Both sides should resist that temptation. The appropriate conclusion is narrower and more uncomfortable: Adani has escaped criminal prosecution in the United States, but the dismissal establishes neither his guilt nor his innocence on the underlying allegations. What remains unresolved is not merely a question about one businessman, but whether powerful institutions can exercise prosecutorial discretion in a manner that commands public confidence.

Space links

The next battle in mobile telecommunications may not be fought over more cell towers. It may be fought above them. That possibility has acquired new urgency after SpaceX said at its first public earnings call that it intends to turn Starlink Mobile into a fuller mobile service capable of competing directly for customers of America's established wireless companies. The company plans a new generation of satellites and has acquired substantial spectrum for the purpose. What is being presented as an American telecom battle could, however, become a much larger contest over who controls the next layer of global connectivity.

The technology is not unique to SpaceX. AST SpaceMobile is building satellites designed to connect ordinary smartphones directly to space, and three more of its BlueBird satellites were launched on August 5. It has partnerships with dozens of mobile operators across several continents. Amazon Leo has separately proposed a constellation of as many as 5,105 satellites for direct-to-device voice, messaging and data, with deployment planned from 2028. Lynk Global is already testing direct-to-device services with mobile operators in countries including the Philippines and New Caledonia.

The significance is that satellite connectivity is moving from being a specialist service for remote areas towards becoming an additional layer of the ordinary mobile network. A country no longer needs to depend entirely on terrestrial infrastructure to connect people in mountains, deserts, oceans or disaster zones. But it also means that communications infrastructure increasingly lies beyond the physical territory of the countries whose citizens use it. India shows why this matters. It is not merely a potential market for foreign satellite operators. Indian companies are developing competing satellite capabilities, while Vodafone Idea has partnered with AST SpaceMobile for direct-to-device connectivity.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has been working on the framework for authorising satellite communication networks and assigning spectrum; its 2026 consultations have involved Starlink, OneWeb, Jio, Airtel, Vodafone Idea, AST SpaceMobile and others. Nor is this a regulatory vacuum. The International Telecommunication Union's Radio Regulations provide the international framework for the use of radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits. But the ITU does not hand a company permission to provide mobile service in India. National authorities remain crucial: in India, the Department of Telecommunications operates under the Telecommunications Act, 2023, while TRAI advises on spectrum and regulatory frameworks. That distinction will become increasingly important as satellites cross borders while licences, spectrum rights, security requirements and national laws do not.

The question, then, is bigger than whether Starlink can take customers from AT&T, Verizon or T-Mobile. It is whether nations will allow a handful of global technology companies to become the owners of an increasingly indispensable layer of communications infrastructure - or insist that space-based connectivity remain integrated with national telecom systems and public-interest safeguards. The terrestrial mobile revolution gave countries control over networks built on their soil. The satellite revolution could force them to renegotiate what that control means when the network is in the sky.

The soul of democracy

Philosophers from Aristotle to Rousseau warned that democracy falters when procedure overshadows principle, when the mechanics of voting are preserved but the spirit of fairness is lost. The Weimar Republic collapsed not because its constitution was flawed but because its spirit was abandoned. Conversely, post war Japan and Germany demonstrated that democratic culture could be cultivated even in societies with no prior tradition of it

What defines a great democracy is not the act of voting alone but the integrity of the institutions that safeguard the vote. Ballots matter only when supported by impartial systems, genuine accountability, and the confidence of citizens that their choice will be respected. Democracies flourish when institutions remain strong, and they falter when those institutions are weakened or silenced.

Philosophers from Plato to Rousseau reminded us that democracy is not merely a mechanical exercise but a moral covenant, sustained only when fairness and trust are preserved. Dr B.R. Ambedkar, speaking in the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949, gave this covenant its most urgent expression. He warned against three dangers: the use of extra-constitutional methods, the tendency toward hero worship, and the neglect of social democracy. These warnings remain as relevant today as they were at the birth of the Republic.

India's journey illustrates this paradox. At independence, the merger of princely states and the crafting of a Constitution promised equality and justice. These beginnings were delicate, yet they carried the vision of building a nation where institutions would safeguard liberty. The early decades were marked by optimism, the belief that a young democracy could mature into greatness if its institutions remained impartial and its citizens engaged.

But democracy is never static; it waxes and wanes depending on whether institutions and citizens rise to the challenge. Over the decades, moments of stress have tested these foundations: the suspension of liberties during the Emergency, the debates around Article 370, the shifting tides of electoral majorities, and the continuing struggle to balance diversity with uniformity in questions such as the Uniform Civil Code.

The electoral process remains the most visible test. Ideally, winning or losing depends on the majority vote cast without fear, prejudice, or favour. Yet when the system is subuded or manipulated, elections risk



becoming hollow exercises, their outcomes anticipated even before the first ballot is cast. In such circumstances, victory risks losing legitimacy, governance acquired without the full trust of the people.

Philosophers from Aristotle to Rousseau warned that democracy falters when procedure overshadows principle, when the mechanics of voting are preserved but the spirit of fairness is lost. The Weimar Republic collapsed not because its constitution was flawed but because its spirit was abandoned. Conversely, post war Japan and Germany demonstrated that democratic culture could be cultivated even in societies with no prior tradition of it, provided institutions were robust and civic education was sustained.

Equally important is the disposition of the voter. A democracy is only as strong as the maturity of its citizens. Without civic education, choices are often shaped by short-term thinking. Promises of relief or populist incentives can create dependency, reducing accountability. When citizens settle for temporary comfort rather than demanding structural reform, democracy weakens. The ballot risks becoming a transaction rather than a mandate for governance.

John Stuart Mill emphasised that democracy requires informed participation, not mere numbers; literacy alone is insufficient unless it is accompanied by values of tolerance, accountability, and respect for institutions. Ambedkar's reminder that "however good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it happen to be a bad lot" captures this truth with prophetic force. Yet the causes of fragility lie not only in institutions but also in society. Regional parties often remain confined to local aspirations, unable to rise to a national vision. Coalition politics can enrich diversity, but it can also fragment coherence. When regionalism dominates, the larger democratic project risks being reduced to bargaining for immediate gains rather than building a shared future.

Federalism is not merely an administrative convenience; it is a democratic imperative in a plural society. When regional aspirations are suppressed rather than negotiated, the democratic fabric frays. When they are accommodated through dialogue and constitutional mechanisms, democracy is strengthened. Psychological influences further

complicate the picture. Fear, prejudice, and herd mentality often override rational choice. Voters can be swayed by emotional appeals, identity politics, or promises of instant relief. This weakens democracy because decisions are made under influence rather than informed judgment.

In societies where civic education and awareness campaigns help voters resist manipulation, democracy is strengthened. Where such safeguards are absent, voters become easy prey to rhetoric and spectacle.

The media, ideally the fourth pillar of democracy, should play a decisive role in raising issues, offering clear alternatives, and holding power to account. When independent, it informs citizens and strengthens institutions. But when controlled or subuded, it becomes a tool of propaganda rather than accountability.

Technology adds another layer. Social media platforms amplify certain voices, sometimes drowning out reasoned debate. Algorithms reward sensationalism, misinformation spreads faster than facts, and voter psychology is shaped by distortions.

Democracies must adapt by ensuring transparency, digital literacy, and accountability in the digital space. Without these safeguards, technology risks becoming a weapon that unmakes democracy rather than a tool that strengthens it.

Economic stress and inequality also feed into democratic fragility. When citizens face unemployment, inflation, or lack of opportunity, they become vulnerable to populist promises. Economic distress makes voters more susceptible to short term relief, even at the cost of long term accountability.

Democracy requires checks and balances. When opposition is weak or silenced, accountability collapses. A strong opposition is not a threat to governance; it is the guarantee of democracy's health. Similarly, constitutional authorities and independent institutions must remain fearless. When they are subuded, democracy falters.

The judiciary, in particular, has often been described as the last hope. With genuine



S S SAXENA

The writer is a retired Air Commodore, VSM, of the Indian Air Force

The Daily Star

Child stunting is putting our future at risk

The implication of 24 percent of our children (aged five and under) being stunted due to chronic malnutrition and poor health during early childhood, can only be described as devastating. It is a deep-seated handicap in the future of our most precious asset - our human resources.

The sobering statistic has come from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and experts have delineated the main causes: poverty, poor nutrition, early pregnancy, and unhealthy practices. The survey shows that one in four children have been deprived of proper nutrition in the first three years of their life, which is a critical period for physical and brain development.

It is predictable how this deprivation will affect the future of these children, increasing their vulnerability to respiratory conditions and diarrhoeal diseases, which

can be attributed to death in early childhood. Poor nutrition was a factor in the recent deaths of hundreds of children afflicted with measles and measles-like symptoms. Malnutrition also hinders brain development, adversely affecting cognitive abilities, and hampering learning and educational attainment.

A World Bank study found that stunted children often enrol in school later, repeat grades, and have lower education levels compared to their healthier peers. If this learning gap remains unaddressed, it will lead to lower skills and educational levels with corresponding low-paying employment.

Thus, malnutrition continues the vicious cycle of poverty. And we cannot plan for a prosperous country when such a large proportion of the population is deprived

of reaching their productive potential.

Sadly, for decades the root causes of malnutrition have not been addressed effectively. One of these is child marriage, which is very high in Bangladesh and leads to early pregnancy, increasing risks for both mothers and their babies. Most women in poor households do not get the recommended minimum of four checkups during pregnancy, which results in complications such as low birth weight and maternal malnutrition going unchecked.

Government interventions, therefore, must start with preventing child marriage using the relevant law, providing incentives for girls to stay in school, and conducting awareness campaigns about the harms caused by child marriage.

Authorities must also keep food prices low, and increase the scope of open market

reforms, it can rise above politics, restore accountability, and protect the Constitution when all other pillars falter. But when the judiciary itself appears subuded, citizens are left wondering whether even this last hope can be trusted.

Hungary under Orban and Turkey under Erdogan illustrate how democratic elections can be used to systematically dismantle democratic institutions. In India's neighbourhood, Pakistan's oscillation between military and civilian rule, Bangladesh's turbulence, Myanmar's coup, and Sri Lanka's collapse all remind us that democracy is not a destination but a continuous negotiation.

Successful democracies across the world remind us of the fundamentals. They prosper not only because elections are free, but because institutions remain independent, citizens are educated, and accountability is enforced. A vibrant democracy must also ensure quality of life: clean cities, accessible medical services, affordable education, and social justice. These are not luxuries; they are the very conditions that allow citizens to participate meaningfully in democracy.

Above all, justice must be ensured without favour or prejudice. In Scandinavia, democracies prosper because institutions are impartial, citizens are educated, and quality of life is guaranteed. In Germany, federalism balances regional aspirations with national coherence, ensuring stability. In Japan, civic discipline and respect for institutions underpin democratic resilience. These examples show that democracy is not merely about ballots; it is about the lived experience of citizens, the independence of institutions, and the equality of law.

India's story is no different. Democracy's resilience has often come from its people, from restoring liberties after the Emergency to demanding accountability when institutions falter. Yet resilience cannot be assumed. Today, multiple forces weaken its fabric: regional aspirations fragmenting national coherence, voters swayed by freebies over responsibility, a weak opposition, subuded institutions, psychological manipulation, controlled media, misinformation through technology, economic stress, and erosion of clean governance and justice. Together, these risks reduce the ballot to ritual rather than mandate.

The challenge before us is clear: to ensure that the ballot remains more than a ritual, that institutions remain fearless, that media remains independent, that technology serves truth, that cities remain clean, that medical services remain accessible, and that justice is delivered without favour or prejudice.

Ambedkar's words remind us that however good a Constitution may be, it will fail if those entrusted to work it are indifferent or opportunistic. Democracy does not survive on documents alone; it lives in the daily choices of citizens, leaders, and institutions. Every generation must choose to make it anew, or risk unmaking it through complacency or malice. Only when accountability is enforced, liberty respected, and fraternity embraced can democracy be described as great - not because it endures, but because it inspires.

sales (OMS) and other programmes that provide poorer citizens with subsidised or free food rations. Improving nutrition also requires massive awareness building and educating people on what constitutes nutritious food. Programmes to teach women, often in charge of the family's meals, to grow kitchen gardens near their homes and which foods are nutritious and which are not can go a long way. School curricula should also feature lessons on nutrition from the earliest classes.

To address the critical issue of our children growing up stunted, a comprehensive, sustained, and well-coordinated effort involving the government, communities, schools, and families is essential. Bangladesh cannot aspire to achieve higher economic growth and development while so many of its children are being denied the opportunity to reach their full potential.

potholed roads, the insouciance of officials, judicial delays, decrepit hospitals and schools, or adulteration in food and drink, the common citizen is left bribing his way to redress. The protests at Jantar Mantar underline a grim reality: our elected representatives have rhino-thick skins, and morality finds no place in their scheme of things. It took a Sonam Wangchuk to prod the government into grudgingly acting on the CJP's demand.

Unwittingly, the CJP has become the harbinger of political change - a reminder that governments derive their power from the people, and that they ignore the people at their peril. India needs more such "from ground zero" movements that give voice to voiceless masses, and force governments to climb down from the high horse of hubris and unaccountability.

Yours, etc., Avinash Godbole, Dewas, 10 August.

Letters To The Editor | ✉ editor@thestatesman.com

Seat belt on

Sir, Apopos the report "Phuket-Delhi flight incident: Air India pilot's screening test requires confirmatory analysis" published today, we have evolved to walk on land and swim across water, but up in the air, we're entirely at the mercy of elements and a machine.

So, when a plane runs into rough weather, as an Air India Phuket-Delhi flight did, it can scar flyers, and scare those who've only been planning to make their first air trip. Unfortunately, such incidents are happening more frequently now, and global warming is the prime reason.

A study found that planes encounter moderate to severe turbulence 68,000 times a year. It's huge number. And the really bad news is that such incidents are bound to increase as climate change quickens. Flyer behaviour is a major problem. Injuries due



to air turbulence would reduce sharply if people heeded seat belt warnings as keeping the seat belt on is the best way to stay safe on a flight. While 75 per cent of turbulence can be predicted up to 18 hours in advance, and avoided, the turbulence, which hit the AI flight last week, can't be detected.

Yours, etc, Sanjay Chopra, Mohali, 10 August.

Planning

Sir, Your editorial today "Checkpoint Power," correctly highlights how strategic waterways influence global trade and energy security. India cannot eliminate such vulnerabilities, but it can reduce their impact

through practical planning.

Diversifying crude oil imports, expanding strategic petroleum reserves, and strengthening domestic renewable energy capacity should remain national priorities. Greater investment in ports, logistics, and alternative trade corridors will also improve resilience during geopolitical disruptions. At the same time, sustained diplomacy with partners across regions is essential to keep vital sea lanes open and stable. Economic security today depends not only on military preparedness but also on careful long-term planning and international cooperation.

Yours, etc., A. Myilsami, Coimbatore, 8 August.

More needed

Sir, India needs more "cockroaches" - movements that bite, irritate, and shame governments into action. Whether it is

'Delhi EV policy opens paths'

Second, while new registrations are being phased out, existing ICE vehicles can still remain on the road for many years. Over the longer term, policymakers will need to consider strategies for gradually reducing the use of these older vehicles as well. Those conversations may come later, but they will eventually become necessary if Delhi wants to achieve its clean mobility goals.

Schooling can put an end to child marriage

The writer is an entrepreneur and freelance writer.

"Since Thursday the Teesta has commenced to erode towards this emergency line, and the latter is now in danger of being washed away. Efforts are being made to protect the railway with boulders but the force of the current is so great that success is doubtful. If the emergency line is carried away, railway communication to and from the Dooars will be interrupted, and transhipment will be necessary until a new line can be constructed further inland."

- 14 Los Angeles Times runs international hotel complex (9)
- 16 As Sánchez drops rising, inside political adviser (8)
- 18 Okra on table; first impressions – it's rubbery (7)
- 19 Contract card game (ace high) (7)
- 20 Got very hot water in the Middle East when cycling (6)
- 23 Charge leaders of teachers organisation planning unauthorised protest (3,2)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

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PM Tarique Rahman's visit to India yet to be finalised, says Bangladesh minister

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Dhaka, 14 August

Bangladesh Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed on Thursday said that Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's proposed visit to India is yet to be finalised.

"None of the visits, including the visit to India, has been finalised yet. A final decision will be taken after discussions," she told reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Her comments come a few days after Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi's meeting with PM Rahman in Dhaka on 10 August, where they discussed about strengthening bilateral relations, people to people contact, and exploring new avenues for cooperation and collaboration.

Significantly, the Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi flew to New Delhi the following day and met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, lending added import



to the meeting in Dhaka with the Bangladesh PM, amid efforts by both sides to ease bilateral tensions.

The meetings also come after Dhaka voiced outrage over former prime minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the media online in New Delhi on 5 August, marking two years since she flew into exile in India following the so-called

student unrest.

On 11 August, India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson, in a key update, said that Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has been invited to India both for a bilateral visit and to participate in the outreach segment of the upcoming BRICS summit in New Delhi in his capacity as the BIMSTEC

Chairperson. "We have extended invitation for a bilateral visit as also for the BRICS outreach session which will be held here in Delhi," the MEA spokesperson said.

On Sunday, 9 August, Indian High Commissioner Trivedi had met Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman at State Guest House Padma. Besides meeting Prime Minister

Tarique Rahman, Trivedi also met Bangladesh Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed at the Secretariat in Dhaka.

Asked about Rahman's visits to India and Japan, Obaed said that no date had currently been fixed for either trip.

"The Japan visit will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. The Prime Minister is currently busy with various engagements," she said.

Referring to the scope for resolving bilateral issues through direct talks between the heads of state in New Delhi and Dhaka, she said India should make proper use of such opportunities.

"Whenever the leaders of the two countries talk and hold bilateral discussions, there is an opportunity to resolve many issues," she remarked, adding "There is an opportunity to improve relations with India. They can consider whether they will make use of this opportunity."

Afghanistan marks 5 years under the Taliban with safer streets but pleas for jobs and education

AGENCIES
Kabul, 14 August



As Afghanistan's Taliban rulers mark five years since sweeping back to power, some Kabul residents say they feel safer after decades of conflict and upheaval but stress the leaders should now focus on creating jobs and expanding access to schools in the country where girls above the age of 12 are banned from education.

The Taliban regained control of Afghanistan on 15 August, 2021, after it launched an offensive as the U.S. and other NATO troops withdrew from the country after two decades of war. The withdrawal led to chaotic scenes at and around Kabul's airport with thousands wanting to leave.

"Thank God, the past five years have passed in safety," said Mohammad Qasim, 30, reflecting on the anniversary that comes against a backdrop of economic hardship in a conflict-stricken country. "Our wish and hope from the government is to create job opportunities for the youth."

"We, along with the entire nation, call upon the govern-

ment to create employment opportunities for the youth and to encourage them to pursue education," he added.

Before the takeover, the Taliban stated that, upon assuming power, it would allow women access to education, employment and public participation, albeit in accordance with its interpretation of Islamic principles. Soon after it seized power, the Taliban imposed an indefinite ban on girls' education beyond the sixth grade and, a few months later, also banned higher education for women until "further notice."

Women also were banned from entering gyms, parks and public baths, from taking part in sports and traveling to distant locations without a "mahram," or male guardian. Taliban spokesperson

Zabihullah Mujahid has repeatedly said the administration is working to establish conditions under which girls and women can attend classrooms or university campuses in line with Islamic Sharia laws. The restrictions, nevertheless, remain in force.

While the U.N. has acknowledged that the country has become more stable since the takeover, it has warned that lasting stability cannot be possible unless the Taliban rulers—who remain isolated internationally—lift restrictions on women and girls, protect basic rights and address terrorism concerns.

"A reduction in conflict has brought tangible benefits for many Afghans and created opportunities to focus on recovery, development and regional economic cooperation," the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, or UNAMA, said in a statement ahead of the anniversary. It added, however, that the restrictions on women and girls impede Afghanistan's recovery and its reintegration with the international community.

TENDER

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
WATER RESOURCES ZONE, BANSWARA
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Date: 04.08.2026
e-NIB No. - 03/2026-27

On behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan, bids are invited from eligible bidders for the work of "Planning, Designing and Construction of Mota Dhamaniya Solar Based Micro Irrigation Project, Tehsil Suhagpura District Pratapgarh including O & M Period of 8 Years on Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) Single Responsibility turnkey basis" (Estimated Value of Work - Rs 4386.06 Lac including GST). Last date of submission of Bid is 02.09.2026. Detailed Bid & Bid document can be seen on & downloaded from official website (<http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> & <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>).

NIB Code No.: WRD2627A0255
UBN No.: WRD2627WLOB00523

DIPR/C/14451/2026

Chief Engineer

कृषि विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर
जोधपुर 342004, राजस्थान, भारत
ई-निविदा 07/2026-27
कृषि विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर द्वारा Lab Equipment for RAPS - 02 Project की खरीद के लिए ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा संबंधी विस्तृत विवरण एवं जानकारी www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in एवं <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध है।
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EID NO. : 2026_AGUJD_584194_1
नगर संचार/सी/26/9904

Sidho Kanho Birsha University, Purulia
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Sidho Kanho Birsha University (SKBU) invites E-Tender for Ground Preparation Work at Sidho Kanho Birsha University, Purulia. E tender ID: 2026_SKBU_1035509_1. For details, please visit: www.wbtenders.gov.in, www.skbu.ac.in/notice.
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E-Tender ID: 2026_WBP_1037326_1 (2nd Call)
WORK TITLE: Supply of spare parts / accessories / Tyre, Tube & Flaps and repair works of Government Vehicles and Motor Cycles of Cooch Behar District Police.
BID CLOSING DATE: 25-08-2026 at 18-00 hrs.
FOR MORE DETAILS LOGON TO: visit <http://www.wbtenders.gov.in>
Sd/-
Superintendent of Police
Cooch Behar

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग नगर खण्ड बीकानेर
क्रमांक : 1270 दिनांक : 07/08/26
Short Term Notice Inviting Bid - : 14 / 2026-27
Bids for the "Various Civil Works" are invited from interested bidders from 10.08.2026 (09:30 AM) to 17.08.2026 (06:00 PM) & Open date 18.08.2026 [11:00 AM], other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal <http://www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> & <http://sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in> of the state and departmental website. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 1846.54 Lakhs.
UBN No. :- PWD2627WSOB09525, PWD2627WSOB09526, PWD2627WSOB09527, PWD2627WSOB09529, PWD2627WSOB09531, PWD2627WSOB09532, PWD2627WSOB09534, PWD2627WSOB09536, PWD2627WSOB09537, PWD2627WSOB09538, PWD2627WSOB09539
Executive Engineer
PWD City Division, Bikaner
DIPR/C/14574/2026

TPSODL TP SOUTHERN ODISHA DISTRIBUTION LIMITED
(A Joint Venture of Tata Power and Government of Odisha)
PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT BPR North Star Building, 2nd Floor, Khodasingi, Berhampur, Odisha-760010
NOTICE INVITING TENDER / Dt.: 15.08.2026
TP Southern Odisha Distribution Ltd. invites tender from eligible vendors for following:
TPSODL/OT/2026-27/2500001258:
Rate Contract for supply of Earthing Device GI Earthing Spike
TPSODL/OT/2026-27/2500001267:
RC for engagement of Safety Inspector & Safety Leader
TPSODL/OT/2026-27/2500001266:
RC for deployment/hiring of safety Trainers at PAN TPSODL
Interested Bidders to submit Tender participation fee along with authorization letter through E-mail on or before 22.08.2026, 18:00 hrs for SI. No.: 1 and 25.08.2026, 18:00 hrs for SI. No.: 2 & 3. For detailed tender, please visit Tender Section on TPSODL website <https://www.tpsouthernodisha.com>

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PWD CIRCLE KOTA
No. 1701 Date :- 6/8/2026
Notice Inviting Bid
(NIT No. 12/2026-27)
Bid for Construction of Various Road work in Distt. Kota is Invited from interested bidders up to 06.00 PM of 31-08-2026 (Monday). Other Particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.rj.nic.in>) of the Rajasthan State. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 5420.20 Lacs.
UBN No. (PWD2627WSOB09094), (PWD2627WSOB09097), (PWD2627WSOB09098), (PWD2627WSOB09099), (PWD2627WSOB09100), (PWD2627WSOB09101), (PWD2627WSOB09110), (PWD2627WSOB09112), (PWD2627WSOB09115), (PWD2627WSOB09117), (PWD2627WSOB09119), (PWD2627WSOB09120), (PWD2627WSOB09121), (PWD2627WSOB09122), (PWD2627WSOB09123), (PWD2627WSOB09124), (PWD2627WSOB09127), (PWD2627WSOB09131), (PWD2627WSOB09132), (PWD2627WSOB09133), (PWD2627WSOB09134), (PWD2627WSOB09138), (PWD2627WSOB09142), (PWD2627WSOB09146), (PWD2627WSOB09148), (PWD2627WSOB09152), (PWD2627WSOB09154), (PWD2627WSOB09157).
Superintending Engineer
P.W.D. Circle Kota
DIPR/C/14407/2026

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
N.B.D.D. NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
Notice Inviting e-Tender by the E.E. / NBDD vide NleT No. 30 of 2026-27 of the E.E., NBDD.
Details of works will be seen in the above-mentioned NleT in the website:
www.wbtenders.gov.in & www.wbnorthbengaldev.gov.in
Executive Engineer
North Bengal Development Department

WB HIDCO
e-N.I.T. No. 14 (2nd Call) of G.M.(E) – I of 2026-27
Tender is invited for House Keeping "Operational Maintenance of TU-142 Aircraft, and Housekeeping & Sanitation etc., along with the services at AA-ID, New Town, Kolkata for One year", having experience in similar nature of works from any Govt. Organization. Last date of submitting application: 19-08-2026 at 2-00 P.M. Detailed may be seen in the websites at wbtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app & www.wbhidcoltd.com
General Manager (Engg.) – I

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग नृत डूंगरपुर
क्रमांक: टी.एस./निविदा नईल/2026-27/डी-1511 दिनांक: 07/08/2026
निविदा सूचना संख्या :- 02/2026-27
NIB Code:- PWD2627A2115
समस्या के समाधान सहित की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्य नृत डूंगरपुर के निम्नलिखित कार्य एवं सामग्री की खरीद के लिए आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा संबंधी विस्तृत विवरण एवं जानकारी के लिए www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in एवं <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध है।
UBN Code No: PWD2627A2115
UBN No: 1 PWD2627WSOB09438
UBN No: 2 PWD2627WSOB09443
UBN No: 3 PWD2627WSOB09448
UBN No: 4 PWD2627WSOB09450
UBN No: 5 PWD2627WSOB09452
UBN No: 6 PWD2627WSOB09458
UBN No: 7 PWD2627WSOB09460
UBN No: 8 PWD2627WSOB09465
UBN No: 9 PWD2627WSOB09468
UBN No: 10 PWD2627WSOB09469
UBN No: 11 PWD2627WSOB09472
UBN No: 12 PWD2627WSOB09473
UBN No: 13 PWD2627WSOB09474
UBN No: 14 PWD2627WSOB09476
UBN No: 15 PWD2627WSOB09482
UBN No: 16 PWD2627WSOB09484
UBN No: 17 PWD2627WSOB09486
(हरीशचन्द्र शर्मा)
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
नगर विकास विभाग
नृत डूंगरपुर
DIPR/C/14498/2026

WB HIDCO
e-Tender Notice No. 03 of 2026-2027
e-tender is invited for the work in the manner as described in the detailed e-tender notice available on websites: wbtenders.gov.in and wbhidcoltd.com & in e-tender portal. Last date of bid submission on 29-08-2026 up to 2-00 P.M. Details may also be available in the website: www.wbhidcoltd.com
General Manager (Engg.)-IV
WBHIDCO

European countries battle wildfires as record heat grips the continent

AGENCIES
Paris, 14 August

Firefighters across Europe struggled against multiple fires Friday as a new wave of record-breaking heat baked a swath of the continent, their task further complicated by exceptionally parched landscapes.

The historic temperatures are linked to human-caused climate change, and are hitting countries more used to long cold seasons and ill-equipped for this sort of heat, with limited air conditioning.

With France experiencing its driest year ever, a new fire raced through woodlands overnight in the Landes region on the southwest coast. The blaze forced more than 500 people to evacuate their homes in the town of Luglon as hundreds of firefighters deployed to the area, the regional administration said Friday. It is one of several fires scorching forests around France this week, including in normally cooler and wetter regions in the north and Brittany. A historic fire devoured forests near Bordeaux last month and pushed a quarter of a million people from their homes.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
KMDA TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No.: 46/SE/CE/HR&B/KMDA/W-28 (Part-VIII) of 2026-2026 (2nd Call)
Tender Id:- 2026_KMDA_5018309_1 to 2026_KMDA_5018309_4
Online e-Tender is invited by the Superintending Engineer, Circle-II, R&B Sector, KMDA, Unnayan Bhavan, Block-A, 7th Floor, Salt Lake, Kolkata-700091 from bonafide, experienced & resourceful firms/individuals/contractors, Consortium for the work, SL No., Name of Work, Value of the Work, Earnest Money, Time of Completion, (i) Development of G.C. Drive Lane from Soti Tala Street to D.D. Har Lane at ward no-12 under Rishra Municipality, Rs. 3,60,209/-, Rs. 7,204/-, 60 (SIXTY) days. (2) Development of Noor Alam Road at ward no 7 at ward no-4 under Rishra Municipality, Rs. 7,78,362/-, Rs. 15,567/-, 60 (SIXTY) days. (3) Development of N.S. Road Bye Lane (Shaw Samaj Gola) at ward no-07 under Rishra Municipality, Rs. 7,17,781/-, Rs. 14,356/-, 60 (SIXTY) days. (5) Development of roads at ward no 16 and 17 under Rishra Municipality in Puthura Urban Scheme (List of 2 nos roads are enclosed in Annexure-I), Rs. 30,13,871/-, Rs. 60,277/-, 60 (SIXTY) days. Last date & time of Online Bid submission: FOR SL NO. 1,2,3: 24/08/2026, Time: 14:00 hrs. FOR SL NO-5: 31/08/2026, Time: 14:00 hrs. For details contact the above office or visit both websites. (KMDA-392)
www.kmda.wb.gov.in
www.tenders.wb.gov.in in ICA: T16227(2026

कार्यालय नगर निगम जोधपुर
क्रमांक:- 8824 दिनांक:- 11.08.2026
--: अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 06/2026-27 :-
(UBN NO. DLB2627WSOB18121)
नगर निगम जोधपुर की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु नगर सरकार एवं राज्य सरकार के निम्नलिखित विभागों/सहायताधी/निगमों/कोई/राजकीय उपकरणों में पंजीकृत संस्थानों, जो कि उपयुक्त निर्धारित सेवा के संवेदकों को समझते हैं, से निष्पत्ति प्रत्यक्ष में ई-टेंडरिंग प्रक्रिया द्वारा ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। ई-निविदा से संबंधित कार्यों की विस्तृत जानकारी, निविदा की शर्तें आदि <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>, www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in एवं <https://sg.rajjasthan.gov.in/mcjs> पर देखी जा सकती है।
अतिरिक्त अभियन्ता (SWM)
नगर निगम जोधपुर
राज.संचार/सी/26/9909

Trump stops short of endorsing Netanyahu ahead of upcoming Israeli elections



UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Washington, 14 August

During the meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump in the Oval Office two weeks back, the US president reportedly shied away from endorsing the Israeli premier while asking him about how he was performing in the polls for the upcoming 27 October general elections in the Jewish nation.

Netanyahu paused when his accompanying advisors replied "Mr President, he is winning", according to a US official familiar with the exchange, reports *Axios*.

However, that is not the truth in reality as the Israeli premier is in a tough position, and Trump hasn't given him the endorsement he hoped for, despite being asked about it repeatedly by reporters.

Making the situation even more dire, there are only 75 days left until the polls, leaving Netanyahu short on time. Nonetheless, it is possible that Trump may endorse him, though that is yet to be seen.

Currently, Netanyahu's coalition is between 49 and

53 seats, well below the 68 seats it is holding and the 61 it needs to form a government, while the opposition parties are projected to win between 67 and 70 seats.

Furthermore, Netanyahu's main rival, former IDF Chief of Staff Gadi Eizenkot, also has higher favourability ratings in most surveys. But that does not necessarily spell defeat outright for Netanyahu, as he does not necessarily need to win outright, rather his immediate objective is to ensure that his opponents cannot form a government without support from Arab-Israeli parties. If neither side can assemble a governing majority, Netanyahu could remain caretaker prime minister for several more months until another election is held, which looks to be the most realistic possibility under the current polling. Further exacerbating this political uncertainty is the increasing tension between Trump and Netanyahu, which has become a bit strained and more complicated since the beginning of the Iran war.

Initially, in the first few weeks of the war, some of Trump's closest aides expected him to endorse Netanyahu. Trump was also publicly pressing for Netanyahu to receive a pardon that could bring his corruption trial to an end. But as the war dragged on, the two leaders' foreign policy objectives and domestic political interests saw an increasing shift, with differences emerging not only over Iran, but also over the conflicts in

Gaza and Lebanon.

Two senior US officials said Trump continues to like Netanyahu personally but has become frustrated with his decisions and policies.

"Bibi is his own worst enemy," Trump said, according to two people who recently discussed Netanyahu with the president, according to the *Axios* report.

The latest strain came after Netanyahu publicly rejected Trump's Gaza Board of Peace plan for disarming Hamas.

A senior US official said the White House viewed Netanyahu's statement largely as election-season politics rather than necessarily a definitive policy position.

"We understand Bibi's political needs. We have no problem with it as long as he continues to do what we ask — especially regarding restraining attacks in Gaza," the official said.

Netanyahu had spoken with Trump's envoy, Jared Kushner, the previous week and promised to give the Board of Peace plan a chance despite his reservations. He also agreed to curb Israeli attacks in Gaza to allow the proposed demilitarisation process to begin, according to a US official.

Since then, Jerusalem has significantly reduced its strikes in Gaza and the IDF has pulled back to the Yellow Line, where it was supposed to be positioned under the agreement.

Kushner is expected to travel to Israel next week to meet Netanyahu and other officials to discuss the Gaza plan, according to four people familiar with the matter.

Record-breaking rain floods Chiba, east of Tokyo, killing at least five people

AGENCIES

Tokyo, 14 August

Record-breaking rainfall flooded cities east of Tokyo overnight, killing at least five people, injuring over two dozen others and stranding thousands, authorities said Friday. As the deluge subsided, the Japan Meteorological Agency downgraded its most severe heavy-rain warning in more than a dozen municipalities in the prefecture of Chiba while forecasting more rain later Friday.

The prefecture saw unprecedented rainfall levels Thursday, with 15 centimetres (4.5 inches) in just one hour in Chiba City and 9.7 centimetres (3.8 inches) fell in one hour in the city of Sakura, JMA said. Photos and television footage showed widespread damage, with homes, cars and parts of railway tracks filled with muddy water.

Roads and dozens of homes were also flooded and some areas remained without power. Chiba prefecture officials said the five deaths included a man found floating on a flooded road in Ichikawa city and a woman who had been stuck in a flooded car in Sakura. Two others were presumed dead after being pulled from flooded cars in the cities of Kashiwa and Chiba. One person remained missing, and more than 30 people were injured, including five seriously, they said.

Meanwhile, the Ground Self-Defence Force said it dispatched buses to pick up about 4,000 stranded people who stayed overnight at the Soga train station, a local route that also serves Tokyo Disney, which did not report any damage. The operation ended later Friday.

BRIEFLY

Italian police recover stolen Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse paintings:



Milan: Italian authorities recovered three paintings by Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse worth millions of euros that were stolen earlier this year from a private museum near the northern city of Parma, police said Friday.

A statement from the Italian Carabinieri's art recovery squad said the paintings were discovered during searches ordered by prosecutors, but no details were given. The investigation is ongoing.

The three recovered paintings are "Fish" by Auguste Renoir, "Still Life with Cherries" by Paul Cézanne, and "Odalisque on the Terrace" by Henri Matisse. Authorities said the Cézanne was valued at 6 million euros (\$7 million), the Renoir at 3 million euros (\$3.5 million), and the Matisse at 20,000 euros (\$23,000).

The heist at the Magnani Rocca Foundation, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Parma, took place on the night of 22-23 March, with thieves forcing open the entrance door, police said.

Local media reported that the thieves took the paintings in less than three minutes and escaped across the museum gardens. Established in 1977, the foundation hosts the collection of art historian Luigi Magnani and also includes works by Dürer, Rubens, Van Dyck, Goya and Monet.

The museum believes a structured and organised gang was responsible for the theft, which the alarm interrupted, local media reported.

The crime followed a series of high-profile heists at major European museums, including the theft in October of French crown jewels and other items worth 88 million euros (\$101 million) from the Louvre in Paris.

N Korea slams US-S Korea military drills, threatens strong response:



Seoul: North Korea on Friday threatened unspecified stern steps against the United States and South Korea ahead of their upcoming military drills, which Pyongyang called a war rehearsal that would be more provocative than last year.

The warning is typical of the harsh rhetoric that North Korea often deploys ahead of

major US-South Korean military exercises and suggests the country could conduct more missile tests in coming days. Experts say North Korea has often used its rivals' drills as a pretext to ramp up its testing activities to expand its weapons arsenals and promote public support for leader Kim Jong Un.

The US and South Korean militaries are to start their major summertime Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises Monday and have described their scope as similar to past years. The allies have said the 11-day exercises are meant to strengthen their readiness against North Korean threats and reiterated that they are defensive in nature.

In a statement carried by state media Friday, North Korea's Foreign Ministry called the U.S.-South Korean training "a rehearsal for an aggressive war" that is triggering a different level of instability in the region.

"It is our consistent principle of ensuring security to respond to a new level of a threat with a new level of a deterrent," the statement said. North Korea "will more clearly express its stance on the enemies to cope with any threats and challenges through the responsible and decisive exercise of the right to legitimate self-defence."

North Korea also said the drills would be of a "more serious provocative nature and dangerousness than last year" and involve all the military assets and war-fighting modes of the US and South Korea, a claim that those countries haven't said.

Two UAE tankers attacked while transiting Strait of Hormuz

AGENCIES

Washington, 14 August

Two tankers owned by Abu Dhabi's state-owned oil and gas company ADNOC were attacked Thursday evening while transiting the Strait of Hormuz, the company said. It added that the attack caused no injuries and that "the situation has been brought under control."

The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Center said two vessels were reported to have suffered minor damage when attacked by drones while transiting the Strait of Hormuz. It did not identify them as the ADNOC ships but it appeared to be the same incident.

The UAE's Foreign Ministry blamed the attacks on Iran and said they were a "flagrant violation" of the United Nations' principles of freedom of navigation.

"Targeting commercial shipping and using the Strait of Hormuz as a tool of economic coercion or blackmail represents acts of piracy by Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, and constitutes a direct threat to the stability of the region, its peoples, and global energy security," the Foreign Ministry said. There was no immediate response from Iran. Activists marched through the occupied West Bank bringing food and water to Palestinians who have been under siege by Israeli settlers for days. Three Palestinian families in the town of Qusra



have been unable to leave their homes for nearly a week after settlers surrounded the area. Israeli troops intervened multiple times, but the settlers have

kept returning. The standoff in the northern West Bank town of Qusra is the latest in a wave of settler violence convulsing the territory, which Israel seized

in the 1967 West Asian war and which would make up part of a future Palestinian state.

Defence Minister Israel Katz instructed the army to prepare a plan to transfer power to the police to enforce civilian related matters, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

In Iraq, a drone was intercepted over Irbil in the country's semiautonomous northern Kurdish region, in an area of the city where a number of hotels and consulates are located.

The regional counterterrorism service said in a statement that there were no casualties. It was not immediately clear who had launched the drone, but since the beginning of the war between Iran and the United States and Israel, Iran and Iranian-backed

Iraqi militant groups have launched regular attacks on US military and diplomatic facilities in Iraq and on bases of exiled Iranian Kurdish dissident groups. President Donald Trump's son-in-law and negotiator Jared Kushner will travel to West Asia next week to try to advance plans for an end to the conflict in Gaza after a deal recently announced by the Trump administration ran into Israeli opposition. An official with the Board of Peace, the body Trump established to oversee the fragile ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, said Kushner, board high representative Nickolay Mladenov, and executive board member and former British PM Tony Blair would arrive in Israel on Sunday.

Russian drones kill a woman and 9-year-old son at home as Ukrainian civilian casualties surge



AGENCIES

Kyiv, 14 August

Russian jet-powered drones struck a home in northern Ukraine on Friday, killing a 29-year-old woman and her 9-year-old son, officials said. The strike came a day after the United Nations said July was the deadliest month for Ukrainian civilians since the weeks following Moscow's all-out invasion of its neighbour more than four years ago.

At least 437 civilians were killed and 2,610 wounded last month, the U.N. monitoring mission in Kyiv said, as Russia escalated its bombing of Ukrainian towns and cities. That was 70 per cent higher than in July last year and 30 per cent up on June of this year. Overall, since Russia's invasion on 24 February, 2022, U.N. human rights monitors say the war has killed at least 16,874 civilians, including 820 children, and wounded 51,273, including 3,126 children.

"Every month this year the number of killed and injured civilians has increased. That trend accelerated sharply in July," said Danielle Bell, head of the U.N. human rights

monitoring mission in Kyiv. "The number of civilian casualties in July was the highest we documented in a single month since March 2022." The Russian strike in northern Ukraine's Sumy region early Friday also wounded four other people, including the dead boy's father and grandmother, who were hospitalised with severe burns, the regional military administration chief Oleh Hryhorov said.

In Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, a Russian glide bomb demolished six floors of a 10-story apartment block, killing one person and wounding 16 others, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Russia is launching around 220 glide bombs every day against settlements near the front line in eastern and southern Ukraine, Zelenskyy said in a social media post Friday. Russian forces crush settlements with the brute force of 3,000-pound (1,300-kg) glide bombs, artillery, missiles and drones, then send in infantry units to attack the exposed defenders. The tactic has rendered many towns and villages uninhabitable.

New aircraft carrier heads toward West Asia after reports of issues on long-deployed USS Lincoln

AGENCIES

Washington, 14 August

The Pacific-based aircraft carrier USS George Washington has begun heading toward West Asia as reports have emerged of mental health and supply issues aboard the long-deployed USS Abraham Lincoln.

The Lincoln has been supporting the U.S. war against Iran, and its deployment has included a record-setting uninterrupted time at sea of more than 260 days. Several Democratic lawmakers are pressing for accountability from the Pentagon over conditions aboard the carrier, which Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Thursday said were "completely misrepre-



sented." Extended deployments of carriers during the Iran conflict have raised concerns about the impact on service members who are away from home for long periods as well as the increasing strain on the ship and its equipment. While renewed hostilities between the U.S. and Iran have calmed in recent weeks,

the Navy has reimposed a blockade on Iranian ports in the crucial Strait of Hormuz, and the Trump administration has offered no clarity on how it intends to wind down the war.

Hegseth told reporters that the U.S. can maintain the blockade "indefinitely."

The USS George Washington

left port in Da Nang, Vietnam, last week, a Navy statement said. The carrier, along with a cruiser and a destroyer, have since been spotted crossing the Singapore Strait.

A Navy official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to detail sensitive ship details, confirmed that the Washington was in the Strait of Malacca, which links the Pacific and Indian oceans and puts the carrier on a course to head into the Indian Ocean. *The Wall Street Journal* reported earlier that the Washington would replace the Lincoln as one of the two aircraft carriers now stationed in West Asia.

The move would leave the waters of the Pacific without a U.S. carrier presence for an unknown period of time.

Reform UK's Nigel Farage beats a slate of fringe candidates in election boycotted by major parties

AGENCIES

Clacton on Sea, 14 August

Nigel Farage regained his seat in Parliament on Friday, beating a field of fringe candidates led by trash-can-wearing comic Count Binface in a special election boycotted by mainstream parties that called it a farce.

Farage, leader of the anti-immigration Reform UK party who some see as a possible next prime minister, abruptly quit his

seat in July amid an investigation into whether he failed to report a 5 million pound gift from an overseas crypto billionaire. He denied wrongdoing and ran again for the seat to prove he had voters' support, regaining it with 63 per cent of Thursday's vote in an unusual election on the hottest day of the year. Binface, a serial candidate who has challenged prime ministers past and present, represented a protest vote and finished



second in a field of 34 candidates - many of them also jokers - with about 27 per cent, according to the results announced Friday.

Farage hailed the result as an "overwhelming win" that increased his vote share over the last election, but it's hard to draw broad conclusions from the election given the lack of genuine rivals and the fact that Farage has long been popular in the conservative constituency on the east coast of England.

"Today the voters in Clacton have stuck up two fingers to the entire political establishment," Farage said.

LEISURE

BETLE BAILEY

TIGER

DADDY DAZE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD

Answers to "?" clues are suggested by words forming the puzzle's title: Tw FOR 10

ACROSS										DOWN									
1	?	(5,3)	2	Several	(1,3)														
6	Ready	money	(4)	3	Bay	(5)													
8	Fruit	skin	(4)	4	Profuse	(7)													
9	Very	hazardous	(8)	5	Roost	(5)													
10	See	title	(6,4)	6	Narnia	novelist	(1,1,5)												
12	Type	of	road	(6)	7	Extinguish	(5,3)												
14	?	(6,4)	11	?	(5,3)														
15	?	(6,4)	13	Greatly	surprise	(7)													
19	Bury	(8)	14	Follow	a	winding	course	(7)											
20	Snare	(4)	16	Means	of	control	(5)												
21	Potato	(Informal)	(4)	17	Japanese	bed	(5)												
22	Fast	runner	(8)	18	Palm	fruit	(4)												

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS:					DOWN:				
1.	Read	13.	Taurus	8.	Additional				
2.	Huddle	16.	Arrest	12.	Maltose				
3.	Surroundings	18.	Tutti	14.	Entity				
9.	Learn	19.	Komodo	2.	Annals				
10.	Enabled	Dragon	3.	Hinder					
11.	Ensign	20.	Appeal	4.	Brigade				
		21.	Viva	5.	Legal				
				6.	Moon				

NEED TO KNOW

SILIGURI

- Police: 100/2662101
Siliguri Metropolitan Police Control Room: 2662210
Siliguri Woman Police Station: 663885
- Fire Services (District): 101/250222/2501867
- Siliguri Municipal Corporation: 2432804
- NJP Railway Station Enquiry / Reservation: 131 / 138 / 2691800
- Bus Services (NBSTC) 2514920
Sikim Nationalized Transport: 2512082
Bagdogra Airport Terminal Manager: 2698456
- Indian Airlines: 2511495 / 2698022
- Medical Services: Ambulance 102
Siliguri Hospital: 2435736 / 2436526
North Bengal Medical College & Hospital: 2535478 / 2535483
- University of North Bengal: http://www.nbu.ac.in, Contact: 2776366
- Darjeeling
- District Magistrate: 0354 22542333, 22542666, 2256301 (O) 0354 2256182 (R) SP- 0354 2254270
- Police Station: 0354 2254422
- Darjeeling Municipality: 0354 2254406
- District Hospital: 2254218, 2252131
Darjeeling and Doars Nursing Home (Planters Hospital): 2254337
- Red Cross Society Ambulance: 2256352
- Fire Station: 2259333, 2252121
- Kurseong
- Police: 03542330222
- Fire: 0345234411
- Municipality: 0354 2344286, 2345195
- Fire Brigade (cob): 03582 225434
- Hospital: 0354 2344333, 2345690, 2345473, Emergency Ward: 2345460
- Cooch Behar
- Kotowali Police Station: 03582 226100
- Fire Brigade (cob): 03582 225434
- Cooch Behar Sadar Hospital: 03582 222243
- Ambulance (cob): 03582 227693

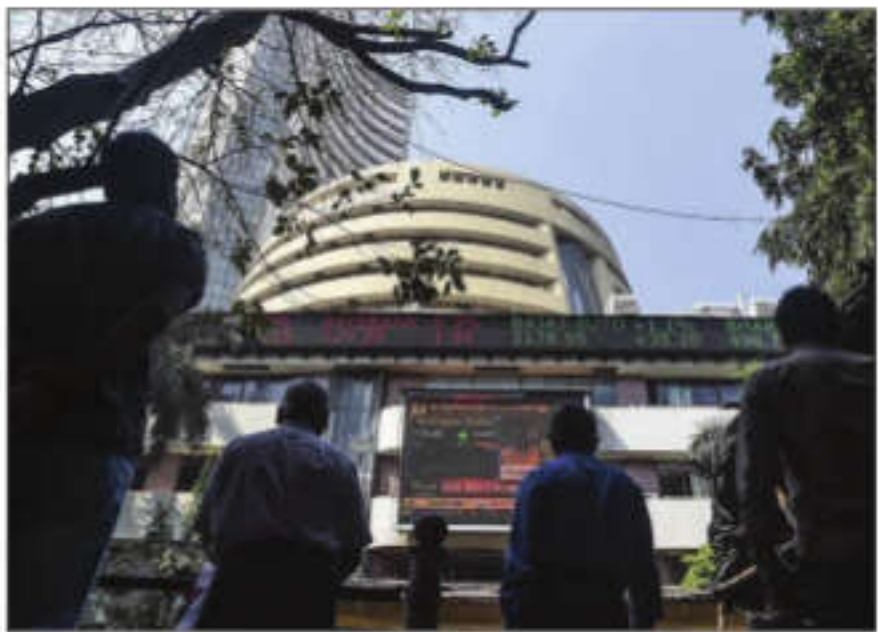
Stock markets remain under pressure; selling in metal, auto and IT

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

The Indian Stock Markets on Friday remained under pressure. Nifty extended losing streak to the fourth consecutive session. Selling was seen in metal, auto and IT stocks weighed on the benchmarks.

At close, the Sensex was down 70.71 points or 0.09 per cent at 78,009.25, and the Nifty was down 29.85 points or 0.12 per cent at 24,366. Nifty midcap index fell 0.5 per cent and smallcap index declined 0.7 per cent. For the week, BSE Sensex shed 0.6 per cent and Nifty lost 0.8 per cent.

Among the sectors, Nifty Media was up 0.96 per cent and Consumer Durables up by 0.76 per cent. However, all other sectoral indices ended in the red.



In some of the key sectors, Pharma, Metal, PSU Bank, and Auto indices declined over half a per cent while Bank Nifty declined 0.25 per cent, and Financial Services index slipped 0.43 per cent.

On Nifty, around 39 stocks ended in the red in the Nifty 50 index. Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Jio Financial Services, and Asian Paints were the top

laggards while Apollo Hospitals, Bharti Airtel, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone ended as the top gainers in the index.

Nearly 160 stocks touched 52-week high including Aether Industries, Welspun Living, Honasa Consumer, HEG, Minda Corporation, Pidilite Industries, Ajanta Pharma, United Spirits, Neuland

Laboratories, Welspun Corp, Gland Pharma, Radico Khaitan, One 97 Communications (Paytm) and Netweb Technologies, among others. Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited said, "Markets remained range-bound through the week amid elevated crude and persistent global uncertainty. While softer-than-expected U.S. labour market data initially supported expectations of a patient Fed, the subsequent rebound in crude shifted focus back to inflation risks and evolving geopolitical developments. Domestically, better-than-expected corporate earnings, stability in the rupee, moderation in the domestic 10-year bond yield and a gradual improvement in FII participation provided support to the domestic macro environment despite external headwinds."

Wholesale price inflation eases to 9.78 pc in July, food prices remain concern

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

India's wholesale price inflation moderated slightly to 9.78 per cent in July 2026 from 9.87 per cent in June, even as food-related wholesale prices continued to show an upward trend, according to provisional data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Wednesday.

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for all commodities stood at 1100 in July, marginally lower than 110.2 recorded in June.

Inflation across primary articles accelerated to 8.52 per cent in July from 7 per cent in the previous month. Manufacturing inflation also picked up, rising to 8.29 per cent from 7.48 per cent. In contrast, inflation in the fuel and power basket eased sharply

to 20.05 per cent from 27.41 per cent in June.

The ministry said mineral oils, food items, basic metals, non-food articles, manufactured food products, and chemicals were among the key contributors to wholesale price inflation during the month.

The WPI Food Index, which combines food articles under primary articles with manufactured food products, rose to 6.65 per cent in July from 6.14 per cent in June.

Within primary articles, inflation in food articles remained broadly stable at 5.44 per cent, compared with 5.49 per cent in June. However, non-food articles saw a significant acceleration, with inflation rising to 17.66 per cent from 11.07 per cent. Mineral prices also increased, pushing inflation in the minerals category to 13.28 per cent

from 9.45 per cent.

The fuel and power segment provided some relief to overall wholesale inflation. Mineral oils inflation fell to 32.4 per cent in July from 46.48 per cent in June, while inflation in crude petroleum and natural gas declined to 26.99 per cent from 34.75 per cent.

Electricity prices also moved into positive territory, with inflation at 1.09 per cent in July compared with a contraction of 0.76 per cent in June.

Price pressures strengthened across several manufacturing segments. Inflation in manufactured food products rose to 8.89 per cent in July from 7.2 per cent a month earlier.

Textile inflation climbed to 12.8 per cent from 10.85 per cent, while inflation in basic metals edged up to 12.56

per cent from 12.31 per cent. Chemicals and chemical products recorded inflation of 13.12 per cent, up from 12.78 per cent in June.

The ministry also revised the final WPI index for May 2026 to 110.1 from the earlier provisional reading of 109.9. As a result, WPI inflation for May was revised upwards to 9.88 per cent from the previously reported 9.68 per cent.

The final May figures were based on a weighted response rate of 98.14 per cent. For the provisional July estimate, the weighted response rate stood at 78.55 per cent.

Meanwhile, the all-India Output Producer Price Index for all commodities remained unchanged at 109.9 in July. The Input Producer Price Index for the manufacturing sector stood at 105.9 during the month.

Technology-driven faster logistics key to Viksit Bharat: Piyush Goyal

AGENCIES
New Delhi, 14 August

Technology is helping make India's logistics ecosystem simpler, faster and more efficient, strengthening the competitiveness of domestic industry and supporting the country's manufacturing and export ambitions, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Friday as the Logistics Data Bank (LDB) achieved the milestone of tracking 10 crore EXIM containers.

He said efficient logistics would play a crucial role in strengthening manufacturing, expanding India's presence in global markets and realising the Prime Minister's vision of a Viksit Bharat.

"The tracking of 10 crore containers through the Logistics Data Bank is an important milestone in India's logistics journey. Technology is helping us make logistics simpler, faster and more efficient, while improving the competitiveness of Indian industry," Goyal said.



"Efficient logistics will be central to strengthening manufacturing, expanding our presence in global markets and realising the Prime Minister's vision of a Viksit Bharat," Goyal added.

The Logistics Data Bank provides end-to-end visibility of EXIM container movement across India through RFID-based tracking technology.

The platform currently offers visibility into 100 per cent of the country's EXIM container movement, covering 19 ports and 32 container terminals. Its network spans 103 Inland

Container Depots (ICDs), 439 Container Freight Stations (CFSs), empty yards, parking plazas and industrial zones, along with 89 manufacturing Special Economic Zones (SEZs), 5,569 railway stations, 269 toll plazas and three Integrated Check Posts.

The platform enables stakeholders to monitor container movement across the logistics chain and generates analytics related to dwell time, transit time, and port and terminal performance.

The data helps logistics operators, exporters, importers and policymakers identify bottlenecks and improve operational efficiency.

In September 2025, Piyush Goyal launched LDB 2.0, which significantly enhanced the platform's capabilities.

The upgraded version introduced high-sea tracking of India's export containers and provided multimodal shipment visibility, allowing users to monitor cargo movements more comprehensively.

National vendors' meet boosts rooftop solar push



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

A National Vendors' Meet under the PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSG:MBY) was jointly organised by the West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL) and REC Ltd in Kolkata to strengthen implementation of the scheme and accelerate rooftop solar adoption across West Bengal.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Santanu Basu, IAS, Principal Secretary, Power Department, Government of West Bengal. Representatives from REC Ltd, CESC, the state government, national and state vendors, financial institutions and training partners attended the event.

Addressing the gathering, Mr Basu emphasised that stronger collaboration among stakeholders would help speed up rooftop solar installations and ensure effective implementation of the Centre's flagship scheme.

Ms S. Jayanthi, Executive Director, REC Ltd, urged national vendors to deploy adequate manpower and expand their channel partner networks across the state. She assured stakeholders of REC's continued support in resolving issues faced by vendors, consumers and distribution companies.

REC officials also highlighted measures to improve vendor participation, maintain installation quality, strengthen vendor ratings and expand training and capacity-building programmes.

RBI policy reset spurs capital hopes

AGENCIES
New Delhi, 14 August

India's banking sector could attract nearly \$50 billion due to the Reserve Bank of India's recent liquidity measures and regulatory changes, potentially strengthening capital buffers and liquidity, a report said on Friday.

The report from consulting company Unicus Consultech said banks have already mobilised \$36.7 billion under the RBI's FCNR(B) deposit scheme and industry estimates suggest inflows could approach \$50 billion before the special window closes.

"Indian banks are entering a new phase of regulatory transformation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) advancing reforms across liquidity, credit risk, capital adequacy, customer conduct, and artificial intelligence

governance," the report said. The agency said the FCNR(B) swap facility and the temporary removal of NRI deposit rate ceilings have made foreign currency deposits more attractive by reducing hedging costs and enabling banks to offer materially higher rates.

"The RBI's latest actions indicate that Indian banking regulation is moving beyond traditional prudential oversight toward an integrated framework covering capital, risk, customer outcomes, and technology governance," said Sagar Lakhani, Partner, Unicus Consultech.

"While liquidity-support measures such as the FCNR(B) swap facility are attracting substantial foreign capital, the simultaneous introduction of forward-looking credit-risk provisioning and AI governance requirements reflects the regulator's focus on building

a more resilient and future-ready banking sector," Lakhani said.

Banks that successfully align capital planning, risk management, and technology governance will be best positioned to navigate this transition, he forecasted.

The transition to the ECL framework and revised Basel III credit-risk norms represents one of the most significant shifts in banking regulation in recent years, the report said.

The reforms prompted banks to reassess how they price loans, allocate capital, measure profitability, and manage portfolio risk.

Another report said that India's capital account surplus is now expected to increase to approximately \$108 billion, compared with a surplus of just \$2 billion in the previous year.

SEBI eases rules for bond platforms

AGENCIES
New Delhi, 14 August

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has widened the range of products that can be offered by online bond platform providers (OBPPs), allowing them to distribute securities and investment products regulated by the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) in GIFT City. The move is expected to improve ease of doing business while expanding investment opportunities for retail investors. Under the revised framework, OBPPs can now offer products regulated by SEBI, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and IFSCA.

SEBI has also permitted the distribution of specified tax-saving bonds issued under Section 54EC of the Income-tax Act, 1961, and Section 85 of the Income-tax Act, 2025, through these platforms.

The regulator said IFSCA-regulated products must be offered in line with the framework governing SEBI-registered stockbrokers operating in GIFT City's International Financial Services Centre. Such offerings must also comply with the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), including overseas investment rules and limits under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS). To avoid confusion, online bond platforms must clearly identify IFSCA-regulated products as international or overseas investments and specify the applicable grievance redressal mechanism.

Railways collected ₹168 crore in irregular superfast surcharge: CAG

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

The Indian Railways collected around ₹168 crore in superfast surcharge from passengers on trains that did not meet the prescribed speed criteria, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has found.

The irregular collection took place between April 2022 and March 2023 and involved more than 190 trains, according to the latest audit findings. Under railway rules, a train can qualify for the superfast surcharge only if its average speed in both the up and down directions is at least 55 kmph.

The average speed is determined using the end-to-end distance covered by a train and the corresponding journey time. The audit found that the

issue persisted despite the Railways acknowledging the discrepancy.

According to the CAG, the matter was raised with the national transporter in August 2024, following which the Railways accepted the audit's observations and informed the auditor about corrective measures being considered.

However, a subsequent examination of data from the Integrated Coach Management System (ICMS) showed that 100 of the 190 trains flagged by the audit were still operating below the 55-kmph threshold as of March 2026.

Passengers travelling on these trains continued to be charged the superfast surcharge, the CAG said, despite instructions issued by the Ministry of Railways in November 2025.

The continued levy indicates that the ministry's directions had not been fully implemented by the concerned railway zones, according to the audit report.

The auditor has called on the Railways to review and revise train schedules to ensure that the superfast classification accurately reflects actual operating speeds.

It has recommended that only trains meeting the prescribed speed requirement should be designated as superfast and subjected to the additional surcharge.

The findings raise questions over the implementation of railway pricing rules and the mechanism used to ensure that passengers are charged additional fares only when the prescribed service criteria are met.

Finance Minister, RBI Governor discuss cross-border payments at BRICS Finance meet



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra co-chaired the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting with discussions focusing on financial stability, cross-border payments and cooperation among central banks.

The RBI said Malhotra underlined the importance of central banks in safeguarding price and

financial stability. He also stressed that greater coordination among monetary authorities would be important for developing a financial system that is more resilient, efficient and inclusive.

During the meeting, the RBI Governor reviewed the progress of various central bank initiatives across key areas. These included information security, fintech, cross-border payment systems, sustainable finance and capacity building.

The discussions also covered the Contingent Reserve Arrangement, a

financial safety mechanism aimed at providing liquidity support to BRICS economies facing short-term balance of payments pressures.

On the sidelines of the BRICS meeting, Sitharaman held bilateral discussions with Indonesia's Vice Minister of Finance Junda Agung in Jaipur.

The talks covered financial sector development, international financial services, trade and mechanisms to deepen economic ties between India and Indonesia.

Sitharaman highlighted the momentum in bilateral

relations following high-level visits between the two countries. The Finance Ministry said India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia last month had further strengthened the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two nations.

The two sides discussed opportunities for greater cooperation in international financial services, including sharing expertise on the establishment and operation of financial centres. They also reviewed the India-Indonesia Economic and Financial Dialogue and

explored ways to strengthen bilateral trade. Local currency transactions were another key area of discussion, as both countries seek to deepen financial linkages and facilitate trade.

India and Indonesia also agreed on the need for closer coordination in multilateral institutions, particularly as members of the Global South.

The discussions highlighted the importance of sustaining economic growth amid continued global uncertainties. Both sides pointed to structural reforms, infrastructure

investment and Digital Public Infrastructure as important drivers of macroeconomic stability and long-term growth.

Agung also acknowledged India's economic performance and resilience, according to the Ministry of Finance.

The BRICS meeting comes as member countries seek to strengthen financial cooperation and build greater resilience against global economic and financial shocks through closer coordination among central banks and finance ministries.



Rahul, Kharge raise alarm over alleged Chinese military activity in Arunachal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress President and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday raised serious concerns over reports of increased Chinese military activity along the Line of Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh, demanding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government come clean on the situation and clarify whether Indian troops have lost access to traditional patrolling areas.

In separate posts on social media platform X, the two senior Congress leaders accused the Modi government of maintaining silence over the alleged developments and questioned whether the government was prioritising



the Prime Minister's political image over national security. Gandhi alleged that the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) had prevented Indian troops from patrolling at several places in Arunachal Pradesh, describing the reports as "extremely concerning". He also alleged that instead of taking steps to stop China, the government was attempting to prevent the news from reaching the public by putting

pressure on the media. "In Arunachal Pradesh, China has stopped our army from patrolling at several places ~ this is extremely worrying," Gandhi said in his post. "But even more worrying is the silence from Rajnath Singh ji, Amit Shah ji and Narendra Modi ji. Instead of stopping China, the Modi government is putting pressure on the media to stop this news."

Gandhi was referring to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Home Minister Amit Shah while demanding an explanation from the government over the reported situation along the sensitive border. He also invoked the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a violent confrontation with Chinese troops, arguing that the government's subsequent handling of the border dispute had already raised questions about transparency.

"The country still remembers the Prime Minister's statement after Galwan, in which, by saying that China had not taken even an inch of our land, he caused immense damage to India," Gandhi said.

"Even today, the same operation to save his image is continuing ~ and a Prime Minister who prioritises his fake image over the country's

security is extremely dangerous for the country," he alleged.

Kharge, in his post, sought specific answers from the government about the reported situation in the Taksing sector of Arunachal Pradesh and the status of Indian access to designated patrolling points.

"After Galwan, now Arunachal Pradesh?" Kharge asked, describing the reports as "disturbing" and alleging that China was attempting to push further into areas of Arunachal Pradesh, which he described as "an inalienable part of our nation".

Kharge questioned whether the PLA had expanded its presence near Taksing and whether India had lost regular access to Shera-5, a designated Patrolling Point. He also sought an explanation for reports that Indian patrolling was limited during winter in the sensitive sector while Chinese troops maintained a year-round presence.



BSF personnel with a dog squad keep a vigil along the India-Bangladesh border at Lankamura as security arrangements intensify ahead of Independence Day, in Agartala on Friday. AGENCIES

Border vigil

1947 Partition testament to Congress' cowardice, says CM Yogi Adityanath

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow, 14 August

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath today said that the partition of the country in 1947 is a testament to the cowardice of the Congress party.

"Had Sardar Patel been Prime Minister at that time, or had the country's leadership like Prime Minister Narendra Modi, no one would have been able to harm our country," he claimed while addressing a programme organised at Lucknow's Lok Bhavan to commemorate the Partition Horrors Memorial Day.

Yogi Adityanath further claimed that: "If the country had leadership like PM Modi in 1947, our country would never have been divided and millions of people would not have been massacred."

Earlier, the Chief Minister joined a 'silent Padyatra' from Patel statue to Lok Bhavan in Lucknow, in which Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak and other BJP leaders participated.

Yogi alleged that due to the Congress party's cowardice, the partition resulted in the massacre of millions of Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs.

The Chief Minister said that India was enslaved for two reasons, one of which was internal conflict. Due to internal conflicts and conspiracies based on caste, region and language, the country became weak. This resulted in slavery.

"Because of these internal conflicts, we were unable to fight collectively. Its adverse consequences were inevitable. The country became enslaved. India, which had been united since time immemorial, was fragmented."

The Chief Minister further added that after Partition, during Congress rule, the enemy properties were distributed. Private properties were created. What should have happened was that Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs who had come from Pakistan should have been helped to settle, but they were not helped. Land was distributed arbitrarily.

My WhatsApp account was closed under BJP's political pressure, Ajay Rai alleges



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow, 14 August

Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee President Ajay Rai has alleged that digital action is being taken against him for raising his voice against the BJP government's policies, alleged scams and failures.

He claimed that his WhatsApp account had been banned under political pressure and that he was not even being given the right to seek a review of the decision.

In a Facebook post on Friday, Mr Rai said he was being punished for continuously raising his voice against the BJP government's policies and its alleged failures. He alleged that his WhatsApp account had been closed under political pressure from the BJP.

The Congress leader said that, along with the banning of his account, his right to seek a review had also been taken away. Calling the move dictatorial, he said that no matter how many digital tactics the BJP uses, the Congress will not back down from fighting for the people.

He stated that the Congress would continue to raise public issues from the streets to Parliament and question the government's policies.

Rai demanded that WhatsApp and Meta immediately restore his account. He said that attempts to suppress voices on social media and other digital platforms were against democratic values.

Allahabad HC dismisses PIL against UP Kanwar route meat shop closures



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Prayagraj, 14 August

The Allahabad High Court has dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) challenging the closure of chicken and mutton shops on the Kanwar route during the month of Shravan in Uttar Pradesh.

The court ruled that the petitioner is a lawyer and has filed the petition in

publicity interest, not public interest. The order was passed by a division bench of Chief Justice Arun Bhasin and Justice Kshitij Shailendra here on Friday.

The PIL was filed by Amroha lawyer Nasir Farooq. The PIL stated that the police had closed chicken shops located off the Kanwar route in Amroha by issuing undated notice and this has jeopardised the livelihoods of hundreds of people.

The public interest litigation sought the High Court's intervention in the matter and sought the cancellation of the undated notice issued.

The petitioner argued that the notice only mentioned four Mondays, but chicken and mutton shops were not allowed to open throughout the month of Shravan.

Mayawati condemns 'purification' of Kharge's stage, demands strict action

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow, 14 August

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) President Mayawati on Friday described the alleged 'purification' of the stage used by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge after his event in Haldwani, Uttarakhanda, as highly condemnable and concerning. She demanded that the government take strict legal action against those responsible, whom she described as casteist and feudal elements.

In a statement posted on social media platform X, Mayawati said that the stage used by Kharge in Haldwani was allegedly 'purified' after his event because he is a Dalit. She added that the



matter had also been raised in Parliament and described the incident as highly condemnable and concerning. The BSP president said the government should take prompt and stringent action under the law against those responsible and ensure that they are brought to justice.

She also urged the leadership of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to take the incident seriously. Mayawati said there were calls to deprive

economically better-off Dalits of reservation benefits and added that such incidents underscored the need for serious consideration of the issue.

Mayawati also described the attack on Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief Sukhbir Singh Badal in Nanded, Maharashtra, as extremely unfortunate and concerning. She said the Central and Maharashtra governments should take the incident seriously and initiate strict legal action against those responsible.

The BSP chief said governments must take such incidents seriously and ensure stringent action against the culprits. She also stressed the need for effective measures to curb social discrimination and violence.

Monsoon returns to Uttar Pradesh, heavy rains submerge low-lying areas

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow, 14 August

The monsoon has become active again in Uttar Pradesh with wide spread rains were reported from almost all the 75 districts since on Friday.

On early Friday morning, intermittent drizzle has been falling in 10 cities, including Lucknow, Barabanki, Bareilly, and Sambhal. The remaining districts are cloudy. A rain alert has been issued for all 75 districts today with heavy rain is possible in 15 districts.

Besides, on Thursday, Agra recorded the highest rainfall of 66 mm. Lalitpur received 60 mm, Etah 57 mm, Ballia



36.4 mm, Azamgarh 28.8 mm, and Gorakhpur 26.3 mm. The rain brought down temperatures and brought relief from the humid heat.

According to the Meteorological Department, the monsoon has reactivated in the state. Its effects will be felt until 17 August. During this period,

intermittent light to moderate rain is expected in many areas. Due to the widespread rainfall, maximum temperatures may drop by four to six degrees Celsius over the next three days.

On Friday, a heavy rain warning was issued for 28 districts in the state. Thunderstorm

alerts were issued for 55 districts. Senior scientist Atul Kumar Singh of the Regional Meteorological Center stated that the low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal has developed into a depression. Due to this, monsoon activity is expected to continue in the state until 17 August.

Meanwhile, due to rain in the mountains, 10 rivers in UP, including the Ganga, Yamuna, and Sharda, are in spate. More than 80 villages in 16 districts are affected by flooding.

The floods have hit 49 villages in Farrukhabad, the worst affected. In Unnao, the Ganga waters have entered homes, forcing people to live on rooftops.

Partition Horrors Memorial Day marked in Kashi, Swatantra Dev Singh attends as chief guest

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Varanasi, 14 August

Uttar Pradesh Water Power Minister Swatantra Dev Singh on Friday said that every citizen should learn from the tragedy of the country's Partition and work together to strengthen the nation's unity and integrity by prioritising its national spirit.

Addressing the programme organised in the Circuit House auditorium on the occasion of Partition Horrors Memorial Day, Mr. Singh said that India gained independence on 15 August, 1947, but Pakistan separated from India a day earlier, on 14 August. During the Partition, a large number of people from both countries lost their lives and millions

EARLIER, A SILENT PROCESSION WAS TAKEN OUT FROM J.P. MEHTA INTER COLLEGE TO THE CIRCUIT HOUSE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF WATER POWER MINISTER SWATANTRA DEV SINGH.

were displaced. In memory of this tragedy, 'Partition Horrors Memorial Day' is observed every year on 14 August.

Addressing the programme, Ravindra Jaiswal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamps, Court Fees and Registration, said that everyone should learn from this historical tragedy and pledge to strengthen national unity and integrity.

On this occasion, Tilak Raj Kapoor, Kamal Kishore Vasudev, Atmaram Shadija, Ramesh Lalwani, Rukmini Devi, Hasan and

Badlani and Lalchand Rupani from the Sindhi and Punjabi community were honoured with robes and mementos.

District Magistrate Satyendra Kumar, Chief Development Officer Prakhar Kumar Singh, and other public representatives and officials were present at the programme.

Earlier, a silent procession was taken out from J.P. Mehta Inter College to the Circuit House under the leadership of Water Power Minister Swatantra Dev Singh.

HIV surge in Meghalaya; 558 new cases detected in just three months

UNITED ENWS OF INDIA
Shillong, 14 August

Meghalaya detected 558 HIV-positive cases among the general population between April and June this year, while 60 pregnant women tested positive for HIV during the same period, an official said on Friday.

The figures were released by the Meghalaya AIDS Control Society (MACS) following the statewide launch of the Intensified IEC Campaign 3.0 on 12 August at Lady Keane College, Shillong.

According to the HIV Estimation Report 2025, Meghalaya has 9,244 people living with HIV (PLHIV).

The intensified campaign aims to strengthen awareness and outreach on HIV and AIDS



across the state, with MACS planning a wide range of community-based activities.

The campaign includes 1,026 village-level meetings, 3,000 awareness sessions in schools and 85 sessions in colleges, besides 30 folk performances and 30 flash

mobs. Around 15,000 households will be reached through door-to-door awareness activities, while 12 special camps will be organised in government hospitals and 10 pop-up awareness booths set up across Meghalaya. The Meghalaya

government on 12 August launched the Statewide Intensified IEC campaign 3.0 to scale up HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention strategies, diagnostic testing, and medical treatment across the state. Health and Family Welfare Minister Wailadmi Shylla has

THE INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN AIMS TO STRENGTHEN AWARENESS AND OUTREACH ON HIV AND AIDS ACROSS THE STATE, WITH MACS PLANNING A WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITIES.

called upon the people of the State to reject discrimination against people living with HIV and extend support by encouraging HIV testing, timely treatment and care.

"HIV cannot be the responsibility of MACS alone and requires collective efforts from various departments, educational institutions, local communities, civil society organisations, healthcare workers, parents, teachers and young people," Shylla said.

UP government to strengthen teachers, improve training through 'Unnati'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow, 14 August

How effective should teacher training be for its real benefits to reach teacher preparation and children's learning?

With this question at the centre, the Uttar Pradesh government has given a new direction to the training system through 'Unnati' by linking teacher capacity development with technology-based monitoring and academic quality.

Training is being monitored online through 'Unnati' to ensure continuous quality assessment and to ensure that the pedagogical understanding and effective teaching methods gained during training do not weaken as trainees progress to the next level. The academic capacity of primary school

teachers and Shiksha Mitras is being strengthened through a five-day training based on FLN and NCERT textbooks.

Officials here on Friday said, 'Unnati' (Unified Network for Nurturing Academic Training and Innovations) is an online supervision system to strengthen teacher training. It aims to make training more effective and minimise cascade loss, so that the core content, pedagogical understanding, and effective teaching methods of training do not weaken as they progress from one level to another. Online supervision will help monitor training activities and understand emerging training needs. This will enable necessary steps to improve the quality and impact of training.

The training focuses on strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN)

and the effective use of NCERT textbooks. Teachers are being prepared to integrate textbook content with activities and effective teaching processes tailored to children's learning levels and classroom needs. The objective is to strengthen basic understanding of language and mathematics while enhancing teacher teaching effectiveness.

To ensure the quality of the training, online supervision will be provided through video conferencing by State Project Office officials, experts, and consultants. For this purpose, it is mandatory to provide a high-resolution webcam in each training hall. A microphone/sound system will be provided to ensure clear audibility of participants, and high-speed internet will be provided for online connectivity.



Independence Day Special



Independence: Sovereignty to Agency

SAYANTAN NANDI

There is something revealing in the origin of the word independence. It derives from the Latin *independens*: in, meaning "not", and *dependere*, meaning "to hang from".

At its most literal, independence means not hanging from another. It describes a severance, the cutting of a connection that has made one dependent.

That was, inevitably, what independence meant to India in 1947. A foreign power would no longer rule the country; decisions about its future would no longer be made elsewhere. After nearly two centuries of colonial rule, the achievement required no elaboration. India was free because Britain was gone.

On the eve of the 80th Independence Day, it's perhaps time to recognise that the meaning of independence has outlived its occasion.

We inherited the word at the moment of severance, when 'not-hanging-from-Britain' was our mantra. But a nation, like a person, cannot live indefinitely by reaching

a single destination. Sooner or later the question turns from what you are free from to what you are free for and it is in that turn of meaning that the nation has spent the last seventy-nine years trying to answer.

Each generation has supplied a different answer. Seen this way, the history of independent India is not simply the story of a nation consolidating sovereignty. It is the story of independence moving steadily inward from the freedom of a country to determine its own destiny to the freedom of its citizens to determine something of their own.

Jawaharlal Nehru perhaps understood this better, as is evidenced in his 'Tryst with Destiny' speech. While remembered for its emotional resonance, the more important aspect was its refusal to regard Independence as completion. The pledges made to India, he acknowledged, could be redeemed only "in substantial measure". Poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality remained. The political revolution had taken place; the social revolution had not.

Ambedkar, in his final address to the Constituent Assembly, presented



the issue more starkly. He warned that a nation that had achieved political equality while leaving social and economic life unequal was building on a contradiction it could not sustain indefinitely. More recently, political scientist Partha Chatterjee made a related point describing how the postcolonial nation-state inherited the 'form' of Western sovereignty, parliaments, elections, a written constitution, while its social life kept running on the older, unresolved logic

of community and hierarchy. The republic therefore began with an extraordinary promise and an uncomfortable truth: political independence had arrived before social independence.

That tension shaped the next generation's understanding of the word. For those who lived through Partition and the freedom movement, independence was a memory with a body count and a date, testimonial,



state that had won freedom from empire could be trusted not to become its own fear vindicated, for eighteen months in the mid-seventies, in the starkest way possible.

The generation after 1991 inherited independence as market rather than state, freedom recast as the end of licenses and queues, the citizen reimagined as consumer before being reimagined as rights-bearer.

And the present generation in a public sphere which is at once more open and more policed than ever before is arguably the first to need the word in something closer to its original, harder sense: freedom from restrictions. For them, independence is therefore becoming a more complicated and intimate idea. It is no longer sufficient to ask whether India is free to determine its own affairs. This is where the meaning of independence has travelled furthest from its etymological beginning. What started as not depending on another

entirely defined by its inherited hierarchies.

This also makes the generational journey clearer. The generation of the freedom struggle sought sovereignty. The generation that built the republic sought self-reliance. Those who lived through the Emergency demanded constitutional safeguards. The generation of liberalisation discovered economic choice. The generation growing up today is asking for something more fundamental: agency and dignity.

These are not competing meanings of independence. They are layers of the same idea.

The journey is therefore from freedom 'from' to freedom 'for': freedom from colonial rule, freedom from arbitrary power, freedom from inherited constraints and freedom for dignity, participation, opportunity and self-determination.

That is a more demanding idea of independence than the one India



has gradually become a demand for the conditions that make genuine agency possible. And that is why the annual celebration can sometimes feel strangely disconnected from the contemporary experience of freedom. The ceremony commemorates a historic severance, while citizens increasingly experience independence through a different set of questions.

The young Indian who wants to marry without caste restrictions, the woman who wants to decide whether and when to have children, the student who wants to question authority, the worker who wants fair conditions, the citizen who wants privacy from an intrusive state or corporation — all are making claims about independence. They are not asking to be free from society. They are asking for enough autonomy within society to participate in it without being

celebrated in 1947. It is also the one that may matter most now.

A transformed independence would measure itself less by the absence of a ruling body and more by the presence of accountable institutions, the freedom not to be governed arbitrarily, exercised daily rather than once a year. That would mean a citizen's independence and the state's answerability moving in the same direction instead of being traded off against each other, which is closer to what Ambedkar seemed to be reaching for than to anything that either the statist decades or the market decades fully built. It is the implicitly triumphant idea the tricolour actually carries. It may also be the only version of the word capable of surviving another eighty years or more.

THE WRITER IS FORMER CEO AND INDEPENDENT COMMENTATOR ON SOCIOPOLITICAL ISSUES.

Review

Batwara 1947: During Times Of Hatred, The Healing Touch

SUBHASH K JHA

It is very rare to see a film these days which tells you not to hate the other community, and to look for the enemy within. In Ms Sathyu's milestone classic on the Partition Garm Hawa, there was an old lady who hid in the kitchen because she didn't want to leave her home. Mai, the character that the great Shabana Azmi plays, is an extension of that briefly but vividly etched character. After all these years I haven't forgotten that character. I don't think I will forget Mai either: stubborn, playful, generous and clever, Shabana Mai just steals our hearts. The actress deserves another National award for this performance.

As for Sunny Deol, he has grown into a formidable actor, far ahead in nuanced characterization than all his contemporaries. His portrayal of Sikandar Mirza seems like a direct descendant of Balraj Sahni's Salim Mirza in Garm Hawa, migrating into mayhem from India to Pakistan during the carnage in 1947, only to find himself fighting to protect an old Hindu woman in Lahore who waits endlessly for her (slain) son to return home. The bonding between



Ratings: ★★★★★

Deol and Azmi is indescribably poignant. They are separated by religion but joined at the hip by an invisible umbilical cord. Oozing empathy, Deol's love for his adopted mother reaches out of every frame. The message here is not broadcasted from rooftops. The bonding of empathy and the hero's adamant resolve that humanism comes above religion, resonates across the film with a feral intensity. I don't think Sunny Deol has played a more heroic character in his entire career. This is a man who

won't let an old woman be hurt by mobsters just because she is in the wrong community.

What lines Deol has been given to speak! The intermittent introspections on humanism and communal harmony never sound like pulpit prattle. Deol assumes the right to spread the opposite of hatred as though by birthright. He is as mellow as a river's running water which does what it does simply because it has to.

Some of the supporting cast is pointedly caricatural, specially the villainous

Yaqoob Pehelwan (Abhimanyu Singh) who grimaces and smirks as if practising for a play on parodied perversity. On the other hand there is Ali Afzal as a mysterious poet and benefactor. He is gentle and wry. He has one lengthy sequence with Shabana Azmi in a dimly lit street of Lahore where he tells her why she mustn't leave town under pressure. That moment hits us hard. I longed for more productive conversations among the more enlightened characters of this fascinating study of the urge for transcending communal divides. The climax is so sublimely inspiring I clutched at my heart to make sure it doesn't break.

Batwara 1947 is Raj Kumar Santoshi's best, most relevant work since Lajja in 2002. He has worked a magical alchemy with Sunny Deol in the past but nothing to compare with the radiant validity of this work.

We may not find every component of this peace anthem equally harmonious and Rahman's atonal Bhajan is the worst I've heard in cinema, but at its core this is a work of tremendous integrity.

THE REVIEWER IS A VETERAN FILM CRITIC.

Opinion

Satyagraha for Democratic Sustainability

PROF. GOURI SANKAR NAG

In democracy, political parties tend to struggle for power and position. However, nearly eight decades since independence, a question crops up about the reality of passive revolution and the ethical failure in getting over the banality of merely electoral cycles. Hence the alternative thought: are we fast reaching a post-political stage where civil society organizations and their struggle to have their voices heard appear as a bright streak of light that bodes well for democracy?

Here we can speak of CJP protests at Jantar Mantar where the youth or euphemistically called Gen Z, had a legitimate ground for protests. But what appeared more convincing was the method they applied. At the current juncture it reminded the nation of the inherent strength of non-violent satyagraha, thus reinstating the Gandhian vision at a time when our moral compass has been hit hard by modernity's unregulated technoscientific turn transgressing Gandhian ways.

However, a few points form the



caveat that protesters should invariably keep in mind. First, to hold the moral high ground they ought to exercise utmost caution. While their demand was authentic and methodology legitimate, the utterance of filthy language went against the values they held dear to their hearts. Second, constructive opposition is the very lifeblood of democracy but emotional excitement and the bandwagon

of brouhaha can't offer any panacea.

Here it won't be too much to draw a parallel between CJP movement in July 2026 and Raat-Dakhal on 14th August 2024 in Kolkata. On that very night men and women, particularly young girls along with their mothers, came out from houses in an unprecedented manner on the Kolkata streets shouting slogan for justice for the mysterious murder of the medical intern at R G Kar medical college. The movement was vigorous, yet law abiding in its overall approach and demeanour. It was a veritable instance of mass volition for truth which was implicitly disciplined, yet chose to raise voice for the righteous cause rather than craven compromise.

So today whenever such non-violent satyagraha takes place not only in India but also in any corner in the world, it has profound impact on society, political systems and governance at large. Of course, it is not a de novo tincture to clean up the mess with the Midas touch but it is certainly the veritable antidote to a possibility of the system's inherent insensitivities and growing lackadaisical posture. In an age of accumulated risks and resultant crises when economy follows 'take-make-dispose' model, for people aspiring to be homo deus is not a cakewalk but an orchestrated work, sort of *verstehen* based on benign introspection, not facile imagination about satyagraha's therapeutic effect for democratic sustainability.

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Views expressed are personal

FIH Hockey WC: Harmanpreet, Salima lead India's twin World Cup charge



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

India will begin their FIH men's Hockey World Cup 2026 campaign against Wales on Saturday, carrying the memories of their historic 1975 triumph while looking to build a new legacy in Belgium and the Netherlands.

It has been 51 years since India last lifted the World Cup, with Ajit Pal Singh leading the team to its only title in Kuala Lumpur. More than five decades later, Harmanpreet Singh will lead the side into another World Cup campaign, hoping to bring the trophy back to India.

There is an interesting connection between the two captains. Ajit Pal captained India at the 1971 and 1975 World Cups, while Harmanpreet is leading the team at the global showpiece for the second time after also wearing the captain's armband in 2023. He is only the second Indian captain to lead the country at two editions of the World Cup.

India enter the tournament with plenty of confidence after an impressive finish to their FIH Pro League campaign. They defeated reigning world champions Germany and Olympic champions the Netherlands, while also beating Pakistan twice and overcoming England in a shootout. Those results could prove particularly useful, with England and Pakistan both drawn in India's

pool.

India are in Pool D alongside England, Pakistan and Wales. They open against Wales on August 15, before taking on England on August 17 and Pakistan on August 19.

The tournament will also test the teams under a revamped format. There will be no traditional quarterfinal stage. The top two sides from each of the four pools will progress to the second phase, where the eight qualifiers will be split into Pools E and F. The top two teams from each pool will then advance to the semi-finals. Crucially, points and results from first-phase matches against teams that also qualify for the second stage will be carried forward, making every group game significant.

Experience could be one of India's biggest strengths. Mandeep Singh and Manpreet Singh are set to make their fourth World Cup appearances. Harmanpreet, Hardik Singh, Amit Rohidas, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Sumit and Nilakanta Sharma add further big-match experience. At the same time, eight players in the squad are preparing for their first World Cup. Chief coach Craig Fulton believes that mix can give India an edge. "Our strength is our diversity," Fulton said.

The tournament will also bring some special personal milestones. Defender Yashdeep Siwach will make his World Cup debut in the Netherlands,

following in the footsteps of his mother Pritam Siwach, who represented India at the same tournament. Goalkeepers Suraj Karkera and Mohith HS are also set for their maiden World Cup appearances. Alongside them, Rajinder Singh, Aditya Arjuna Lalage, Yashdeep and Shilana Lakra will look to make an impression on the biggest stage.

Stern test for women's team Simultaneously, the Indian women's team will begin its World Cup campaign against China on Sunday, with Salima Tete's side facing a tough challenge right from the outset.

India have been clubbed alongside higher-ranked China and England in their pool, while South Africa are the lowest-ranked team in the group. The opening assignment against China will be particularly demanding, given India's recent struggles against the Asian side.

China defeated India twice at last year's Asia Cup, while England also got the better of them in the final of the World Cup qualifiers in March, despite India creating opportunities in that contest.

However, India will enter the World Cup with renewed confidence after lifting the FIH Nations Cup. The title provided a significant boost to the team's morale and belief, and the Tete-led outfit will hope to carry that winning momentum into the global tournament.

Gambhir-led India chases redemption in 600th Test

TRIDIB BAPARNASH
New Delhi, 15 August

India will begin a new chapter in their Test journey in Galle on Saturday, with the opening match against Sri Lanka carrying significance beyond the two teams and the result. The 15 August encounter, which falls on India's Independence Day, will also be the 600th Test in the country's history, making India only the third team after England and Australia to reach the landmark.

India's Test journey began on 25 June 1932, when C K Nayudu led the side against England at Lord's, 15 years before the country gained independence. After 599 Tests, India have 186 wins, 188 defeats, 224 draws and one tie. Reaching the 600-Test milestone on Independence Day gives the occasion an added historical significance.

Yet, as India enter this landmark Test, their focus will be firmly on rebuilding a red-ball side that has endured a difficult period.

Under Gautam Gambhir, India have enjoyed considerable success in white-ball cricket, winning the Champions Trophy, Asia Cup and T20 World Cup. Test cricket, however, has presented a contrasting picture. Home-series defeats against New Zealand and South Africa significantly dented India's ICC World Test Championship (WTCT) campaign and exposed weaknesses that the team will be keen to address in Sri Lanka.

India's performance in



red-ball under scrutiny

India are currently placed fifth in the ICC WTCT 2025-27 standings after having played nine Tests, winning four, losing four and a draw. The two-Test series therefore presents an opportunity for India to begin repairing some of that damage.

While another poor result could further dent India's hopes of reaching next year's World Test Championship Final, it would also intensify questions around the Gambhir-led coaching set-up and the way forward in the longest format.

The impact of India's home-series defeats has already been felt within the support staff, with two assistant coaches and a fielding coach exiting

the set-up. Another disappointing campaign is unlikely to lead to Gambhir's immediate removal, but it would inevitably put his position and the team's red-ball approach under greater scrutiny.

Galle, however, is hardly an easy place to begin that process. Sri Lanka have won 27 of the 49 Tests played at the venue since 1998, with spin playing a central role in their success. Prabath Jayasuriya and Ramesh Mendis now carry the responsibility once shouldered by legends such as Muttiah Muralitharan and Rangana Herath.

Spin test for Indian batters

India's batting will consequently face its biggest

examination. The visitors have struggled against quality spin in recent assignments against South Africa and New Zealand, and the performances of Rishabh Pant and Dhruv Jurel could prove crucial if they are preferred over Sarfaraz Khan.

The top three comprising KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Devdutt Padikkal will also be expected to provide substantial contributions, with captain Shubman Gill likely to remain the fulcrum of the batting order. Padikkal, in particular, has an opportunity to strengthen his case for the No. 3 position before Sai Sudharsan returns from injury. India's bowling combination is equally intriguing. With

Jasprit Bumrah unavailable, Mohammed Siraj is expected to lead a relatively inexperienced pace unit, likely alongside Prasidh Krishna. The conditions could prompt India to rely heavily on spin, with Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja and Manav Suthar all in contention.

The Galle surface is not expected to be a minefield from the outset but should become more spin-friendly as the Test progresses. India will therefore need patience, discipline and the ability to build pressure over long spells.

Sri Lanka also have questions to answer after a lack of regular Test cricket. Having gone almost a year without a red-ball match before their recent tour of the West Indies, Dhananjaya de Silva's side will need to quickly adapt to the demands of facing India.

Squads:

India: Shubman Gill (Captain), K L Rahul (Vice-Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant (w/k), Dhruv Jurel (w/k), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Manav Suthar, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Gurnoor Brar, Devdutt Padikkal, Saransh Jain, Auqib Nabi, Sarfaraz Khan.

Sri Lanka: Dhananjaya De Silva (Captain), Lahiru Udara, Nishan Madushka, Kamindu Mendis, Dinesh Chandimal, Pasindu Sooriyabandara, Sonal Dinusha, Niroshan Dickwella (w/k), Ramesh Mendis, Prabath Jayasuriya, Keshara Nuwantha, Milan Rathnayake, Asitha Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, Dilshan Madushanka.

Tanzid century stuns Australia again

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

Tanzid Hasan's landmark century helped Bangladesh strengthen their position against Australia in the opening Test in Darwin, carrying a 153-run lead into the third day after an impressive batting display on Friday. The opener's 101 made him the first Bangladesh batter to score a Test hundred in Australia and helped the visitors build on Hasan Mahmud's six-wicket haul that had bowled the hosts out for 198 on the opening day.

Resuming at the overnight score of 96/1, Bangladesh consolidated further with Tanzid batting with composure through the first half of the second day's play, anchoring the innings as the visitors steadily chipped away at the hosts' total.

His dismissal for 101 ended a memorable knock, but by then he had done enough to put Bangladesh firmly in control. He became only the second Bangladesh batter to score a Test century against Australia, following Shahriar Nafees' 138 at Fatullah in 2006. Mominul Haque also played an important supporting role, making 49, while captain Najmul Hossain Shanto added 84 as Bangladesh maintained a steady scoring rate and moved well beyond Australia's first-innings total.

The visitors' progress was briefly checked when Australia struck with the second new ball. Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins picked up wickets to give the hosts hope of restricting the lead.

However, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Hasan Mahmud showed plenty of resistance late in the innings, frustrating Australia's attack and ensuring Bangladesh finished with a sizeable advantage.

The surface also appeared to become easier for batting as the Test progressed, making Bangladesh's first-innings lead even more valuable.



एन एच पी सी
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क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, सिलीगुड़ी

एनएचपीसी का हरित ऊर्जा नेतृत्व

180 मेगावाट से 9332.9 मेगावाट तक की यात्रा
अनेक चुनौतियों के बावजूद 31 महीने की यात्रा ऊर्जा पावर स्टेशनों के माध्यम से उल्लेखनीय प्रगति।

- सुदूर वितीय प्रदर्शन
अपनी स्थापना के बाद से निरंतर सुदूर परिणाम प्रदर्शित कर रही है।
- 17 सक्रिय परियोजनाएं
संघारणीय अक्षिण के लिए, 9204 मेगावाट क्षमता का निर्माण कर रही है।
- एनजी ट्रांजिशन को बढ़ावा देना
वर्ष 2032 तक 23,000 मेगावाट और वर्ष 2047 तक 50,000 मेगावाट नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा का लक्ष्य।
- भारत की दो सबसे बड़ी जलविद्युत परियोजनाओं का निर्माण
सुबान्सिटी लोअर परियोजना: 2,000 मेगावाट अरुणाचल प्रदेश और असम में।
दिबांग बहुउद्देशीय परियोजना: 2,880 मेगावाट अरुणाचल प्रदेश में।
- नवरेल का दर्जा
कार्बोनिक् नहरा को मान्यता देते हुए 30 अगस्त, 2024 को प्रदान किया गया।
- अक्षिण के लिए विजय
एनएचपीसी संघारणीय ऊर्जा और वर्ष 2047 तक विकसित भारत के विजय के प्रति समर्पित है।

सिक्किम में स्थापित परियोजनाएं / पावर स्टेशन

तीस्ता -V पावर स्टेशन	510 मेगावाट
रंगीत पावर स्टेशन	60 मेगावाट
तीस्ता -V। परियोजना	500 मेगावाट
तीस्ता IV परियोजना	520 मेगावाट

पश्चिम बंगाल में स्थापित पावर स्टेशन

तीस्ता लो डैम III पावर स्टेशन	132 मेगावाट
तीस्ता लो डैम IV पावर स्टेशन	160 मेगावाट

मणिपुर में स्थापित पावर स्टेशन

लोकट पावर स्टेशन	105 मेगावाट
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एनएचपीसी लिमिटेड

(भारत सरकार का एक नवरेल उद्यम)

क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय सिलीगुड़ी विद्युत नगर सैटेलाइट टाउनशिप सिलीगुड़ी पश्चिम बंगाल 734015
सीआरईएन: L40101HR1975GOI032564 | वेबसाइट: www.nhpcindia.com

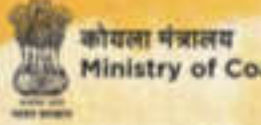
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एन एच पी सी लिमिटेड

(भारत सरकार का एक नवरेल उद्यम)

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Jemimah ruled out with injury

India suffered a major setback as batter Jemimah Rodrigues was ruled out of the ACC Women's Asia Cup and Asian Games with a high-grade right hamstring tear. The injury occurred during The Hundred in England. Uncapped T20I batter Pratika Rawal replaces her for the Asia Cup, with India opening their campaign against Thailand on 30 August.

The Statesman SPORTS

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

16
Siliguri
Saturday, 15 August 2026



Gill eyes WTC revival as India begin crucial series; de Silva backs experienced players

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 14 August

With India's World Test Championship hopes on the line, captain Shubman Gill has underlined the importance of the two-Test series against Sri Lanka, saying the visitors need a strong result in Galle and Colombo to keep their qualification hopes alive.

India begin the series on Saturday with Gill set to lead the side in his 10th Test, while a string of injuries has added to the challenges facing the new-look team.

"The main goal is to play the World Test Championship final next year. We have to win around six or seven to have a chance of qualifying. In terms of that, this is a very important series," Gill said in the pre-match presser on Friday. India's preparations have been overshadowed by a string of injuries, with Jasprit Bumrah, Sai Sudharsan and Washington Sundar among those unavailable. However, Gill dismissed suggestions of any communication gap between the team management and the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru.

"There is a constant communication with them. Unfortunately Sai Sudharsan did not improve as much as we liked as we can't take risks in Tests. But we are confident of our 15 (players)," Gill said.

The India skipper said the five-day nature of Test cricket made it important to avoid taking chances with players who were not fully fit.

"The Test match is for 5 days. If it's one-day or T20, then it's a different story. But in the Test match, you don't want to take a risk. I feel that in the Test match, you have more opportunities with other players (to come back).

"For example, if you don't play well on the first day, you get another chance. So, the players have more chances to



come back. So, keeping that in mind, we were a little disappointed (with Sai and Bumrah). But it didn't affect the morale of the team that much that they didn't get the first 11," he said.

With Washington still recovering, Ravindra Jadeja is India's only established all-rounder in the squad. Gill, however, believes young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar can offer useful contributions with both bat and ball if selected.

"I think that's where someone like Manav coming in. He's got the ability with the bat. Of course, you need a bit of experience, you need some belief and confidence and that will only come once you're out there playing, when you score some runs.

"And hopefully he does that in the series. He's someone with a great skill with bowling. And he's got the potential to be able to be a really good number 8 batsman as well," Gill said.

He also backed Devdutt Padikkal, who could get an opportunity in the top order, besides praising the recent form of Prasidh Krishna. "Devdutt was here earlier with India A and did well. He has got all the skills and the potential to succeed in this format." Later he added: "Prasidh recently has been bowling the best that I have ever seen him bowl."

India's early arrival in Sri Lanka has given the squad

more preparation time than is often available during a packed international calendar. Gill believes the additional time could prove valuable in adapting to local conditions.

"If the scheduling allows us to have at least a week or 10 days before a Test, it helps with the preparation. Last year we had a busy schedule and it is never easy. Most players require a bit of time to adjust with the conditions. So this extra time in preparation helps."

India last played a Test series in Sri Lanka in 2017, when Virat Kohli's side completed a 3-0 sweep. Their most recent Test at Galle also ended in a convincing 304-run victory.

Sri Lanka back experienced campaigners

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, have placed their faith in experience, with captain Dhananjaya de Silva backing the returns of wicketkeeper-batter Niroshan Dickwella and fast bowler Lahiru Kumara.

Dickwella, who has played 54 Tests, has been recalled primarily for his wicketkeeping, while Kumara brings 35 Tests and 104 wickets of experience to the attack.

"Dickwella had to leave the Test squad over the last few years because Kusal Mendis went to No. 7, and Kusal has played well there in the last few years so Dickwella didn't get a chance to come back,"

de Silva said. "But when you play at Galle, the most important thing is that the player with the best glove work plays."

"Right now in Sri Lanka, there's no bowler who can replace Lahiru Kumara in the squad. He's the fastest bowler we have playing red-ball cricket. Unfortunately, he got injured in the West Indies, and a series that we could have won became a 1-0 defeat. Hopefully, he will use that as motivation and he will do something big for us in this series," the captain said backing Lahiru.

Rain could have a say in Galle

Weather is another variable heading into the first Test. India's final practice session was shortened by rain on Friday, while showers are forecast throughout the opening days of the match. Galle is expected to see cloudy and breezy conditions on Saturday, with a few showers and temperatures around 30-31°C. The forecast had indicated a 90 per cent chance of precipitation, with rain interruptions potentially continuing into Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. With both teams looking to make an early statement in the WTC cycle, the weather could add another layer of uncertainty to an already important series.



Bhawanipore hold East Bengal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Kolkata, 14 August

Bhawanipore FC strengthened their position at the top of the Calcutta Football League (CFL) standings after holding reigning champions East Bengal FC to a 1-1 draw in a gripping top-of-the-table clash on Friday. Fresh from their victory over Mohun Bagan, Ranjan Chowdhury's side produced another disciplined display to end East Bengal's five-match winning streak.

The first half remained goalless despite both teams creating chances. East Bengal looked dangerous through Bijoy Murmu, while Bhawanipore relied on the attacking intent of Sahil Harjan and captain Jiten Murmu. Bhawanipore broke the deadlock immediately after the restart when 21-year-old Shyamal Besra scored in the 46th minute. East Bengal responded six minutes later as Ananthu NS curled in a superb left-footed strike to restore parity. The Red & Gold Brigade pushed for a winner late on, with Ananthu hitting the woodwork and missed chances from Sanjib Ghosh and Robi Hansda proving costly.

Jaglan clinches maiden Coal India Open:

Kolkata: Shubham Jaglan secured his maiden professional title after firing a brilliant six-under 64 in the final round to win the weather-shortened Coal India Open 2026 by two shots in Kolkata. The 21-year-old finished at 14-under 196, earned ₹15 lakh, and climbed to 14th in the DP World PGTI Rankings after a composed closing birdie.



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