

IN BRIEF

Indonesian Envoy calls on TN Governor

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : Ms.Ina H. Krisnamurthi, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to India called on Tamil Nadu Governor R.N.Ravi at the Raj Bhavan here today.

She was accompanied by delegates from the Indonesia Embassy. Raj Bhavan sources described it as a courtesy call.

Underreporting of cyber attacks impact issuers in Asia Pacific region

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : Underreporting of cyber-attacks could create a false sense of security among Asia-Pacific issuers and adherence to tighter regulation would provide a better picture of cyber preparedness and related credit quality, S&P Global Ratings said today.

In a report titled 'Cyber Risk Brief: How Recent Data Breaches Affect Asia Pacific Issuers' and released today, it said cyber risks in the Asia Pacific region are intensifying.

"Asia-Pacific issuers are as vulnerable to cyber threats as those in any other region," S&P Global Ratings credit analyst Shruti Zatakia said.

"We believe a lack of public disclosure requirements in the region is causing cyber incidents to go unreported. This could falsely suggest Asia-Pacific is less vulnerable," Zatakia said.

Vulnerabilities along the supply chain and at third-party service providers pose additional risks.

As per the report, cyber incidents affect credit quality in different ways.

The related downside risks will emerge gradually and depend on the rating buffer.

Business positions could weaken on factors that include regulatory actions, loss of market share, reputational damage, supply-chain disruptions, and remediation costs.

Similarly, it is not always clear how long it will take for the impact of potential fines or operational disruptions to affect cash flow and leverage, S&P Global Ratings said.

Stalin treated for heart rhythm variation, healthy

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin, who was admitted in Apollo Hospitals for mild giddiness, was today treated for heart rhythm variation. He was stable now and would resume his regular official duties, which he has been doing it from the Hospital, within two days, the Hospital said in a bulletin.

It said Mr Stalin underwent various investigations for symptoms related to giddiness.

"The investigation revealed that the symptoms were due to variations in heart rate", Dr Anil B.G., Director Medical Services, Apollo Hospital, said in the release.

Based on the opinion of medical expertscommittee led by Interventional Cardiologist Dr G Sengottuvelu, the Chief Minister underwent a therapeutic procedure today morning to correct these variations.

The diagnostic Angiogram done today was normal, he said. Mr Stalin is healthy and is expected to resume his normal routine in two days' time.

Ever since his hospitalisation four days back, Mr Stalin has been discharging his official duties from the hospital by participating in video conferences to discuss the present status of his flagship programme 'Ungaludan Stalin' (Stalin with You-reaching to the people at their doorsteps to mitigate their grievances), held meeting with three district collectors on the present status, the number of applications received and how many of them were addressed.He also held a meeting with Chief Secretary N Muruganandham.

Centre unveils expansion plan for Puducherry airport

(Standard Post Bureau)

Puducherry, July 24 : The Union Government on Thursday announced that a comprehensive master plan has been prepared for expanding Puducherry airport, with provisions to enable operations of larger aircraft and the potential introduction of new flight routes based on commercial viability. Responding to a question in the Lok Sabha from Puducherry MP and Pradesh Congress Committee president V. Vaithilingam, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu said that the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has formulated a proposal to upgrade the airport's infrastructure.

The plan includes extending the runway to 2,300 metres in length and 45 metres in width, which would allow operations of Airbus A320 aircraft, commonly used for domestic

commercial aviation.

To facilitate this expansion, a total of 402 acres of land will be required - 217 acres in Tamil Nadu and 185 acres within the Union Territory of Puducherry.

The proposal has already been shared with the Puducherry government for further action, the Union Minister said.Currently, the airport operates limited services, offering flights only to Bangalore and Hyderabad.

MP Vaithilingam had specifically inquired whether steps were being taken to commence new flights to Kochi and Shirdi.

In response, Union Minister Naidu clarified that the aviation sector in India is deregulated, following the repeal of the Air Corporation Act in 1994.As a result, airlines have full autonomy to select their destinations and routes based on commercial and operational

considerations."The Ministry of Civil Aviation does not regulate routes or destinations. Airlines are free to initiate services to any city, including Kochi and Shirdi, if found viable. The government only facilitates infrastructure and regulatory frameworks," he said.The Puducherry Airport has long faced limitations due to the short length of its existing runway and land constraints, restricting its operations to smaller aircraft. The proposed expansion is expected to be a game-changer for the region, enabling better connectivity, boosting tourism, and enhancing economic development in and around Puducherry.

Officials from Puducherry and Tamil Nadu are expected to work closely with the Centre to address land acquisition and related logistical challenges as the project moves forward.

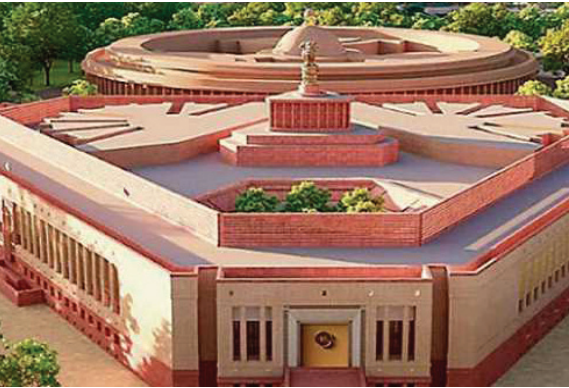


Keshav Prasad Maurya launches scathing attack on Samajwadi ...

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya has launched a sharp offensive against the Samajwadi Party (SP), accusing its leadership of misusing socialism as a façade for personal gain.In a social media post on Thursday, Maurya described the party as an "organised gang" that thrives on land grabbing and misgoverning."Samajwadi Party, which stands at zero in terms of ideology, is merely an organised gang of occupiers," Maurya wrote.

(See on page 2)

Both Houses adjourned for fourth day amid Opposition ...



For the fourth consecutive day today, both Houses of Parliament were adjourned for the day after Opposition members created ruckus, demanding the withdrawal of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in Bihar and discussion on Operation Sindoor.

(See on page 4)

Unnati shocks Sindhu in round ...



In a high-octane all-Indian clash, 17-year-old Unnati Hooda delivered a sensational performance to overcome two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and book her place in the Women's Singles quarterfinals at the China Open 2025 on Thursday. The match was a showcase of India's present and future in badminton, with the rising star Hooda taking on the seasoned champion Sindhu.

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Jairam Ramesh mocks India-UK ...



: Congress today took a jibe at the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), saying another effective "FTA -- Fugitive Transfer Agreement" was needed as three stars are awaiting "ghar waapsi".In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "What India needs from the UK is the announcement of another and more effective FTA (Fugitive Transfer Agreement)".

(See on page 6)

India, UK sign landmark Free Trade Agreement

New Delhi/London, July 24 (UNI) : India and UK today signed the landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) after three years of hectic parleys, bringing in the promise of a major boost to the economies of both countries.The Agreement was signed in London by Union Minister Piyush Goyal and his British counterpart Jonathan Reynolds in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, currently on a two-day visit to UK, and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. Prime Minister Modi described the Agreement as a "plan for shared prosperity."

"The Agreement is not just an economic agreement but also the plan for a shared prosperity. New opportunities will emerge in the UK market for India's agricultural produce and processed food industry. This agreement will especially benefit Indian youth, farmers, fishermen



and MSME sector. For people in India products made in UK will be available at reasonable and affordable prices," the Prime Minister said.The UK PM described the Agreement as a "big win for Britain". "India deal is a big win for Britain that will improve people's lives," Mr

Starmer said on X."A landmark deal with India means jobs, investment and growth here in the UK. It creates thousands of British jobs, unlocks new opportunities for businesses and puts money in the pockets of working people. That's our Plan for Change in action," he said.

The agreement, okayed by the Union Cabinet early this week, includes lower tariffs on cars, clothing and footwear and jewellery and will involve reduced levies on British exports to India including on gin and whiskey, cosmetics and cars. The lower tariffs will

make Indian exports cheaper and Indian manufacturers will gain access to the UK market for electric and hybrid vehicles.Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said both countries had finalised the Agreement on May 6.Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal described the FTA as a "big win" for farmers, ensuring duty-free exports on nearly 95 per cent of agricultural products.Duty-free access for about 99 per cent of Indian exports unlocks nearly 23 billion Dollars in opportunities for labour-intensive sectors, he said adding that artisans, weavers and daily-wage labourers employed in MSMEs would usher in a new phase of prosperity.

He said the FTA is a big leap for women through improved access to finance and deeper integration into global value chains and will provide Indian consumers high quality goods at competitive prices.

After successful return of Indian-led AX-4 crew, ISS preps for Crew Swap

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : After the successful splashdown of the four-member A-4 Mission, piloted by decorated Indian pilot Shubhanshu Shukla after a 18-day stay the orbiting lab, NASA has commenced final

preparations on ground for crew swap in early August at the International Space Station (ISS). In an update, NASA today said it was also continuing space health studies as four members of Expedition 73 are ready to unpack and return to earth, while another four-member are gearing up to replace them at ISS.The Ax-4 crew comprising astronauts from India, US, Hungary and Poland took off to ISS on June 25 onboard a falcon rocket from Florida, docked at the ISS the next

day after a 28 hr flight journey, stayed in the Orbiting lab for 18 days and conducted nearly 60 experiments, including seven microgravity studies by Indian astronaut, who returned with a wealth of information.

The Ax-4 undocked from ISS on July 14 and the dragon spacecraft splashed down off California coast the next day successfully, marking culmination of a historic mission that saw Shukla becoming the second Indian to travel to space after 41 years when Rakesh Sharma flew in 1984.

Shukla, who carried the hopes and dreams of billions of people, created history by becoming the first Indian to travel to ISS. Meanwhile, NASA said it was reading for crew swap

at the ISS which is likely to happen in the first week of August.The Expedition 73 crew is preparing to split up in early August while another crew on the ground is beginning final preparations for a launch to the International Space Station next week.

Meanwhile, the orbital residents continue their human research activities, space exercise studies, and lab maintenance duties today. NASA Flight Engineer Anne McClain kicked off her shift packing personal items and cargo inside the SpaceX Dragon crew spacecraft she will ride back to Earth with Nichole Ayers of NASA, Takuya Onishi of JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), and Kirill Peskov of Roscosmos.

Participate in Chola Emperor's 1000th birth anniversary fete

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : With Tamil Nadu assembly elections around the corner, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is slated to undertake a two-day visit to the state during which he will take part in the 1,000th birth anniversary celebration of the mighty Chola emperor Rajendra Chola I, at Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Ariyalur district, 250 km south of Chennai.

Arriving here on Saturday, he is first scheduled to inaugurate the expanded airport at the coastal Thoothukudi and lay the foundation for developmental projects to the tune of Rs 4,500 crore. He would stay for the night at Trichy.

On Sunday, Modi will attend the grand celebration of 1,000th birth anniversary of emperor Rajendra Chola I, whose reign (1014-1044) extended right from the Gangetic plains in the north to Indonesia in the far east as well as the contiguous Sri Lanka. It was the zenith of the Chola dynasty. With a massive navy, the most powerful of that era, he held the Bay of Bengal as his captive zone. Now, a nondescript town, Gangaikonda Cholapuram was once a bustling capital of the imperial Cholas for over 250 years. Only the temple tower that dots the small town and is visible across the expanse of green farmlands.

In thrilling canal rescue, Bathinda Police save 11 lives

Chandigarh/Bathinda, July 24 (UNI) Four police officers were celebrated for their daring rescue of 11 individuals, including children, from a car that plunged into the Sirhind Canal near Behman Bridge. The operation showcased extraordinary teamwork between the police and local residents, thwarting a potential catastrophe.

A nearby Police Control Room (PCR) team, comprising Assistant Sub-Inspectors Rajinder Singh and Narinder Singh, Constable Jaswant Singh, and Woman Constable Harpal Kaur, acted with lightning speed. With vital assistance from the community, they successfully extracted all passengers from the submerged vehicle.

In a grand felicitation ceremony, Bathinda SSP

Amneet Kondal presented each officer with Rs 25,000, totaling Rs 1 lakh, and the prestigious DGP Commendation Disc. Punjab CM Bhagwant Singh Mann and DGP Gaurav Yadav showered praise on the team's valor and unwavering commitment to public safety.

The rescued passengers received immediate first aid and were rushed to a hospital for further care. The operation highlighted the power of police-community collaboration in emergencies.

Local organizations also played a key role in the rescue, earning widespread appreciation.

The gallantry of the officers and residents has been lauded as an inspiring testament to unity and heroism.

3 killed, several injured in two separate road accidents

Lucknow, July 24 (UNI) : A tragic road accident in Deoria district claimed the life of a high school student on Thursday afternoon.

Karishma Gupta, a resident of Usrahwa Tola in Sekhuai village under Gauri Bazar police station limits, was returning home from Inter College Indupur on her bicycle when she was fatally hit by a speeding dumper.

The incident occurred around 1 PM near the Central Bank on Rudrapur-Deoria Road. According to eyewitnesses, the dumper approached from behind at high speed and rammed into Karishma's bicycle.

She fell onto the road, and the vehicle ran over her, killing her instantly. Shocked bystanders tried to stop the dumper, but the driver fled the scene after abandoning the vehicle a short distance away.

In a separate accident in Agra, two women died and five others were injured when an Eco car carrying seven devotees collided with a roadside tree in the Fatehabad area of Agra district on Thursday morning.

The group, all residents of the Chandwar Gate area in Firozabad, was en route to the Mankameshwar Temple in Agra. The accident occurred as the group was singing bhajans during their journey. The car reportedly lost balance and crashed into a tree. The impact severely damaged the front of the vehicle, causing panic and injuries to all occupants.Two women sitting in the front seat, 60-year-old Charan Devi and 55-year-old Rampati, died on the spot. The injured include Sunita, Manju, Aradhya, Navami, and the car driver, Pawan.

All were rushed to a local hospital for medical treatment. Police and local villagers worked together to rescue the injured from the wrecked vehicle.

Take strong action against outlets selling machine-made carpets: Omar to officers

Srinagar, July 24 (UNI) Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today instructed the Industries & Commerce department to take strong action against showrooms and retail outlets that are selling machine-made carpets under the label of Kashmir handmade carpets.

The CM took a serious note of counterfeit machine-made carpets passed off as authentic Kashmiri hand-knotted

products.CM observed that these fakes would damage the globally renowned brand of Kashmiri hand-made carpets and adversely affect the artisan families who depend on this craft for their livelihood.A delegation of Carpet Export Promotion Council, Indian Silk Export Promotion Council, Meeras Carpet Weavers Cooperative, the Kashmir Carpet Cluster Development Organisation



National Students' Union of India (NSUI) workers being stopped during a protest, in Patna on Wednesday.

Kejriwal leads charge against BJP, calls party MLA Chaitar Vasava 'symbol of tribal resistance'

Ahmedabad, July 24 (IANS) :Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal led a rally in Gujarat's Narmada district in support of jailed tribal MLA Chaitar Vasava. Speaking in Dediypada, Kejriwal accused the BJP government in the state of suppressing tribal voices and framing Vasava in a fabricated case for exposing systemic corruption.

"The BJP can jail our leaders, but they cannot jail the truth," Kejriwal declared.

"Chaitar Vasava is not a criminal; he is a symbol of resistance, of truth, and of tribal rights. He stood for his people when no one else did."

Punjab Chief Minister

Bhagwant Mann, AAP Gujarat state president Isudan Gadhvi, senior leader Gopal Italia, and other party functionaries also addressed the crowd, framing the event as a battle for the dignity and future of Gujarat's tribal communities.

Kejriwal accused the BJP of looting public funds meant for education, healthcare, and rural infrastructure.

"From school money to hospital budgets to MGNREGA wages all have been siphoned off. And when Chaitar Vasava exposed this rot, they jailed him," he said.

He further claimed that false cases were filed, CCTV footage was deleted,

and law enforcement acted on political instructions. "BJP's message is clear: if you speak up, we'll lock you up. Our message is clearer: we will only speak louder."

AAP MLA Gopal Italia drew sharp contrasts between AAP and BJP, saying, "The BJP gives tickets to goons and criminals. Arvind Kejriwal gave tickets to youths like Chaitar Vasava and me — people who come from modest backgrounds and care about justice."

He urged the public to support "honest, clean candidates" in upcoming local body elections. "We need to win every taluka and district panchayat seat and make sure BJP loses its

deposit everywhere," he said.Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann said: "The land, water, and forests belong to the tribal people. But the BJP is selling everything. They are even deleting CCTV footage to hide the truth."He promised that AAP would remain a steadfast ally of tribal communities and accused BJP of turning governance into an extractive industry. "When an adivasi rises, no storm can stop him," Mann said.With district and taluka panchayat elections around the corner, AAP used the event to galvanise its grassroots base. "Come forward, take tickets, stand in elections," Kejriwal urged locals. "Let the people of Gujarat write a

new chapter."

Isudan Gadhvi echoed this sentiment, claiming the BJP's time was up. "The cycle of power is turning. Just like Krishna said when the time comes, the arrogant fall. BJP, your time is up," he declared.

Chaitar Vasava's wife Varsha Vasava read out a letter from her jailed husband. The letter accused the police of acting on BJP's orders and outlined a series of injustices, including being denied family visits and legal due process. "I left a secure government job to fight for my community," Vasava wrote. "Now they are punishing me for raising my voice. But I am not afraid. This fight is bigger than me."

Cong UP president Ajay Rai attacks Govt. on law & order

Prayagraj, July 24 (UNI) Congress state president Ajay Rai today visited SRN Hospital to meet brothers Arun Mishra and Aditya Mishra, who were injured in a recent firing incident outside the registry office in Patti, Pratapgarh district.

While speaking to the media, Rai directly accused a BJP leader of involvement in the attack,

even showing the alleged shooter's photo on his phone.

Rai alleged that the shooting took place in broad daylight, with the attacker identified as a BJP leader chasing and firing at the victims in full public view.

"In the BJP government, people are being shot openly on the streets.

Even after two days,

the accused has not been arrested, and no bulldozer action has been taken against his house," he said, referring to the Yogi Adityanath-led government's well-known policy of demolishing properties linked to accused criminals.

The Congress leader further claimed that one of the injured brothers was operated on and

discharged shortly before his arrival, while he managed to meet the other victim at the hospital. He questioned the haste behind the discharge, suggesting it was an attempt to suppress the matter.

Calling the incident a reflection of "jungle raj" and "mafia raj" in Uttar Pradesh, Rai demanded immediate and strict action against the

accused. "Why is there no bulldozer on the house of the attacker? When will action be taken? CM Yogi is protecting criminals and promoting lawlessness in the state," he added.

Rai urged the government to act under its stated policy of zero tolerance towards crime and immediately demolish the accused's property while ensuring legal action without delay.

Keshav Prasad Maurya launches scathing attack on Samajwadi Party, calls it 'organised Gang'

Lucknow, July 24 (UNI) Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya has launched a sharp offensive against the Samajwadi Party (SP), accusing its leadership of misusing socialism as a façade for personal gain.

In a social media post on Thursday, Maurya described the party as an "organised gang" that thrives on land grabbing and misgoverning.

"Samajwadi Party, which stands at zero in terms of ideology, is merely an

organised gang of occupiers," Maurya wrote. He alleged that from top to bottom, SP leaders treat public and government land as their personal property, further adding, "In the name of socialism, they are only working to expand the 'Saifai empire.'"

He also targeted the party's ethics and political direction, stating that the SP no longer operates based on policy or morality. Referring to the Saifai clan, the native village of the Yadav family, he claimed the

SP's actions reflect a strategy of expansionism under the guise of socialism.This isn't the first time Maurya has hit out at SP chief Akhilesh Yadav. In an earlier statement, he referenced a Supreme Court decision, alleging it validated the illegal land occupation carried out during Akhilesh Yadav's tenure. "SP leaders believe in the principle of 'lathi-vaad' and support those whose core agenda is capturing land," he added, reinforcing his criticism.

Punjab Governor hospitalized after sudden health scare

Chandigarh, July 24 (UNI) Gulab Chand Kataria, who serves as both the Governor of Punjab and the Administrator of Chandigarh, was rushed to

PGI Chandigarh today due to a sudden health emergency. Details regarding the nature of his condition have not yet been revealed.Unverified

reports from some sources suggest that Kataria may have been injured after a fall, but no official statement from Raj Bhavan has confirmed these claims.

All HC grants bail to Zafar Ali in Jama Masjid violence case

Prayagraj, July 24 (UNI) Allahabad High Court has granted bail Zafar Ali, accused in the violence during the survey in Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal.

The Court's single bench of Justice Sameer Jain gave relief to Zafar Ali here on Thursday.

Violence took place during the survey of Sambhal Jama Masjid on November 24, 2024. In this case, an FIR was lodged against SP MP Zia ur Rehman Barq and Sambhal's SP MLA Iqbal Mahmood's son Sohail Iqbal.

It was argued that Mosque's head Zafar Ali's name was not included in the FIR. On March 23, 2025, the police arrested Zafar Ali during the investigation.

The police arrested Zafar Ali on charges of inciting violence during the survey. After which the hearing on this matter was going on continuously in Allahabad High Court and today the court granted bail to Zafar Ali. Presently Zafar Ali is in Moradabad jail.

Governor's Drug-free Himachal model to be implemented nationally

Shimla, July 24 (UNI) Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Wednesday said that the anti-drug campaign launched from Raj Bhavan is set to be adopted at the national level.

Addressing a press interaction, he said a high-level committee led by Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya recently visited Raj Bhavan to study the "Nasha Mukht Himachal" model. Impressed by its outreach and community involvement, the Union Ministry has decided to replicate the model across the country.

As a first step, the Ministry organised a youth spiritual retreat, Nasha Mukht Yuva for Viksit Bharat, in Kashi, Uttar Pradesh, on July 20, which the governor attended.

Expressing concern over the rising substance abuse in the hill state, the governor urged the state government to establish a state-of-the-art de-addiction and rehabilitation centre.

He said the campaign, inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, is rooted in grassroots participation.

The initiative has involved students, Mahila Mandals, and Panchayati Raj Institutions across all districts. Awareness rallies, drug-free-themed fairs, and local resolutions to withhold government benefits from substance abusers have formed key pillars of the campaign. Sports competitions in collaboration with NCC, NSS, and youth clubs have also helped mobilise youth.

To further institutionalise the effort, students entering universities and colleges must now submit affidavits pledging to stay drug-free. The governor has also written to all MLAs, urging them to actively support the mission in their constituencies.

"This is not just a campaign but a mission to protect our future generations and preserve the social fabric of our communities," said Governor Shukla, emphasising the need for collective societal action to combat the drug menace.

ESIC has approved SPREE 2025

(Standard Post Bureau)
Puducherry, July 24 : The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has approved SPREE 2025 (Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees) during its 196th ESI Corporation Meeting held in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, under the chairmanship of Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports.

SPREE 2025
The Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees (SPREE) 2025, approved by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), is a special initiative aimed at expanding social security coverage under the ESI Act. The scheme will be active from 1st July to 31st December 2025 and provides a one-time opportunity for unregistered employers and employees-including contractual and temporary workers-to enroll without facing inspections or demands for past dues.

Under SPREE 2025:

Employers can register their units and employees digitally through the ESIC portal, Shram Suvidha and

MCA portal.

Registration will be considered valid from the date declared by the employer.

No contribution or benefit will apply for periods prior to registration. No inspection or demand of past records will be made for the pre-registration period.

The scheme encourages voluntary compliance by removing the fear of retrospective penalties and easing the registration process. Prior to SPREE, non-registration within specified timeframes could result in legal action and demand for backdated dues. SPREE 2025 addresses these barriers, aiming to bring left-out establishments and workers into the ESI fold and ensure broader social protection. Therefore, employers and employees of Puducherry, and Karaikal districts are requested to utilize this scheme to register their factories/establishments. For further information and facilitation of registration, the employers can contact the nearest ESIC Branch Office or the ESIC Regional Office, Puducherry at 0413-2357642, or visit the website: www.esic.gov.in.

PM to dedicate Rs 1,030 cr Railway Projects in TN

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate and dedicate Rs 1,030 crore worth Railway projects in Tamil Nadu on July 26, Saturday, at an event in the southern Tuticorin district of Tamil Nadu, where he will land from Thiruvananthapuram on a two-day visit to the State. Along with Railway Electrification and Doubling projects, the projects implemented by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, that included inauguration of the renovated Tuticorin airport, Ministry of Power and Ministry of Road Transport and Highways will be inaugurated/dedicated to the Nation by the Prime Minister benefiting the state of Tamil Nadu. The Prime Minister will dedicate three major railway infrastructure projects in southern Tamil Nadu to strengthen sustainable and efficient connectivity, Southern Railway officials said today.

They said Electrification of the 90 km Madurai-Bodinayakanur line, commissioned at a cost of Rs.99 crores, will promote eco-friendly transport and support tourism while benefiting regular commuters, farmers, students and small vendors in Madurai and Theni districts.

Further, additional Express train services can be introduced in the section boosting speed and reducing travel time for passengers. He will also dedicate Rs 650 crore doubling of the 21 km Nagercoil Town-Kanniyakumari section, part of the Thiruvananthapuram-Kanniyakumari project. This will strengthen the connectivity in Southern regions of Tamil Nadu.

The project has paved the way for operation of additional passenger and freight services and has contributed to improved operational efficiency. Further, the doubling of the Aralvaymozhi-Nagercoil Junction (12.87 km) and Tirunelveli-Melappalaiyam (3.6 km) sections at a cost of Rs.283 Crores will reduce travel time on major southern routes like Chennai-Kanniyakumari and promote regional economic progress by improving passenger and freight capacity. Union Ministers, Tamil Nadu Ministers, elected representatives, Senior Officials of all the participating ministries will attend the event. During his two-day visit, Mr Modi after launching projects in Tuticorin, will leave for Trichy for an overnight stay. Next day, on July 27, Sunday, the Prime Minister will take part in the 1000th birth anniversary celebration of the mighty Chola emperor Rajendra Chola I, at Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Ariyalur district, 250 km south of Chennai. On Sunday, Modi will attend the grand celebration of 1000th birth anniversary of emperor Rajendra Chola I, whose reign (1014-1044) extended right from the Gangetic plains in the north to Indonesia in the far east as well as the contiguous Sri Lanka. It was the zenith of the Chola dynasty.

NICSI

Notice for Inviting Tender (NIT)

MPVS

RFP for Selection of Managed Service Provider (MSP/SI) for Augmentation of IT Infrastructure at Madhya Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, Bhopal

GEM Bid No: **GEM/2025/B/6382205 dt. 25-06-2025**

NICSI invites proposals from Reputed Companies/ Managed Service Providers for Augmentation of IT Infrastructure, i.e. Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning & Maintenance of IT Infrastructure at Madhya Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, Bhopal. Interested Companies, who qualify as per the criteria mentioned in the tender document, may submit their Proposals online through GEM portal till 16/07/2025.

Please refer the tender document available at GEM portal with Bid Number: **GEM/2025/B/6382205 dt. 25-06-2025** for detail Scope of Work, Other important details, corrigendum and other terms and conditions.

CBC 06107/11/0001/2526

(General Manager)
NICSI

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath listens to the grievances of people during 'Janata Darshan', at Gorakhnath Temple, in Gorakhpur on Thursday.

Access to non-farm business, irrigation significantly reduces drought-induced rural migration : IITM study

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : An Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) study has found that access to non-farm business activities and irrigation were major factors that significantly reduced drought-induced migration among rural farm households.

The study found that there was no significant evidence of drought-induced migration among households engaged in non-farm business activities and those having access to irrigation, thus proving that participation in non-farm activities and access to irrigation do make a positive difference in the case of drought-affected rural areas, IIT-M said today.

Although the effect of rainfall and temperature anomalies on migration is well documented, little is known about the impact of

climate-change-induced drought on migration among rural farm households in India.

The study was led by Dr. Sabuj Kumar Mandal, faculty, IIT Madras, and Dr. Gauri Sree Kumar, Researcher, IIT Madras and the findings were published in the reputed peer-reviewed journal Indian Economic Review.

The authors have investigated the impact of drought on out-migration among rural farm households in India. They also research on whether participation in non-farm activities and access to irrigation make any difference.

The researchers suggested that the Government could augment the rural non-farm sector through schemes such as Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

Employment Guarantee Act. Similarly, irrigation techniques can be boosted through schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana.

The study also found that social membership could play a significant role in reducing the number of migrants. Households' participation in agriculture/ milk/other cooperatives, non-government organisations, credit/savings groups, self-help groups, and other such associations could check migration. Farmer-based organisations and more agricultural extension services could be established by the Government.

In this study, the Researchers analyzed Round I (2004-2005) and Round II (2011-2012) data of the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) and the impact of

drought on the migration among rural farm households was estimated using Difference-in-differences (DiD) method—a statistical technique used in economics and quantitative research to study the differential effect of a treatment group versus a control group in an experiment. Elaborating on this study, Dr. Sabuj Kumar Mandal said “Unfortunately, rural-urban migrations come with drawbacks. Although there is data to suggest that migration improves the overall well-being of families and the economy, increased rural-urban migrations lead to overpopulation in a particular region, urban poverty, violence, crime, and other societal problems.”

Excessive rural-urban migration also leads to a decline in rural population,

WABAG bags Rs.2,332 crore Saudi order for desal plant

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) ; City based pure play water technology company VA TECH Wabag today announced bagging of a sea water reverse osmosis desalination plant order in Saudi Arabia. According to WABAG, the order valued about USD 272 million (SAR 1,019 million/Rs 2,332 crore) is for 300 million litres per day (MLD) desalination plant at Yanbu, Saudi Arabia. The order is from the Saudi Water Authority (SWA).

WABAG said the order scope encompasses design, engineering, supply, construction, and commissioning of a 300 MLD desalination plant, to be developed on a greenfield site located along the west coast of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Indian multinational said in a statement. The company said it has received the Letter of Award, and the contracting formalities will commence now. Post signing of the contract, the effective date for commencement of execution will be announced. The order has to be executed in 30 months from the effective date which will be announced after signing of the contract. Rohan Mittal, Head of Strategy and Business Growth for GCC said, “We are immensely proud to have emerged successful in this prestigious project not just once, but twice.

NASA tests new Heat Source Fuel for Deep Space Exploration

Chennai, July 24 (UNI) : US Space Agency NASA has successfully tested new Heat Source Fuel for deep space exploration, millions of miles from Earth.

To explore the unknown in deep space, millions of miles away from Earth, it's crucial for spacecraft to have ample power.

NASA's radioisotope power systems (RPS) are a viable option for these missions and have been used for over 60 years, including for the agency's Voyager spacecraft and Perseverance Mars rover.

These nuclear batteries provide long-term electrical power for spacecraft and science instruments using heat produced by the natural radioactive decay of radioisotopes. Now, NASA is testing a new type of RPS heat source fuel that could become an additional option for future long-duration journeys to extreme environments, the US Space Agency said in its website. Historically, the radioisotope plutonium-238 (plutonium oxide) has been

NASA's RPS heat source fuel of choice, but americium-241 has been a source of interest for the past two decades in Europe. In January, the Thermal Energy Conversion Branch at NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland and the University of Leicester, based in the United Kingdom, partnered through an agreement to put this new option to the test. One method to generate electricity from radioisotope heat sources is the free-piston Stirling convertor. This is a heat engine that converts thermal energy into electrical energy. However, instead of a crankshaft to extract power, pistons float freely within the engine.

It could operate for decades continuously without wear, as it does not have piston rings or rotating bearings that will eventually wear out. Thus, a Stirling convertor could generate more energy, allowing more time for exploration in deep space.

Researchers from the University of Leicester—who have been leaders in the development of americium RPS and heater units for more than 15 years—and NASA worked to test the capabilities of a Stirling generator testbed powered by two electrically heated americium-241 heat source simulators.

“The concept started as just a design, and we took it all the way to the

prototype level: something close to a flight version of the generator,” said Salvatore Oriti, mechanical engineer at Glenn.

“The more impressive part is how quickly and

inexpensively we got it done, only made possible by a great synergy between the NASA and University of Leicester teams. We were on the same wavelength and shared the same

mindset”, he said. The university provided the heat source simulators and generator housing. The heat source simulator is the exact size and shape of their real americium-241 heat

source, but it uses embedded electric heaters to create an equivalent amount of heat to simulate the decay of americium fuel and therefore drive generator operation.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

DEPARTMENT OF EX-SERVICEMEN WELFARE

(KENDRIYA SAINIK BOARD SECTT)

RESERVED DEFENCE SEATS IN MEDICAL/DENTAL COLLEGES

AS GOVERNMENT OF INDIA NOMINEE UNDER

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE QUOTA (2025-26)

1. Applications are invited for admission to Medical Colleges and Dental College (subject to allotment of seats by Ministry of Health), from sons/daughters/widows/wives of Armed Forces Personnel of the following categories of Defence personnel only, as per priority shown against each -

| Sl. No | Category | Priority |
|--------|---|----------|
| (a) | Widow/ Wards of Defence personnel killed in action. | I |
| (b) | Wards of disabled in action and boarded out from service. | II |
| (c) | Widows/ Wards of Defence personnel who died while in service with death attributable to military service. | III |
| (d) | Wards of disabled in service and boarded out with disability attributable to military service. | IV |
| (e) | Wards of Ex-Servicemen and serving personnel who are in receipt of Gallantry Awards. | V |
| (f) | Wards of Ex-Servicemen. | VI |
| (g) | Wives of | VII |
| (i) | Defence personnel disabled in action and boarded out from service. | |
| (ii) | Defence personnel disabled in service and boarded out with disability attributable to military service. | |
| (iii) | Ex-servicemen and serving personnel who are in receipt of Gallantry Awards. | VIII |
| (h) | Wards of Serving Personnel. | |
| (j) | Wives of Serving Personnel. | IX |

2. Eligibility for Candidature

(a) Selection of candidates for reserved seats as Govt of India Nominee will be made on the basis of marks obtained by the candidates in NEET-2025 conducted by NTA. Candidates who do not qualify the NEET should not apply.

(b) Wards of Civilians are not eligible.

3. Candidates are required to apply on Google Forms available on the following Website :-

(a) DESW Website - www.desw.gov.in

(b) DGR Website - www.dgrindia.gov.in

4. Eligibility certificate for Retd pers duly signed by RSB/ZSB, Records Office for Serving Personnel and Priority V, VII, VIII & IX by CO/OC Unit, has to be uploaded alongwith supporting documents and photograph of candidates.

CBC 10405/11/0001/2526

STANDARD POST

Yoga may reduce diabetes risk by 40 per cent

Even as India continues to be the diabetes capital of the world, a new study on Thursday shows yoga can prevent the risk by 40 per cent.

The findings, presented by Union Minister for Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh, himself a noted diabetologist, highlighted the potential of yoga in preventive healthcare.

The study led by the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI) suggests that the regular practice of yoga may reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by as much as 40 per cent in individuals predisposed to the condition.

"This is one of the first such efforts that seeks to scientifically document the prevention of the occurrence of Type 2 diabetes with yoga. As per the authors of the report, there is as much as a 40 per cent reduction in developing of Type 2 diabetes among potential individuals who practice yoga regularly," Singh said.

The research aimed to explore the role of yoga in the prevention -- rather than just the management -- of Type 2 diabetes. It also specified certain Yoga Aasans found useful for this.Singh pointed out that most earlier studies had focused on individuals already living with diabetes, examining how yoga could reduce their dependence on medication or insulin.In contrast, this study concentrates exclusively on individuals at risk of developing the disease, such as those with a family history of diabetes, and whether the onset can be prevented altogether.“The report has been submitted for further scrutiny. As per the authors, it is based on non-clinical observations,” the MoS said. The Minister further noted that similar research is also underway under the purview of the Department of Biotechnology, where studies are being conducted on how traditional wellness interventions like yoga can contribute to preventive and therapeutic health outcomes.“This study reflects how ancient practices like yoga, when rigorously examined through scientific methods, can offer real-world health solutions. It’s a step towards strengthening preventive healthcare and building a healthier India,,” Singh said.

Advancements in Endoscopic Microsurgery and CyberKnife Radiosurgery for Brain Tumors

(Standard Post Bureau)

The field of neurosurgery has undergone a revolutionary transformation over the past decade, particularly with the emergence of advanced endoscopic microsurgical techniques and the evolution of radiosurgical technologies such as CyberKnife. These innovations have significantly enhanced the precision, safety, and efficacy of brain tumor treatment, offering patients new hope with fewer complications and faster recovery.

Traditionally, brain tumor surgery involved large craniotomies—removal of a significant portion of the skull—to access and remove the tumor. While effective, such procedures were associated with considerable risks including infections, blood loss, and prolonged recovery times. With the introduction of endoscopic microsurgery, the approach has become minimally invasive, involving the use of high-definition endoscopes inserted through small openings, either via natural orifices like the nose or through tiny incisions in the skull.

This technique has proven especially effective in the treatment of pituitary adenomas, craniopharyngiomas, colloid cysts, intraventricular tumors, and other deep-seated brain lesions. Using angled lenses and precise



Dr. Aditya Gupta, Director – Neurosurgery and Cyberknife, Artemis Hospital, Gurugram

instrumentation, we can now reach regions of the brain that were once considered high-risk or inoperable, all while preserving surrounding healthy tissues.

endoscopic endonasal surgery for tumors located at the base of the skull are performed through the nasal cavity, eliminating external scars and significantly reducing hospital stay. Patients typically experience faster recovery, reduced postoperative pain, and a quicker return to normal activities.

Another significant advancement has been the integration of neuronavigation systems—akin to a GPS for the brain—which guide the surgeon with real-time, 3D imaging. Combined with high-powered microscopes and fluorescence-guided techniques, we can achieve maximal tumor resection while minimizing the risk of neurological

deficits.

While surgical resection remains the gold standard for many brain tumors, not all tumors are amenable to surgery. For lesions located in eloquent areas of the brain or for patients who are unfit for surgery due to age or comorbidities, CyberKnife radiosurgery offers a non-invasive, outpatient alternative.

CyberKnife is a revolutionary robotic radiosurgery system that delivers highly focused beams of radiation to the tumor with sub-millimeter accuracy. Unlike conventional radiation therapy, which is delivered over multiple sessions, CyberKnife can often treat brain tumors in one to five sessions with minimal impact on surrounding tissues.

This technique is particularly effective for treating vestibular schwannomas (acoustic neuromas), meningiomas, brain metastases,

arteriovenous malformations, and even recurrent or residual tumors following surgery. One of the standout features of CyberKnife is its ability to track the tumor in real time, adjusting the radiation beams as the patient moves slightly—this ensures continuous accuracy without the need for a rigid frame, offering unmatched patient comfort.

At Artemis Hospital, we have successfully treated hundreds of patients using CyberKnife, either as a standalone therapy or in conjunction with surgery. The synergy between microsurgical tumor debulking and radiosurgical precision allows us to optimize outcomes even in complex cases.

The integration of minimally invasive surgery with robotic radiosurgery represents the future of neuro-oncology. With continuous advancements in imaging, instrumentation, and intraoperative monitoring, we are now better equipped than ever to tackle tumors once deemed untreatable.

For patients and their families, these technologies translate into better quality of life, reduced hospitalization, and long-term disease control. The focus is no longer just on survival—but on healing with dignity, functionality, and minimal disruption to life.

India-UK FTA 'blueprint for shared prosperity': PM

London/New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi today described the India-UK Free

Trade Agreement (FTA) as a blueprint for shared prosperity which is more than an economic partnership and marks historic milestone in relations between the two countries.

“I am pleased that after years of dedicated efforts, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between our two countries has been concluded today. This agreement is more than just an economic partnership; it is also a blueprint for shared prosperity,” the Prime Minister said in his remarks during the joint press statement along with his British counterpart Keir Starmer.He said the Agreement paves way for enhanced market access in the UK for Indian textiles, footwear, gems and jewellery, seafood, and engineering goods and will unlock new opportunities for India’s agricultural produce and processed food industry.

Above all, the agreement will be especially beneficial for India’s youth, farmers, fishermen, and the MSME sector.

He said UK-made products like medical devices and aerospace

components will become more accessible and affordable for Indian consumers and industries.

Alongside the trade agreement, a consensus has also been reached on the Double Contribution Convention which will inject new momentum into the service sectors of both countries, particularly in technology and finance.

It will enhance the ease of doing business, reduce operational costs and boost confidence of doing business. Additionally, the UK economy will benefit from access to skilled Indian talent.These agreements will boost bilateral investment and generate new employment opportunities in both countries. Moreover, these agreements “between two vibrant democracies and major global economies” will contribute to strengthening global stability and shared prosperity.

The Prime Minister said both countries were launching Vision 2035 to infuse new momentum and energy into the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership over the next decade. This would serve as a roadmap for a strong, trusted, and ambitious partnership in the areas of technology, defence, climate, education, and people-to-people

connectivity.

A Defence Industrial Roadmap has also been developed to deepen collaboration in defence and security. Both countries will also work to further strengthen Technology Security Initiative and are committed to creating the future together through commitment to AI, Critical Minerals, Semiconductors and Cyber Security.

He said both our countries are writing a new chapter together in the field of education. Six universities from the UK would open campuses in India. The University of Southampton has already inaugurated its campus in Gurugram.The Prime Minister thanked his British counterpart and his government for their strong condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack and said both leaders were united against double standards in the fight against terrorism.

They also agreed that forces with extremist ideologies must not be allowed to misuse democratic freedoms and those who misuse democratic freedoms to undermine democracy itself, must be held to account.

On the matter of extradition of economic offenders the Prime

Minister said agencies of both countries would continue to work together in close coordination and cooperation.

On peace and stability in Indo-Pacific, Ukraine and the situation in West Asia, he said he and Mr Starmer continued to share perspectives. “We support early restoration of peace and stability. Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries is essential. Today’s era demands development, not expansionism.”

He condoled the death of British citizens in the tragic Ahmedabad plane crash.Describing the people of Indian origin living in UK as a “living bridge in our relationship,” Mr Modi said “they did not just bring curry from India, but also creativity, commitment, and character. Their contribution is not limited to the UK’s thriving economy — it is equally visible in the country's culture, sports, and public service.”

xpressing commitment to building a “high scoring solid partnership” Prime Minister Modi said India and UK come together in cricket, especially during a Test series.

“For both of us cricket is not just a game but a passion. And also, a great metaphor for our partnership.

Both Houses adjourned for fourth day amid Opposition uproar over Bihar SIR

New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) For the fourth consecutive day today, both Houses of Parliament were adjourned for the day after Opposition members created ruckus, demanding the withdrawal of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in Bihar and discussion on Operation Sindoor.

As soon as the Lok Sabha reconvened at 2 pm, and the presiding officer, Krishna Prasad Tanneti, called for the proceedings of the House, Opposition members entered into the well of the House holding placards in support of their demands and started raising slogans.

Tanneti urged the members to return to their seats and participate in the discussion on the bill related to the Scheduled Tribes of Goa, which was due today.

He said that the bill was also listed for discussion yesterday, but due to the commotion caused by Opposition members, the discussion could not take place.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal said that an important bill related to the Scheduled Tribes is listed for discussion and passage, but the Opposition was not concerned about the interests of the Scheduled Tribes.He said that this is a significant bill as for the first time, a legislation has been introduced to provide representation to the Scheduled Tribes of Goa.

The presiding officer said that yesterday as well, the Goa State Scheduled Tribe Representation Re-adjustment Bill, 2014 was brought for discussion and passage, but the House was not allowed to function. He added,

"As long as you keep displaying placards, the proceedings of the House cannot continue. All of you please return to your seats and participate in the discussion on the bill".

Due to the continued protest by Opposition members, the Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned until Friday.

Earlier in the day, the Lok Sabha was adjourned till 2 pm after Opposition members created ruckus demanding rollback of SIR process in Bihar.

Meanwhile, Rajya Sabha too was adjourned for the day after Opposition party members protested against the SIR of the electoral roll in Bihar and created uproar.

When the House reconvened at 2 pm, Deputy Chairperson Bhubaneswar Kalita called on AIADMK's M Thambi Durai to begin the discussion on the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025. As soon as Durai stood up to speak, Opposition members rose from their seats and came near the chair, shouting slogans in protest against the SIR in Bihar.As the uproar escalated, BJP's Laxmikant Bajpai raised a point of order under Rule 235 and demanded action against Opposition members.

In response, Deputy Leader of the Congress in the House, Pramod Tiwari, also cited rules and said that the Leader of the Opposition was not being given an opportunity to speak in the House.Kalita appealed to the Opposition members to return to their seats and urged for maintaining order in the House. When his appeals had no effect, he adjourned the proceedings for the rest of the day.

Rajya Sabha bids farewell to 6 members

New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) : The Rajya Sabha bade farewell to six of its members after completion of their tenure today.

The MPs represented Tamil Nadu in the Upper House.

However, one of the retiring members, P Wilson of DMK, was re-elected, and is expected to re-join the House tomorrow onwards.

Soon after the House met for the business of the day, Deputy Chairman Harivansh announced that the terms of M Mohamed Abdulla of DMK, N Chandrasegharan of AIADMK, Anbumani Ramadoss of PMK, M Shanmugam of DMK, Vaiko of MDMK and DMK’s P Wilson ends today.

On the occasion, MPs from different parties appreciated their contribution towards strengthening the democratic set-up and traditions of the country.

Deputy Chairman Harivansh, Leader of the House J P Nadda, and many other leaders from different political parties lauded their work, saying they contributed meaningfully to the deliberations of the House.

"Each one of these members has contributed

meaningfully to the deliberations of the House, bringing with them diverse experiences, perspectives and a deep sense of commitment to public service and democratic value," said the Deputy Chairman of the House.

He also wished them good health, happiness, and continued success in their future endeavours on behalf of the House.

Union Minister JP Nadda said they provided valuable insights on different aspects, including policy, and other critical issues, which enriched the House. Congress Deputy Leader in the House, Pramod Tiwari, in the absence of Leader of Opposition, Mallikarjun Kharge, wished the retiring members good health, and hoped that they would continue serving the society.

Speaking on the occasion, one of the retiring members, Chandrasekaran said that during the last five years, he raised issues concerning the people of his state.

He also expressed satisfaction over his tenure in the Rajya Sabha, and thanked all the members for their support and best wishes.

Thai F-16 bombs targets in Cambodia, tensions flare up

Bangkok, July 24 (UNI) ; A Thai F-16 fighter jet bombed targets in Cambodia as weeks of tension over a border dispute escalated into clashes that have killed at least two civilians, sources said today.

Thailand deployed F-16 fighter jets along the disputed border, and one of the aircraft fired into the Cambodian territory destroying a military target, the Thai army said.

Both countries accuse each other of escalating the tensions. Cambodia has been accused of firing rockets into a Thai village and attacking a hospital, while Thailand has carried out air strikes on Cambodian military targets, as per local media reports.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet has requested the UN Security Council to convene an “urgent meeting” over clashes between Thailand and Cambodia troops.

Hun Manet has written to Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN and president of the security council for July 2025.

"Considering the recent extremely grave aggressions by Thailand, which have greatly threatened peace and stability in the region, I earnestly request you to convene an urgent meeting of the Security Council to stop Thailand's aggression," Cambodian Prime Minister said in his letter.

The letter accuses Thailand of “unprovoked, premeditated and deliberate attacks” on Cambodian positions along border areas.

Macrons sue American podcaster over 'bizarre' claim

Paris, July 23 (UNI) : French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife, Brigitte, have filed a 22-count defamation lawsuit in the United States against right-wing podcaster Candace Owens over the 'bizarre' claim that Brigitte could be a man.

The lawsuit filed yesterday in Delaware Superior Court alleges Owens has broadcast “a relentless year-long campaign of defamation against the Macrons”, according to a statement from Tom Clare, the Macrons’ lawyer. Conservative commentator Candace Owens revived an absurd conspiracy theory in March with a YouTube video titled “Is France’s First Lady a Man?” according to the complaint, reports CNN.

Since then, Owens has produced numerous videos about Brigitte Macron for her nearly 4.5?million YouTube subscribers, including a multi-part series called “Becoming Brigitte.”The lawsuit further claims she has also sold?merchandise promoting the claim.

Owens also posted a screenshot on Instagram of an article referencing the Macrons’ lawsuit and a picture of the couple with the caption: “I will be coming for this wig today. Stay tuned.”She later posted a video on YouTube saying the lawsuit was “an obvious and desperate public relations strategy.”The Macrons are seeking punitive damages against Owens and her business entities for 22 counts of defamation, false light, and defamation by implication, the?statement said.

Ukraine sees 1st major anti-government protests as Zelensky moves to weaken anti-corruption agencies

Kyiv, July 24 (UNI) : Ukraine has seen the first major anti-government protests since the start of Russia’s full-scale invasion over three years ago, as a move by President Volodymyr Zelensky to curb the powers of anti-corruption agencies sparked fury across the nation.

Defiant crowds gathered in the capital city on Tuesday, as well as Lviv in the west, with smaller groups gathering in Dnipro in the east and Odesa in the south, after Ukraine’s Parliament — the Verkhovna Rada — approved a bill that grants oversight of two key anti-corruption agencies to the prosecutor general, a politically appointed figure.Critics say the move will hamper the functioning of two bodies -- the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor’s Office (SAPO), and take Ukraine further away from its dream of joining the European Union.The EU has made it clear to Kyiv that it must implement strong anti-graft measures if it wants to become a member, reports CNN.Ukraine has long been seen as one of the most corrupt countries in Europe.Allegations of corruption have been wielded against some of the country’s top officials, including several close allies of Zelensky – such as former Deputy Prime Minister Oleksiy Chernyshov.The bill was fast-tracked through the parliament and signed into law by Zelensky late Tuesday.

Number of Mexican migrants returning from US reaches 75,000

Mexico city, July 24 (UNI) : About 75,000 Mexicans have returned home from the United States since January 20, when Donald Trump took office, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said.

"According to the report I received this morning, since January 20, when President Trump took office, about 75,000 compatriots, Mexicans and Mexican women, have repatriated," Sheinbaum said at a press conference on Wednesday.

Sheinbaum also urged those who have returned to the country but have not yet received official confirmation of repatriation to contact the nearest migration service office to gain access to government services.In January, US President Donald Trump, in his first speech as the 47th president of the US, promised to immediately stop illegal migration and begin the process of extraditing millions of migrants.

Touched by warm welcome from Indian community...truly heartening': PM Modi in UK



London/ New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on a two-day crucial trip to the United Kingdom, today thanked the Indian diaspora in the United Kingdom for their warm welcome, calling their passion and dedication to India’s development “truly heartening.”

“Touched by the warm welcome from the Indian community in the UK. Their affection and passion towards India's progress is truly heartening,” the Prime Minister posted on X, shortly after arriving in London — the first leg of his two-nation tour.

This marks PM Modi’s fourth visit to the United Kingdom since 2014. His two-day trip from July 23 underscores the growing momentum in the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, established in 2021.Describing the visit as one aimed at "advancing the economic partnership between our nations," PM Modi said the focus would be on fostering prosperity, accelerating growth, and generating employment. “A strong India-UK friendship is essential for global progress,” he noted.During

the visit, PM Modi is scheduled to meet his British counterpart, Keir Starmer, and King Charles III. His discussions with PM Starmer are expected to culminate in the signing of a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and the UK.

The long-awaited deal, three years in the making and finalized in May, is set to bolster bilateral trade by eliminating or reducing tariffs on a range of goods. It is expected to significantly boost exports of Indian labour-intensive sectors such as leather, footwear, and garments, while also easing the entry of British goods like whisky and automobiles into the Indian market.

Officials on both sides believe the agreement could help double bilateral trade to \$120 billion by 2030, creating new opportunities for businesses and workers alike.This trip also marks the third meeting between PM Modi and PM Starmer in the past year. The two leaders previously met on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the G7 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada, in June.

The United Kingdom is

currently the sixth-largest investor in India, with cumulative investments exceeding USD 36 billion. Interestingly, India is also a significant source of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the UK, contributing close to USD 20 billion over the years — underscoring the depth and reciprocity in economic engagement.

Defence cooperation between the two nations has also intensified, with regular joint exercises and strategic exchanges involving all three branches of the armed forces. These engagements reflect growing mutual trust and a shared vision for regional and global security.

One of the most important, probably the foundational aspects of India-UK relationship is the 'living bridge' that connects India in the UK, people of Indian origin in the UK nearly 1.8 million strong Indian diaspora, which has contributed to strengthening bonds of friendship between our two countries, but has also made extremely valuable contributions through UK economy.

Syria-Saudi Arabia sign 40 agreements across sectors worth \$6 billion

Damascus/Riyadh, July 24 (UNI) : Syria and Saudi Arabia have agreed to sign more than 40 agreements worth \$6 billion across many industries, Syrian Information Minister Hamza al-Mustafa said.

"Forty-four agreements worth \$6 billion will be signed with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," al-Mustafa said on Wednesday at a press conference dedicated

to the Syrian-Saudi investment forum in Damascus.The minister added that the new agreements will contribute to the creation of more than 50,000 new jobs throughout Syria."We are working to attract private investment in the energy sector and discussed with a group of Saudi investors issues of cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and areas

where the media and communications industries intersect," al-Mustafa noted.Syria's armed opposition captured Damascus on December 8, 2024.Bashar Assad stepped down as Syrian president and left the country. Ahmed Al-Sharaa, the leader of the armed opposition, was declared transitional president in January.A new Syrian cabinet was formed in March.

Russian plane with 49 on board crashes, no survivors reported; fuselage found

Moscow, July 24 (UNI) Russian rescuers have located the fuselage of an Antonov An-24 passenger plane that disappeared from radar earlier in Russia’s Far East, the Emergencies Ministry said today.

The plane was carrying 49 people, including six crew members, and it crashed in the eastern Amur region, reports said.

“An Mi-8 helicopter operated by Rosaviatsiya (Russia’s civil aviation authority) has spotted the burning fuselage of the aircraft,” the Emergencies

Ministry stated on Telegram.

According to the news agency TASS, there are no survivors from the crash.

The agency further reported that one of the likely causes of the accident was a crew error during landing in poor visibility conditions.

The An-24, which went missing in Russia’s Amur Region, was found on a mountainside approximately 15 km from the town of Tynda, emergency services told Sputnik on Thursday. Preliminary information

confirms there were no survivors.

"The An-24 plane was found on a mountainside 15 km from the town of Tynda... There are no survivors, according to preliminary information," the emergency services said, adding that the crash site is located in a remote, hard-to-reach area.

The Amur Center for Civil Defense and Fire Safety also told Sputnik that while no survivors were seen during an aerial inspection, there is a possibility that survivors may be found during ground operations.

Tariff talks between South Korea, US postponed

Seoul, July 24 (UNI) : High-level talks between top South Korean and US officials to negotiate over United States President Donald Trump’s tariffs have been postponed due to a scheduling conflict for US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, South Korea’s finance ministry informed today.

The two sides will reschedule the meeting between Bessent and South Korean Finance Minister Koo Yun-cheol, as well as the top trade envoys of both countries, as soon as possible, the ministry said.

The parties were expected to hold talks in Washington in the 2+2 format with the participation of South Korean Finance Minister Koo Yun-cheol and Trade Minister Yeo Han-koo and their American counterparts - Bessent and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer.

"The US has proposed holding talks in the near future, and South Korea and the US will set a new date for talks at the earliest date possible," ministry spokesperson Kang Young-kyu was quoted as saying by the news agency.

Hungarian FM Peter Szijarto accuses Ukraine of undermining Central Europe’s energy security by blocking gas transits

Budapest, July 24 (UNI) : Taking a jab at Ukraine once again, Hungarian Foreign Minster Peter Szijarto has accused the country of undermining the energy security of Central Europe, through its recent actions which include the blockage of gas transits from its territory, threatening energy supplies throughout the region.In an interview with Russian state media TASS, Szijarto said “The TurkStream pipeline is working on full capacity not without a good reason. We have a long- term contract, plus we buy on spot basis, plus Slovakia buys its gas now through Hungary because Ukraine was ‘kind enough’ to lock down transit through its own territory, endangering the energy safety of supplies in the Central European region.”Stating that Kyiv’s calls for solidarity with Europe are made more questionable by such actions, he added “So when we speak about solidarity, I'm not quite sure that we understand the same

definition under that on both sides of the border.”

Hungary has long been opposed to Ukraine’s bid for joining the EU, stating that Budapest will not allow itself to be dragged into a war with Russia by allowing Kyiv to join the bloc.It has also been one of the few countries which has refused to supply any military equipment to Ukraine, or cut its ties with Moscow.

Rather, it has become even closer to Russia, as Budapest is joining the country in construction of new gas pipelines, much to the opposition of Brussels which is seeking to cut its reliance on Russian energy.

Slovakia has insisted on maintaining the transit of Russian gas through Ukraine, whose authorities stopped supplies at the beginning of this year.

As such, Bratislava currently receives energy raw materials from Russia via the TurkStream pipeline, though their volume is less than half of the republic’s gas imports.

Third round of Russia-Ukraine talks concludes in Istanbul

Istanbul, July 24 (UNI) : The third round of peace talks between Russia and Ukraine has concluded in Istanbul, as delegations from both sides met once again in an effort to break the deadlock in negotiations over the ongoing conflict.

As per a report by RT News, the talks were held at the historic Ciragan Palace on the European shore of the Bosphorus, this followed two earlier rounds of direct negotiations in Istanbul this year.

While any major breakthrough to end the war currently remain elusive, discussions have so far concentrated on humanitarian concerns- in particular, the exchange of prisoners of war and the repatriation of fallen soldiers.

Both delegations remained unchanged from the previous rounds. Russia was represented by presidential aide Vladimir

Medinsky, who has led Moscow’s negotiations throughout.Ukraine’s delegation was headed by Rustem Umerov, the former defence minister who was recently appointed head of the country’s Security Council as part of a sweeping government reshuffle last week.Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said ahead of the meeting that talks would “mainly focus on issues related to those draft memorandums that were exchanged during the second round,” with additional emphasis on continuing prisoner exchanges. However, he urged caution regarding the outcome.

“It’s hardly possible to talk about this now. We need to see how it goes,” Peskov told reporters. “No one expects an easy path. Naturally, this will be a very difficult conversation. The draft proposals are diametrically opposed.”

The two sides have

already exchanged draft documents setting out their respective visions for a possible settlement. While the content remains undisclosed, the gap between their positions appears substantial.

Despite the difficulties, both parties have continued to engage in the negotiation process, suggesting a shared interest in keeping communication channels open - particularly on humanitarian matters.

However, with battlefield dynamics and geopolitical pressures continuing to shape the broader context, the prospects for a meaningful breakthrough remain uncertain.

The Istanbul talks come amid growing international calls for a ceasefire and diplomatic resolution, though expectations remain tempered given the entrenched positions of both Moscow and Kyiv.

Australian scientists restoring Sydney Harbour’s seagrass meadows to save endangered seahorses

Sydney, July 24 (UNI) ; Australian scientists are restoring Sydney Harbour's seagrass meadows while helping the endangered seahorse population recover.

Scientists from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) are restoring native seagrass meadows and building "hotels" to save the endangered White's Seahorse population in Sydney Harbour in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW), a UNSW news release said today.

White's Seahorse, native to eastern Australia, faces extinction as its key habitat, Posidonia meadows, has nearly vanished from Sydney's coast over the past 50 years due to urban growth and pollution, UNSW scientists warned today.

Seagrasses stabilise coastlines, store carbon, and nurture juvenile marine life; as

they vanish, so do the species reliant on them, said UNSW Professor Adriana Verges, a leader in the Greener Pastures project and several related marine restoration efforts.

To counter habitat loss, scientists are replanting seagrass and using custom-built "seahorse hotels", steel mesh cages that mimic natural habitats. These quickly become covered with marine growth such as sponges, corals and algae, providing shelter and food for White's Seahorses, which colonize them within months. Sydney's Cobblers Beach now has 15 "seahorse hotels." Within a year, the White's Seahorse population grew from eight to 12, including juveniles, as the "hotels" also protect young seagrass, supporting ecological restoration, said the release.

Beauty

Get rid of whiteheads to prevent Acne

Whiteheads are caused due to build-up of oil, serum and dead skin that plugs up your pores. They clog your skin's pores and result in pimples.



A repeated occurrence of whiteheads can cause a serious problem of acne. But the good news is that whiteheads can be treated effectively at home. With a little effort and a regular skincare routine, you can keep whiteheads at bay. Follow these steps to get flawless skin:

Wash your face regularly. It makes skin oil-free, which would otherwise result in whiteheads. For best results, use a non-oily face wash and not the one that has glycerine as one of its contents.

Make sure that your hair is washed. Often greasy hair contributes to more oil on the surface of your skin. Dandruff is also one of the major causes of whiteheads and acne. Use an anti-dandruff shampoo once a week to keep your scalp clean.

Avoid oily makeup and lotions as they clog the pores the most. They make matters worse and lead to breakouts. Before buying a cosmetic, check out its oil content. Clean your face with a cleanser every day before going to bed.

Dab on a little tree tea oil before going to bed. Tea tree oil prevents whiteheads, blackheads and acne. This oil, surprisingly, does not clog pores. It also prevents breakouts. Scrub your face once a week. Because using a face wash alone won't be enough. To get rid of the sebum that accumulates in pores, gently scrub your face and wash it off with cold water.

Here's how to protect your skin this Summer

Summer is a time to wear all those dresses, shorts and skirts that you had put away during winter. The sun is out and is shining bright, inviting you to soak it up over Sunday brunches and early evening walks. But the increased exposure to sun brings with it skin problems. Here's how to keep your skin healthy and radiant during this season...



Exfoliate: You may think that exfoliating your skin is something that is done only during winter, but it is equally important in summer. Your body sheds skin cells regardless of the weather, so it is vital to scrub them off to avoid making your skin look dull and dry.

Hydrate: Moisturize, even if you have oily skin. As the temperature rises, swap your heavy body lotions for lighter ones. You could also use gels and purees as they absorb better into your skin.

Sunscreen: This is perhaps the most important tool to help fight sun issues during summer. Pick a sunscreen that is SPF 50 and above to protect yourself against the harmful effects of the sun.

De-tan: Even with sunscreen, your skin is likely to get tanned. But don't fret. If you are the type that doesn't fancy a tan, then just mix gram flour with yogurt and a few drops of lemon, and use this as a facemask to get rid of an uneven tan.

Water: Increase your water intake at this time of the year as you tend to get dehydrated quicker during summer. If it is not given enough water, your body tends to sap moisture from your hair and skin, leaving both dry and listless. So, drink up.

Toner: Use a toner to keep your pores closed and your skin cool. If you don't want to use chemicals, you could opt for rose water instead. Rose water's natural cooling properties make it ideal to soothe irritated and over-exposed skin.

Go bananas for Beauty!



While it is known that this humble fruit may have a host of health benefits, bananas also offer several beauty benefits. Available throughout the year, bananas are a powerhouse of nutrients and are great for your skin and hair as well. Here are some benefits...

- The fruit contains generous amounts of vitamin C and B6, which ensure that your skin remains supple and elastic. Apart from that, bananas also have antioxidants that protect your skin from premature ageing.
- The water content present in bananas keeps your skin well hydrated so that it doesn't get flaky and dry. It works as a great moisturiser as well. This is because it comprises vitamin A, which helps your skin recover the moisture it has lost.
- One of the best ways to moisturise your skin is to use a mashed banana and liberally rub it all over your face and neck. After leaving the pulp on your face for about half an hour, wash it off.
- You also treat pigmented skin with bananas. Simply add a tablespoon of honey to banana pulp and apply it on your skin.
- Have to go to an important function and don't have time to visit the parlour? Simply take a banana and add yogurt, honey and almonds to it. Make a paste and apply it all over your face. Not only will this moisturise your face but also remove excess oil and add a glow to your skin.
- For those who want to get rid of marks and scars left on the skin due to acne and pimples, bananas are a helpful aid. The vitamin C they contain lightens blemishes caused by skin aggravation.
- Bananas also work as great exfoliators. Simply mix jagged and mashed bananas together and use the paste as a scrub on your face and neck.
- Is the skin on your hands and heels dry, flaky or cracked? Let a banana come to your rescue. Simply mix mashed banana with some rose water and apply on the affected areas.

Of course wallet is a must-carry in your handbag, but apart from the regular stuff, one must have a mini summer kit in their handbag this summer. Check if you have these following things in your handbag before you step out in this scorching heat.

Summer kit for your Handbag



Small umbrella

Try to carry a mini-umbrella in your kit. This will help you to protect your skin from sun tan and dehydration.

Compact

One cannot maintain the freshness of

the face all day this summer. But, a compact will help to an extent. Compact powder not only removes excess oil on your face, but also hydrates the skin and makes you look clean and fresh.

Wet wipes

If you feel tired or look a bit dull, just wipe your face with wet wipes and refresh yourself.

Hairpins and hair bands

In this hot sun, leaving the hair loose is not a comfortable option. Even if you do so, you may need a hairpin or a hair band to tie it up some time during your travel. So, always put a few hair pins and hair bands in your bags for an instant hair-do. Also, hair tends to be frizzy this season, so hairstyles do not hold for long and hence you will definitely need these.

Sanitizer

It is better to be safe and avoid picking up infections. So, pin up a small sanitizer in your handbag and clean your hands as often as you need to.

Water bottle

Always carry a small water bottle in your bag. You will not know when you may need one during the day. Since parched throat might cause dehydration, this is a must-carry.

Deo

Summer means frequent sweating and deos are a must-carry to keep you fresh. Sweat also can make you stink and staying odourfree is important. Always carry a fragrant deo to smell good this summer.

Small towel

Keep a small towel in your handbag. You may wash your face and hands quite often at your work place this season, and having a small towel could come in handy in drying yourself.

Sunglasses

Don't forget to take your sunglasses. They might be worn as a style statement during other seasons, but during summer, they help you escape the heat. Also choose glasses, preferably wraparound ones, that offer complete UV protection.

Stole

Just keep a stole, preferably made of cotton, in your handbag as this might help you cover your head when you have to walk in the sun. It also helps to protect your hair.

Safe ways to colour your hair during Pregnancy

Don't stop yourself from colouring your hair during pregnancy. Here's what to keep in mind.



Pregnancy makes a woman glow with health and beauty and it shouldn't stop her from enhancing her hair with additional colour. Most bleaches and hair dyes contain harmful chemicals, which when absorbed through the scalp, can enter the bloodstream. So the general tendency is to take a break from hair colour when you are expecting if you want to play it completely safe.

Since you are going through crazy hormonal changes, your mane also gets affected and may not take to hair colour. However, don't stop yourself from a colour job or from dyeing your roots. Covering greys is a must, whether you are pregnant or not, and infusing colour will give a fresh change to your usual look.

Keep these tips in mind:

- Pick ammonia-free hair colour. If you are colouring at home, buy hair colour that doesn't contain any ammonia. For salon-based colouring, ask your stylist to do the same. It might not give you the intense colour that others would, but it's safe.
- Go ombre instead of global colouring. The ombre (or dip-dye) technique refers to colouring only the hair tip so the product doesn't touch your scalp.
- Dilute the colour to make it more tolerable to your scalp. Effective and non-toxic options to dilute the hair dye are water or almond, sunflower or jojoba oil.
- Always do a patch test before colouring.
- If you feel an irritation, develop a rash or get nauseous from the fumes, wash off the dye immediately.

Unnati shocks Sindhu in round-of-16

Changzhou, July 24 (UNI) : In a high-octane all-Indian clash, 17-year-old Unnati Hooda delivered a sensational performance to overcome two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and book her place in the Women's Singles quarterfinals at the China Open 2025 on Thursday.

The match was a showcase of India's present and future in badminton, with the rising star Hooda taking on the seasoned champion Sindhu.

Hooda started strong, claiming the opening game 21-16, but Sindhu struck back in the second, edging it 21-19 in a tense finish. In the decider, Hooda displayed remarkable play, sealing the contest 21-13 to advance to the quarterfinals.

Hooda will now face World No. 4 and third seed Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in the quarterfinals.

Tanvi, Vennala advance to QF; Bhargav and Viswa Tej progress to Rd-of-16

Solo (Indonesia), July 24 (IANS) : India's young shuttlers continued their impressive run at the Badminton Asia Juniors Individual Championships 2025, with Tanvi Sharma, Vennala Kalagotla and the top-seeded men's doubles pair of Bhargav Ram and Viswa Tej leading the charge in Solo, Indonesia.

Second seed Tanvi Sharma showcased her dominance in the women's singles category, overcoming China's Shi Si Chen 21-19, 21-14 in the Round of 32, followed by a commanding 21-14, 21-15 win over Thailand's Phannachet Passa-Orn in the Round of 16 to book her place in the quarterfinals.

Vennala, meanwhile, won back-to-back rounds for a second consecutive day to book her spot in the last eight. In men's doubles, top seeds Bhargav Ram and Viswa Tej comfortably



defeated Japan's Haru Masuda and Shogo Miyashita 21-15, 21-15 to advance to the Round of 16. The World No. 1 Indian pair will now face China's Wen Xin and Wei Gang Zheng later today for a place in the quarterfinals. Elsewhere in men's singles, Rounak Chouhan edged Thailand's Utchan Ruaysap 25-23, 21-

18, while Ansh Negi registered a 21-14, 21-16 win over Vietnam's Le Minh Son, with both advancing to the Round of 16.

In women's doubles, the duo of Vennala Kalagotla and Reshika U cruised past Hong Kong China's Au-Yeung Wing Chi and Yi Kiu Yu 21-7, 21-16 to secure their Round-of-16 berth.

Meanwhile, Pranaav Ram Nagalingam concluded his campaign in the Round of 16, while Himar Lalthazuala, Tanvi Reddy Andluri, and the mixed doubles pair of Vishnu Kedhar Kode and Keerthy Manchala bowed out in the Round of 32. Several Indian shuttlers will be in Round of 16 action later in the day.

Spain wins women's duet free title at World Aquatics Championships

Singapore, July 24 (UNI) : Spain's Iris Tio Casas and Lilou Lluís Valette clinched the gold medal in the women's duet free routine at the World Aquatics Championships here today, while China's Lin Yanhan and Lin Yanjun finished fourth.

The Chinese twin sisters, who placed sixth in the preliminaries, earning 274.3090 points in the final with an improvement of over 22 points in the same routine themed "Shadow of the Moon".

The Spanish duet, showcasing higher difficulty and a compelling artistic performance, secured the gold with 282.6087 points. Italy's Enrica Piccoli and Lucrezia Ruggiero claimed silver, while the bronze went to neutral athletes Mayya Doroshko and Tatiana Gayday.

"That mistake in the preliminaries was a wake-up call, reminding us to be more meticulous with the technical required elements," Lin Yanhan said after the final.

"In the final, we focused more on synchronization and coordination." Lin Yanjun added, "Our opponents were very strong and presented high-difficulty elements. So we decided to raise our degree of difficulty in the final to boost our artistic impression scores. We don't feel regretful about the result, it was a growth experience, and we delivered a performance we're proud of."

The 22-year-old twins had already earned a silver medal in the women's duet technical routine earlier in the tournament and contributed to China's two gold medals in the team technical and team free events.

India's World Cup boxers to get Rs 17.5 lakh boost

New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) : The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) today announced a cash reward of Rs 17.5 lakh for the 17 Indian pugilists who won medals at the recent legs of the World Boxing Cup held in Brazil and Astana, Kazakhstan.

Under the scheme, each gold medallist will receive Rs 2 lakh, silver medallists Rs 1 lakh, and bronze winners Rs 50,000, as the federation looks to maintain momentum heading into the World Boxing Championships in Liverpool and the World Boxing Cup Finals, scheduled to be hosted in New Delhi later this year.

BFI President and Chairman of the Interim Committee, Ajay Singh, congratulated the athletes and said India's impressive performance, highlighted by 17 medals including four golds, has elevated the nation's stature on the global boxing stage.

"I want to congratulate our boxers for a fantastic showing on the world stage. Our efforts are beginning to bear fruit. India has made a huge mark in the first two cups and we are now ranked fifth in the world," Singh said. "We've also been approached by China for a strategic partnership across junior, sub-junior and elite categories, which is a testament to the growing respect for Indian boxing."

Prominent medallists include Sakshi (54kg), Jaismine Lamboria (57kg),

and Nupur (80+kg), who struck gold in Astana, along with Hitesh Gulia (70kg) who clinched top honours in Brazil. Hitesh also bagged a silver in Kazakhstan, while Abhinash Jamwal (65kg) returned with two silvers, demonstrating consistency across legs.

Other silver medallists were Pooja Rani (80kg), Minakshi (48kg), Jugnoo (85kg), and Sanju (60kg), Nikhil Dubey (75kg), and Narendar (90+kg) picked up bronze. From the Brazil leg, Jadumani Singh (50kg), Manish Rathore (55kg), Sachin Siwach (60kg), and Vishal (90kg) also won bronze.

India's boxing icon and chief guest at the event, Vijender Singh, praised the athletes and encouraged them to stay hungry for greater success. "You have all done well. There are always hurdles, but we must move ahead without being satisfied," he said.

The prize announcement is part of BFI's broader vision to institutionalise support, reward performance, and enhance India's boxing structure across all levels. Recent successes at the U-15 and U-17 Asian Championships and strong performances by second-line teams at the Thailand Open underline the depth of India's boxing talent. Domestically, the Elite Women's Boxing Tournament in Telangana has also served as a vital platform for scouting emerging talent.

IGPL set to deliver image makeover the IPL way

New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) : In a landmark moment for Indian golf, the Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) was formally introduced to the media today with an interaction of three of India's most celebrated golfers — Shiv Kapur, SSP Chawrasia, and Gaurav Ghei — who were also announced as the league's inaugural icon players.

The initiative, drawing inspiration from the resounding success of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in cricket, aims to inject fresh energy into Indian golf through a fast-paced, team-based league format designed to be more accessible and exciting to younger audiences.

Speaking at the online media meet, Shiv Kapur said, "Any new league is always compared to the

IPL, but for me it's not about mimicking IPL; it's about what it has done for sport in the country. IGPL aims to do the same for Indian golf — unearthing new talent and growing the game in a revolutionary team setting."

The IGPL promises to bring men and women together on the same platform, merging top amateurs with seasoned professionals. Chawrasia hailed the mixed-team format as something completely new and a great move for the sport, adding that such an inclusive initiative could be a game-changer for developing talent across gender lines.

Veteran golfer Gaurav Ghei, with nearly four decades of experience, emphasised the significance of the shift to

a team structure in a traditionally individual-centric sport. "Professional golf can be a lonely journey. A league like this brings camaraderie, motivation, and an opportunity for veterans like us to pass on wisdom to the next generation," he said.

The format is expected to incorporate unique innovations such as relay golf, where players won't hit consecutive shots, a nod to shortening match durations and appealing to Gen Z viewers with faster, more consumable content. "Nobody wants to watch five hours of golf anymore. The sport needs an image makeover," said Kapur. "This is a step toward making golf social media-friendly and attractive to newer generations" he added. On the challenges

Indian pros face on international tours, the trio pointed to varied weather, course conditions, and travel fatigue. While Kapur stressed the need for mental and technical adaptability, Ghei highlighted the financial burden on young pros and how IGPL's prize structures could ease that strain. Asked about IGPL's relationship with existing bodies like PGTI and the implications on world ranking points, players acknowledged the complexities but also noted that global ranking systems themselves are undergoing reevaluation. The emphasis, they said, should be on creating sustained pathways and financial backing for emerging talent.

Regarding grass root level development, Chawrasia said the platform

would help young golfers understand the game and grow from observing veterans up close. Kapur added, "It's not just about grooming - it's a two-way street. Even we as veterans can learn from the boldness and energy of today's youth." Answering a question about the necessity of league-style formats in India, Ghei said, "There's a cool factor to being part of a city team — like saying you play for Delhi or Mumbai."

It's also about performing under team pressure, something completely different from individual formats.

"In conclusion, all three icon players expressed enthusiasm about shaping their respective teams, leading the charge, and contributing to the sport's future."

Harith Noah returns to rally at Baja Aragón 2025, eyes form ahead of W2RC's final stretch

New Delhi/Spain, July 24 (UNI) : Harith Noah, representing India, is set to return to competitive action at the 41st edition of Baja Aragón, scheduled from July 25 to 27, 2025 in Teruel, Spain.

One of the most demanding and historic cross-country Baja-style rally events, Baja Aragón forms a crucial leg of the FIM Bajas World Cup and the FIA World and European Baja Cups.

Riding in the Rally GP category for the Sherco TVS Rally Factory Team, Noah will use the event to regain race sharpness and rebuild momentum as he prepares for the final rounds of the FIA-FIM World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC) later this year.

With its mix of high-speed tracks, rocky climbs, and summer heat, Baja Aragón is widely regarded as a testing ground for both man and machine. The rally

features a Prologue Stage on Friday, followed by two long special stages across Saturday and Sunday, offering riders a true test of endurance and navigation.

Noah is no stranger to the challenge. He has delivered consistent performances at Baja Aragón in the past, including a 7th place finish in 2024, following a 5th place result, a year earlier.

"Baja Aragón has always been one of my favourite events, it's fast, technical, and always throws in surprises."

I'm excited to be back here, and the goal is to build momentum and enjoy being back on the bike at a race I know well," said Harith Noah ahead of the rally.

Noah's outing comes after two consecutive injury setbacks in 2025. In January, Noah was forced to withdraw from the Dakar Rally 2025 following a wrist fracture during the Prologue.

Noida Kabaddi League set to kick off in November

Greater Noida (Uttar Pradesh) July 24 (UNI) : In order to promote kabaddi at the grassroots level, the Noida Kabaddi League (NKL) was announced today by 100 Sports. For the first time ever, a kabaddi league will be held in a franchise format at the district level, offering a unique platform for young talent from Noida and across Uttar Pradesh.

The league is being organized under the guidance of the District Gautam Buddh Nagar Kabaddi Association, along with (NKL) League Directors Mukesh Bhati, Manish Bhati, and Deepak Bhati. Speaking during the launch event of Noida Kabaddi League, Jitendra Nagar said, "The Noida Kabaddi League is a step toward nurturing grassroots talent and giving kabaddi the professional platform it truly deserves."

Amina Abdali's six-goal haul lights up Day 4

New Delhi, July 24 (UNI) : A dominant display from Sanskriti School's girls' team, led by a spectacular six-goal performance by Amina Abdali, set the tone for Day 4 of the Oriental Cup 2025, here at Dr. Ambedkar Stadium.

The two-time defending champions, under Coach Keshav Chandra Duklan, cruised to a commanding 9-0 win over Tagore International School in their Group A fixture, putting one foot firmly in the final. Alongside Abdali's brilliance, Diksha Joshi, Sreeparna Mitra, and Aditi Chamoli each added a goal, to reinforce their team's title defense.

The day also saw crucial wins for DPS Vasant Kunj, DPS RK Puram, Navy Children School, and New Green Field School in the boys' second-round knockout matches, as the tournament now transitions into the league phase for the top six boys' teams.

In other matches, The Mother's International School and Amity International School, Noida played out a goalless draw in the Group A girls' fixture, leaving both sides with limited room for error in their upcoming games. Meanwhile, in Group B

girls' fixture, Govt. Girls Senior Secondary School, Faridabad, under guidance of coach Inderjeet edged past Delhi Public School, Vasant Kunj with a narrow 1-0 win, thanks to the only goal from Nidhi.

In the boys' second round, DPS Vasant Kunj continued their dominant run under coach Roshan Singh with a thumping 5-0 victory over Sapphire International School. Idaant Trivedi and Kanav Sharma scored two goals each, while Garv Khullar chipped in with one.

While Delhi Public School, RK Puram got the better of DAV Public School, Sahibabad in a penalty shootout after a 2-2 draw in regulation time. For DPS RK Puram, Arhan Gupta and Afraaz Tariq were on target, while DAV responded through Sagar Laha and Shriansh Nath Tiwari. In the shootout, DPS RK Puram, under coach Gobardhan Sahoo, held their nerves to secure a 3-1 victory with Afraaz, Arhan, and Ayush Ranjan converting their penalties, as only Dhruv Kumar Sai could score for DAV.

Navy Children School Boys team, under the guidance of coach Karan Negi, also progressed with

a confident 3-0 win over St. Francis De Sales Senior Secondary School. Dhruv Kumar Jha scored twice, while Prince Kumar added the third.

In the final boys' second round knockout fixture, New Green Field School, Saket defeated Heritage Global School, Faridabad 3-2 in a tense penalty shootout following a goalless draw. Nilesh, Garv Tonger, and Anuj scored for New Green Field under coach Rohit Yadav, while Javed Akhtar and Noorem Darle converted for Heritage.

With the conclusion of the second-round knockout stage, the boys' category will now shift into the league phase. Six teams—The Mother's International School, Amity International School Noida, DPS Vasant Kunj, Navy Children School, DPS RK Puram, and New Green Field School—have qualified and will be divided into two groups for the next phase of competition.

Day 5 promises more intense football action and key battles, with the boys' league fixtures and final group-stage matches in the girls' category set to decide the road to the finals of Oriental Cup 2025.

Tanvi, Vennala Kalagotla advance to QFs

Solo, July 24 (UNI) : India's young shuttlers continued their impressive run at the Badminton Asia Juniors Individual Championships 2025, with Tanvi Sharma, Vennala Kalagotla and the top-seeded men's doubles pair of Bhargav Ram and Viswa Tej leading the charge in Solo, Indonesia.

Second seed Tanvi Sharma showcased her dominance in the women's singles category, overcoming China's Shi Si Chen 21-19, 21-14 in the Round of 32, followed by a commanding 21-14, 21-15 win over Thailand's Phannachet Passa-Orn in the Round of 16 to book her place in the quarterfinals. Vennala, meanwhile, won back-to-back rounds for a second consecutive day to book her spot in the last eight.

In men's doubles, top seeds Bhargav Ram and Viswa Tej comfortably defeated Japan's Haru Masuda and Shogo Miyashita 21-15, 21-15 to advance to the Round of 16. The World No. 1 Indian pair will now face China's Wen Xin and Wei Gang Zheng later today for a place in the quarterfinals.

Elsewhere in men's singles, Rounak Chouhan edged Thailand's Utchan Ruaysap 25-23, 21-18, while Ansh Negi registered a 21-14, 21-16 win over Vietnam's Le Minh Son, with both advancing to the Round of 16.

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“Employee Connect Drive” launched on Western Railway



Mr Vivek Kumar Gupta, GM/WR, Mr Pradeep Kumar, Additional General Manager, Smt Manjula Saxena, Principal Chief Personnel Officer and other senior railway officials of Western Railway releasing the “Employee Connect Drive” poster.

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, July 24 : Western Railway has always been in the forefront in the welfare & well-being of its employees. Moving ahead

in this direction, under the aegis of able guidance of Shri Vivek Kumar Gupta, General Manager of Western Railway, a novel initiative “Employee Connect Drive” has been

launched across all six divisions of WR. To mark the launch of this campaign, GM Shri Vivek Kumar Gupta, Shri Pradeep Kumar, Additional General

Manager of WR, Smt Manjula Saxena, Principal Chief Personnel Officer and other senior officials of Western Railway released “Employee Connect Drive” poster on

24th July, 2025. These posters available in four languages, viz. Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati & English have been displayed across the divisions of WR in order to ensure inclusivity and effective communications with employees.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, the drive aims to promote employee well-being, timely grievance redressal and awareness of various welfare schemes. Special emphasis has been laid on reaching out to field staff such as Trackmen/ Gangmen, who are continuously on duty and often unable to voice their concerns in a timely manner. The objective of this initiative is to establish continuous communication with employees and address matters related to their welfare in a structured and effective manner

Effective implementation of Chief Minister's 150-day Action Plan Program by Mahavitaran

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, July 24: In order to effectively implement government schemes using new technology and to promote the work in various departments and to make the work in the department more people-oriented, Hon. Chief Minister Shri. Devendra Fadnavis had announced a 150-day action plan program. Against this backdrop, various works

such as new electricity connections, name change, address correction, complaint redressal regarding electricity bills, and complaint redressal regarding power supply interruptions were successfully implemented by Mahavitaran's Bhandup Circle.

Joint Managing Director of Konkan Regional Circle Mr. Dilip Jagdale had directed for

effective implementation of this program in Bhandup Circle.

Accordingly, under the guidance of Chief Engineer Mr. Sanjay Patil, Bhandup Circle, on In this 150-day action plan program that started on May 2, 2025, Mahavitaran's Bhandup Circle has provided 11,862 new electricity connections. The names of 22,735 customers have been changed. The

addresses of 4,982 customers have been corrected. While the billing complaints of 34,565 customers have been redressed.

In addition, 83,945 complaints regarding power supply interruptions have been resolved. From May 2, 2025 to July 10, 2025, 30 complaints received on the Aaple Sarkar portal have been redressed and zero complaints remain on the

Aaple Sarkar portal. In addition, 4 complaints received on the PG portal have been resolved and zero complaints remain on the PG portal.

Chief Engineer of Bhandup Circle, Mr. Sanjay Patil said, "Mahavitaran is a customer-oriented company and all officers and employees should work with the highest priority and provide good service to the customers."

Income Tax Dept., Mumbai Celebrates 166th Income Tax Day



(By PIB, Mumbai Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, July 24 : The Income Tax Department, Mumbai, commemorated the 166th Income Tax Day today at its office complex at Kautilya Bhavan, Mumbai, marking the historic enactment of India's first income tax legislation in 1860. The ceremony was graced by the Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan, as the Chief Guest, along with distinguished dignitaries including Vice President, Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), Mumbai, Shri Saktijit Dey and

Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Mumbai, Smt. Malathi Sridharan.

Speaking at the event, Hon'ble Governor Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan emphasized the pivotal role of the Income Tax Department in not only mobilizing revenue but also fostering voluntary compliance and acting as a deterrent against economic malfeasance. He lauded the Department's sustained efforts and its significant contribution to strengthening the nation's fiscal framework through consistent growth in tax collections. Shri

Radhakrishnan stated that the proposed Income-tax Bill, 2025 signifies another leap forward for the department and the country.

Vice President, Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, Mumbai, Shri Saktijit Dey commended the Department's unwavering commitment to transparency, integrity, and efficiency in tax administration. He further noted that the Income Tax Department today stands as a symbol of financial discipline, equity, and democratic responsibility. Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Mumbai, Smt. Malathi

Sridharan reflected on the evolution of income tax legislation in India—from its inception in 1860 to the present day—as the new Income Tax Act is being framed. She emphasized that tax laws must align with the country's stage of economic development. With India poised to become the third-largest global economy by 2028, she highlighted the need for a taxation framework that is transparent, user-friendly and growth-oriented.

The Governor also unveiled the statue of Chanakya, also known as Kautilya, whose famous verse 'kosha moolo danda'

is the motto of the Income Tax Department. As part of the celebrations, the Income Tax Department, Mumbai, felicitated top taxpayers from the region for their exemplary compliance and contribution, retired officers for their distinguished service and sportspersons employed with the Department who have represented India and earned accolades at international sporting events. The event served as a tribute to the Department's legacy and its evolving role in fostering a robust and equitable tax ecosystem.

Noday block over Western Railway on Sunday

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, July 24 : To carry out maintenance work of tracks, signaling and overhead equipment, a Jumbo Block will be taken from 00:15 hrs to 03:15 hrs at Vasai Road Yard including all Goods line and Diva lines during the intervening night of Friday/ Saturday, i.e. on 25th/26th July, 2025.

There will be NO BLOCK in DAY TIME over Western Railway Suburban section on Sunday, 27th July, 2025.

Special Train Services Between Yesvantpur and Talaguppa Extended :SWR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, July 24 : To cater to the increased demand of passengers, South Western Railway has extended the operation of Train Nos. 06587/06588 Yesvantpur – Talaguppa – Yesvantpur Express Special for two additional trips in each direction.

Train No. 06587 Yesvantpur – Talaguppa Express Special will depart from Yesvantpur at 22:30 hrs on 1st and 8th August 2025 (Fridays) and will arrive at Talaguppa at 04:15 hrs the following day (Saturday).

Train No. 06588 Talaguppa – Yesvantpur Express Special will depart from Talaguppa at 08:15 hrs on 2nd and 9th August 2025 (Saturdays) and will arrive at Yesvantpur at 16:50 hrs on the same day. En route, the train will stop at the following stations in both directions: Tumakuru, Tiptur, Arsikere, Birur, Tarikere, Bhadravati, Shivamogga Town, Anandapuram, and Sagara Jambagaru.

DRM conducted Visakhapatnam Station Inspection : ECoR



(Standard Post Bureau)

Visakhapatnam, July 24 : Divisional Railway Manager, Waltair Division Shri Lalit Bohra led a comprehensive inspection of Visakhapatnam station today (24.07.2025) accompanied by senior

officials of the Division. Divisional Railway Manager inspected the various amenities like Pay & Use toilets, Parking, Waiting Halls, Foot Over Bridges, lifts, Water Boots, Catering Stalls, Platforms, Parcel office etc.

DRM Mr Lalit Bohra reviewed the infrastructure works in progress at the station with senior officials. He checked the various facilities at the station towards Gnanapuram side during the inspection at Visakhapatnam station.

Jairam Ramesh mocks India-UK FTA

New Delhi, July 24 (UNI)

: Congress today took a jibe at the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), saying another effective “FTA -- Fugitive Transfer Agreement” was needed as three stars are awaiting “ghar waapsi”.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, “What India needs from the UK is the announcement of another and more effective FTA (Fugitive Transfer Agreement)”.

“After all, three stars are still waiting for their ghar waapsi -- Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi, and Lalit Modi. There may well be others too,” he added.

Cancellation of trains due to safety works : ECoR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Visakhapatnam, July 24 : Due to non-interlocking (NI) works between Thadi-Duvvada DN line to carry out Complete Track Renewal (CTR) works in the Vijayawada Division of South Central Railway (SCR), some trains were cancelled, as detailed below:-

1. The Train No. 67285 Rajahmundry-Visakhapatnam MEMU passenger leaving Rajahmundry on 26.08.2025, 28.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
2. The Train No. 67286 Visakhapatnam-Rajahmundry MEMU passenger leaving Visakhapatnam on 26.08.2025, 28.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
3. The train No. 17267 Kakinada-Visakhapatnam MEMU Express leaving Kakinada on 26.08.2025, 28.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
4. The train No. 17268 Visakhapatnam-Kakinada MEMU Express from leaving Visakhapatnam on 26.08.2025, 28.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
5. The train No. 22876 Guntur -Visakhapatnam Uday Express leaving Guntur on 26.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
6. The train No. 22875 Visakhapatnam-Guntur Uday Express leaving Visakhapatnam on 26.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
7. The train No. 12718 Vijayawada-Visakhapatnam Ratnachal Superfast Express leaving Vijayawada on 26.08.2025, 28.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled.
8. The train No. 12717 Visakhapatnam- Vijayawada Ratnachal Superfast Express leaving Visakhapatnam on 26.08.2025, 28.08.2025 and 30.08.2025 is cancelled. People are requested to note the changes and act accordingly.

China downplays India, Bangladesh concerns on dam construction on Yarlung Zangbo river

New Delhi/Beijing, July 24 (UNI) China has downplayed concerns by India and Bangladesh that the dam being constructed on Yarlung Zangbo River in Tibet would adversely impact downstream regions and said Beijing is engaged in cooperation with downstream countries on sharing hydrological data, flood prevention

and disaster reduction. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun said Beijing has had necessary communication with them on the project and would continue enhancing cooperation for the benefit of all people along the river basin. “The project will help prevent and mitigate disasters along the entire Yarlung Zangbo

River, and will not adversely affect downstream regions. China is engaged in cooperation with downstream countries on sharing hydrological data, flood prevention and disaster reduction. We have had necessary communication with them on the project, and will continue enhancing cooperation for the benefit of all people along the river basin,” he said.