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DISSENT CANNOT BE DELETED

Maharashtra Weather Alert For April 1 Stormy Winds, Hailstorm Likely; Orange Alert in 7, Yellow Alert in 27 Districts

MAHARASHTRA : The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a weather advisory for Maharashtra from March 31 to April 3, 2026, warning of unstable conditions across the state, including thunderstorms, lightning, strong winds, hailstorms, and light to moderate rainfall. Western Maharashtra, Marathwada, Vidarbha, and parts of Konkan are expected to be most affected, with wind speeds potentially reaching 30-60 km/h in some areas. Certain regions are at higher risk of hail damage.

March 31 - Orange Alert : Severe thunderstorms with hail, lightning, heavy winds, and rainfall expected in Nashik, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Jalna,



Parbhani, Beed, Hingoli, Pune, Solapur, Satara, and Sangli.

March 31 - Yellow Alert : Thunderstorms with lightning and strong winds in Nandurbar, Dhule, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Kolhapur, Dharashiv, Latur, Nanded, Yavatmal, Amaravati, Wardha, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Bhandara, Gadchiroli, Gondia. Other areas may see scattered

rainfall.

April 1-3 - Yellow Alert : Thunderstorms, lightning, and strong winds expected in Solapur, Dharashiv, Latur, Washim, Yavatmal, Wardha, Nagpur, Bhandara, Gondia, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Sangli, Kolhapur, Satara, Beed, Parbhani, Hingoli, Nashik, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Pune, and surrounding

districts. Farmers are advised to secure harvested Rabi crops such as wheat, maize, and jowar in safe locations, and cover stored produce with tarpaulins or plastic sheets. Grapes in harvest stage should be monitored for cracking and fungal infections; ensure proper drainage and use protective covers in sheds. Ripe mangoes should be harvested immediately to prevent rain damage. Banana plants must be supported with bamboo or wooden stakes to avoid toppling during strong winds. Vegetable crops should be tied or covered to prevent wind and hail damage. Livestock should not be tied under trees or near metal structures during

thunderstorms and should be kept away from water bodies and agricultural machinery. Do not stand under trees or near metal objects. Avoid contact with electrical equipment and cables. Seek low-lying cover if caught in an open field, keeping your body compact to minimize exposure. Drain excess water from fields and cover crops with polyethylene sheets if rainfall occurs. The IMD and state agriculture officials have urged farmers to plan fieldwork carefully and take all necessary precautions to protect crops from hail, heavy rain, and strong winds, especially on March 31 when an orange alert has been issued.

Pune Student Safety At Risk? Rash Driving By School Van Driver In Lohgaon Raises Alarm



PUNE, Serious concerns over student safety have emerged in Pune after an incident of alleged rash driving by a school van driver in the Lohgaon area came to light. While authorities continue to stress strict safety norms for school transportation, a shocking case has surfaced involving a van driver associated with St. Mount Patrick School. The driver was reportedly seen driving recklessly through the narrow lanes

of Lohgaon despite carrying young students in the vehicle. Internal roads and bylanes in Lohgaon are known to be extremely narrow, requiring drivers to maintain low speeds and exercise heightened caution, especially when transporting schoolchildren. However, in this instance, the driver allegedly ignored all safety protocols and drove at high speed in a negligent manner, putting the lives of students at

serious risk. Locals stated that had another vehicle appeared suddenly or if the driver had lost control even slightly, it could have resulted in a major accident. The reckless driving also alarmed pedestrians and residents in the area. A video of the incident has reportedly surfaced, further intensifying concerns. Attempts to contact the school administration for a response have so far gone unanswered.

Maharashtra School Summer Vacation From May 2, Classes Resume June 15

The Maharashtra Education Department has announced the school calendar for 2026, introducing key changes in summer vacation dates and reopening schedules across the state. The move aims to bring uniformity in academic planning for all state board schools.

As per the official circular issued by Director of Primary Education Sharad Gosavi and co-signed by Dr Mahesh Palkar, summer vacation for all state board primary, secondary, and higher secondary schools will begin from May 2, 2026, and continue till June 14. The new academic year will commence from June 15, 2026.

This marks a significant shift, especially for the Vidarbha region, where schools traditionally reopened later due to extreme heat conditions. This year, the state has aligned reopening dates across all regions, ensuring that schools in Vidarbha and the rest of Maharashtra resume together.



To address heat concerns, specific provisions have been made for Vidarbha. Schools in the region will operate in the morning shift from June 15 to June 29, with timings from 7:00 AM to 11:45 AM. Regular school timings will resume from June 30. Officials stated that the decision was taken to maintain consistency in school schedules while also prioritising student safety during high temperatures. The circular has been sent to divisional deputy directors, Zilla Parishad education officers, and school inspectors for implementation. The administration has instructed schools to make

necessary arrangements in advance to ensure a smooth start to the academic year. Authorities believe that a unified academic calendar will help reduce confusion among students, parents, and teachers. Meanwhile, schools affiliated with other boards such as CBSE and ICSE have been given flexibility to follow their own academic schedules. These institutions may continue with their pre-planned calendars or ongoing academic activities. The new structure is expected to streamline operations across Maharashtra's education system while ensuring that regional challenges like heat are managed effectively.

Pune Traffic Police Crack Down On Triple Riding, Modified Silencers and Drunk Driving; ₹51 Lakh Fine Collected



PUNE : The Pune City Traffic Police conducted a three-day special enforcement drive from March 27 to March 29, 2026, targeting traffic violations such as triple riding, use of modified silencers, and drunk driving across the city. During the drive, strict action was taken against violators. A total of 1,265 motorcycles were penalised for triple riding. In addition, 320 motorcycles fitted with illegal modified silencers were booked, and all such silencers were removed and seized on the spot. Authorities collected fines amounting to ₹5.71 lakh in these cases, while 234 modified silencers and 852 vehicles were seized during the operation. The drive also covered other traffic rule violations, with the department collecting a total fine of ₹51.54 lakh over the three

days. To curb drunk driving, police set up checkpoints at 30 locations across Pune. During these checks, action was taken against 186 motorists found driving under the influence of alcohol. The traffic police have urged citizens to follow road safety rules, highlighting that modified silencers contribute to noise pollution and inconvenience to the public. Officials also warned that drunk driving is a serious offence that endangers lives. Authorities further reiterated that triple riding on two-wheelers is illegal and increases the risk of accidents, posing a threat to both riders and other road users. Citizens have been appealed to cooperate in maintaining safe and disciplined traffic conditions in the city.

Raghav Chadha Visits Mumbai Airport's Udaan Yatri Cafe: Enjoys ₹10 Tea and ₹20 Samosas

Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha recently visited Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport and made a stop at the Udaan Yatri Cafe, where he had a cup of tea for just ₹10. Sharing his experience on social media, Chadha highlighted how passengers can now enjoy affordable food and beverages at airports, breaking the long-standing perception that airport snacks are always expensive.



Airports have often been criticized for steeply priced refreshments, where even tea, coffee, or bottled water can cost double or triple their normal price. Many travelers avoid buying snacks inside airports because of these inflated rates. Chadha, who has been vocal about such pricing issues, visited Udaan Yatri Cafe to show that budget-friendly options are now available. During his visit, Chadha not only enjoyed his tea but also interacted with fellow travelers, many of whom were pleasantly surprised by the pricing and service. The cafe's menu offers simple items at pocket-friendly rates: Tea - ₹10, Bottled water - ₹10, Coffee - ₹20, Samosa - ₹20, Sweet of the day - ₹20. Compared to regular airport cafes, these prices are remarkably low, making snacks and beverages accessible to all travelers. The Idea Behind Udaan Yatri Cafe Udaan Yatri Cafe was launched to make airport food affordable for the common passenger. Raghav Chadha played a key role in initiating discussions about how food and drinks were often overpriced at airports. This initiative aims to ensure that travelers can access good quality items without feeling the pinch on their wallets. Since its launch, Udaan

Yatri Cafe has expanded to several major airports across India, including Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata. Its popularity demonstrates that affordable food options can coexist with the airport's convenience and quality standards. Making Airports More Traveler-Friendly Raghav Chadha's visit and social media post have brought attention to a significant improvement for passengers. Airports are gradually becoming more passenger-friendly, offering tasty, affordable options like ₹10 tea and ₹20 samosas. Travelers can now enjoy their pre-flight refreshments without worrying about inflated prices, making flying a more comfortable experience for everyone.

New IT Rules Proposal: Social Media News Creators May Face Publisher-Level Regulations

PUNE : The central government has proposed significant changes to digital content regulation, bringing social media users and influencers who post news-related content under stricter oversight. The draft amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2026, has been released for public consultation. If implemented, the proposal could mark a major shift in how online content—especially news and current affairs—is regulated in India. Influencers May Be Treated Like Publishers One of the key changes proposed is the removal of an earlier exemption for individual users. Previously, only those engaged in



systematic business or professional activity were regulated. Now, even individuals posting news-related content on social media could fall under the same rules as publishers. This means influencers and regular users sharing news or current affairs content may be subject to stricter scrutiny and compliance requirements. Under the proposed rules, authorities will have expanded powers to take action against online content. This includes the

ability to order deletion, modification, or even emergency blocking of posts. Such actions can be taken if content is found to violate guidelines, significantly increasing regulatory control over what is shared online. Expanded Role Of Information & Broadcasting Ministry The proposal also strengthens the role of the Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Ministry. Its authority

to intervene in digital content moderation is expected to increase, particularly through mechanisms like the Inter-Disciplinary Committee (IDC). The IDC may now be able to take up broader "matters" instead of only formal complaints, allowing it to act on a wider range of issues. Social media platforms like X, Facebook, and Instagram may be required to strictly follow advisories issued by the IT Ministry. Failure to comply could lead to legal consequences, tightening accountability for intermediaries. Officials have stated that the changes are being proposed because news-related content on social media is currently "largely unregulated." The aim is to

create a more structured framework for monitoring and managing such content. The move also comes amid increasing concerns over misinformation, including deepfakes and AI-generated content. The draft rules have been opened for stakeholder consultation, with the government inviting feedback until April 14. This gives content creators, platforms, and the public an opportunity to share concerns or suggestions before final implementation. If these rules are enforced, the distinction between professional publishers and individual content creators could blur. Anyone sharing news-related posts online may need to be more cautious, as the regulatory framework tightens.

Pune's Luxury Real Estate Boom: These 7 Posh Areas Leading The Demand

PUNE : Pune's real estate market is undergoing a noticeable shift, with luxury housing gaining strong traction among high-income buyers and NRIs. Improved infrastructure, proximity to IT hubs, and evolving lifestyle preferences are pushing demand in premium localities across the city. Several upscale neighbourhoods are now emerging as the backbone of Pune's luxury housing boom.



Koregaon Park continues to be one of Pune's most prestigious residential addresses, known for its tree-lined streets, heritage bungalows, and vibrant social life. High-end restaurants, boutiques, and proximity to business hubs make it a preferred choice for affluent buyers. Kalyani Nagar complements this appeal with modern infrastructure and well-planned residential spaces. Its location near the airport and key commercial zones has made it popular among professionals and families seeking a premium lifestyle. Viman Nagar stands out for its strategic location near Pune International Airport and major IT hubs. With malls, educational institutions, and entertainment options, it offers a complete urban lifestyle. Magarpatta City, on the other hand, is known for its integrated township model. Combining residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, it provides a self-sustained ecosystem that appeals strongly to working professionals. Aundh has emerged as a sought-after

residential hub due to its strong connectivity to Hinjewadi IT corridor and other key areas. It offers a blend of modern housing, retail spaces, and social infrastructure. Model Colony, one of Pune's established neighbourhoods, provides a quieter yet centrally located living experience. Its proximity to Shivajinagar and Deccan Gymkhana makes it ideal for those seeking convenience along with a peaceful environment. NIBM Road is fast gaining popularity as a premium residential corridor. Known for spacious homes, gated communities, and greenery, it attracts families looking for a calm yet well-connected lifestyle. Its proximity to Hadapsar and Kondhwa adds to its appeal. The surge in luxury housing demand in Pune is largely driven by the city's IT growth, infrastructure upgrades, and rising disposable incomes. Buyers are increasingly prioritising lifestyle, space, and amenities over just affordability.

Motherhood Is Not a Penalty



BY SOUMYASHREE MOHANTY,
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, CYDA

"Woman denied job for being a mother." Yes, that was the headline. According to a report published in Business Today, a woman from Delhi applied for a Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) position at a consumer brand. She didn't get the job not because of her skills or experience, but because she is a mother.

Rejection in itself isn't unusual. It happens to all of us in our professional journey. But here, the reason matters. During her interview, instead of asking about her achievements, challenges, or the projects she led, the panel chose to focus on her family and kids. Her identity as a professional was overshadowed by her role as a mother. Sadly, this is not a rare case. If we look closely, we will see countless women paying a heavy price just because they are women.

This is what experts call the Motherhood Penalty—the disadvantages women face in the workplace after becoming mothers. They are often seen as less competent, offered fewer opportunities, and even face wage cuts compared to their peers without children.

A recent survey published in Business Standard revealed that nearly 75% of working mothers reported a career setback of one to two years after returning from maternity leave in the corporate sector. Many also said that maternity leave reduced their pay or pushed them into roles they did not want. Isn't it hypocrisy that we speak of women's empowerment and development on one hand, but continue to deny women the platform they deserve? Men are rarely questioned about their family roles, yet women are forced to prove their worth again and again.

The numbers reflect this bias. A study

published in The Times of India shows that only 19% of C-suite roles in India are held by women, far below the global average of 30%. On the other hand, research reported in the Economic Times shows that companies with women leaders perform significantly better, with nearly 50% higher profits on average. Yet despite such evidence, 63% of Indian companies still do not have women in key managerial positions.

Why does this gap persist? Because leadership is often tied to qualities like aggression and dominance, traits seen as "masculine." As a result, women are unfairly judged as less suited for leadership, not because of their abilities, but because of outdated stereotypes.

So, what is next? The easiest way is to create policies and schemes for women. But policies alone do not change reality. They look good on paper, but unless they are implemented with intent and sincerity, they remain hollow promises. Companies and organizations must not just hire women but also give them equal opportunities to grow and lead. If we genuinely want to achieve SDG-5 (Gender Equality), society needs to move beyond token gestures and address the deeper bias that holds women back.

Women do not need sympathy. They need space. They need equal platforms where their skills and talent are valued. Their dedication should be recognized without being overshadowed by questions about family or motherhood.

True equality will exist only when women are not forced to choose between career and family. It will exist when motherhood is no longer treated as a penalty. It will exist when society learns to value competence over stereotypes. Until then, gender equality will remain only on paper, not in real life.

What Makes Employees Stay in a Job?

Mathew Mattam
In today's fast-moving world—where job portals are always open and opportunities seem endless—organizations often wonder what truly keeps employees committed. Is it the hefty paycheck? The modern office? The perks and recognitions? Or the amenities that promise comfort and convenience? While all these factors play a role, they do not fully explain why some employees stay for years, growing with the organisation, while others leave despite good opportunities.

More than material advantages, it is the emotional and professional experience of working in an organisation that determines whether people stay or move on. Employees remain where they feel purposeful, valued, and supported. They stay where they can grow. They stay where they feel at home.

The first shift is looking beyond the job description. Today's employees are not satisfied with simply fulfilling a list of duties. They want meaning attached to their work. They want to know that their tasks contribute to a larger social or organisational mission. A job description might tell them what to do, but it doesn't always tell them why. The feeling of contributing to something worthwhile—something bigger than oneself—is a powerful glue. When employees are encouraged to take initiative, bring ideas to the table, and shape the work they do, they begin to see themselves not just as workers but as partners in progress. Such ownership naturally deepens their loyalty.

Feeling valued goes hand-in-hand with this sense of purpose. An employee who is invited into conversations around strategic planning, annual goal-setting, or review meetings understands



that their opinion matters. This involvement nurtures a sense of partnership with the leadership. People remain committed to institutions where they feel heard, respected, and trusted. When staff members see that their insights are not only welcomed but used to shape decisions, their bond with the organization strengthens. They feel like stakeholders, not workers. And people rarely abandon what they have helped build.

Another crucial pillar of retention is growth. Employees stay when they see a path forward—when they believe that the organisation is invested in their future. A workplace becomes a long-term home when it offers continuous learning, mentorship, and clear opportunities for advancement. Many inspiring journeys begin with someone joining as a field executive, gradually taking on responsibilities, leading teams, managing programmes, and eventually becoming the Executive Director. Such stories demonstrate that the organization is not just offering a job; it is nurturing careers. The message becomes clear: If you grow the organisation, the organisation will grow you.

However, growth cannot flourish without well-being. Work-life balance has emerged as one of the strongest determinants of employee loyalty. Modern

professionals understand that productivity is not the result of long hours—it is the result of healthy minds and bodies. When organisations allow flexible work arrangements, hybrid schedules, wellness programmes, and mental health support, they send a strong message: Your life outside work is respected. Employees reciprocate this respect through dedication and long-term commitment. When people feel cared for—not just used—they offer their best.

Recognition also plays a vital role. Even the most self-motivated individuals need to feel that their contributions matter. Whether it is a formal award, a small note of appreciation, a family trip or public acknowledgement, recognition boosts morale and fuels motivation. It affirms the employee's belief that their work is meaningful. More importantly, recognition builds an emotional connection. People may join an organisation for opportunities, but they stay because they feel seen.

Beyond recognition lies the silent but powerful factor of workplace environment. Employees spend more time with colleagues than with their families. The culture of an organisation—its everyday interactions, its attitudes toward conflict, its levels of respect and transparency—defines whether people feel comfortable staying.

A toxic environment pushes talent away faster than any salary can retain them. But a positive, supportive culture becomes a magnet for loyalty. When employees feel safe, respected, and understood, the workplace becomes a community. A place where relationships matter. A place where people want to return every morning.

All these factors, however, are incomplete without job security. Stability is deeply valued, especially in uncertain economic times. Employees stay when they trust that the organisation will stand with them through change. Timely salaries, clear communication, long-term contracts, and financial transparency build this trust. When staff believe that the organisation has a strong future—and that their own growth and security are tied to that future—they feel confident investing their time, energy, and skills. Financial growth of staff, not just financial stability of the organisation, further strengthens this loyalty.

In the end, employee retention is not about preventing people from leaving. It is about creating a place where they want to stay. Hefty pay and luxurious workspaces may attract talent, but they do not create belonging. What truly keeps employees grounded is a sense of purpose, inclusion, growth, balance, recognition, community, and security.

People stay where they feel respected.

They stay where they feel they are growing.

They stay where they feel valued.

They stay where they feel safe.

Retention is ultimately a relationship, not a transaction. And like all relationships, it thrives where there is trust, care, and a shared journey forward.

Union Budget 2026–27: Education Provisions, Promise and Persistent Gaps

BY PRAMODINI NAIK,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CYDA

The Union Budget 2026–27 marks a significant moment for India's education sector, with the Ministry of Education receiving its highest-ever allocation of ₹1.39 lakh crore, reflecting a year-on-year increase of 8.27 per cent from ₹1.28 lakh crore in FY 2025–26 (Ministry of Finance [MoF], 2026a). The enhanced allocation signals the government's intent to strengthen learning, skilling, and innovation to support a future-ready, knowledge-driven economy. Of the total outlay, ₹83,562.26 crore has been allocated to school education, while ₹55,727 crore has been earmarked for higher education (MoF, 2026b). While school education witnessed a modest growth of 6.35 per cent, higher education saw a sharper rise of 11.28 per cent, indicating a policy tilt towards advanced learning, research, and employability (MoF, 2026b).

Structural Reforms and Education-Employment Linkages

A major structural reform announced in the budget is the proposal to develop five University Townships near major industrial and logistics corridors (MoF, 2026a). These townships are envisioned as integrated hubs comprising universities, research institutions, skill centres, and residential facilities, aimed at strengthening industry-academia collaboration and improving employment outcomes for graduates.

To better align education with labour market needs, the government has proposed a high-powered Education-to-Employment and Enterprise Standing Committee to link education policies with job creation, service sector growth, and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (MoF, 2026a). This aligns with NEP 2020's focus on improving employability through multidisciplinary and skill-based learning (MoE, 2020).

Emphasis on STEM, Artificial Intelligence, and Digital Learning

The Union Budget 2026–27 places strong emphasis on STEM education and digital transformation. A key announcement is the establishment

of a Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence for Education, aimed at promoting AI-enabled learning tools, adaptive learning platforms, virtual laboratories, and smart classroom technologies across schools and higher education institutions (MoF, 2026a). This initiative directly aligns with NEP 2020's vision of leveraging technology to enhance access, equity, and learning outcomes (MoE, 2020).

Another notable initiative is the establishment of content creation labs in 15,000 schools and 500 colleges, focusing on Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC) (MoF, 2026b). These labs are expected to equip students with digital creativity and future-oriented skills, opening pathways in emerging media industries and creative entrepreneurship.

The budget also reiterates the government's commitment to strengthening digital infrastructure, including expanded broadband connectivity for schools, reinforcing the shift towards technology-enabled learning environments nationwide (MoF, 2026b).

Inclusivity and Women's Education Inclusivity remains a stated priority in Budget 2026–27, particularly for women in higher education. The proposal to establish one girls' hostel in every district, in partnership with state governments, aims to address barriers related to safety, mobility, and accommodation faced by women students (MoF, 2026a). Such infrastructure support is expected to enhance female participation in higher education, especially in rural and aspirational districts.

Benefits for Youth and Students

Collectively, these initiatives promise significant benefits for youth and students by expanding access to skill-oriented education, emerging technologies, and industry-linked learning ecosystems. Investments in AI, digital creativity, and university townships can potentially improve employability and foster innovation-driven growth, aligning with India's demographic dividend aspirations (MoE, 2020).

Gaps, Critiques, and Policy Concerns Despite record allocations, the

budget has attracted criticism for falling short of transformative reform. Most notably, education expenditure continues to remain well below the long-standing target of 6 per cent of GDP, first recommended by the Kothari Commission (1964–66) and restated in NEP 2020 (Education Commission, 1966; MoE, 2020). This persistent underinvestment raises concerns about long-term human capital development.

A major equity concern arises from sharp cuts in scholarship funding. The Merit-cum-Means Scholarship allocation has been reduced by over 99 per cent, while funding for the Maulana Azad National Fellowship declined by 16 per cent in FY 2026–27 (MoF, 2026b). These reductions are likely to disproportionately affect minority and economically disadvantaged students, potentially limiting access to higher education and research opportunities.

Further, while NEP 2020 places strong emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) and holistic child development, the budget provides limited targeted investment for early childhood education, teacher training, and continuous professional development (MoE, 2020). Education experts and assessments such as ASER reports and UNESCO global learning studies continue to highlight gaps in basic learning outcomes among Indian children, underscoring the need for sustained investment at the school level (ASER Centre, 2023; UNESCO, 2022).

Conclusion

In sum, the Union Budget 2026–27 presents a mixed outlook for India's education sector. While it makes notable advances in higher education, STEM, AI, and skilling, it falls short of the bold financial commitment required to strengthen foundational education and ensure equity. Without renewed focus on school education, scholarships, and teacher development, India risks deviating from the transformative vision articulated by the Kothari Commission and NEP 2020. Record allocations must be matched with balanced, inclusive, and sustained investments to build a resilient and future-ready education system.

Soft Skills Training Helped Women Reclaim Their Identity

BY SWATI SHIRTAR, ASST.
DIRECTOR, CYDA

What truly makes someone stand out from the crowd? It's not just education or technical know-how but also the personality, the attitude to bounce back from difficulties, and the confidence to create your own identity. These are called soft skills, and they are just as important as technical skills. Soft skills, like communication, self-awareness, confidence, and empathy, help people face life's unexpected challenges with resilience. They give you the courage to speak up, the ability to work with others, and the mindset to solve problems instead of being crushed by them. Without these, opportunities can pass by unnoticed, and even the most talented person can feel stuck.

In many low-income urban communities, especially in the slums of Pune, women live behind invisible walls—walls built from gender stereotypes, family restrictions, emotional trauma, and societal expectations. Some are single mothers or widows. Others face domestic violence, social stigma, or abandonment by partners. These struggles are heavy, often leaving women feeling invisible and powerless.

Centre for Youth Development and Activities recognized that these women needed more than just a job opportunity—they required the tools



to rediscover their worth and take charge of their lives. So, in collaboration with Bajaj Finserv, it has designed an intervention that provides young women with both soft and hard skills to enter sectors that are predominantly male-dominated. Through its 6-day Soft Skills and Gender Identity training, it has helped women break these barriers, reclaim their confidence, and step into the world with dignity.

The training covers far more than just workplace etiquette. It builds communication skills, teaches women to speak and listen effectively, creates awareness about gender and patriarchy, and helps them explore their own identity beyond the labels society puts on them. It also offers practical lessons in financial literacy, digital safety, mental health awareness, and job readiness.

For many women, this was the first time they looked inward and realized they were more than the roles assigned to them. Karuna Jadhav, a

mother of two abandoned by her husband, says, "Earlier, I only thought about daily expenses. After the training, I started thinking about myself for the first time." She went on to complete a computer course, found a part-time job, and now earns Rs15,000 a month—her life no longer defined by betrayal, but by independence.

For Pooja, a transgender woman and single parent, the training built the confidence to face public judgment with pride. Today, she earns Rs13,000 a month as a cab driver, owning her identity instead of hiding it. And for 19-year-old Sakshi, burdened with caring for her mentally ill mother and sister, the program sparked a belief in her future. She now studies while earning Rs14,000 a month to support her family.

The impact doesn't stop at individuals. Families that once resisted women working outside, believing it was unsafe or inappropriate, are now supporting them after seeing the stability and

respect it brings. Seema Aadsule's father and brother, who once opposed her working, now take care of her child while she earns a steady income.

The training's activities, like "Hand on Hand," "Opening the Fist," and "Listening Pairs," help women open up, process emotions, and heal. Discussions on gender roles connect their personal struggles to broader social issues, creating collective strength and solidarity. One participant said: "Main pehilsirfadkithi, ab main ekinsaanhoon. Mujhepehchaanmilhai." ("Earlier, I was just surviving. Now, I am a human being. I have found my identity.") These words show that change is possible when someone gets the right opportunity and platform. These trainings help women find their voice, make confident choices, and value themselves. Women who once lived in silence are now leading their own journeys by breaking boundaries that once felt impossible to cross.

Centre Allows Kerosene Sale At Petrol Pumps Across 21 States Amid Energy Concerns

NEW DELHI : In a significant move aimed at easing concerns over fuel availability, the Central Government has permitted the sale of kerosene at select petrol pumps across 21 states and Union Territories. The decision comes in the backdrop of a global energy crunch triggered by the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict.



According to a notification issued by the Petroleum Ministry, kerosene will now be made available not only through the Public Distribution System (PDS) but also at designated outlets of state-run oil companies such as Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL). The move is intended to ensure uninterrupted access to fuel for household cooking and lighting, especially in case of LPG shortages.

The government has relaxed provisions under the Petroleum Safety and Licensing Rules to accelerate kerosene distribution. The new policy mainly targets regions where kerosene was not previously supplied

through PDS, including major states like Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Himachal Pradesh.

As part of the initiative, an additional allocation of 48,000 kilolitres of kerosene has been approved for states and Union Territories over and above their regular quota. Authorities have also been directed to identify suitable distribution points at the district level, while 17 states have already issued orders for the allocation of Superior Kerosene Oil (SKO).

Under the guidelines, each district will designate two petrol pumps for kerosene distribution, with a storage limit of up to 5,000 litres per outlet. Distributors will no longer be required to obtain a separate 'Form XVIII' licence, and tanker vehicles

have also been granted regulatory relaxations to speed up supply.

The government has set strict conditions for distribution: kerosene must be used only for domestic purposes such as cooking and lighting, and not for commercial use. Petrol pumps must adhere to safety norms, maintain proper records of stock and sales, and ensure that storage limits are not exceeded.

This arrangement is temporary and will remain in effect for 60 days or until further orders are issued. The government has clarified that there is no shortage of oil and gas in the country and has urged citizens to avoid panic buying based on rumours.

Pune Professor Turns Rockstar, Sings 'Mehbooba Mehbooba' at College Event — Video

PUNE : College life is often a mix of lectures, assignments, and friendships, but every now and then, a moment comes along that freezes time and becomes unforgettable for students. The bond between professors and students can sometimes go beyond the classroom, and when a teacher decides to express themselves creatively, it leaves a lasting impression. Over the years, we've seen many educators surprise the internet by showing off their talents—be it dancing, singing, or performing—but the latest sensation comes from Pune.

During a recent event at Sri Balaji University, Pune, a professor took the stage during "Drishti 2026" and left everyone spellbound with his rendition of the iconic



"Mehbooba Mehbooba" from the classic film Sholay. The performance was captured in a video shared on Instagram by user Nupur Mall, showcasing the professor's energy, confidence, and undeniable stage presence.

In the clip, the professor is seen fully immersed in the song, delivering

every note with flair while students cheer him on enthusiastically. Above the video, it was written: "Attendance ke liye aaye, fan banke chale gaye" — came for attendance, left as a fan. Nupur Mall's caption perfectly summed up the moment:

"When your professor has more vibe than your playlist. Sri Balaji University, Pune College professor singing song on a college event Drishti 2026."

The video quickly went viral, racking up over 1.1 million views in a short span. Social media users were quick to praise the professor's charisma and the connection he shares with his students. One viewer commented, "This is the kind of professor who makes college life memorable," while another wrote,

"He didn't just sing, he owned the stage completely." The enthusiasm of the students reflected in the clip only added to the appreciation, with one comment noting, "Students cheering like this shows how loved he is on campus."

Many online users highlighted how such performances challenge the usual perception of professors and make academic life more relatable and enjoyable. "Not every day you see a professor outshining performers," one comment read, while another said, "Gone are the days of boring lectures; this is the vibe we need." Some even felt that the respect for the professor doubled after seeing him perform with such confidence and charm.

Tempo Driver Beaten by Alleged Cow Vigilantes In Wanowrie, Police Probe On

PUNE : Pune police have filed a case against a group of alleged cow vigilantes for assaulting a 54-year-old tempo driver, Papa Fakrudin Shaikh, who was transporting buffaloes with valid documentation. The incident occurred on Sunday in Wanowrie, raising concerns over rising vigilantism and the safety of lawful livestock transporters.

Shaikh was driving a six-wheeler Ashok Leyland truck (MH-14 GU 2593) carrying seven buffaloes from Market Yard to Keshavnagar



in Mundhwa on behalf of owner Mohinuddin Qureshi. Around 11:30 am, his vehicle was blocked near a petrol pump on Lullanagar Road by occupants of a pick-up truck, who accused him of transporting cattle for illegal slaughter.

Despite showing valid documents and clarifying that the animals were buffaloes, Shaikh was allegedly assaulted and forced off the road. The group later informed the police, and the truck was taken to the Wanowrie Bazar police chowki.

Police said that at approximately 1 pm, the main accused, identified as Hrushikesh Kamthe, along with four to five associates, reportedly assaulted Shaikh again inside the police station premises. Shaikh sustained injuries to his face, chest,

and legs and was issued death threats warning him not to return to the area. He was later taken to Sassoon General Hospital for a medical examination and lodged a formal complaint.

Wanowrie police have registered FIR No. 0120/2026 under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, including charges of voluntarily causing hurt, criminal intimidation, unlawful assembly, wrongful restraint, and rioting.

Pune: Kondhwa Schools Face Hygiene Issues; Authorities Urged For Swift Intervention

PUNE, In a move aimed at safeguarding student welfare, concerns regarding sanitation, maintenance, and basic infrastructure were raised for two civic-run schools in Kondhwa Khurd.

A detailed representation was submitted by Akshay Shinde, BJP leader from Kondhwa,

BJP General Secretary of Hadapsar Assembly to Mayor Manjusha Nagpure regarding the condition of Sant Gadge Maharaj School and Late Rajendra Lonkar E-Learning School, both operated by the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC).

Highlighting the importance of a clean, safe, and quality

educational environment for the holistic development of students, the delegation urged the authorities to take immediate corrective measures.

Following the submission, a joint inspection was carried out along with officials from the health department of the Wanowrie-Ramtekdi ward office to assess the ground situation and identify key issues.

Taking serious note of the concerns, the Mayor has directed the concerned departments to initiate prompt action. Authorities have expressed confidence that the necessary improvements and repair work will be expedited in the coming days.



70 kW Solar Project Inaugurated under 'Go Green' Initiative at Vedanta Society, Wakad

PUNE, Vedanta Society in Wakad has taken a significant step towards environmental sustainability by successfully commissioning a 70 kW rooftop solar power project under its 'Go Green' initiative. The project, completed within just three months at an approximate cost of ₹35 lakh, marks a major milestone in the society's eco-friendly efforts.

The project was inaugurated on Saturday by Hon'ble MLA Shankar Bhau Jagtap. The event was attended by Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation corporators Mrs. Sneha Tai Kalate, Mrs. Shruti Tai Wakadkar, Mrs. Reshma Tai Bhujbal, Mr. Kunal Wavhalakar, along with a large number of society residents.

In his introductory address, Chairman Dr. Somnath Dhonde highlighted that the solar project was completed without collecting any additional funds from residents. It was executed using the society's savings along with financial support from central government subsidies. He further stated that the project is expected to reduce the common electricity (MSEB) bill by approximately 60



percent. He also announced that an additional 60 kW solar project will soon be implemented with the support of residents.

On the occasion, MLA Shankar Bhau Jagtap appreciated the initiative, describing it as a commendable step towards sustainable development and an environmentally responsible future. He emphasized that such initiatives not only reduce electricity costs but also contribute to the nation's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat by promoting clean and self-reliant energy solutions.

Under the leadership of Chairman Dr. Somnath Dhonde, the society has consistently implemented several eco-friendly initiatives. The society already operates a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), and in 2020, the STP meter was converted into a green meter, resulting in significant

savings in electricity costs.

Additionally, the society has implemented rainwater harvesting and partial wet waste management systems, with plans to introduce a complete waste processing project soon. These efforts are expected to reduce the burden on the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation.

The solar project was executed under the guidance of Mr. Sumant Deshpande, with valuable support from Secretary Sneha Rao, Treasurer Pramod Bhosale, and committee members Nikhil Mule, Mayur Waghmare, Parag Rudrawar, Bhushan Baviskar, Gaurav Mankar, Madan Patil, and Niti Pathak.

Vedanta Society has consistently maintained a green and eco-friendly campus, and this initiative is expected to serve as an inspiration for other residential societies.

PCMC Faces Heat Over 0.5% Property Transfer Fee Hike; BJP Leader Shatrughan Kate Takes Aggressive Stand

PIMPRI-CHINCHWAD: The Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) is facing sharp criticism over the recent increase in property transfer fees. BJP city president and corporator Shatrughan Kate has strongly opposed the move, directly questioning the civic administration over what he called an "unjust and excessive" charge.

Kate has submitted a detailed memorandum to Municipal Commissioner Dr. Vijay Suryavanshi, demanding the immediate withdrawal of the current 0.5% fee levied on the total market value of a property. A similar representation

has also been made to Mayor Ravi Landge.

In his memorandum, Kate stated that the new fee structure imposes a significant financial burden on citizens. Homebuyers already pay substantial amounts in stamp duty and registration charges, and the additional municipal fee effectively creates a double financial strain.

"Earlier, only a nominal fee was charged for property transfer, which was sufficient to cover administrative costs. Introducing a percentage-based fee purely to boost revenue is an unfair practice," Kate said.

He further pointed out that such

high charges discourage citizens from officially registering property transfers with the municipal authorities. This, he warned, could ultimately impact the corporation's revenue collection in the long run.

Highlighting the rising cost of living, Kate noted that paying lakhs of rupees for property transfer is unaffordable for many families. He said the decision has led to growing dissatisfaction among residents and urged the administration to take the matter seriously.

Kate has demanded that the 0.5% fee be scrapped immediately and replaced with the earlier

nominal charges. According to him, this would not only ease the financial burden on citizens but also make the transfer process simpler, more transparent, and efficient.

"We will not tolerate the 0.5% property transfer fee that puts an unfair burden on the common citizens of Pimpri-Chinchwad. We will continue to follow up with the administration until this fee is revoked and the earlier nominal charges are reinstated. If needed, we will also launch a democratic protest to ensure justice for citizens," said Shatrughan Kate.

A Daughter's Gift of Life: Dr. Mamta Shivtare Donates Kidney to Save Father Vijay Shivtare

MUMBAI : In an extraordinary act of filial devotion, former Maharashtra minister and Purandar MLA Vijay Shivtare underwent a successful kidney transplant on Monday, March 30, 2026, at a private hospital in Mumbai. The donor was none other than his daughter, Dr. Mamta Shivtare, who selflessly donated her kidney to save her father's life.



Vijay Shivtare had been battling a serious kidney condition for several years, with both kidneys failing and requiring regular dialysis. His health had been steadily deteriorating. In this critical situation, Dr. Mamta Shivtare, moved by her father's condition, stepped forward to donate one of her

kidneys, ensuring he could regain his health.

Post-surgery, both Vijay Shivtare and Dr. Mamata Shivtare are reported to be in stable condition. Close family members highlighted Mamata's selfless act as giving her father a new lease on life. Dr. Mamta Shivtare is married to IPS officer Shivdeep Lande, who praised his wife's courageous

decision in a heartfelt social media post, lauding her sacrifice and devotion.

Shivdeep Lande wrote about the emotional journey, emphasizing how his wife handled the numerous medical tests, legal formalities, and documentation over the past three months single-handedly, and how her selfless act reaffirmed the

invaluable role of a daughter in a family.

About Vijay Shivtare: Vijay Shivtare is a prominent leader from Purandar Assembly constituency in Pune district. He won the assembly elections in 2009 and 2014 but lost in 2019. He has served as Minister of State for Water Resources in the Maharashtra government. In recent years, he joined the Shinde faction of Shiv Sena and regained political prominence.

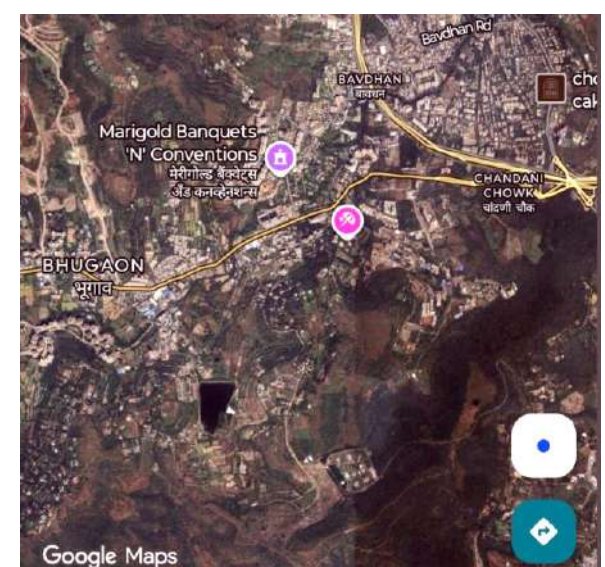
This heartwarming incident has been widely covered in Marathi media, highlighting both the personal sacrifice of Dr. Mamta Shivtare and the enduring bond between a father and daughter.

PMC Proposes ₹200 Crore Chandani Chowk-Bhugaon Road Widening To Ease West Pune Traffic

PUNE, In a major infrastructure initiative, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has proposed a ₹200 crore project to widen the Chandani Chowk-Bhugaon road, aiming to decongest traffic and improve connectivity in western parts of the city.

The information was shared by Bhosari MLA Mahesh Landge on his X platform. The project focuses on expanding the existing narrow stretches of the road, currently around 10 metres wide, to up to 60 metres. Officials said the move is expected to significantly ease traffic flow on one of the busiest corridors in West Pune.

The Chandani Chowk-Bhugaon stretch serves



as a key entry route for commuters travelling from Bhugaon, Mulshi, Pirangut and the Konkan region. It is also a crucial

link connecting Pune city to important locations such as Pirangut, Roha, Bhagadi and Mangaon.

At present, the

route faces severe congestion, particularly for commuters heading towards Kothrud and central Pune. The road also acts as an alternative access route to Hinjawadi IT Park, further adding to traffic pressure.

With several international educational institutions already operating in the vicinity and more planned in the future, traffic volume on this stretch is expected to rise further.

Civic officials believe the proposed road widening will not only reduce congestion but also strengthen regional connectivity and support long-term urban growth in West Pune.

City Echoes with Saffron Flags as Grand Bike Rally Held Ahead of 'Virat Hindu Sammelan'

Sahibganj : The town witnessed an atmosphere of enthusiasm and unity as a grand bike rally was organized in preparation for the upcoming "Virat Hindu Sammelan." The rally, aimed at promoting Sanatan culture and social unity, commenced from the Durga Temple at Chowk Bazaar and concluded at the Surya Dev Ghat temple premises after passing through major routes of the city. Hundreds of bikes adorned with saffron flags participated in the procession, drawing significant public attention. The rally symbolized a collective resolve to strengthen cultural identity and unity among the Hindu community. Addressing the gathering at the concluding



venue, RSS divisional pracharak Ajay Kumar stated that the conference is not merely a formal event but a movement to awaken society. He emphasized that such initiatives serve as a powerful medium to promote unity, awareness, and cultural preservation, while also

guiding future generations with proper values and direction. Organizers informed that extensive preparations are underway to make the upcoming conference grand. A key highlight of the event will be the presence of Raju Das Ji Maharaj, head priest of Hanumangarhi in Ayodhya, who is expected to attend as a special guest. One of the unique aspects of the event is community participation through the collection of food grains from every Hindu household, which will be used to prepare "Mahaprasad." The entire event is being

organized with the support and contribution of common families. Following the rally, devotees gathered at the temple premises and collectively recited the Hanuman Chalisa, creating a deeply devotional atmosphere. Several prominent individuals, including members of the Surya Dev Temple Service Committee, RSS functionaries, and social workers, were present in large numbers. The program was coordinated by District Contact Head Dr. Surendranath Tiwari. Organizers have appealed to ensure that the invitation for the conference reaches every household, stating that the primary objective of the event is to build a united, aware, and empowered society.

Annual Exam Results Declared at Saraswati Shishu Mandir Kotalpokhar, Meritorious Students Felicitated

The annual examination results for the academic session 2025-26 were declared at Saraswati Shishu Mandir, Kotalpokhar, followed by a felicitation ceremony held within the school premises.



Mohiuddin Mansoori Kotalpokhar

Kotalpokhar — The annual examination results for the academic session 2025-26 were declared at Saraswati Shishu Mandir, Kotalpokhar, followed by a felicitation ceremony held within the school premises. Students who delivered outstanding performances were honored during the event. Students from classes Arun to Class V who secured first, second, and third positions in their respective categories

were called onto the stage and awarded for their achievements. The occasion filled the school environment with enthusiasm and joy, as children expressed happiness upon receiving their awards. Addressing the gathering, the Principal stated that the results reflected the students' consistent hard work and dedication throughout the year. He encouraged students to remain disciplined and continue striving for excellence, emphasizing that sustained effort is key

to achieving success in life. He also extended his best wishes for their bright future. The event was attended by members of the school committee, including the Secretary, President, and school patrons, along with several distinguished guests. Teachers also played an active role in motivating and encouraging the students. The ceremony concluded with everyone expressing their best wishes for the students' successful and promising future.

ONE-DAY WORKSHOP ON MOTOR ACCIDENT CLAIMS TRIBUNAL HELD IN SAHIBGANJ

Sahibganj : A district-level one-day workshop on the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) was organized at the Lok Adalat hall in the Civil Court premises under the guidance of Principal District and Sessions Judge and Chairman Akhil Kumar, following directives from the Jharkhand State Legal Services Authority. The workshop was inaugurated with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by Principal Judge (Family Court) Sanjay Kumar Upadhyay, District Judge (III) Shiv Karan, DLSA Secretary Vishwanath Bhagat, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Headquarters) Vijay Kushwaha, Public Prosecutor Anurag Shukla, and Medical



Officer Dr. Kumari Snehlata. Addressing the participants, Principal Judge Sanjay Kumar Upadhyay emphasized the crucial role of police officials in ensuring timely justice for victims of road accidents. He stated that providing compensation is not merely a financial formality but an essential support system for affected families. He underlined that it is the legal responsibility of police officers to act promptly in the interest of victims and ensure

proper documentation and communication with insurance companies. He further stressed that verification of vehicle documents through the District Transport Office (DTO) and timely submission of reports to insurance companies are mandatory responsibilities of the police. District Judge Shiv Karan highlighted recent legal amendments, stating that all necessary documents related to road accidents must be submitted to the court within

30 days. In case of delays, the court must be informed accordingly. He urged police station in-charges to work with sensitivity and commitment to ensure that no victim is deprived of compensation. Speakers at the workshop emphasized that effective coordination among police, the transport department, and insurance companies is essential to expedite the compensation process. They called upon all concerned departments to perform their duties with diligence and accountability. The workshop was attended by members of the Legal Aid Defense Council, officials from the transport department, medical professionals including Dr. Tabrez, police officers from various stations, and representatives from other related departments.

BJP Training Camp Held in Kotalpokhar, Organization Strengthens Strategy for Upcoming Elections

Barharwa : A one-day training camp was organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under its Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Training Campaign at Gulabi Madhav Bhavan in Kotalpokhar on Tuesday. The program was conducted as per the directives of the Jharkhand state unit, with active participation from party workers across Sahibganj district. The event commenced with floral tributes to Deendayal Upadhyaya, Bharat Mata, and Syama Prasad Mukherjee, followed by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp and a collective rendition of "Vande Mataram." Distinguished guests were honored with traditional angavastra during the ceremony. Addressing the gathering as the chief speaker, Bambam Mandal provided detailed guidance to party workers on organizational ideology, functioning, and strengthening grassroots presence. Other



speakers, including state working committee member Kusumakar Tiwari, district general secretary Sharmila Rajak, and a former state minister, elaborated on party policies, principles, and upcoming programs. The program was presided over by Mandal President Vikas Kumar Bhagat, while the stage proceedings were conducted by former block-level Twenty Point Program chairman Ranjit Kumar Sah. Several party

leaders and workers, including Jiten Singh, Jaydev Rajwar, Seema Devi, Pranav Singh, Beauty Devi, Surendra Sah, Anoop Lal Rajak, Ganga Ghosh, Bhim Ghosh, and Tapesah Sah, were present in large numbers. The session concluded with remarks by district working committee member Rajesh Sah. During the training, discussions were also held on strengthening the organization at the booth level and formulating strategies for the upcoming elections.

Civil Surgeon and Three Doctors Honoured for Excellence in Healthcare Services in Sahibganj

Sahibganj : A grand civic felicitation ceremony was organized on Tuesday at the warehouse premises of Sadar Hospital, where the Civil Surgeon and three dedicated doctors were honored for their outstanding contribution to healthcare services in the district. The event, organized by local citizens and social workers, was attended by Civil Surgeon Dr. Ramdev Paswan as the chief guest, along with District Information Science Officer Dr. Divesh Kumar. During the ceremony, three prominent doctors of Sadar Hospital—Dr. Mukesh Kumar, Dr. Keshav Krishna, and Dr. Mohan Murmu—were felicitated along with the Civil Surgeon for their exemplary service and commitment. Under the leadership of social worker Mohammad Shahid, the



doctors were honored with bouquets as a token of appreciation. Speakers at the event praised the dedication of the medical professionals, highlighting their commitment to patient care, punctuality, and their practice of treating patients until the last case of the day. It was noted that the district's healthcare system has witnessed significant improvements under the leadership of the Civil Surgeon. The honored doctors were described as the backbone of the hospital, setting an example for oth-

ers in the medical field. Expressing gratitude, Dr. Mukesh Kumar stated that the recognition serves as motivation to continue delivering better healthcare services. He reaffirmed his commitment to improving patient care in the future. Ward Councillor Mohammad Nazrul Bari also appreciated the doctors for their dedication and service. Following the felicitation ceremony, a three-point memorandum was submitted to Civil Surgeon Dr. Ramdev Paswan by social worker Mohammad Shahid.

Rajmahal Hills May Hold Clues to Dinosaur Era, Says Dr. Ranjit Kumar Singh

Sahibganj : Jharkhand's Sahibganj district has once again emerged as a focal point for geological research, as students from the Geology Department of Patna University undertook a special educational field trip to explore the region's rich geological heritage. The one-day "Geological Field Trip" provided students with a rare opportunity to move beyond textbooks and witness Earth's ancient history firsthand. The field study was led by renowned geologist and Principal of Model College, Rajmahal, Dr. Ranjit Kumar Singh. The journey began in the Borio region, where students examined the complex structures of the Rajmahal Traps. Dr. Singh explained the concept of "intertrappean" layers, describing them as evidence of quiet intervals between successive lava flows. One of the key highlights



of the trip was the visit to Mandar Fossil Park, where students closely studied fossilized wood—often referred to as "stone-like wood"—and impressions of ancient leaves. They also observed spherical weathering patterns in basalt rocks, gaining insights into chemical transformations within volcanic formations. At Moti Jharna, students witnessed remarkable columnar joint formations created due to thermal contraction

during the cooling of lava, offering a vivid example of volcanic processes. During the visit, Dr. Singh made a significant observation, stating that the Rajmahal Hills are a treasure trove of geological mysteries. He noted that given the types of rock structures and fossils present in the region, there is a strong possibility that future in-depth research and scientific excavations could uncover evidence

related to the dinosaur era. The students extended their exploration beyond major sites, visiting Katghar and Maharajpur to study regional geological formations, as well as China clay (kaolin) mining areas to understand mineral resources and extraction processes. They also analyzed the diversity of local rock formations in Vrindavan Hill and the Model College campus. The field trip proved to be a unique blend of volcanology and paleobotany, offering students an immersive learning experience. Under Dr. Singh's expert guidance, the tour transformed into a journey through millions of years of geological evolution. Experts believe that the geological richness of the Rajmahal region has the potential to earn global recognition, provided sustained research and scientific exploration continue in the area.

HEAVY RAIN UPROOTS BANYAN TREE, TRAFFIC DISRUPTED FOR HOURS IN SONAHATU

Sonahatu : Continuous heavy rainfall severely affected normal life in the block area, as a massive banyan tree collapsed onto the Sonahatu-Bundu main road near Danadih village, bringing traffic to a complete halt for several hours. According to eyewitnesses, strong winds accompanied persistent rainfall since morning, weakening the roots of the old tree, which eventually fell across the middle of the road. The incident led to long queues of vehicles on both sides, leaving commuters, bikers, and motorists stranded for hours. Local residents initially attempted to clear the road themselves, but due to the large size of the tree, removal proved difficult and time-



consuming. Authorities were later informed, following which a team reached the spot and managed to clear the obstruction after considerable effort, restoring traffic movement. The incident has raised concerns over preparedness and preventive measures. Villagers pointed out that old and weakened roadside trees should be regularly inspected and trimmed to avoid such disruptions and ensure safer travel for the public.

ed for hours. Local residents initially attempted to clear the road themselves, but due to the large size of the tree, removal proved difficult and time-

NSS Volunteers of Sahibganj College Undertake Educational Tour of Historical Sites

Sahibganj : Volunteers of the National Service Scheme (NSS), Unit-I of Sahibganj College, participated in a one-day educational tour aimed at exploring the district's rich historical heritage and expanding their academic understanding beyond classroom learning. The program was conducted under the leadership of Program Officer and District Nodal Officer Professor Kumar Prashant Bharti.



During the tour, volunteers visited several prominent historical sites in the Taljhari block, including the historic Jami Masjid, Baradwari, and Kanhaiya Sthan, where they

closely observed architectural features and learned about their cultural and historical significance. Speaking during the visit, Professor Bharti emphasized the importance

of practical knowledge alongside theoretical education. He noted that such educational initiatives help students develop a deeper understanding of history and culture while inspiring them to preserve their heritage. The tour was attended by several faculty members and students of the college, including B.Ed department professors Nitin Kumar Ghosh, Dr. Manoj Kumar, Dr. Sunil Kumar, and Professor Pradeep Kujur.

KITGG 2026 DAY 7 ROUND-UP:

Jharkhand Sprinters Shine as Shiv Kumar Soren and Prithvi Oraon Claim 100m Gold

Raipur : The seventh day of the inaugural Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 witnessed thrilling performances at the sports complex in Jagdalpur, where Jharkhand's Shiv Kumar Soren and Prithvi Oraon emerged as the fastest athletes in the men's and women's 100 metres events respectively. Shiv Kumar Soren dominated the men's 100m sprint, clocking 10.58 seconds to clinch the gold medal, while Chhattisgarh's Tilak Barset secured silver with 10.87 seconds and Odisha's Atish Kindo took bronze in 10.91 seconds. In the women's 100m final, 16-year-old Prithvi Oraon delivered a personal best of 12.73 seconds to secure the gold medal, followed by Nagaland's Ruduoilhouneuo



Belho (12.90 seconds) with silver and Jharkhand's Putul Bakshi (13.03 seconds) with bronze. Prithvi said after her victory that she was confident of a strong performance, having done well in the selection trials, and focused on giving her best to achieve a personal record. In field events, Chhattisgarh's Siddharth Nagesh put up a strong performance by win-

ning gold in shot put with a throw of 13.52 metres and earlier securing a silver medal in discus throw. Gujarat's Danish Makwana claimed gold in discus throw with 44.83 metres, while Odisha's Chandray Murrmu took bronze. The competition also saw intense battles in other athletics events. Lakshadweep's Abdul Fatah created history by becoming

the first athlete from his region to cross 7 metres in long jump, winning gold with 7.03 metres. The men's 400m final saw a razor-thin finish, where Gujarat's Santoshbhai Ganvit won gold in 49.332 seconds, narrowly beating Odisha's Noble Kumar Kisan, who finished just behind in 49.335 seconds. In women's events, Karnataka's Reethushree won gold in the 400 metres with 58.63 seconds, while Goa's Manasi Kunkalka claimed gold in shot put with a throw of 9.72 metres. Odisha continued its strong showing in track events, including relay success in the 4x100m races. Jharkhand strengthened its overall medal tally by adding gold medals in the women's 4x100m relay and men's Greco-Roman wrestling

(77kg), moving to third place in the standings with 7 gold, 2 silver, and 5 bronze medals. Karnataka continues to lead the medal table with 19 gold medals, followed by Odisha in second place with 13 golds, while Jharkhand holds third position after a strong Day 7 performance. The day also featured notable football action, where Chhattisgarh reached the women's final after a penalty shootout win over Arunachal Pradesh, while Jharkhand defeated Gujarat 9-0 to set up a high-profile final clash. With multiple finals across athletics, wrestling, and team events, Day 7 delivered intense competition and record-breaking performances, marking one of the most exciting days of the games so far.

Modern Tehsil Office Inaugurated in Dharsiwa: Major Step Toward Transparent and Citizen-Centric Governance

By Correspondent

Raipur : Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai inaugurated the newly constructed modern tehsil office in Dharsiwa, Raipur district, marking a significant step toward making administrative services more accessible, efficient, and transparent for citizens.

Addressing the event, the Chief Minister said that the core objective of good governance is to ensure that citizens receive essential services in a timely, simple, and transparent manner. He stated that the new tehsil office in Dharsiwa embodies this vision and will significantly improve the speed and convenience of revenue-related services for local residents. CM Sai further emphasized that the state government is continuously working to strengthen the administrative framework and improve service delivery quality in both rural and urban areas. The aim, he said, is to



ensure that every citizen receives efficient administrative support without unnecessary difficulties. The newly built tehsil office includes essential facilities such as the Naib Nazir office, record room, land revenue storage section, copying branch, Kanungo office, Bhuiyan and land records section, along with

a public service center and Aadhaar center. Basic amenities like clean drinking water have also been provided for public convenience. Constructed at a cost of Rs 66.20 lakh, the facility is expected to strengthen the administrative infrastructure of the region and improve the implementation of public services.

Missing Class 8 Girl Found Dead on Railway Track in Khairagarh, Investigation Underway

Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai : A 14-year-old schoolgirl from Chichola village in Khairagarh district was found dead on a railway track in Kisan Parsada village under Bilaspur district, triggering shock and grief in the region. The deceased has been identified as Devika Verma, a Class 8 student and one of four sisters. Her father, Shailendra Verma, works as a sweeper at a local high school, while her mother is employed as a cook at an anganwadi centre. According to information, Devika went missing



from her home around 10:30 pm on March 28. Her family lodged a missing complaint at Khairagarh police station on March 29 at around 12 pm. On the same day, an unidentified teenage girl's body was recovered near a railway

track in the Masturi police station area of Bilaspur district. The body was later identified by family members on March 31 as Devika Verma. Following identification, Khairagarh police took the family to Bilaspur to complete necessary legal procedures. The incident has sparked allegations from the family regarding delay in police response, claiming that timely action might have saved the child. Police, however, stated that an FIR has been registered and the matter is being investigated from all possible angles.

Illegal Betting Racket Busted in Birejhar, Accused Arrested During Anjora Police Raid

Durg : An illegal betting operation was exposed in the Anjora outpost area after police received a tip-off on March 30, 2026, regarding gambling activity being conducted openly in Gram Birejhar. Acting swiftly on the information, Anjora police conducted a raid and arrested the accused red-handed while operating the betting setup. The accused has been identified as Kamlesh Yadav (42), a resident of Birejhar village under Anjora outpost limits in Durg district. During the search, police recovered Rs



2,550 in cash, three betting slips, and a pen used for maintaining records. All seized materials were confiscated on the spot, and a case has been registered against the accused under Crime No. 308/2026 and Section 06 of the Chhattisgarh

Gambling Prohibition Act, 2022. Authorities have initiated legal proceedings in the matter. Police officials stated that preliminary investigation suggests the accused was involved in illegal betting activities for financial gain in the area.

Time-of-Day Tariff in Bihar to Benefit Consumers, Says Company; Free Power Up to 125 Units Continues



Samastipur: The company has described the system of providing cheaper electricity during the day and costlier electricity in the evening—known as the Time of Day (ToD) tariff—as being in the best interest of consumers in Bihar. On Monday, the company stated that the ToD tariff is currently in force across 22 states in the country. Under the Union Ministry of Power's 'Rights of Consumers (Amendment) Rules, 2023' and the 'National Tariff Policy, 2016,' this system has now been implemented in Bihar as well. The company further noted that the facility of free electricity for consumption up to 125 units remains operational within the state. Thanks to this provision, the monthly electricity bills of approximately 90 percent of domestic consumers amount to zero. The implementation of the ToD tariff will not cause inconvenience to consumers; rather, they will be able to utilize this system to generate even greater savings. The Regulatory Commission has made the Time of Day

(ToD) tariff mandatory. Effective on or before April 1st, the Time of Day (ToD) tariff has been made compulsory for commercial and industrial consumers with a maximum demand exceeding 10 kW. Under this new framework, electricity will be available at lower rates during the 'off-peak' hours—from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM—while rates will be higher during the 'peak period'—from 5:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Standard rates will apply during the hours between 11:00 PM and 9:00 AM. The company assured that electricity supply will be provided to consumers in strict accordance with the regulations. It added that if consumers shift even a portion of their electricity usage from the peak hours to the off-peak hours, they could save approximately Rs 90 every month. For instance, if a domestic urban consumer shifts the usage of just 2 units of electricity daily from the evening peak period to the daytime off-peak period, it results in a daily saving of Rs 2.96, which accumulates to approximately Rs 89.00 per month.

Land Registration in Samastipur to Become Costlier from April as Revised MVR Comes into Effect



Samastipur: Purchasing land in the district is set to become more expensive starting in April. After a long hiatus, the process of revising the Minimum Value Register (MVR) has been completed, and from the new financial year, land registration values will be determined based on prevailing market rates. Once implemented, buyers will be required to pay higher registration fees compared to current rates. New land rates have been fixed for all revenue villages across both urban and rural areas. This new valuation has been formulated to encompass all categories of land—residential, commercial, developmental, and irrigated. It is estimated that following the implementation of the new rates, registration fees could increase by three to four times. In fact, until now, the Registration Department had been registering land based on rates established in 2013

for rural areas and 2016 for urban areas. Given the significant fluctuations in land market values over the past decade, this revision was deemed necessary. Specifically regarding Samastipur district, the valuation of land and plots across all 43 wards of the Municipal Corporation has been completed. In addition to the Municipal Corporation, the District Valuation Committee has also prepared reports covering all Nagar Parishads, Nagar Panchayats, and rural areas within the district. According to official sources, the changes to the MVR could result in land registration becoming three to five times more expensive. The most significant impact is expected to be observed in the registration of non-agricultural land within the Municipal Corporation limits, thereby enabling the government to generate increased revenue from land registrations.

Grand Religious Tambola Competition Held on the Occasion of Bhagwan Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Mahotsav

Jagdalpur : A series of events marking the Bhagwan Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Mahotsav continued with a grand religious Tambola competition organised at Waterfront Society under the aegis of the All India Kharatar Gachchh Mahila Sangathan. The programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, followed by Manglacharan and Ganesh Vandana performances that created a devotional and vibrant atmosphere. The Tambola competition was made more engaging with musical presentations by Tarika Kochar, Yashi Tatiya and Deepika Maloo, which were widely appreciated by the audience. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation and a festive spirit throughout. The



programme was conducted by Manju Lunkad, Payal Lunkad and Sunita Bafna. Addressing the gathering, chairperson Ritu Luniya encouraged everyone to adopt the teachings and principles of Bhagwan Mahavir in their daily lives. General Secretary Anil Kagot provided details about the upcoming Mahavir Jayanti celebrations. The event

concluded with a vote of thanks by Pawan Modi on behalf of the community and Shweta Luniya from the Mahila Mandal. A number of community members contributed to the successful organisation of the event, including Ritu Luniya, Santosh Duggar, Nisha Bothra, Manju Duggar, Shweta Bardia, Nisha Kochar, Moli Duggar, Seema

Tatiya, Dolly Burad, Priyanka Bafna, Sharmila Duggar, Kiran Lalwani and Kavita Duggar among others. The event concluded with distribution of attractive prizes to lucky winners. A large number of community members, including senior citizens, attended the programme, which concluded in a highly enthusiastic and peaceful atmosphere.

RAPE OF MINOR ON THE PRETEXT OF MARRIAGE, ACCUSED ARRESTED



Janjgir-Champa : In the case of abducting a minor girl on the pretext of marriage and committing incest with her in Naila Chowki area of the district, the police took

immediate action and arrested the accused youth. According to the information received, the accused Birendra Ratre alias Sikandar Ratre (20 years), resident of Kapan, Chowki Naila, had taken away the minor girl on a motorcycle by luring her with the pretext of marriage on the intervening night of March 27, 2026. Police registered a case on the complaint of family members and started investigation. Chowki Naila police took prompt action under the leadership of Chowki in-charge Bhavani Singh Chauhan and arrested the accused.

Arms Act Action in Bilaspur: Four Armed Youths Arrested for Creating Panic in Mini Basti Area

Bilaspur : A swift police action under the Arms Act led to the arrest of four youths who were allegedly brandishing sharp weapons and creating panic in the Mini Basti area of Jarhabhata under Civil Line police station limits on March 31, 2026. According to reports, the situation escalated when the youths were seen openly waving sharp-edged weapons and threatening passersby, causing fear and disturbance in the locality. The sudden incident created panic among residents before police intervened. Acting promptly, the Civil



Line police launched a raid and managed to apprehend all four accused after a brief chase and cordon operation. From their possession, police recovered three iron button knives and one iron spear-like weapon. The arrested individuals

Jarhabhata under Civil Line police station limits. Police have registered a case against them under Sections 25 and 27 of the Arms Act and initiated strict legal proceedings. During the same operation, authorities also took preventive action against another individual, Rakesh Ogle (29), resident of Magarpara Marar Gali, for allegedly disturbing public order. Officials stated that the swift response by the police helped prevent a potentially serious law-and-order situation, restoring calm in the area before the situation could escalate further.

Trump tells the UK and other countries 'go get your own oil' from Strait of Hormuz

AGENCY
Washington: Hegseth claims that regime change has occurred in Iran and the country's leadership should be "wiser than the last". He warns that if they don't agree a deal with Trump, then the US military will continue with "even more intensity". Chair of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Dan Caine then picks up. He delivers an update saying over 150 ships have been taken out successfully by the Navy, and the US B-52 missions have started. Hegseth continues, saying US firepower is increasing and Iran's is decreasing, adding that President Trump is doing what no other president had the guts to do. The last 24 hours saw the lowest number of missiles fired by Iran and the morale of Iranian military is being damaged, causing desertions, and frustration among military leaders, Hegseth says. Hegseth begins the briefing, saying over the weekend he visited troops that are part of the military

operation, but won't say where he visited for security reasons. "The trip was an honour," he says, adding that he "witnessed the best of America". He describes meeting a female member of the military, who when he asked her what she needed for the job, she smiled at him and said "more bombs". The feeling among troops that he spoke to was the opposite to that during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan when they didn't know "when the operation would end", he continues. Hegseth says in this operation, he sees motivation, mission focus and an "urgency" to finish the job. I'm in the Pentagon press briefing room waiting for Pete Hegseth and Dan Caine. This is the first news conference they've held in 12 days. As I've mentioned before, these news briefings are tightly controlled in terms of access. We've just had a security official come in for a second time making us raise our hands to check we're all wear-



ing a bright green wristband that was issued as we entered the building. The briefings are usually highly choreographed with Hegseth tending to give priority to questions from outlets that signed a declaration last year to remain part of the Pentagon's resident press corps. Most major news organisations rejected this as it meant they wouldn't be able to freely report, and a judge this month ruled the Pentagon's policy unconstitutional. If there are some challenging questions, they might focus on the strategic impasse of this war, as the administration engages in threats to escalate as well as attempts to do a deal with the regime. President Trump has just called France "very unhelpful" for not letting planes heading to Israel with military supplies fly over French territory. Earlier, Italy

reportedly denied a US request to use the Sigonella air base in Sicily for military aircraft a few days ago, in a move that underscores Rome's cautious approach to involvement in military operations. Italian daily newspaper Corriere della Sera reported on Tuesday that Defence Minister Guido Crosetto denied authorisation after learning of a US flight plan involving aircraft that were due to land at Naval Air Station Sigonella, in the southern Italian region, before continuing towards the Middle East. The plan was reportedly communicated while the aircraft were already in flight, and no prior approval had been requested from Italian authorities. Checks suggested the aircraft were not carrying out routine or logistical operations covered by existing agreements between Italy and the US, according to the report. The request reportedly involved bombers, which require specific approval and

parliamentary oversight. The Italian government has not commented publicly on the episode. Contacted by the BBC, the defence minister's office was not immediately available for comment. In a follow-up post on Truth Social, Trump says France "wouldn't let planes headed to Israel, loaded up with military supplies, fly over French territory". He goes on to say France "has been very unhelpful with respect to the 'Butcher of Iran,' who has been successfully eliminated!" The post concludes with the US president saying: "The U.S.A. will REMEMBER!!!" US President Donald Trump says countries "like the United Kingdom" who can't get jet fuel because of the restrictions around the Strait of Hormuz should "build up some delayed courage, go to the Strait, and just TAKE IT!". In a post on Truth Social, he writes countries will "have to start learning how to fight for yourself, the U.S.A. won't be there to help you anymore."

Eurovision Song Contest launches first-ever Asia edition



AGENCY
Thailand: Known for its glitzy stage costumes and sometimes outlandish performances, the Eurovision Song Contest is now launching its first ever Asia edition. Broadcasters from 10 countries in the region, including South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines, have confirmed that they will be taking part. According to the contest's website, which lists the participating countries, there are "more to follow". These countries will first host their own national selections before the grand final in Bangkok which will be broadcast live on 14 November. First held in 1956, Eurovision has grown into the world's longest run-

ning international music competition. With 2026 marking its 70th anniversary, it felt "especially meaningful to open this next chapter with Asia, a region rich in culture, creativity and talent", explained Martin Green, director of the Eurovision Song Contest at the EBU, in a statement. The idea of an Asian version of Eurovision, conspicuously not named "Asiavision", has already generated some excitement on social media, with people rooting for their home countries to win the contest. "Philippines will win every year," read an X post, while another questions why major Asian markets such as China and Japan are not yet a part of the competition.

PALESTINIANS CONVICTED OF LETHAL ATTACKS FACE DEATH PENALTY UNDER NEW ISRAELI LAW



AGENCY
Tel Aviv: Israel's parliament has approved a law that would make the death penalty the default sentence for Palestinians convicted of deadly terror attacks. Critics have described the new law as discriminatory and several European nations warn it risks undermining "democratic principles". The new law passed its third and final reading in the Knesset by 62 votes to 48 on Monday, with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu voting in favour. The bill stipulates that Palestinians convicted in Israeli military courts of carrying out deadly attacks deemed to be "acts of terrorism" would be executed by hanging within 90 days, with a possible postponement of up to 180 days. In theory, Jewish Israelis could also be executed under the law - but in practice this almost certainly would not happen, as the death penalty could only be carried out where the intention of the attack was to "negate the existence of the state of Israel". The leg-

islation was pushed hard by the far-right, with the National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir its driving force. After the vote, he posted on X: "We made history!!! We promised. We delivered." A member of Ben-Gvir's party, Limor Son-Har-Melech, who survived an attack by Palestinian gunmen in which her husband was killed, argued that the law was necessary, citing the example of how one of her husband's killers was later released and went on to take part in the 7 October 2023 attacks on Israel. During the debate in the Knesset, she said: "For years, we endured a cruel cycle of terror, imprisonment, release in reckless deals, and the return of these human monsters to murder Jews again." But Yair Golan, the leader of opposition Democrats under the law - but in practice this almost certainly would not happen, as the death penalty could only be carried out where the intention of the attack was to "negate the existence of the state of Israel". The leg-

GAZAN MOTHER REUNITED WITH EVACUATED DAUGHTER AFTER TWO YEARS



AGENCY
Gaza: At least eight children who were evacuated from Gaza as premature babies in the early weeks of the war, have returned from Egypt and been reunited with their relatives. The toddlers were among more than 30 severely ill newborns in incubators, who were evacuated from Gaza's Shifa Hospital in November

2023, during heavy fighting. The hospital complex had earlier been occupied by Israeli forces, who said it was being used by Hamas. Sundus al-Kurd, a mother waiting for her daughter's return on Monday, said that she was "torn between fear and joy", as she worried that she would not be accepted as a parent after more than two years apart.

CHINA BANS STORING CREMATED REMAINS IN EMPTY 'BONE ASH APARTMENTS'

AGENCY
Beijing: The Chinese government is set to ban people from storing the cremated remains of their loved ones in empty apartments instead of paying for expensive cemetery plots. The new law will put an end to "bone ash apartments", which have risen in popularity as spaces in cemeteries remain scarce. Low property prices in the country mean that for many, it is more affordable to entomb the ashes of relatives in an empty apartment than pay for funeral costs. The legislation prohibits the use of residential properties "specifically for the placement of ashes" as well as the burial of remains outside of cemeteries and areas where ecological burial is legal. Bone ash apartments are empty properties which are



turned into ritual halls by family members of the deceased. Their loved one's ashes are placed inside and the space turned into an ancestral shrine. The apartments are often identifiable by closed curtains or sealed-off windows, Chinese media has reported. Mourners are making the most of low property prices, which have fallen in China in recent years and were down 40% in 2025

about 150,000 yuan (£16,400), with prices rising to 300,000 yuan (£32,841), which the website notes is "relatively high" in Beijing. The price of funerals is also high. In 2020, funerals cost nearly half of the country's average annual salary, according to a survey by British insurance firm SunLife. On social media, commentators have pointed out the cost of cemetery plots and queried how the new law will be regulated. One person wrote on Weibo, China's equivalent of X: "Who would resort to this if cemetery plots were affordable?" Another said: "How will those enforcing these rules know if the apartments are being used just to store ashes? And how will they deal with those cases?" The ban comes days before the Qingming Festival.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE PART OF 'EVERYDAY LIFE' IN PARTS OF SUDAN, CHARITY SAYS

AGENCY
Sudan: Rape and sexual violence remain "part of everyday life" in areas of Sudan even when fighting in the country's civil war has moved elsewhere, according to a new report by medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). Calling rape a "defining feature" of the conflict, it says sexual assault is overwhelmingly carried out by armed men and is often accompanied by acts of brutality and humiliation. But MSF says rape persists as an "insidious" part of life for communities in the western region of Darfur that are no longer on the front line. The report is the most comprehensive account yet



on sexual violence in Sudan's nearly three-year war. Warning: This article contains details of sexual violence that some people may find distressing. It is based on testimonies from 3,386 victims who sought treatment in MSF-supported facilities across North and South

Darfur between January 2024 and November 2025. The warring parties - Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) - are both accused of sexual violence. But Darfur is the stronghold of the RSF and the vast majority of perpetrators identified by survivors were their fighters. Many of the cases in the report took place in the conflict hotspot of North Darfur last year, following the RSF takeovers of the displaced persons camps of Zamzam and Abu Shouk, and of the city of el-Fasher in October, which MSF calls "one of the most shocking iterations, unfolding the most unimaginable brutality". The charity says more than 90% of victims it treated were assaulted while travelling from these areas to safety in the town of Tawila. The attacks often involved multiple rapists and included other forms of extreme violence and intimidation such as beatings or the murder of relatives.

Congressman writes to King Charles urging him to meet Epstein victims during US visit



AGENCY
London: A US lawmaker is calling on King Charles to meet the survivors of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein when the monarch visits the US. While not officially confirmed, the King and Queen Camilla are reportedly planning a visit at the end of April. Democratic Congressman Ro Khanna, who co-sponsored a law that compelled the US justice department to release the Epstein files last year, is calling on the King to privately meet victims to hear from them directly about "how powerful individuals and institutions failed them". "As you are aware, this is not solely an American matter," Khanna wrote in a letter to the King on Monday. The Palace has previously expressed that the King's "sympathies have been, and remain with, the victims of any and all forms of abuse". In his letter, Khanna said: "Epstein's network had significant ties to the United Kingdom through Ghislaine Maxwell, through Epstein's relationships with British public figures, and through the social and political circles in which he operated." These connections, he wrote, "raise broader questions about how Epstein was able to maintain

influence, credibility, and protection across borders for so long". Khanna said a meeting with survivors would give an opportunity to "identify any additional information British institutions and individuals may be able to share". He added: "It would also ensure that survivors are heard directly and that these matters are addressed with transparency, seriousness, and accountability." The California lawmaker also noted that members of Congress have sought testimony from the King's brother, Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, as well as Peter Mandelson, the UK's former ambassador to the US, about their ties to Epstein. Mountbatten-Windsor, who was stripped of his titles last year due to his ties with Epstein, cannot be forced by a subpoena to go to the US. In his letter, Khanna said the former prince "did not respond" when Congress members sought testimony from him regarding his ties to the disgraced financier. Mountbatten-Windsor has consistently and strenuously denied any wrongdoing in his associations with Epstein. Mandelson, Khanna wrote, was asked to appear before a committee on the same matter.



Artemis II crew said they are going to the Moon

'A succulent Chinese meal' - iconic Australian quote immortalised in national film archive

AGENCY
Crabtree: A famously theatrical monologue, given by a man as police arrested him at a Chinese restaurant in Australia, has officially been preserved by the country's National Film and Sound Archive. The 1991 clip of Jack Karlson's arrest in Brisbane became an internet sensation when it was rediscovered in 2009. "What is the charge? Eating a meal? A succulent Chinese meal" Karlson - born Cecil George Edwards - dramatically shouted, while resisting the officers. "Gentlemen, this is democracy manifest" and "get your hand off my penis" were among his other, now immortalised, phrases that have been officially recognised by the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA) for their cultural significance.



The moment, now known as Democracy Manifest, became one of the most viral videos in Australia's history, and inspired thousands of memes, musical remixes, merchandise and even an orchestral piece. Describing his protest as "dramatic, indignant and unexpectedly articulate", NFSA said that "Karlson's words became shorthand for irreverent Australian humour".

Educated and employed but still struggling: India's middle class under strain

AGENCY

Mumbai: In a darkened control room in Navi Mumbai, 100 operators oversee bots monitoring 30,000 ATMs across India. Their cameras, sensors and bots do the work that 60,000 security guards once did. That control room is a small window into something much larger. Across India, the quiet machinery of automation has been reshaping - and in many cases, eliminating - the jobs that the middle class was built on. And the middle class is only now beginning to reckon with what that means. As stable incomes come under pressure, many are turning to riskier ways of making money to bridge the gap. Consider VS, a 27-year-old BTech graduate from a small town near Bhilwara city in western Rajasthan state. He earns 14,000 rupees (\$151; £113) a month as a freelance salesperson. Last year, he lost 1.3m rupees - nearly his entire family's savings - trading Futures and Options (F&O) on the stock market. He is one of nine million Indians doing the same thing - and are collectively losing over \$12bn a year. That figure is roughly equal to the federal government's entire annual education



budget. These are not gamblers.

They are educated, aspirational people with nowhere else to put their ambitions. Or consider Rahul Singh, a delivery agent with a food delivery app. Singh explained that he borrowed money not just to finance his home renovation, which is a discretionary spend, but also for "covering essential expenses, such as rent, medical bills and any other unforeseen expenses, which were critical for survival". VS and Singh come from different layers of India's vast middle class and they are socially and economically different. But their predicament is anything but different.

These are not cautionary tales about individual failure. They are portraits of a class under pressure - the 40 million income taxpayers who earn between 500,000 (\$5,283; £3,969) and 10m rupees annually, and who form the productive core of the Indian economy. Something is going wrong for them, as we discovered while researching our new book, and it is happening on multiple fronts at once. White-collar job creation - the kind of employment that an engineering or commerce degree was supposed to guarantee - has fallen from 11% growth before 2020 to

just 1% today, according to Naukri Jobspeak Index. The decline didn't begin with AI. Automation had been following out middle-skill work since the early 2000s, quietly eliminating the clerical roles, bookkeeping jobs and sales positions that once absorbed India's graduates. But AI has dramatically accelerated the disruption. India's IT services sector - the country's largest graduate employer with eight million workers - is in active retrenchment. The government's own planning body, Niti Aayog, estimates that by 2031, AI could eliminate close to three million IT and customer service

jobs. The CEOs of India's most profitable companies speak openly to us about using AI to cut salary bills by a third. Into this contracting market, eight million new graduates arrive every year. The results are becoming hard to ignore. At IIT Bombay - one of India's top technology institutes that was once a near-guaranteed passport to prosperity - fresh graduates are leaving with lower salaries than their predecessors. Across IITs nationally, 8,000 of 21,500 graduates remain unemployed.

The IIT degree, long India's most coveted credential, is beginning to look less like a golden ticket and more like a lottery. Even for those who find work, something has quietly gone wrong with the economics of middle-class life. Over the past decade, the average middle-class income taxpayer's annual income has grown by around 50,000 rupees - roughly the price of a decent smartphone. In isolation, that sounds like progress. Against the actual cost of living, it is a slow erosion. Recent research shows a vegetarian thali (an Indian meal comprising several small dishes) now costs 11% more each year.

INDIGO APPOINTS WILLIAM WALSH AS NEW CEO



AGENCY

New Delhi: The country's largest airline IndiGo on Tuesday, March 31, announced the appointment of former British Airways chief William Walsh as new CEO. Walsh, an airline industry veteran, is currently the Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Announcing the appointment of Walsh as the CEO, subject to regulatory approvals, IndiGo, in a release, said his tenure at IATA comes to a close on July 31 and is expected to join no later than August 3. The announcement comes less than three weeks after the sudden exit of IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers. Walsh, popularly known as Willie, was formerly CEO of British Airways and IAG (International Airlines

Group, a holding company, which owns Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia, Level and Vueling). "As we enter a new phase of transformation and growth, I am delighted to welcome Willie to IndiGo.

"He is an iconic and accomplished aviation leader, and brings a rare combination of global perspective, operational expertise of having built strong customer-focused airlines, deep industry experience and a values-driven leadership, making him exceptionally suited to lead IndiGo at this pivotal cusp of growth," IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia said. His term at IATA ends on July 31 and he is expected to join IndiGo by August 3 at the latest, the airline said in a statement. "(Walsh's) experience in managing large scale airline

operations and navigating complex market dynamics make him ideally suited to strengthen and lead IndiGo," chairman Vikram Singh Mehta said.

COMBATIVE LEADER

Before joining IATA, Walsh built a long career in commercial aviation, starting as a cadet pilot at Aer Lingus in 1979 before becoming its CEO in 2001. He became CEO at British Airways in 2005, steering the airline through the global financial crisis and overseeing its 2011 merger with Iberia to create IAG. Walsh earned a reputation as a combative leader during labour disputes at BA and later directed blunt criticism at governments over their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic after taking charge of IATA in April 2021.

Social media firms must better enforce Australia under-16 ban, watchdog says

AGENCY

Cranberra: The world's biggest social media companies are not doing enough to keep children in Australia off their platforms, the country's internet regulator says, despite a law that came into effect late last year. The legislation banned users under 16 from 10 platforms, but eSafety says it has "significant concerns" about the compliance of Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube. Australia's ban - which is being closely watched by countries like the UK - was justified by campaigners and the government as necessary to protect children from harmful content and addictive algorithms. Firms like Meta and Snap believe the approach is flawed, but say they're doing the best they can to comply. In its first report since the ban was instigated in December, the regulator said it had identified "a number of poor practices" from the five platforms. These include: Giving children who had declared they were aged under 16



before the ban the chance to show that they were, in fact, over 16. Enabling under-16s to repeatedly "attempt the same age assurance method" Insufficient measures to prevent new under-16s creating accounts Not providing effective ways for parents and others to report under-16s who still had access to social media Limited data has been released since the ban came into force. In January, the regulator said 4.7 million accounts had been restricted or removed in the first month since the law took effect on December 10. "While social media platforms have taken some initial action, I am concerned through our compliance

monitoring that some may not be doing enough to comply with Australian law," Australia's eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant said. The regulator - which had until now been monitoring the situation - says it will begin enforcing the restrictions and gathering evidence. "The evidence must establish the platform has not taken reasonable steps to prevent children aged under 16 from having an account," Inman Grant said. "That means more than simply demonstrating some children do still have accounts. Rather, the evidence must show the platform has not implemented appropriate systems and processes." The

Highlights

■ The world's biggest social media companies are not doing enough to keep children in Australia off their platforms, the country's internet regulator says

BBC has contacted all of the social media companies for comment. A spokesperson for Meta, which owns Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Messenger, and Threads, said that the company is "committed to complying with Australia's social media ban". It also noted that accurate age determination is a "challenge for the whole industry" and argue that "robust age verification and parental approval" at the app store level is the most effective approach to protect young people. Snap, which developed Snapchat, said it had locked 450,000 accounts and "continue to lock more every day".

West Asia war can shave off 1 pc point from India's GDP growth projections: EY

AGENCY

New Delhi: India's real GDP growth for the next fiscal could erode by around 1 percentage point, while retail inflation could rise by about 1.5 percentage points from their baseline estimates if the Middle East conflict persists through the next fiscal, an EY report said. The EY Economy Watch report said that several sectors, including employment-intensive sectors like textiles, paints, chemicals, fertilizers, cement and tires, could be directly impacted. Any reduction in employment or incomes in these sectors may further dampen aggregate demand. As a result, both supply and demand conditions may be adversely affected by global oil market disturbances. It said the Indian economy, which imports nearly 90 per cent of its crude oil requirements, is also highly dependent on imports of natural gas and fertilizers, and is particularly vulnerable to such external shocks, with the adverse effects likely to cascade across multiple sectors through strong forward and backward linkages with crude oil and



energy. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has significantly disrupted global crude oil and energy markets by affecting supply, storage, transportation and prices. Even if the conflict is resolved in the near term, some of these disruptions may take considerable time to normalise, it said. "If the impact persists throughout FY27, we estimate that India's real GDP growth could erode by around 1 percentage points, while CPI inflation could rise by approximately 1.5 percentage points from their baseline estimates of 7 per cent and 4 per cent respectively," the EY

Economy Watch report said. EY in its February report had projected India's GDP could be between 6.8 and 7.2 per cent in the 2026-27 fiscal. In response, the Government of India may need to deploy a substantive countercyclical policy. It may also be prudent for the GoI to co-opt larger and more industrialised states into this countercyclical effort. Additional provisions may be made to augment the Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF) introduced by the GoI in FY26, EY said. The government has already set up a Rs 1-lakh crore ESF to act as a

financial buffer against global headwinds. Global crude prices have risen by almost 50 per cent since the United States and Israel launched military strikes against Iran on February 28, triggering sweeping retaliation from Tehran. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had last week projected India's GDP growth to moderate to 6.1 per cent in the next fiscal, from 7.6 per cent in the current financial year. EY in its February report had projected India's GDP could be between 6.8 and 7.2 per cent in the 2026-27 fiscal.

Worry-Free Retirement with Assured Income for Life with ICICI Pru GPP Flexi

AGENCY

Mumbai: According to UNDP's 2025 Human Development Report[1], India's life expectancy rose from 58.6 years in 1990 to 72 years in 2023. Interestingly, a government data on 'Elderly in India' suggests that by 2036 nearly one in seven Indians will be aged 60 years or older[2]. While these projections are good signs of the improving healthcare in India, an individual must be cognizant about the challenges posed by the rising life expectancy as well. As people live longer, individuals will face significantly higher living costs and soaring medical inflation during their retirement years. Understanding this challenge and to make retirement planning easy, ICICI Prudential Life has designed ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi which enables customers to effectively plan their retirement. This product allows individuals to systematically make contributions to build the required amount of savings

Highlights

■ According to UNDP's 2025 Human Development Report[1], India's life expectancy rose from 58.6 years in 1990 to 72 years in 2023.

and then receive guaranteed regular income for life, which is the main goal of retired individuals. The rate of interest at which the regular income will be paid out is fixed at the time of purchasing the product, this means the guaranteed regular income does not fluctuate with interest rate movements. Commenting on the plan, Mr. Vikas Gupta, Chief Product Officer of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "Retirement planning is driven by one core need - certainty of income for life.

ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi is designed to deliver this certainty through a simple and flexible structure. In fact, it offers 7 flexible options to customers to serve their different needs. Notably, this product offers the Joint Life with the 'Waiver of Premium' option which ensures all future premiums are paid by the Company in case of demise of the first holder and the guaranteed regular income is paid out to the second holder, ensuring their family's financial security. Also, if the policyholder is diagnosed with any of the specified critical illness or is permanently disabled, the product can be returned for a full refund. Other options such as increasing income, top-ups, and access to liquidity through loans makes ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi, a practical and relevant plan for real-life needs. Thus, enabling customers to plan early, stay in control and build a predictable and stable financial future with confidence."

Korean Air takes emergency action as fuel prices soar

AGENCY

Korean Air says it is moving into emergency management mode to buffer the impact of surging jet fuel costs as the global economy is rocked by the ongoing US-Israel war with Iran. A spokesperson for the national flag carrier said on Tuesday that it will implement "internal cost-reduction measures" to manage its finances to ensure the firm's "stability amidst rising fuel prices and global economic uncertainty". It is the latest Asian airline to announce measures to deal with the economic impact of the Iran war. The cost of crude oil has surged by more than 50% since the conflict began on 28 February, while global jet fuel prices have more than doubled. Airlines have adopted similar emergency protocols to protect their businesses during crises like the Covid-19 pandemic, said Tan Chi Siang from consultancy PwC Singapore. Asian carriers, in particular, are dealing with a "double shock" of rising global oil prices and a regional jet fuel shortage that has forced



them to take action, he added. South Korea South Korea is especially vulnerable to energy supply disruptions from the Middle East as it is heavily reliant on oil from the Gulf. In recent days, several of the country's carriers - including Korean Air, Asiana Airlines and Busan Air - have entered emergency management mode. The measures are typically internal, such as slowing upgrades or other investments, but some airlines may reduce the number of flights to cut costs, Tan said. Korean Air employees were first notified about the emer-

gency measures in a memo that has been seen by the BBC. Vice Chairman Woo Ki-hong told staff members the airline is preparing for "a surge in fuel expenses". It will cut costs through measures based on the price of oil, Woo wrote, adding that the moves are "not merely a one-time" initiative but a chance to "strengthen our structural foundation". Mainland China and Hong Kong Despite being a major energy producer, China is the world's biggest importer of oil, making its aviation industry susceptible to global energy shocks. China

Eastern Airlines, one of the country's largest state-owned carriers, warned on Monday that global disruptions could weigh on its operations this year. The airline said trade conditions and "geopolitical conflicts or wars will have a relatively significant impact" on the aviation sector, which could affect its performance. Many Chinese airlines have raised their fuel surcharges on flights since the Iran war started. Authorities have also reportedly ordered China's oil refineries to stop exporting fuel in a bid to keep domestic prices under

control. In Hong Kong, Cathay Pacific said that a fuel surcharge has been included on all flights, with many of its fares rising sharply. Japan Japan is an international transport hub, as well as being a major manufacturer of plane parts. All Nippon Airways (ANA) has said it will not be raising fuel surcharges for tickets issued in April and May as prices were set before the Iran war. The immediate impact of rising energy costs is "limited" for now due to the existing surcharges and measures that the airline has taken to secure fuel prices in advance, a spokesperson for ANA said. Meanwhile, Japan Airlines said it had taken no specific actions yet regarding fuel shortages. Some prices of flights, such as trips between Japan and Europe, have risen due to an increase in demand after the closure of the carrier's Middle East routes, Japan Airlines said. India India's aviation industry has been hit hard by the cancellation of flights to the Middle East, the biggest market for its international airlines.

The fallout and key questions from the IOC's biological female decision

AGENCY

Cranberra: "This is a question where there is no one-size-fits-all solution. It differs from sport to sport." The words of former International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach in July 2021, when claiming that sex eligibility criteria should be left to each individual sport to determine. A few months later, the organisation issued a new set of guidelines, reiterating that it was "not in a position to issue regulations that define eligibility criteria for every sport". And that "athletes should not be deemed to have an unfair or disproportionate competitive advantage due to their sex variations." Yet just five years on, Bach's successor Kirsty Coventry has announced a blanket ban on transgender women, as well as athletes with differences in sex development (DSD) who have gone through male puberty from



female events, "to protect fairness, safety and integrity". From the 2028 LA Games, eligibility for women's competition at all IOC events will be limited to biological females, and determined on the basis of a one-time SRY gene screening, which detects the presence of a Y chromosome and male sex development. So what explains the IOC's dramatic change in approach? How divided has the reaction been? And what challenges and questions remain? BBC Sport takes a closer look. Why the u-turn? The IOC says its

new approach is a reflection of "relevant ethical, human rights, legal, scientific and medical developments, including stakeholder feedback", and that a review on the issue took into account "the state of the science, including developments since 2021, and reached consensus that male sex confers performance advantage in all sports and events that rely on strength, power, and/or endurance" It added this was irrespective of testosterone suppression, which until now has been relied upon by a number of sports

when regulating the inclusion of transgender and DSD athletes in female competition. The IOC has not published the scientific research it based its decision on, but has stated that at the elite level, there is a 10-12% male performance advantage in most running and swimming events, and that rises to 20% in most throwing and jumping disciplines, and 100% in sports such as boxing, that involve explosive power. Those who have long called for this change in policy argue that the science has shown such advantages for years, and some believe the IOC has been forced into this by a series of controversies, and the fact that a growing list of sports had already shown it was possible legally to introduce tougher eligibility criteria. After New Zealand weightlifter Laurel Hubbard became the first openly transgender woman to compete at an Olympics

in Tokyo in 2021, the governing bodies of swimming and cycling brought in transgender bans for women's events amid concerns among female athletes that they could also face biological males in elite competition. By then, World Athletics had tightened its rules after the 2016 Rio Olympics, when all three medalists in the women's 800 metre final were DSD athletes, introducing mandatory sex testing in 2025. World Boxing did the same after a major crisis at the women's boxing competition engulfed the 2024 Paris Olympics, where fighters Imane Khelif and Lin Yu-ting both won golds, despite being disqualified from the previous year's World Championships for allegedly failing sex eligibility tests conducted by then-governing body the IBA. Lin has since been cleared to compete in female competition by World Boxing.

Mumba TT Clinch Maiden Title With 8-4 Win Over Jaipur Patriots

AGENCY

Mumbai: U Mumba TT etched their name into the history books, clinching their maiden Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) title with a dominant 8-4 win over Jaipur Patriots in the Season 6 grand finale on Sunday, thanks to a stellar team performance. Wins for Lilian Bardet and Bernadette Szocs gave U Mumba an early lead, before Szocs and Akash Pal swept the mixed doubles 3-0 to take them to the brink. Teenager Abhinandh PB sealed the title with a clutch game win in the fourth match.

Although Yashaswini Ghorpade didn't feature in the final, her standout semi-final display epitomised U Mumba's collective strength this season - hallmarks of a campaign expertly managed from the dugout by coaches John Murphy and Jay Modak. For their performances in the final, Akash and Szocs were named the Indian and Foreign Player of the Final, respectively, while Jeet Chandra claimed the Shot of



the Final. Bardet set the tone for U Mumba with a gritty comeback against Kanak Jha in the opening rubber, turning a one-game deficit into a 2-1 win. That momentum carried into a marquee clash between the league's top-ranked player, Szocs and India's highest-ranked paddler on the international circuit, Sreeja Akula. Szocs showcased elite defence and composure

under pressure to claim a hard-fought 2-1 victory, handing Sreeja her first loss of the season. Szocs returned alongside Akash to dominate the mixed doubles, cruising past Jeet and Britt Eerland in straight games. With each game increasingly one-sided, the U Mumba duo went from 5-5 to 11-5 in the second game and closed out the third with the same scoreline.

Yuvendra Chahal Claims He Slammed 20 Runs In One Over. Jos Buttler's Reply Breaks Internet

AGENCY

Mumbai: Punjab Kings spinner Yuvendra Chahal shared a hilarious banter with Gujarat Titans star Jos Buttler ahead of their IPL 2026 encounter in Mullanpur. It was a reunion of sorts for the two players who played together for Rajasthan Royals before getting released ahead of IPL 2025 mega auction. While Chahal was bought for a mammoth Rs 18 crore by Punjab Kings, Buttler joined Gujarat Titans for Rs 15.75 crore. Ahead of their match on Tuesday, PBKS shared a video where Chahal claimed that he once faced Buttler's bowling and slammed 20 runs in an over. "Two years back, I smashed Jos Buttler - one over, 20 runs," he said.



Buttler quickly responded - "(You) Can't get (the ball) outside the 30-yard circle." Meanwhile, Punjab Kings (PBKS) skipper Shreyas Iyer urged his side to move on from last season and embrace a fresh start, as he laid down a clear message ahead of their first match of

the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 to be played against the Gujarat Titans (GT) at the PCA New International Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. "See, last season is history now. We start from ball one. It's important that we stick to the present and see to it that

we enjoy each and every moment," Iyer said in a video released by the IPL. Skipper also praised the love and support the team gets when they play at their home ground and expected the fans to continue cheering for them as they start their new season "It certainly feels like home. The love and the support the home team got last season it was phenomenal. And I'm hoping to see a lot of them coming in numbers this season and cheering us up. It doesn't really feel like an away game," Iyer added. Punjab Kings enjoyed a stellar campaign in IPL 2025, finishing as runners-up and marking one of their best performances in the tournament's history.

GHANA SACK MANAGER ADDO, 72 DAYS BEFORE WORLD CUP

AGENCY

Mumbai: India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers Live Streaming: The focus will be on Australian-born winger Ryan Williams as India take on Hong Kong in their final match in the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers. It was a campaign to forget for the Indian football team as they failed to qualify and even suffered some unexpected losses. However, all eyes on the new No. 10 who will be starting a new chapter with the national side. The match will also mark the return of international football to Kochi after more than a decade. However, it will be an exceptionally tough chal-



lenge for Khalid Jamil's side as Hong Kong have lost only once in their last 12 matches and even defeated India 1-0 in their last match. When will the India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match take place? The India vs Hong Kong, AFC

Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match will take place on Tuesday, March 31 (IST). Where will the India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match be held? The India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match will be held at the Jawaharlal

Nehru Stadium in Kochi, Kerala. What time will the India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match start? The India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match will start at 7 PM IST. Which TV channels will show the live telecast of the India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match? The India vs Hong Kong, AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match will be live streamed on the FanCode app and website.

WWE Raw Results, March 30: IShowSpeed Twist In Logan Paul vs LA Knight Fight

AGENCY

Washington: The road to WrestleMania 42 produced another dramatic turn of events at Madison Square Garden in this week's Monday Night Raw. The episode delivered a night of nostalgia, brutal brawls, and a massive twist involving YouTube streamer IShowSpeed. With heavy hitters like Stephanie McMahon and Triple H in the building, the final pieces of the puzzle for in the WrestleMania 42 story seem to be falling into place. The rivalry between Logan Paul and LA Knight reached a fever pitch at MSG, but it was the unexpected arrival of IShowSpeed that stole the headlines. As the tension boiled over between the two rivals - Logan Paul and LA Knight, IShowSpeed's inter-



ference came as an unexpected twist, leaving even the most ardent WWE fans baffled. The YouTuber hit LA Knight with a brass knuckle, ensuring that their fight at WrestleMania will be one of the most talked-about spectacles on the card. CM Punk Sends Crystal Clear Message The evening's final segment saw a chaotic confrontation involving the biggest names

in the industry. In a visual that will be replayed for years, CM Punk asserted his dominance by powerbombing Roman Reigns through a table. The statement was clear: Punk is not just back, he is keen to dismantle the Tribal Chief's legacy. Triple H Restrains The Beasts Fans held their breath as Brock Lesnar and Obba Femi finally stood face-to-face.

Ultimate Table Tennis Reaches India's Heartland As UP Prometheans Join Line-Up for Season 7

AGENCY

Mumbai: Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) is set to add a strong new Uttar Pradesh flavour to Season 7 with the inclusion of UP Prometheans, bringing the energy and sporting passion of India's heartland into the league's mix. The upcoming season, scheduled to be played in July in Goa, marks another step in UTT's journey of building a dynamic and competitive league. Owned by first-generation entrepreneur and BITS Pilani alumnus Mukesh Sharma, UP Prometheans reflects a clear and long-term vision to strengthen India's high-performance sporting ecosystem. With the franchise coming into the lineup, UTT also sees a fresh regional presence added to its roster,



as UP Prometheans step in place of Chennai as part of the league's evolving team composition. The move strengthens representation from the northern belt while adding a new competitive dynamic, with Season 7 also set to feature a revised format with an expanded group stage. Commenting on the announcement, Ekansh

Gupta, CEO, Ultimate Table Tennis, said: "We are pleased to see UTT's footprint extend into Uttar Pradesh with UP Prometheans coming on board. As India's largest state, UP holds immense potential for sport, and this addition strengthens our ambition of building a league that truly represents the country."

MI FAN LOSES ENGAGEMENT RING WHILE PROPOSING TO GIRLFRIEND DURING IPL 2026 MATCH



AGENCY

Mumbai: The Mumbai Indians (MI) vs Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) IPL 2026 match at the Wankhede Stadium saw several high points on Sunday. KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane (67 off 40 balls) top-scored for his team, while youngster Angkrish Raghuvanshi (51 off 29 balls) showcased his potential. KKR posted a formidable 220 for 4 in 20 overs, but MI chased down the target in 19.1 overs. Ryan Rickelton (81 off 43 balls) and Rohit Sharma (78 off 38 balls) provided the fireworks for MI. There were fireworks in the stands as well. An MI fan proposed to his girlfriend, who was wearing a KKR jersey, during the match. However, to his shock, just as he opened the box, the ring fell off. Another spectator, however, managed to find the ring. Talking about the match, KKR were under pressure while defending the total. However, their star all-

rounder Cameron Green did not bowl. Cricket Australia on Monday said the Kolkata Knight Riders' management is "fully aware" of Cameron Green's injury status after KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane created a flutter by stating that only the all-rounder's home board knew why he could not bowl in their IPL opener against Mumbai Indians. Rahane deflected queries on Green's absence as a bowler in Mumbai by saying, "Ask Cricket Australia," triggering a mild controversy over the player's current fitness status. "Cameron has a lower back injury which is being managed but requires him to abstain from bowling for a short period," a Cricket Australia spokesperson told PTL. "Cameron is currently rebuilding his bowling loads in India with a view to returning in around 10-12 days' time. KKR has been communicated with and is fully aware of this information."

How Scotland found their base camp for 'travelling' World Cup

An Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman were waiting at the door of Charlotte FC's training ground for Steve Clarke's arrival. On his search for Scotland's World Cup base camp, the head coach found the one in North Carolina, with a wee hand from a few familiar faces. MLS side Charlotte are coached by Dean Smith, the former Aston Villa manager and pal of Clarke, his assistant is the Scotland boss' former Kilmarnock player, Gary Dicker and the club's technical director is Clarke's ex-St Mirren team-mate, Tommy Smith. They say it's not what you know, but who you know. A few other



nations checked out the Atrium Health Performance Park, while the Scots searched "most of the East Coast", but Charlotte will be

their home from home when they compete in their first World Cup since 1998 - against Haiti and Morocco in Boston and Brazil in

Miami. With both cities around a two-hour flight away, Clarke said he is hopeful the "top" facilities will provide his side with

the "best possible conditions" as they make their long-awaited return to the biggest stage of them all. With the help of Charlotte assistant Dicker and Scotland assistant Steven Naismith, BBC Scotland gets the lowdown on "one of the best facilities in the MLS" and the national team's summer set-up. What goes into selecting a base camp? Unsurprisingly, a lot of conversations and a lot of checking places out. Fifa offers a selection of available facilities but each nation will naturally have their own plans and priorities. For Scotland, Naismith admitted getting it right for "travel and humidity" was paramount. "It's a travelling

World Cup," the assistant coach and Sportscene pundit said. "We've got two games in Boston, one in Miami, but there's only a limited amount of facilities around Boston. "That was probably the biggest challenge. We've done a lot of work seeing a lot of training bases - there's a lot on offer - but we're delighted with Charlotte." Clarke's former Killie midfielder Dicker agreed it's "a really good central base" with flights to both Scotland's match cities only a couple of hours. "I know it's difficult when at past tournaments it's easier to get around, but you do get used to it here, having an hour, two-hour flight and it not being a big deal."