

IN BRIEF

Five of family electrocuted in Jalgaon, one child survives

Jalgaon, Aug 20 (UNI): In a shocking incident, five members of the same family were found dead in a farm near Khedi village in Erandol taluka, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, today.

The incident has caused panic not only in the village but also in the surrounding areas.

Police investigation has revealed that all five died due to electrocution. The deceased include two women (aged 40), one man (aged 45), an 8-year-old girl, and a 6-year-old boy. In a miraculous turn, a 3-year-old girl from the family survived the accident. According to police, the family members came in contact with an electric current while going to their farm, leading to the tragic deaths.

Thackeray faction blames govt for flooded city after heavy rains

Mumbai, Aug 20 (UNI): In the wake of relentless rainfall over the past few days that has left Mumbai waterlogged, the Shiv Sena (Thackeray faction) has launched a scathing attack on the state government, questioning its preparedness and accountability.

The party asked whether the government's responsibility ends merely by issuing a "red alert" after warnings from the Meteorological Department. "Rains are natural, and people take precautions. But who is responsible when Mumbai gets submerged twice this monsoon?" the Thackeray group questioned. They further asked "what measures were taken to ensure smooth road traffic and uninterrupted local train services during heavy rains? When all roads were choked, what was the disaster management department of the state government and the municipal corporation doing?" Pointing fingers at the political leadership, the group noted that Mumbai has three guardian ministers, yet none were visible when the city was drowning.

"These ministers were quick to jump into a controversy over pigeons, but what did they do during this crisis? Where was the deputy chief minister who frequently traveled to Delhi to cover up scams by ministers in the Shinde government? Is the chief minister trying to shirk responsibility by merely appealing to people from the disaster management cell?" the party asked.

CM bats for creating human resources in AI



(Standard Post Bureau) Pune, Aug 20 : Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis on Wednesday said although Maharashtra is the data center capital of the country with 60 per cent of the country's data center capacity, there is a need to create good human resources in the fields of quantum computing, artificial intelligence and semicon to effectively tackle the challenge of the Artificial Intelligence (AI).

In his address at the silver jubilee foundation day function of the Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation

Limited (MKCL), the Chief Minister pointed out that it is important to reach AI and its knowledge to the last person, especially when data has become a part of the world's wealth.

He emphasised the need to move forward in such a situation by identifying new values and challenges.

"When we are facing the big challenge of artificial intelligence, it is important to make this knowledge available to the last person. Data has become a part of the world's wealth. In this situation, we will have to move forward by identifying

new values and challenges. By creating good human resources in the three fields of quantum computing, artificial intelligence and semicon, we will be able to move forward in a new wave. Maharashtra is the data centre capital of the country. Maharashtra has 60 per cent of the country's data centre capacity; MKCL should try to take advantage of these facilities. The state government will cooperate in its every effort," said the Chief Minister. He further stated that MKCL should create a generation that can accept and deal with the new

changes in society in the fast-paced wave of artificial intelligence. He assured that the state government will remain at the forefront to play its role in MKCL's innovative and development-oriented initiatives. "Like the information technology wave, we will have to stay ahead in the era of artificial intelligence. While the nature of employment is changing, if a system is created to reach new knowledge and technology to the new generation, the state government will support it. Various initiatives

of MKCL have been useful for the society and the government. Nearly 50,000 books can be read on the new website developed by MKCL. Due to various projects of MKCL, transparency has been brought into the administration and efficiency has also increased," said the Chief Minister while acknowledging MKCL's work in its 24-year journey.

He said said when the wave of the internet came into the world, MKCL worked to find answers to the questions facing social life regarding digital inequality and to create a system that would reach everyone. MKCL did a great job responsibly, keeping in mind the long-term benefits rather than just profit, to bring forward a specific section of society.

"A network of six and a half thousand entrepreneurs in the state and a system to reach the last person of society at any moment were established through this medium. We were able to bring the common man into this system," he added said praising the work of MKCL.

Amit Shah introduces three key Bills amid opposition protest ...

Amid massive ruckus by the Opposition members, Union Home Minister Amit Shah today introduced three Bills -- The Constitution (One Hundred & Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025, The Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha. The three bills were referred to the Joint Committee of the Parliament. The Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025, seeks to remove a Central or State Minister who is facing allegations of corruption or serious offences and has been detained for at least 30 days while holding office. (See on page 2)

Elected govt can't be at 'whims of Governors', remarks



The Supreme Court on Wednesday remarked that allowing a Governor to withhold assent to Bills without returning them to the state Assembly would place the functioning of an elected government at the "whims and fancies" of a Governor. (See on page 4)

Venky wants Chinnaswamy ends named after Kumble, Dravid



Former international cricket player Venkatesh Prasad and key KSCA office bearer Vinay Mruthyunjaya, who are contesting for the upcoming Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) elections, have renewed their long-pending demand to honour cricketing icons Anil Kumble and Rahul Dravid by naming the two ends of the Chinnaswamy Stadium after them. (See on page 7)

Govt approves third, fourth railway tracks on Pune-Lonavala route

Pune, Aug 20 (UNI): The state government, in coordination with the central government, has approved the long-pending proposal for the construction of the third and fourth railway tracks between Pune and Lonavala.

The government cleared the project during the Infrastructure Committee meeting chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis to enhance suburban railway connectivity between Pune and Lonavala and provide major relief to daily commuters.

Union Minister Murlidhar Mohol has been consistently pursuing this demand with both the central and state governments. While the Centre has already shown a positive response, the state's approval now paves the way for the project to move forward. The project costs will be shared equally between the Centre and the state. Mohol had personally met CM Devendra Fadnis and Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to press for the proposal, and with this approval, the long-standing demand of Pune commuters is now set to become a reality.

Speaking about the development, Minister Mohol said under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government has been working at a rapid pace for the modernisation and expansion of the Indian Railways over the past 11 years. Given the heavy passenger load on the Pune-Lonavala route, the third and fourth lines will significantly improve railway connectivity. "I am confident that the next stages of this project will move swiftly and that work on the ground will begin soon," he said.

Amid heavy rains in Nashik

Nashik, Aug 20 (UNI) With heavy rains pouring down throughout the night in Nashik city and rural areas, the water level in the major dams of the district has increased significantly, and discharge has been started from Gangapur and other dams today. 2,557 cusecs of water has been released from Gangapur Dam, and since this discharge will be increased in stages, the water level of the Godavari river will increase further. Therefore, the administration has warned the citizens living near the riverbanks to be alert. Since today is the weekly market on Wednesday, the administration has also given immediate instructions to the traders to be on alert.

Also, due to the increase in the flow of water in the riverbed, leaf vines have also been washed away in the Ramkund area. The entire Ramkund area is covered with leaf vines.

Shinde welcomes leaders into his faction, says public has chosen Mahayuti

(Standard Post Bureau) Kalyan, Aug 20 : The public has now decided to support those who work and sideline those who remain idle, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said here today.

Commenting on recent Assembly elections, he remarked, "When some people win, they say the voting machine is good. When they lose, they blame the machine. This will no longer work. The people have given their mandate to the Mahayuti, and they will continue to stand with us in future elections."

In Kalyan-Dombivli, several former corporators, office bearers, and sarpanchs from the Shiv Sena (UBT) joined the

Shinde group, raising slogans of "Jai Maharashtra." Speaking on the occasion, Shinde said, "Those who have come back today have truly returned home. They were not at peace where they were, nor were we at peace without them. We are all one family, and I wholeheartedly welcome them. All of them have been working in Dr. Shrikant Shinde's constituency."

Highlighting the Mahayuti's priorities, Shinde stressed, the state government is giving priority to development, improving the lives of common citizens, and bringing positive changes to grassroots communities through government schemes.

Shiv Sena-MNS alliance fails to win single seat in BEST credit society poll

Mumbai, Aug 20 (UNI): The alliance of Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) and Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) has suffered a defeat in the BEST Employees' Co-operative Credit Society elections, failing to secure even a single seat out of 21 contested positions.

The election results, declared this morning, showed that the much-hyped Thackeray brothers alliance, contesting under the 'Utkarsh Panel', could not open its account despite fielding candidates for 19 seats. The Shiv Sena (UBT) fielded 18 candidates whilst

the MNS contested two seats. Transport union leader Shashank Rao's independent panel emerged as the clear winner, bagging 14 of the 21 seats in the prestigious cooperative society. The Mahayuti-backed 'Sahakar Samruddhi Panel', led by BJP MLC Prasad Lad and comprising leaders from the BJP, Eknath Shinde faction and other allies, managed to secure seven seats. This electoral contest marked the first joint political collaboration between the Thackeray cousins after years of rivalry, dealt a huge blow to the 'Thackeray brand' that once dominated the city's labour

unions and municipal politics. The credit society, which has over 15,000 BEST employees as members, has been under the control of the Thackeray-led Kamgar Sena for the past nine years.

The polling held on August 18 witnessed an impressive turnout of 83.69 percent, with 12,656 of the 15,123 eligible members casting their votes across 35 polling stations at BEST depots. Despite heavy rainfall affecting the counting process, the final results were announced after counting continued through last night.

Political observers view this defeat as a major

setback for the Thackeray alliance ahead of the crucial Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections, where both factions had hoped to project unity and revive their influence in Mumbai's political landscape. The loss has raised serious questions about the electoral appeal of the Thackeray brand among workers and voters.

Suhas Samant, president of BEST Kamgar Sena aligned with the Shiv Sena (UBT), expressed shock at the defeat and alleged that money power played a decisive role in the election outcome. MNS leader Sandeep Deshpande had

earlier raised allegations of vote-buying, claiming that rival panels were distributing cash to influence voters.

BJP leaders, particularly Prasad Lad, took to social media to mock the Thackeray brothers following the results. Lad wrote on social platform X that the "Thackeray brand had turned out to be zero, stating that the bosses of the brand could not win a single seat." The election was widely seen as a litmus test for the renewed alliance between the Thackeray cousins and a trial run for the forthcoming municipal elections across Maharashtra.

PK accuses Nitish govt of failure on Kosi floods, proposes ...



Jan Suraj leader Prashant Kishor popular as PK today launched a scathing attack on the Nitish government of Bihar, alleging that despite ruling the state for nearly two decades, it has failed to find a permanent solution to the recurring flood menace in the Kosi region. (See on page 8)

New L-1 system mandatory for fertilizer sales

(Standard Post Bureau)

Thane, Aug 20 : It has now been made mandatory for fertilizer vendors to use the new L-1 sales system instead of the old system while selling fertilizer. As per the instructions of the Central Fertilizer Department, this new system, which has been certified by the Aadhaar Authority of India, is essential for fertilizer distribution.

According to the information received from the Agriculture Department of the Zilla Parishad, it is mandatory for all fertilizer vendors to adopt and implement the new L-1 sales system by August 20, 2025.

After this deadline, fertilizer sales through the old system will be discontinued and all fertilizers will be distributed only through the L-1 sales system.

A total of 153 new L-1 machines have been commissioned in Thane district, for which RCF Company has been appointed. The company will make these machines available free of cost to fertilizer vendors.

The implementation of this system has been accelerated under the guidance of Chief Executive Officer Rohan Ghuge. This decision will bring more transparency and discipline in the fertilizer

distribution process and will make it easier for farmers to get fertilizers on time.

The Agriculture Department has given a clear warning that if fertilizer sellers do not implement the new L-1 system before August 20, they will not be able to sell fertilizer from their shops.

For more information, contact the concerned Taluka Agriculture Officer, Panchayat Samiti Agriculture Officer or the Agriculture Department of Zilla Parishad, Thane, has been appealed by Munir Bachotikar, Agricultural Development Officer of Zilla Parishad.

Irregular water supply in Thane city for a few days

(Standard Post Bureau)

Thane, Aug 20 : Sediment entering the pumping station has affected pumping capacity. Appeal to filter water and drink.

Due to heavy rainfall in the Bhatsa Dam area for three consecutive days, a large amount of silt, garbage, and tree branches have accumulated in the riverbed of Thane Municipal Corporation's Pise Pumping Station. Due to the creation of flood-like conditions in the riverbed, water has entered the Pise Pumping Station. Due to this, there are obstacles in pumping at full capacity at this pumping station. Also, the turbidity of the water is also affecting the purification process. Due to all these circumstances, the water supply coming to Thane city has reduced by about 25 percent."



The work of removing the sludge from the pump's strainer is being done. Therefore, citizens should please note that there will be insufficient and irregular

water supply in the city for the next few days. Also, the Municipal Corporation has appealed to boil water and drink it during this period and use water wisely.

JD(U) slams ‘Voter Adhikar Yatra’ as cover for Rahul-Tejashwi’s PM-CM pitch

Patna, Aug 20 (UNI) Bihar's ruling Janata Dal (United) leaders launched a scathing attack on Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav stating that they have launched the ‘Voter Adhikar Yatra’ to project themselves as candidates for Prime Minister and Chief Minister. JD(U) State Spokesperson Dr. Nihora Prasad Yadav said: “Both leaders face serious corruption charges. The real motive behind the ‘Yatra’ is their hunger for

power. They are misleading the people of Bihar to project themselves as candidates for PM and CM. This yatra is not about people’s rights but about selfishness and political ambition.”

He added that instead of staging political drama in the name of protecting voters’ rights, it would have been better if Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi Yadav had instructed their Booth-Level Agents (BLAs) to help rectify the voter list where eligible

voters’ names had been wrongly removed.

JD(U) leader and Bihar's Rural Development Minister Shrawan Kumar said that the INDIA Alliance is based purely on selfish interests and has no real connection with the public.

He further claimed that the opposition is spreading lies through the Yatra to create confusion.

“Questioning the impartiality of the Election Commission is proof of the opposition’s petty

Wang Yi flies to Afghanistan instead of Pakistan for China-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral

New Delhi, Aug 20 (UNI) : China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi who was to travel to Pakistan after completing his India visit today, instead arrived in Afghanistan to attend the sixth China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue in Kabul. The talks will cover a wide range of key issues, including political, economic and regional cooperation between the three countries.

This is Wang Yi's first visit to Afghanistan in more than three years. Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has already arrived in Kabul to attend the day-long meeting.

Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry while announcing the arrivals of Mr Wang Yi and Mr Dar for the trilateral in Kabul, said the meeting, to be hosted by Afghanistan, “will include comprehensive discussions among the three countries on a wide range of important issues, encompassing political, economic and regional cooperation.” The participants are expected to exchange views on the future of relations, based on shared interests, mutual understanding and enhanced cooperation, the Ministry said. It said the discussions would focus particularly on political, economic and regional cooperation, as well as the future of relations based on mutual interests, understanding and enhanced collaboration.

India rejects Yunus govt's accusations of allowing anti-Bangladesh activities on its soil

New Delhi, Aug 20

(UNI) :India today rejected allegations by Dhaka’s interim government accusing India of allowing anti-Bangladesh activities by members of the Awami League on its soil.

In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the Indian government does not allow political activities against other countries to be carried out from Indian soil.

The spokesperson also said that India hopes that free, fair and inclusive elections will be held at the earliest in Bangladesh “to ascertain the will and mandate of the people”.

The statement read: “The Government of India is not aware of any anti-Bangladesh activities by purported members of the Awami League in India or of any action that is contrary to Indian law.

1,648 km of Indo-Bangladesh border fenced in West Bengal, Rajya Sabha told

New Delhi, Aug 20 (UNI) A total of 1,647.696 km of the Indo-Bangladesh border in West Bengal has been fenced, the Rajya Sabha was informed today.

In a written reply, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai stated that out of the total 2,216.7 km border length in West Bengal, fencing has been completed along 1,647.696 km.

He noted that 569.004 km still remains to be fenced and equipped with other border infrastructure. Of this, 112.780 km has been deemed non-feasible, while 456.224 km is feasible for fencing.

Out of the feasible stretch, land for 77.935 km has been handed over to the executing agency. For the remaining 378.289 km, the state government has yet to initiate land acquisition for 148.971 km, while land for 229.318 km is at various stages of the acquisition process.

The Minister highlighted that the Centre has taken multiple measures to accelerate land acquisition, including regular coordination meetings with the state government, on-ground reviews, and timely release of payments as per norms.

The Government does not allow political activities against other countries to be carried out from Indian soil.

“The Press Statement by the Interim Government of Bangladesh is thus misplaced.

“India reiterates its expectation that free, fair and inclusive elections will be held at the earliest in Bangladesh to ascertain the will and mandate of the people.”

India's reaction came after the Bangladesh interim government called on New Delhi “to take urgent measures to prevent any Bangladeshi nationals residing there from engaging in activities harmful to Bangladesh’s interests”.

The interim government also urged the Indian government not to permit or support any such activities in any manner and called for

immediate closure of the political office(s) of the “banned” Bangladesh Awami League on Indian soil, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday.

The ministry said the attention of Dhaka has been drawn to the reported establishment of offices of the ‘banned’ Awami League in New Delhi and Kolkata.

This development comes against the backdrop of "growing anti-Bangladesh activities undertaken by the leadership of the Bangladesh Awami League from being based on the Indian soil", Dhaka claimed.

Many of the senior leaders of the party, absconding in several criminal cases in Bangladesh on account of grievous crimes committed against humanity, remain in the

Indian territory, said the interim government.

"Any form of political activity campaigning against the interests of Bangladesh by Bangladeshi nationals, particularly by the absconding leaders/activists of a banned political party, staying on Indian soil, legally or illegally, including the establishment of offices is an unambiguous affront against the people and State of Bangladesh," said the interim government in Dhaka in a statement.

Dhaka's reaction comes in the aftermath of India's unresponsiveness to its persistent request for the extradition of former Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, who is living in New Delhi in exile since she fled her country on August 5 last year in the face of a so-called student-led mass movement against her.

Good Taking a collective pledge on Bhavana Diwas, paying homage to late Rajiv Gandhi



(Standard Post Bureau)

Navi Mumbai, Aug 20 : Good On the occasion of Bhavana Diwas, a grand function was held at the amphitheatre at the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation headquarters. Taking the pledge of allegiance, a wreath was offered to the portrait of former Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi.

On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner of Social Development Department Mr. Kisanrao Palande, Deputy

Commissioner of Encroachment Department Dr. Kailas Gaikwad, Municipal Secretary Mr. Chitra Baviskar, Assistant Health Officer Dr. Ratnaprabha Chavan, Accounts Officers Mr. Vijay Ranjane and Mr. Dayanand Koli, Assistant Commissioner of Encroachment Department Mr. Arun Patil, Legal Officer Mr. Abhay Jadhav, Estate Manager Mr. Ashok Ahire along with the officers and employees present paid their respects. Bhavna Day

pledge was taken.

I pledge that I will work for the emotional unity and harmony of all the people of India, without distinction of caste, creed, religion, region or language. I further pledge that I will resolve all differences between us through dialogue and constitutional means without resorting to violence ” – such a pledge The officers and employees present on the occasion took the Bhavana Diwas Pledge.

LS passes bill to drive responsible tech and healthy gaming

New Delhi, Aug 20 (UNI) : Amid ruckus, the Lok Sabha today passed a bill that seeks to encourage innovation in gaming and safeguarding society from the potential harm of technology misuse.

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, was cleared by the Lower House by voice vote.

?While introducing the bill, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnav highlighted India’s commitment towards digital innovation over the past 11 years. He also named some forerunner schemes including 'Digital India' and 'Startup India.'

The minister said the government wants to promote two segments of online gaming, which are ‘e-sports’ and ‘online social games’, but he criticised the third segment, which is ‘Online money gaming’, by stating it causes serious consequences among youths, including financial losses or even suicides.

Minister Vaishnav cited media reports related to youth suicides in Karnataka as a consequence of ‘Online money gaming.’ He also highlighted a WHO report pointing towards the psychological stress caused due to money losses in such games.

The Bill aims to regulate e-sports and online social games while curbing the harmful online gaming services, advertisements, and financial

transactions related to them. Moreover, this bill also outlaws all online Betting and Gambling, including Online Fantasy Sports, online Gambling, and Lotteries. Moreover, the Online Gaming Bill will also protect the youth from predatory online Real Money Gaming apps that manipulate ‘monetary return promises’ that put youth and their families under financial stress.

The Online Gaming Bill will work collaboratively for the promotion of e-sports, for which the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports will establish a dedicated framework. Moreover, MeitY and MIB will extend support to online gaming for improving educational and cultural values among gamers.

The Online Gaming Bill has key provisions intended to create a healthy gaming environment, including :- Promotion and Recognition of e-sports, Promotion of Social and Educational Games, Prohibition of Harmful Online Money Games, and Establishment of an Online Gaming Authority.

The bill also includes the provisions of penalties and offences under some key sections which are cognizable and non-bailable. Moreover, the Central Government may authorise the officers to investigate, search and seize digital or physical property linked to offences.

AAP leaders condemn attack on Delhi CM

New Delhi Aug 20 (UNI) : Top leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) issued strong condemnations today over the attack on Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, asserting that violence has no place in a democratic society.

The incident, which occurred earlier in the day, involved an individual allegedly attempting to assault the Chief Minister.

AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal, in a post on social media platform X, stated, “The attack on Delhi's Chief Minister Rekha Gupta is highly condemnable. In a

democratic system, differences of opinion and opposition are acceptable, but there can be no place for violence. I am confident that the Delhi Police will take appropriate action. I hope the Chief Minister is completely safe and healthy.”

Echoing this sentiment, AAP Delhi State President Saurabh Bharadwaj called the attack “absolutely condemnable” in a video statement.

He used the occasion to broaden the definition of violence, stating, “Violence is not limited to an attack on a Chief

Minister. When SSC aspirants and teachers demand their rights, the police’s brutality against them is also violence. Farmers were mercilessly beaten, their heads were broken, they were dragged. That too is violence”, in an apparent dig at the BJP-led central government.

Bharadwaj also drew a contrast with past incidents, alleging that when AAP's Arvind Kejriwal was similarly attacked during his chief minister-ship, the attacks were justified by his political opponents.

“We will not say that because people are angry

with Rekha Gupta, that is why she was attacked. No, anger does not mean one can commit violence,” he said, adding that his party stands against violence directed at any political party.

In a separate post on X, Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Atishi, wrote, “The attack on Delhi's Chief Minister Rekha Gupta is highly condemnable. It is hoped that the Delhi Police will take the strictest action against the culprits.”

Notably, in a major security lapse, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was attacked by a man during her daily Jan Sunwai

11 die in Marathwada rain fury, 5.5 lakh hectares crops damaged

Ch.Sambhajinagar, Aug 20 (UNI): At least 11 people have died in rain-related incidents across the Marathwada region since August 14, with Nanded district bearing the brunt of the devastation, as flash floods claimed seven lives there alone.

The torrential rains have wreaked havoc on agricultural lands, damaging over 5.5 lakh hectares of kharif crops across 17 districts in Maharashtra. The Marathwada and Vidarbha regions have suffered the maximum impact. Nanded district has reported the highest crop damage with 2,59,789 hectares of agricultural land affected, followed by Hingoli with 56,806 hectares and Parbhani with 21,092

hectares.Apart from the seven fatalities in Nanded, Hingoli and Beed districts have reported two deaths each. The deluge has also resulted in the death of 500 cattle, while 601 houses and sheds have collapsed. Over 1,100 people have been evacuated to safer locations, and 300 have been rescued from flood-hit areas in Nanded alone.

The agricultural sector has suffered severe losses, with soybean and cotton crops being the worst affected. Other damaged crops include jowar, bajra, urad, maize, moong, tur, sugarcane, fruits, and vegetables. A total of 1,154 villages across Marathwada have been impacted by the unprecedented rainfall.

Chief Minister

Devendra Fadnavis has directed district collectors to conduct panchnama surveys for damage assessment and provide compensation according to National Disaster Relief Fund norms. The Army has been deployed in severely affected areas, particularly in the Nanded district, to assist in rescue and relief operations.The state Congress has demanded the declaration of "wet drought" in affected areas and immediate assistance of Rs 50,000 per hectare for distressed farmers. This latest disaster has compounded the existing agrarian crisis in Marathwada, which has already seen a 32 percent surge in farmer suicides during January-March 2025 compared to the previous year.

Woman blackmailed with obscene video, police register FIR

Mumbai, Aug 20 (UNI) Police registered a criminal case against a cyber fraud gang for allegedly blackmailing a 34-year-old woman with an obscene video after being targeted through a fake marriage proposal on a matrimonial website.The woman, a resident of Byculla in south Mumbai, had registered her profile on a bride-groom platform, received a call on August nine from an individual, claiming to be interested in marriage.

Gaining her trust over multiple conversations, the man later made a video call and asked her to undress. When she initially refused, he convinced her by falsely promising marriage. The woman complied, after which the accused recorded the video.Soon after, the man began threatening her with the footage and demanded money, warning that the video would be made viral on social media if she didn't pay. Under pressure, the woman transferred Rs 30,000, but the demands continued.

Realising she was being duped, the woman finally approached the Byculla Police, who registered an FIR (first information report) under Sections 308(2) and 351(2) of the Indian Penal Code, along with Section 67(a)(b) of the Information Technology Act.

Woman dies of electrocution in Nagpur

Nagpur, Aug 20 (UNI) A 32-year-old woman died of electrocution while pouring water into a cooler at her residence in the SRPF Camp, Hingna Road in Maharashtra's Nagpur district, police said today.

The incident occurred on Tuesday evening when the deceased, identified as Radhika Sanjay Yadav, accidentally came in contact with an electric current and collapsed unconscious.Relatives rushed her to Lata Mangeshkar Hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead.

Based on a report by complainant, MIDC Police have registered a case of accidental death.Further investigation is underway.

Gutka worth Rs 62.45 lakh seized

Kolhapur, Aug 20 (UNI) Police today seized a large quantity of gutka worth Rs 62.45 lakh from a truck on the Pune-Bengaluru national highway here and arrested two people in this connection.Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of police from Ichalkaranji, Jaysingpur and Vadgan intercepted a truck at the Kini toll plaza and found 176 bags of Vimal Pan Masala gutka inside.They seized gutka worth Rs 62,45,360 and the truck used for transportation worth Rs 15 lakh. The total value of the seizure is Rs 77.45 lakh. They arrested two men in this connection. They were identified as Shahzad Mahamad Murban Khan (40) and Rizwan Ahamad Khan alias Raza (32), both hailing from Uttar Pradesh.



A view of partially submerged houses as the water level of the Yamuna river rises following heavy rainfall, in Mathura.

Amit Shah introduces three key Bills amid opposition protest; referred to Joint Committee of Parliament

New Delhi, Aug 20 (UNI) : Amid massive ruckus by the Opposition members, Union Home Minister Amit Shah today introduced three Bills -- The Constitution (One Hundred & Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025, The Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha. The three bills were referred to the Joint Committee of the Parliament. The Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025, seeks to remove a Central or State Minister who is facing allegations of corruption or serious offences and has been detained for at least 30 days while holding office. Shah said the Bills will be referred to a Joint Committee of the Houses consisting of 21 Members of this House to be nominated by the Lok Sabha Speaker and 10 Members of Rajya Sabha to be nominated by the Deputy Chairman.

The Committee shall make a report and submit to this House by the last day of the first week of the next session (winter session), the Home Minister said. Amid loud protests and sloganeering by the

Opposition members against the 130th Amendment bill, Speaker Om Birla said, "You can protest but your way of protesting is not right. Change your method of protest." When the House reconvened at 3 pm, marshals were seen in the House, following the unruly behaviour of the Opposition MPs. The Speaker then adjourned the House till 5 pm.

The Speaker called the Home Minister to move the three Bills. As he tabled the Bills, the Opposition started creating a ruckus.

Congress member Manish Tiwari while opposing the bill said, "The bill is squarely destructive of the basic structure of the Constitution. This bill makes an investigating officer the boss of the Prime Minister of India."

"This bill opens the door for political misuse by instrumentalities of the state, whose arbitrary conduct has been repeatedly frowned upon by the Supreme Court," he added.

He further said that the bill distorts Parliamentary democracy, which is part of the basic structure, by displacing the will of the

people through mere custody bereft of a judicial determination. He demanded the Bills be withdrawn. Moreover, AIMIM member Asaduddin Owaisi while opposing the bills said that it violates the principle of separation of powers and weakens the right to choose a government. He said, "It gives executive agencies a free hand to become judge and executioner on the basis of trivial allegations and suspicions. This government is bent on turning the country into a police state." "This will be the last nail in the coffin for an elected government. The Constitution of India is being amended to transform this country into a police state," he added.

Opposing the bill, NK Premachandran of the Revolutionary Socialist Party asked the government, "What was the need to bring the Bill in a haste?" He also accused the government of not circulating the bill to the members. Another Congress member who opposed the bill was KC Venugopal. "BJP leaders claim that this bill aims to bring morality into politics, but I would like to ask the

Home Minister of India: when he was the Home Minister of Gujarat and faced arrest, did he consider taking moral responsibility and resigning?"

This bill is meant to target the "Opposition-ruled governments", he claimed.

Countering Venugopal, Amit Shah said that when he was Gujarat minister he had resigned on moral grounds before his arrest and joined the government only after being discharged by the court. He said, "We cannot be so shameless that we continue to occupy constitutional positions while facing serious charges."

To show his opposition, Venugopal tore the bills and threw it. Other opposition members too tore up the bill to showcase their protest.

The protesting opposition members then approached very close to the Treasury Benches and near the Home Minister. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju then came in front of Amit Shah's seat and tried to stop the agitating members. But the Opposition members continued to throw bits of paper at the Chair and the Treasury Benches.

One woman killed in Nashik Road accident

Nashik, Aug 20 (UNI) One woman was killed and another was injured after being hit by a truck in the Nashik Road area here in Maharashtra, police said today. The accident occurred near the Muktidham area last evening. According to police sources, two women were crossing the road when a truck hit them. Both were seriously injured, but one of them died on the spot. Local citizens alleged that the accident was caused by the increasing encroachments on Muktidham Road and in the Somani Udyan area.

The truck travelling from Bitko to Maldhakka Road first hit a car, causing major damage to two autorickshaws parked on the side. The truck driver then hit the two women who were crossing the road. Local citizens immediately took the injured to the new Bitko Hospital, where 45-year-old Sunita Waghmare died during treatment.

BJP taunts Thackeray cousins after wiping out SS(UBT)-MNS panel

Mumbai, Aug 20 (UNI) : The BJP today taunted the Thackeray cousins after the panel jointly backed by the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena and the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) failed to win any seat in the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport (BEST) Employees' Cooperative Credit Society election.

A rival BJP-backed panel, led by BJP member and labour leader Shashank Rao, won 14 of the 21 seats.

The election was held on August 18, and counting continued till late last night due to heavy rain. Despite the heavy downpour, BEST workers turned out in large numbers, ensuring an 83 per cent voter turnout. The BEST election was seen as a precursor for the forthcoming local civic body elections in Mumbai and Maharashtra, and hence was politically significant. "Zero plus zero is equal to zero. The Thackeray brand turned out to be zero in the BEST employees' Cooperative Credit Society election. The bosses of the Thackeray brand could not even win a single seat. We have shown them their place. The tyres of the Thackeray brothers' bus have been

punctured," BJP MLC Prasad Lad tweeted on his X handle, taunting the Thackeray cousins. Maharashtra Minister for Information Technology and BJP leader Ashish Shelar said the win was a "good omen" for his party in Mumbai.

"For the BJP, this is a positive sign from Mumbaikars. Workers and employees have backed us, while those fighting for 'pat' (credibility) and 'pedhi' (money) have been handed a big pumpkin. Once again it is clear that workers and labourers are with us," Shelar said in a social media post.

BJP's Maharashtra state chief spokesperson Keshav Upadhye said the BEST election outcome proved the waning influence of the Thackeray cousins.

"Uddhav and Raj Thackeray came together, making a huge noise about the BEST election. It was portrayed as if their victory was a cakewalk. Yet the BEST cooperative, which was controlled by the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena for years, failed to win even a single seat despite joining hands with the MNS.

"This proves that Marathi people in Mumbai support the BJP's development agenda and not the Thackeray brothers' politics of sentiment," Upadhye said.

Mumbai slaughter houses to be closed for two days during Jain festival: BMC

Mumbai, Aug 20 (UNI) :The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) informed the Bombay High Court that it has decided to keep abattoirs closed for two days during the Jain festival Paryushan Parv, a lawyer said here on Wednesday. BMC made a statement before a bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Sandeep Marneduring the hearing in petitions by Sheth Motishaw Lalbaug Jain Charities and Sheth Bherulalji Kanaivalalji Kothari Religious Trust challenging the BMC

commissioner's order dated August 30, 2024, which limited the slaughterhouse closure to a single day instead of nine days observed during Paryushan.

The petitioners argued that permitting animal slaughter during the nine-day period violates Jain religious sentiments. Highlighting the significance of Ahimsa, they said slaughter during this sacred time would be "detrimental to the cause of Jainism". During the hearing on Tuesday, the BMC lawyer informed the court that the

commissioner has decided to keep the slaughter closed for two days, which lasts for nine days.

The bench had earlier this month asked the BMC to reconsider its decision allowing closure of slaughterhouses for one day during the Jain festival of Paryushan Parv, which emphasises the principle of Ahimsa (non-violence).

However, the court also raised concerns about whether such a direction could set a precedent for similar demands by other communities.

Sena (UBT) criticises BCCI decision on cricket match against Pakistan

Mumbai Aug 20 (UNI) Shiv Sena (UBT) today strongly criticised the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for its decision to field a team against Pakistan, calling it a betrayal of the nation's sacrifices and principles.

In a post on X, Sena (UBT) youth leader and MLA Aaditya Thackeray accused the

BCCI of prioritising revenue over national interest.

"Blood and water cannot flow together, but for BCCI, blood and revenue can flow together," he said.

The Shiv Sena leader said that he has written to Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, urging the Union Government to step

in and prevent what he described as "BCCI's shameful act".

Thackeray highlighted that while India has consistently tried to isolate Pakistan on the global stage by sending delegations of MPs to various countries; the cricket board's decision undermines those very efforts.

STANDARD POST

India’s workforce goes AI-first as frontier firms lead transformation

India’s most forward-looking organisations (called frontier firms) are leading the charge in reimagining work as these companies are not only adopting AI but also redesigning operations around human-agent collaboration -- with 59 per cent of leaders already using AI agents to automate workstreams or business processes across entire teams, a report said.

According to Microsoft’s '2025 Work Trend Index', the Indian leaders are moving with confidence and urgency to integrate AI across their organisations, with 93 per cent intending to use AI agents to extend workforce capabilities in the next 12-18 months.

This transformation is enabling organisations to scale with agility, speed, and purpose.

"India is firmly in its AI-first era, with AI agility accelerating at an unprecedented pace. We’re seeing a workforce that’s not just adopting AI, but embedding it into the fabric of everyday work—leveraging its speed, precision, and 24/7 availability to drive meaningful transformation," said Puneet Chandok, President, Microsoft India and South Asia.

Leaders are scaling operations with AI emerging as a true thought partner — fuelling creativity, fast-tracking decisions, and redefining collaboration, Chandok added.

Indian business leaders are making bold moves in response to AI’s acceleration.

"An overwhelming 90 per cent say this is a pivotal year to rethink core strategies and operations — the highest globally. With 64 per cent prioritising productivity gains and 93 per cent confident they’ll use digital agents to expand workforce capacity in the next 12–18 months," the Microsoft report stated.

Organisations are getting ready for a new generation of jobs as AI becomes more integrated into everyday processes. The organisational chart is being revised to include software operators, agent bosses, and AI workflow designers.

"92 per cent of leaders say their company is considering adding AI-specific roles, and 57 per cent expect teams to build multi-agent systems to automate complex tasks," the report said.

This represents a shift toward dynamic, AI-enabled teams in which each worker takes on the role of change architect.

Organisations are stepping up their skilling efforts to support this evolution.

"51 per cent of leaders cite upskilling as their top priority over the next 12–18 months, with 63 per cent of managers expecting AI training to become a core team responsibility within five years," Microsoft said.The results highlight India's preparedness to take the lead in the AI-powered future.With 66 per cent of employees and 80 per cent of leaders already familiar with AI agents, and a workforce eager to treat AI as both a thought partner and a productivity tool, the foundation is strong, according to the report.“Today, we’re not just leading businesses -- we’re leading them with AI. This isn’t a simple tech upgrade; it’s a cultural transformation rooted in continuous learning, application, refinement, and scale," said Himani Agrawal, Chief Operating Officer, Microsoft India and South Asia.

Mumbai Port Authority hosts ‘Regional Engines of Maritime Growth’ Session as prelude to India Maritime Week 2025

(Standard Post Bureau) Mumbai Port Authority under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, today organized the session “Regional Engines of Maritime Growth” under the theme “Unlocking Potential of States for National Maritime Progress” in Mumbai, as a prelude to the forthcoming India Maritime Week 2025 scheduled from 27th to 31st October 2025 in Mumbai.

Delivering the keynote address, Director General of Shipping and Chief Guest, Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde highlighted the importance of centre–state coordination and said roadshows are being planned in major maritime states for seafarer training and welfare, including issues of shore leave and sign-on/sign-off at non-major ports. He also stressed state cooperation in crisis management such

as salvage and oil spills, and said India Maritime Week 2025 will be an important opportunity for international cooperation with IMO and ILO and for state-specific image building.

Chief Port Officer of the Maharashtra Maritime Board, Capt. Praveen S. Khara, spoke on the state’s growing role in India’s maritime sector, emphasising the transformation of regional ports into smart, digitalised trade gateways through PPP models and strategic investment. He highlighted efforts to boost shipbuilding and ship repair capacity, improve connectivity to hinterlands, and promote coastal tourism and maritime heritage, positioning Maharashtra as a front runner in the nation’s maritime growth story.

Deputy Secretary General of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dr. Jatinder

Singh, in his address, emphasised the importance of aligning state-level maritime initiatives with national programmes to unlock India’s full maritime potential. He noted that states such as Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra have already shown how port-led industrialisation, strengthened by PPP models and multimodal connectivity, can drive regional and global growth.

The event brought together over 200 delegates, including senior government officials, industry leaders and prominent stakeholders across India. It proved successful in uniting key drivers of India’s maritime progress, hosting thought-provoking panel discussions, delivering inspiring and insightful addresses and reinforcing a collective vision for the Maritime Amrit Kaal

Vision 2047 and the role States can play in boosting India’s Maritime Sector.

The event also featured a highly interactive panel discussion session that became a focal point for translating the day’s strategic themes into actionable ideas. Moderated by Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar, Managing Director of ATC Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd., the discussion enabled participants to explore in depth the roadmap for developing regional ports as smart, digitalized global trade gateways through PPP models and state investment. Panelists explored ways to empower coastal communities and the blue economy, boost shipbuilding, ship repair and inland water transport, improve multimodal connectivity with integrated security, and advance climate resilience and

sustainability in coastal strategies. The panel included Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde, I.P.S., Additional Director General of Shipping; Shri Shantanoo Deshpande, Director & COO, Pace Marine Solutions Pvt Ltd; and Capt. Padmini Kant Mishra, COO – Terminals, JSW Infrastructure. State perspectives were represented by Shri Kalpesh Vithlani, GM Projects at Gujarat Maritime Board and Capt. M. Anbarasan, State Port Officer, Tamil Nadu Maritime Board who enriched the discussion with region-specific approaches and best practices.

A special presentation on India Maritime Week 2025 was delivered by DS MOPSW , Shri Rajesh Asati, showcasing the event’s strategic vision, key themes, and opportunities for collaboration, investment, and innovation across the maritime ecosystem.

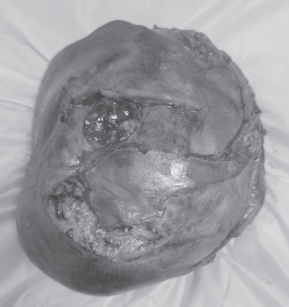
The session concluded with insightful closing remarks and a formal vote of thanks delivered by Smt. Madhuri Ajay Varade, FA&CAO, Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA), acknowledging the contributions of all speakers, delegates, participants and the Indian Ports Association (IPA).

India Maritime Week (IMW) 2025, scheduled from 27th - 31st October 2025 in Mumbai, is the nation’s premier platform to showcase progress across the maritime sector, including ports, shipping, and waterways. The event will convene global and domestic leaders to foster dialogue, innovation, and policy initiatives aimed at building a sustainable and future-ready maritime ecosystem. Featuring thematic sessions, business forums, exhibitions, and high-level dialogues, IMW 2025 will catalyze advancing India’s maritime ambitions.

Football-Sized Tumor Removed from the Stomach of a 16-Year-Old Boy

(Standard Post Bureau)

Sixteen is an age to play, laugh, and study with youthful energy. However, for this teenage boy, the last one month was full of distress. He was suffering from severe abdominal pain and recurrent fever, which left him weak and exhausted. Initially, when he was taken to other hospitals, doctors suspected a liver infection and prescribed medication. But as there was no improvement, he was brought to KIMS Seethammadhara Hospital, Visakhapatnam. After a series of tests, the doctors confirmed that it was cancer. A rare and highly complex surgery was performed to remove the tumor by Dr. Muralidhar Nambada, Senior GI and



Liver Surgeon, who shared the details of the case.

“When the boy came to us, his stomach and lower limbs were visibly swollen. This suggested a major issue with the liver. Upon conducting tests, we found that he was suffering from an extremely rare form of liver cancer, known medically as Malignant Hepatic Angiomyelolipoma. The tumor had occupied almost half of the right side of the liver. Further investigations

including CT Scan and MRI revealed the exact size, location, and extent of the tumor.We decided to proceed with immediate surgery. The operation lasted nearly six and a half hours. The tumor weighed 4.5 kilograms and was almost the size of a football. It was a massive tumor, and removing it safely without complications was highly challenging. We had to ensure there was no bleeding from the tumor, and at the same time, we had to make sure not even a trace of the tumor remained in the liver. It was equally important to preserve the healthy portion of the liver, as it is a vital organ for survival. Since the patient is only 16 years old, his liver has the capacity to regenerate. Hence,

protecting the remaining healthy liver was crucial. Considering the size and the tricky location of the tumor, the surgery required meticulous planning and precise execution,” explained Dr. Muralidhar and Dr Ravi Chandra Reddy, the Surgical team.

Following the surgery, the boy recovered rapidly and was discharged on the fifth day. He has also successfully completed six cycles of chemotherapy and is now able to carry on with his daily routine.

The boy’s parents expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the doctors, staff, and management of KIMS Seethammadhara Hospital for performing such a complex surgery successfully and saving their son’s life.

Cinematech Film Institute quietly reshapes India’s film education landscape

(Standard Post Bureau)

Often described as the heartbeat of India’s film industry, Mumbai continues to draw thousands of aspiring filmmakers, actors and storytellers from across the country. To many, the term “Mumbai Film Institute” represents far more than a search query — it represents hope, opportunity and the beginning of a dream that could someday light up the silver screen.

Amidst a crowded field of film schools and training academies, Cinematech Film Institute has quietly emerged as one of Mumbai’s most impactful and future-ready educational institutions. With a curriculum designed with industry professionals, an emphasis on hands-on production experience and the active integration of AI-powered tools in film learning, Cinematech is redefining

the way film education is delivered in India.

A Human-Centric Learning Environment Cinematech understands that every student arrives with a story. Whether it is a budding filmmaker from Nagpur with a borrowed phone or an aspiring actor from Indore searching for a stage, the Institute has created an environment that prioritises sincerity, craft and confidence.

Students at Cinematech don’t just earn a qualification — they build careers in Film Direction, Acting, Video Editing (Premiere Pro, DaVinci Resolve), Filmmaking with AI, Script Writing, Sound Engineering and Cinematography.

With affordable fees, mentor-led guidance, real industry projects, and flexible short-term courses, the institute is helping reshape the future of film education in the city.

Real Learning. Real Work. Real Impact.

Cinematech students work on ad films, YouTube content, short films and OTT pitch content — all produced for real clients and audiences. From building strong personal brands on social platforms, to understanding AI-driven advances in VFX and editing, students graduate with the skills required by today’s creator-led economy.

The institute’s impact is visible in the success stories of its students:

A sound engineer from Nagaland currently contributing to professional post-production projects

A young editor from Jalgaon managing viral video edits for a Mumbai-based influencer

A student-directed YouTube short film receiving festival recognition

A budding actor from

Bhopal landing a national television commercial

Admissions Made Simple

Cinematech’s admission process removes the complexity typically associated with film schools:

Review available courses

Select preferred programme

Submit an inquiry form or call

Speak directly with a mentor

Begin the journey — without an entrance exam or lengthy procedures

Cinematech Film Institute is a Mumbai-based film education institution committed to bridging the gap between aspiration and action. By combining industry-driven training, affordable learning, and emerging technology integration, the Institute empowers the next generation of filmmakers, creators and storytellers.

Elected govt can’t be at 'whims of Governors', remarks Supreme Court

New Delhi, Aug 20 (IANS) :The Supreme Court on Wednesday remarked that allowing a Governor to withhold assent to Bills without returning them to the state Assembly would place the functioning of an elected government at the "whims and fancies" of a Governor.

A Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) B.R. Gavai, was hearing the reference made by the President under Article 143 of the Constitution in the aftermath of the apex court verdict in the Tamil Nadu Bills case. President Droupadi Murmu, in May this year, had asked the Supreme Court to report its opinion on constitutional options available to a Governor when a Bill is presented to him under Article 200 of the Constitution.

Before the 5-judge special Bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant, Vikram Nath, P.S. Narasimha and Atul S. Chandurkar, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Union government, argued that a Governor could permanently withhold assent to a Bill without sending it back to the state legislature for reconsideration.

SG Mehta submitted that under Article 200 of the Constitution, the Governor has four options – to grant assent, withhold assent, reserve the Bill for consideration of the President, or return the Bill to the Assembly.

The Solicitor General, the second-highest law officer of the Union government, added that if a Governor withholds assent, there is no obligation to return the Bill to the state Assembly for reconsideration.

At this, CJI Gavai said: "Would we not be giving total powers to the Governor to sit in appeal? The government elected with the majority will be at the whims and fancies of the Governor", suggesting that such an interpretation of the Governor’s powers could allow him to indefinitely stall legislation.

When the Solicitor General referred to the Constituent Assembly debates on the importance of Governors in India’s federal structure, the Supreme Court asked whether the high office had, in practice, lived up to the Constituent Assembly’s vision of maintaining harmony with elected state governments.

"You are entitled to read the debates, but see whether expectations have been met," CJI Gavai told Mehta, pointing out that the exercise of Governors’ discretionary powers in the past had triggered several rounds of litigation.

Stressing that constitutional interpretation cannot be based on the "worst examples", the law officer argued that the Governor’s power to withhold assent is meant to be exercised rarely and sparingly, only in extraordinary situations such as when a Bill is unconstitutional, repugnant, or violative of fundamental rights. The 5-judge special Bench will continue hearing the matter titled "In Re: Assent, Withholding or Reservation of Bills by the Governor and the President of India" on Thursday.

In April 2025, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, using its inherent powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, resolved a standoff between the Tamil Nadu government and Governor R.N. Ravi over the delay in granting assent to Bills passed by the Assembly.

It ruled that Governor Ravi’s refusal to approve 10 Bills in Tamil Nadu was both "illegal and arbitrary" and set a three-month deadline for Presidential and gubernatorial approval of Bills passed by the legislature for a second time."The President is required to take a decision on the Bills reserved for his consideration by the Governor within a period of three months from the date on which such reference is received," said a Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan.

Death toll of Afghan road accident soars to 79

Kabul, Aug 20 (UNI) The Death toll of the deadly road accident, which occurred in Afghanistan's western Herat province on Tuesday night, has reached 79, including women and children, spokesman for the Ministry of Interior Affairs Abdul Mateen Qani said Wednesday. Among the victims, 19 are children, the official added.

Earlier, local officials in Herat city counted the dead bodies as high as 64, and three people were injured.

The bloody road mishap took place after a passenger bus carrying Afghan returnees from Iran collided with a motorbike and a mini-truck on a road linking the neighboring Iran to Herat city in Afghanistan on Tuesday night. Blaming reckless driving for the mishap, local officials said that since the ill-fated bus caught fire in the deadly accident, the majority of the dead bodies could not be recognized.

Flash floods injure 10 in Yemen's

Aden, Yemen, Aug 20 (UNI) : Flash floods triggered by heavy rainfall swept through Yemen's southern port city of Aden on Tuesday, injuring 10 people and causing significant material damage, a government official told Xinhua. The official said on condition of anonymity that torrential rains inundated residential neighbourhoods and flooded houses and businesses. Local residents said the rains also brought traffic to a standstill.

State-run Saba news agency reported that Aden Governor Ahmed Hamed Lamlas issued emergency directives for health authorities to provide comprehensive medical treatment to flood victims at local government expense.

The government-operated Meteorological Forecasting and Early Warning Centre warned that precipitation would persist in the coming hours in eastern and southwestern coastal regions and along the Red Sea coast. It urged citizens "to exercise caution", especially in flood-affected areas, avoid valleys and flood channels, and refrain from travelling on slippery, muddy roads. Yemen's severely deteriorated infrastructure, weakened by more than a decade of conflict between government forces and the Houthis group, has intensified the flooding's impact on residents already facing fragile basic services.

Egyptian police kill 8 drug, arms traffickers in Nile shootout

Cairo, Aug 20 (UNI) : Egyptian police killed eight drug and arms traffickers in a shootout at their hideouts on Nile islands, north of Cairo, the Egyptian Interior Ministry said Tuesday in a statement.

The men had a criminal record, including murder, drug dealing, illegal weapons possession, armed robbery, and vehicle theft, the ministry said.

They were operating from Nile islands adjacent to the provinces of Menoufia and Qalyubia, using speedboats to facilitate their movements and exploiting the area's terrain to escape security pursuit, it said.

After obtaining legal approvals, security forces monitored and tracked the gang's movements before targeting them. "The criminals opened heavy fire at the police forces, and the exchange resulted in their death," the ministry said.

Police also seized 125 kg of drugs estimated at about 16 million Egyptian pounds (around 330,000 U.S. dollars), along with eight firearms, it added.

UK, France not to deploy troops

Moscow, Aug 20 (UNI) : The United Kingdom and France are unlikely to deploy tens of thousands of troops to Ukraine, and the so-called "coalition of the willing" is exploring alternative ways to guarantee Kiev's security, The Times newspaper reported.

The "coalition of the willing" is focusing on protecting Ukraine from the air and sea, as well as deploying military instructors on the ground to help replenish the Ukrainian armed forces, the report said on Tuesday. UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office said that the "coalition of the willing" and the United States would discuss plans on providing security guarantees to Ukraine in the coming days.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said that the presence of NATO states' troops on Ukrainian territory, under any flag and in any capacity, including as peacekeepers, is a threat to Russia, and that Moscow will not accept it under any circumstances.

White House launches official TikTok account

Washington, Aug 20 (UNI) : The White House launched an official TikTok account on Tuesday, less than a month before U.S. President Donald Trump's deadline for the social media app to either find a new owner or face a ban in the United States.

The account posted its debut video on Tuesday afternoon -- a 27-second clip featuring footage of Trump walking and interacting with his supporters, accompanied by audio from his acceptance speech at the 2016 Republican National Convention.

A few hours after the debut video, the account has garnered over 57,000 followers, while the TikTok account Trump used for his presidential campaign last year has more than 15 million followers.

In his first term, Trump signed an executive order effectively seeking to ban the app, owned by the Chinese firm ByteDance, in the country unless ByteDance sold its U.S. operations to a U.S. company. The order did not go into effect amid legal challenges.

Since his second term, Trump has extended the deadline twice, each by 75 days on Jan. 20 and April 4, respectively. On June 19, Trump signed an executive order to keep TikTok running in the United States for another 90 days, extending the deadline to Sept. 17, 2025.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar interacts with prominent scholars and think tank representatives of Russia, in Moscow on Wednesday.

1 killed, several injured in unexploded ordnance blast in Iran

Tehran, Aug 20 (UNI) : A blast from unexploded ordnance left over from the 12-day conflict with Israel killed one person and injured seven in Iran's western Lorestan province, official news agency IRNA reported. The explosion took place Tuesday evening in Beyranshahr city. The injured, all children and adolescents, were taken to a hospital, it said. It added that the number of those wounded in the incident could increase.

On June 13, Israel launched major airstrikes on several areas in Iran, including nuclear and military sites, killing senior commanders, nuclear scientists, and many civilians. Iran responded with multiple waves of missile and drone attacks on Israel, causing casualties and damage.

After 12 days of fighting, a ceasefire between Iran and Israel was reached on June 24.

US willing to provide air support to Ukraine to aid in reaching peace deal with Russia

Washington, Aug 20 (UNI) While ruling out any US boots on the ground in Ukraine, President Donald Trump nonetheless did express willingness to provide the country with air support if it helps in Moscow and Kyiv reaching an agreement for settlement, reports The Guardian. His comments came a day after he pledged security guarantees to help end the war at an extraordinary White House summit. Affirming Washington's full involvement in Europe's security, Trump had ruled out Ukraine's admission into NATO, calling it 'unrealistic'. "When it comes to security, (Europeans) are willing to put people on the ground. We're willing to help them with things, especially, probably ... by air," Trump said in an interview on Fox News on Tuesday.

Russia has repeatedly warned that it will not allow Ukraine to ever join the NATO, and said that one of the preconditions for peace was Kyiv abandoning these aspirations, along with its demilitarisation and denazification.

China to display new-generation armaments in V-Day military parade

Beijing, Aug 20 (UNI) : China will showcase a series of new-generation armaments during the upcoming V-Day military parade in Beijing, such as fourth-generation tanks and aircraft, unmanned intelligence and counter-unmanned equipment, and advanced missiles including hypersonic ones, said an official on Wednesday.

All the armaments to be displayed are domestically made and in active service, said Wu Zeke, a senior officer of the Joint Staff Department of the Central Military Commission, at a press conference. Wu

added that these armaments are composed mainly of new-type fourth-generation equipment, such as new-type tanks, ship-borne aircraft and fighter jets. Organised according to combat modules, these formations highlight the Chinese military's systems-based operational capabilities. A series of land, sea and air unmanned intelligent and counter-unmanned equipment, as well as cyber-electronic combat forces, such as new-type drones, directed-energy weapons and electronic jamming systems, will also be displayed, he said. In

addition, the parade will feature other types of advanced equipment such as hypersonic and air defense anti-missile equipment and strategic missiles -- which will demonstrate China's powerful strategic deterrence capability, Wu noted.

With a high level of informatization and intelligence, the weapons and equipment to be displayed will fully demonstrate the strong capability of the Chinese armed forces to adapt to sci-tech development and the evolution of war forms, and to win future wars, he said.

Iran, Russia, China discuss interaction with E3 on Nuclear deal

Tehran, Aug 20 (UNI) : Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said he held discussions with Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Iran Rafael Gevorkyan and Chinese Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu on joint measures to counter the stance of the E3 countries, the United Kingdom, France and Germany regarding UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and the Iranian nuclear issue.

Last week, the Financial Times, citing a

letter, reported that the E3 countries informed the United Nations of their readiness to reimpose sanctions on Iran if Tehran does not agree to the nuclear deal by the end of August.

"At a meeting with the ambassador of the People's Republic of China and the chargé d'affaires of Russia in Iran, joint measures to combat the destructive approach of the three European governments regarding UN Security Council Resolution 2231 were discussed," Gharibabadi

said on X.

In 2015, the UK, Germany, China, Russia, the United States, France and Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which lifted sanctions in exchange for limits on Iran's nuclear program. However, the United States withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018 and reimposed sanctions on Tehran, after which Iran announced a gradual reduction of its commitments on nuclear research and uranium enrichment.

IDF puts additional 60,000 reserves on alert for operation to fully take over Gaza City

Tel Aviv, Aug 20 (UNI) : The Israeli Defence Forces have put over 60,000 reserve troops on alert for the total capture of Gaza City. This comes in the wake of Israel's plan to fully occupy the Gaza Strip to remove the Hamas forces in the area. The military is set to launch its offensive against Hamas today in Gaza City, announced Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz. According to The

Times Of Israel, the reserves would not be rolled out at once but rather in waves. The majority -- around 40,000-50,000 -- would be ordered to show up for duty on September 2. Another wave would take place in November-December, and a third wave in February-March 2026, the IDF said. This move markedly increases the number of reserves being called for action, as the IDF

already has thousands of reserves currently serving.

Additionally, the military is also extending reserve duty for some 20,000 reservists who were currently on duty by another 30-40 days. This would bring the total number of reservists at a given time during the offensive to around 130,000. These reserves include three brigades and several more battalions, and

Donald Trump imposed 'sanctions on India' to end war in Ukraine: White House

Washington, Aug 20 (UNI) White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said that US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs as a form of "sanctions" to exert additional pressure on Russia to end the war in Ukraine. India made "huge" profits on the sale of Russian oil after the war in Ukraine, and Trump said that his sanctions on New Delhi may have played a role in Russian President Vladimir Putin agreeing to meet him.

Trump doubled India's tariff burden to 50 per cent by adding a new 25 per cent levy on top of the previously announced 25 per cent. Leavitt told reporters the move was part of Washington's strategy to apply "secondary pressure" on Moscow.

"Look, the president has put tremendous public pressure to bring this war to a close. He's taken actions as you've seen, sanctions on India and other measures as well. He's made himself very clear that he wants to see this war end, and he has scoffed at suggestions that we should wait another month before any meeting takes place," Leavitt said.

She also said that plans are underway for a bilateral meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, noting that while the Kremlin has so far avoided firm commitments, it has not ruled out future talks.

Earlier in the day, Trump

reiterated that the US would not deploy ground forces to Ukraine but left open the possibility of other forms of American support. "The president understands security guarantees are crucially important to ensure a lasting peace, and he has directed his national security team to coordinate with our friends in Europe and to continue discussions with both Ukraine and Russia," Leavitt added.

Trump also met Zelensky at the White House on Tuesday, signaling openness to a potential trilateral meeting with Putin. Describing the talks as "very successful," Trump said progress had been made toward a possible negotiation. Zelensky, meanwhile, called it the "best conversation" he has had so far with the US President.

US envoy Steve Witkoff shared new details today about the high-stakes meeting between US President Donald Trump and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Alaska last week, saying that Russian officials made concessions "almost immediately." "There were concessions almost immediately made on the part of the Russians in the first meeting in Alaska," Witkoff told Fox News. "Part of getting those concessions was learning whether we were going to be able to see the Russians prepared to be more accommodated."

SL issues over 1,300 driving licenses to foreign nationals at airport counter

Colombo, Aug 20 (UNI) Sri Lanka has issued over 1,300 driving licenses to foreign nationals after the Department of Motor Traffic (DMT) established a license issuance counter at the Bandaranaike International Airport, the DMT said on Wednesday.

The DMT said 1,338 driving licenses have been issued until Aug. 17 since the counter was established on Aug. 3.

The dedicated counter was introduced for the convenience of foreigners visiting Sri Lanka. Earlier, foreign tourists who wanted a driving license had to visit the DMT office in Colombo.

Over 1.5 million foreign tourists have arrived in Sri Lanka so far this year.

many combat support soldiers, including in intelligence and logistics.

Not all reserves are going to be deployed to Gaza City, but rather will fill in for the active ground troops deployed in various areas currently.

In all, five IDF divisions, made up of tens of thousands of troops, were set to participate in the military's planned offensive against Hamas in Gaza City,

according to the army.

The forces included 12 brigade-level teams, each of which has infantry, armoured, artillery, and combat engineering forces, along with combat support.

In addition, the Gaza Division's northern and southern brigades -- normally tasked with the border -- are set to participate in the offensive, bringing the total number of brigades to 14.

selling arms to the Europeans who are then selling them on to the Ukrainians. And President Trump's taking a 10% markup on the arms. So maybe that 10% will cover the cost of the air cover," he said. The Treasury Secretary added that Washington and Kyiv had

also signed a deal on the mining of rare earth minerals, which will allow the White House to redeem the billions it has spent on Ukraine since 2022, but only once the conflict with Russia has stopped and the partnership has a chance to kick in.

the bill for Ukraine's air cover, stressing that one of President Donald Trump's key goals has been to avoid sending more money to Kyiv, as he was not going to give Ukraine a carte blanche in regards to weapons or monetary aid, reports RT. "Right now, we are

to Ukraine through Europe via NATO. Bessent argued that the additional charges could offset costs for any direct support Washington provides for Kyiv. In an interview with Fox News on Tuesday evening, Bessent dismissed concerns that US taxpayers would foot

Washington/Brussels, Aug 20 (UNI) : The White House has imposed an additional 10% charge on its arm sales to Europe, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio had earlier announced that Washington will sell arms

Travel

A traveller's guide to Rio de Janeiro



Copacabana Beach

A magnificent confluence of land and sea, the long, scalloped beach of Copacabana always has a flurry of activity stretching its length—footballers sing their team's anthem, cariocas (Rio's residents) and tourists line up for caipirinhas—a popular local cocktail—at kiosks, and beach vendors make their way through the mass of bronzed bodies. The rocky outcrop at its south end, called Arpoador, is popular with the city's surfing community and is one of the best spots in the city for watching the sunset. The beach is lined from one end to the other with tourist-class and luxury hotels, casinos, indoor and outdoor restaurants, bars and nightclubs. There are historic forts at both ends of the beach—Fort Copacabana, built in 1914 at the south end and Fort Duque de Caxias built in 1779 at the north end.

Ipanema Beach

Ipanema shares a border with Copacabana, but this world-class beach destination is more

exclusive than its south Rio counterpart. Ipanema has a magnificent beach and leafy streets dotted with enticing outdoor cafes and lively bars—it was here that the famous song Garota de Ipanema (Girl from Ipanema) was penned. With mountains, turquoise waters, golden sand and tropical flora making for most of this beach's landscape, Ipanema is Rio's most visited beach. The beach promenade is home to many of the city's upscale shops and cafes and the nearby Rua Vincius de Moraes, Baixo Farme and Baixo Quiteria streets are lined with expensive bars, clubs and restaurants.

Sugarloaf Mountain

Set at the mouth of the Guanabara Bay, Pao de Acucar or Sugarloaf Mountain is one of the world's most famous landmarks. A breathtaking cable car ride to the top of the mountain will stun you with panoramic views of one of the world's most beautiful landscapes. Standing 394 metres high, Pao de

Acucar derives its colloquial name comes from the mountain's resemblance to a concentrated sugarloaf. To reach the summit, passengers take two cable cars—the first ascending to the shorter Morro da Urca (standing 220 metres high) and the second ascending to Pao de Acucar. The top of the mountain offers exapnsive views of the Guanabara Bay with the Botafogo beach to the North and Copacabana to the South. Be sure to check out the open-air cable car on display that was used for transportation in the 1930s.

Rio Carnival

A carnival is a celebration of fun, music and frivolity held worldwide, but the Rio Carnival is the biggest and the best known. More than 500,000 visitors flock to Rio for the carnival every year adding to around a million local revellers. It takes place over four days, culminating in the samba parade where three to five thousand people from samba schools all over Rio perform with floats, music

Savour a chilled coconut as you walk along the scalloped shoreline of Copacabana or take in the dazzling 360-degree views from Sugar Loaf Mountain—Rio de Janeiro is a true holiday paradise. Whether you're headed to this year's FIFA World Cup or have plans to spend quality time with the sun and sand, this guide will help you make the most of your Brazilian break.

themes and costumes and onlookers party in the streets. Samba schools spend all year preparing for it, and complete over the four days for the right to feature in the samba parade where the final winner is announced. The hedonistic attitude of this carnival comes from its history as a final fling in the lead up to Lent, while the drum music played on many

Trolley tracks run through this intimate neighbourhood's cobblestoned-streets lined with ambrosial restaurants, adding to its folksy allure and ethereal magnetism.

Christ the Redeemer

Nothing like a giant, 150-foot tall statue of Jesus, arms gracefully outstretched to keep a city as known for its taste for vice as Rio in line. Christ the Redeemer (who watches over us with what I think is a slightly anxious expression in his rather elegantly draping robe) stands atop Corcovado, trust me, you won't miss him, in the Tijuca National Park. Outside he's soapstone but inside he's reinforced concrete, much safer for everyone (I do have dreams about him falling on the city, but that could be a sign his presence is working and suggesting I lay off the vice), especially since he's been standing there since 1931. Underneath his great plinth is a Catholic chapel.

In 2007, Christ was voted one of the Modern 7 Wonders after a hectic media campaign from local industry, but the best story about him is the number of people who schlepped up the hill to see him unveiled, about one and a half million, trust me, you can see him pretty well from many parts of Rio and less well up close. But there is a grand view looking down so maybe they were after a Christ's Eye View like so many tourists today. But you can climb the 220 stairs or get the elevator, if you want to get close enough to whisper in his ear. I was lucky enough to be in Rio when he got struck by lightning in February—naturally he survived intact—need I say more.

Santa Teresa

The hillside neighbourhood of Santa Teresa, where aging 19th-century-mansions and a bohemian spirit offer a very different take on the Cidade Maravilhosa (Spanish for 'Marvellous City'). Take in fine views from the Parque das Ruínas, stop for potent caipirinhas, or ride along the old-fashioned tram that still rattles along the cobblestone streets. The neighbourhood never loses sight of its community roots, and many of its spaces have been re-imagined into Art Deco buildings that serve as stomping grounds for artists, travellers and collaborators.

Willemstad, Curacao, Kingdom of the Netherlands

Buildings in Willemstad, Curacao, located in the Dutch Caribbean may have borrowed every colour from the rainbow but the end result is a picturesque waterfront that looks like Legoland. (Text: Kunal Guha)

Utrecht, Netherlands

An hour's train journey from Amsterdam and you'll be welcomed to this colourful city which is the educational capital of Netherlands. Peek out of the train station and you'll spot houses of various colours sitting next to each other.

Longyearbyen, Svalbard, Norway

For being the world's northernmost town, Longyearbyen is a colourful affair. Multi-coloured houses perched on this hilly range offer a pretty contrast to the rugged background.

Skagit Valley, near Mt. Vernon, Washington, USA

Most might believe that Holland has the ultimate authority on tulips but the Skagit Valley in the northwest corner of Washington takes it up a notch by hosting the annual 'Tulip Festival' in the month of April every year. The festival is one of the biggest attractions in the area.

Santorini, Greece

This stunning Greek Island is known for its houses and resorts with completely white-washed walls. But with the azure-blue Aegean Sea in the foreground it still makes for a masterpiece composition, don't you think?

Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado, USA

The song 'Smoke on the water' could've been shot at the Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, USA. Head for a morning trek here and you'll be rewarded with this magnificent sunrise.

Ontario, Canada

The very mention of Canada and the mind

23 places where you don't need to Paint the town red



paint a picture of a snow-covered town borrowed from the 'Ice Age'. But come fall and the city of Ontario is dressed in the foliage of the season.

Rainbow family village, Taichung, Taiwan

This tiny village in Taiwan makes a compelling expression of art. A quiet refuge from the noisy cities in Taiwan, almost every surface in this village, from the walls to the narrow alleys are all splashed with colours and drawings that could resemble your pre-school art project.

Nyhavn, Copenhagen, Denmark

Copenhagen's waterfront has a buzzing nightlife, canals and various entertainment options. What it also has is a colourful

skyline that can be best taken in while cruising past it on a boat.

Nice, Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur, France

Probably, the second-most visited destination in France after the capital, Nice has a waterfront to die for. But it's a part of this list for having neighbourhoods that has colours that could cause visual seizures.

London, England

The Big Ben clock tower is seen behind spring flowers in central London. London generally observes dull weather through most of the year leading to tourists complaining about bad lights for photographs. But come Spring (March to May) and one can see the English

capital in full bloom.

Lima, Peru

The capital and largest city in Peru, Lima is a nestled in a stunning valley with multi-coloured houses dotting the hilllocks, making for a compelling visual memory.

La Boca, Buenos Aires, Argentina

This neighbourhood in the Argentinean capital, Buenos Aires is flush with European look and feel. Explore the streets on foot to find houses of every imaginable colour and even tonnes of wall graffiti to gawk at.

Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico

This arid state in Mexico is splashed with a dash of colour or so it seems if you take one look at the houses that are coated in a rainbow of hues.

Greater Khingan Range, China

A lesser-known and even lesser-ventured mountain range in northeast China, the Great Khingan Range is a volcanic range with the highest peak reaching 2,035 metres. Explore this range to find the many colours that define the season.

Glowworm Caves, Waitomo, New Zealand

You don't need to be in a Peter Jackson movie to experience this psychedelic treat. You just need to head to the Glowworm Caves in Waitomo, on the North Island of New Zealand. One of the country's most celebrated tourist attractions, these caves can be explored through 45-minute guided boat tours that will let you explore the stunning underground scenery and even learn about the history and formation of the area.

Girona, Spain

This quaint small town near Barcelona is known for gothic streets, squares and multi-coloured houses that look like they've been built out of colourful

cardboard boxes. A rare sight to find in the rest of Spain.

Eisenach, Thuringia, Germany

Being German composer Johann Sebastian Bach's hometown is probably Eisenach's only claim to fame. But if you try to go off the tourist map to explore the city, you will be greeted by these deliciously painted buildings that make for striking photographs.

Cinque Terre, Italy

A part of the Italian Riviera, Cinque Terre comprises five villages. Pick any and you will be presented with a beautiful mesh of colours that the houses are painted in.

Carlsbad, California, USA

A worker hand-picks Giant Tecolote Ranunculus flowers at the Flower Fields in Carlsbad, California. The flowers are sold for commercial purposes and the fields are a major tourist attraction.

Burano Island, Italy

This Venetian island in northern Italy is probably one of the most colourful islands in Europe and is known particularly for the brightly-coloured houses here.

Bo Kaap, Cape Town, South Africa

This psychedelic neighbourhood in Cape Town, South Africa used to be called the Malay Quarter. Multi-coloured homes and cobblestone streets define this quaint area which should be marked on every Cape Town itinerary.

Aurora Borealis, Finland

The aurora borealis (also called northern lights) is seen over the town of Hyvinkaa in southern Finland. This natural projection of lights on the sky is caused by a collision of energetically-charged particles and is a phenomena that can only be witnessed in high-latitude places like the Arctic and the Antarctic region.

India beat Nepal 7-0 in SAFF U17 Women’s Championship opener

Thimphu (Bhutan), Aug 20 (UNI) : India’s U17 women’s team sent out a resounding statement of intent in their SAFF U17 Women’s Championship 2025 opener, dismantling Nepal with a thumping 7-0 victory at the iconic Changlimithang Stadium here today.

Braces from Nira Chanu Longjam (25’, 56’), Abhista Basnett (16’ 41’), and Anushka Kumari (37’, 62’), along with a strike from captain Julian Nongmaithem (45+1’), ensured a flawless start to India’s campaign. The Young Tigresses raced to a commanding 5-0 lead by half-time, leaving Nepal no room for recovery in what was a one-sided affair from the outset.

With the tournament adopting a double round-robin format this year, it was imperative for India to begin on the front foot, and they did so in sensational style.

Nepal didn’t allow India to assert their dominance from the first whistle. But it was only a matter of time before the Young Tigresses’ cohesive structure, the result of months of training since January, began becoming evident. The midfielders gradually began dictating tempo, finding incisive passes and carving through Nepal’s defence with sharp distribution, while the forwards constantly found pockets of space to create havoc. The backline, though tested early, remained compact and resilient. Goalkeeper Munni produced a solid display, securing a clean sheet and marshalling her defence with confidence.

Set-pieces proved to be a significant weapon for India. The breakthrough came in the 16th minute after a poor backpass resulted in a corner. Shveta Rani swung in a dangerous delivery from the left, and Nepal custodian Jharna Dumrakoti fumbled under pressure. Abhista was quickest to react, slotting home from close range.

India doubled their advantage in the 25th minute. Anushka slipped a beautifully weighted pass behind the defence for Nira, who still had work to do. The striker powered home a low drive, beating the stretching Dumrakoti.

Anushka then turned scorer in the 37th minute, racing onto a through ball and showing great composure to beat the keeper and make it 3-0.

Four minutes later, Abhista made it a brace. A pass from Anushka intended for Nira was deflected by Anshu BK, but Abhista latched onto the loose ball and fired home a precise finish to extend the lead to 4-0.

Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Kerala. “Since Services will not take part in these Games as a team, it will be good to see how the states compete and perform. The course has been prepared keeping all international specifications in mind and we are all set to go,” said competition manager Bilquis Mir, a former World Cupper canoeist and an Olympic judge.

The Khelo India Water Sports Festival is a new addition to the Khelo India calendar. In 2025, two new events have been added. The Khelo India Beach Games took place in Diu in May. As per the Khelo Bharat Niti, both the Water Games and Beach Games are aimed at promoting sports and attracting tourism.

Suhani Meena, a water sports athlete from Madhya Pradesh, who will participate in rowing said she was elated at being in Kashmir. “This is a great opportunity for water sports athletes since we get only a few opportunities throughout the year to participate in a national-level event. Now the Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025 will give us a chance to excel,” she said.

For kayaking and canoeing, the last nationals were held at Tehri (Uttarakhand) in November which were categorized as a qualifier. The top 15 in singles and doubles and the top eight fours will be participating in KIWSF. For rowing, the top eight from the nationals held in Bhopal in March this year will take part.

There will be international flavor as well. Arjun Lal Jat, an Army rower who will represent

Anant Jeet nails men’s skeet gold as India soars to top of medal tally



Shymkent (Kazakhstan), Aug 20 (IANS) : Olympian Anant Jeet Singh Naruka, was third time lucky, as he turned his silver from last year to gold, overcoming former Asian Games champion Mansour Al Rashidi’s challenge 57-56 in the process, in the men’s skeet final of the 16th Asian Shooting Championship in Shymkent, Kazakhstan.

Shooting on Day Three at the Shymkent Shooting Plaza, Naruka first finished third in qualifying with a score of 119 over two days, before shooting a confident final from the very first shot of the 60-shot decider, to land the biggest medal of his career.

He shot 29 of the first 30 targets, then took the lead for the first time in the match, shooting 35 of the first 36, and went into the final 10 shots, one hit ahead of the champion Kuwaiti.

He held on gamely as both missed one in the final round, erasing memories of his silver to another legendary Kuwaiti in Kuwait City last time around. India also picked up two more gold medals on the day in the 10m air pistol mixed team junior and youth events, while also winning bronze in the senior air pistol mixed team through Suruchi and Saurabh Chaudhary, with the senior women’s skeet trio of Maheshwari Chauhan, Ganemat Sekhon and Raiza Dhillon, combining for a bronze in the team event.

India thus ended the day on top of the medal tally as they had on Day Two, with a total of 19 medals now, nine of them gold, to go with five silver and bronze medals each.

Among the seniors, the pair of Suruchi and Saurabh Chaudhary began the day with a bronze in the 10m air pistol mixed team competition. They shot a combined 578 in qualification (Suruchi 292, Saurabh 286) to qualify for one of the two bronze medal matches against the Chinese Taipei pair of Liu Heng-Yu and Hsieh Hsiang-Chen. They won the bronze match with a 17-9 margin.

The women’s skeet team then confirmed the day’s second bronze when their combined qualification score of 329 (Maheshwari 113, Ganemat 109, Raiza 107) landed them the bronze behind China and Kazakhstan.

Olympian Maheshwari was the only one to make the individual final, finishing fourth, which was how she ended the final as well, shooting 35 of the first 40 targets to miss out by one lost bird, as the Kazakh who edged her had a higher bib number. Also on Day Three, the junior and youth

Assam & Chhattisgarh play out a 2-2 thriller; Haryana Notches dominant 3-0 victory over Nagaland

New Delhi, Aug 20 (UNI) Day 2 of the Subroto Cup International Football Tournament saw contrasting shades of footballing drama — from the nail-biting 2-2 draw between Assam’s Betkuchi High School and Chhattisgarh’s Mata Rukhmani Kanya Ashram, to an unforgettable record where Amenity Public School, Rudrapur (Uttarakhand) scored 20 goals against Air Force School, Kanpur in one of the tournament’s most emphatic wins.

The Assam–Chhattisgarh clash had spectators on edge, with early strikes from Assam’s Samaina (2’) and Sayasree (21’) before Chhattisgarh’s Sushila hit back with a brace (6’, 49’).

Meanwhile, Amenity Public School’s ruthless finishing saw standout performances from Kamal (5 goals), Sonam (6 goals), Anjali (3 goals), and Sonakshi (3 goals) in a 20-0 rout.

Other Highlights of the Day: Kerala vs Gujarat: Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Hr. Sec. School (Thrissur, Kerala) beat Vimla Vidyalaya (Palanpur, Gujarat) 3-0.

Sri Lanka vs Lakshadweep: Sri Lanka School Football Association defeated PM Shri Govt. Mahatma Gandhi Sr. Sec. School, Andrott 3-1.

Jharkhand vs Delhi: PM Shri KV Sr. School, Hazaribagh scored a dominant 4-0 win.

Bihar vs Haryana: Upgraded High School Bilaspur thrashed Vidya Devi Jindal School 5-0 with a hat-trick from Anshu.

Haryana vs Nagaland: PM Shri GGSSS Mangali Hisar’s Ruchi scored a hat-trick in a 3-0 victory.

Meghalaya & Chandigarh Shine: Nongjri Presbyterian Secondary School (Meghalaya) and Govt. Model Sr. Sec. School (Chandigarh) both registered 5-0 wins.

Goa vs Arunachal Pradesh: St. Xavier Higher Secondary school, Mapusa sealed a 2-0 win.

The day once again reinforced the Subroto Cup’s reputation as a breeding ground for thrilling contests, record-breaking feats, and the rise of young football stars.

Top national, international athletes to vie for 24 gold medals

Srinagar, Aug 20 (UNI) : The best national athletes in the country will vie for the 24 gold medals at stake in the inaugural Khelo India Water Sports Festival to be held at the iconic Dal Lake here. The three-day event will see more than 400 compete for the medals events- rowing, canoeing and kayaking.

The Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025 will be the first consolidated Open-age category championships where all 14 kayaking and canoeing events and the 10 rowing events are Olympic events. To add to the fun of the Water Games, there will be three demonstration events- water skiing, shikharo boat spring and dragon boat race.

The KIWSF will see 36 states and Union Territories in action. Among them, all eyes will be on athletes from

Venky wants Chinnaswamy ends named after Kumble, Dravid

Bengaluru, Aug 20 (UNI) : Former international cricket player Venkatesh Prasad and key KSCA office bearer Vinay Mruthyunjaya, who are contesting for the upcoming Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) elections, have renewed their long-pending demand to honour cricketing icons Anil Kumble and Rahul Dravid by naming the two ends of the Chinnaswamy Stadium after them. Addressing mediapersons after unveiling a wide-ranging manifesto covering safety, infrastructure, and player development, Prasad said “Every cricketer who has represented India from Karnataka is a legend. But Anil Kumble and Rahul Dravid, with over 100 Test matches each and stints as India captains, stand apart. Naming the two ends at Chinnaswamy as the ‘Anil Kumble End’ and the ‘Rahul Dravid End’ would be the most fitting tribute.”

He recalled that the idea was first proposed nearly 12–13 years ago during Kumble’s presidency, stressing that it was not an electoral ploy but a long-overdue recognition.

While acknowledging other legends such as G. R. Viswanath, E. A. S. Prasanna, B. S. Chandrasekhar, Syed Kirmani, and Roger Binny, the leaders underlined that Kumble and Dravid symbolised Karnataka’s unmatched contribution to Indian cricket at the highest level.

Alongside the naming proposal, the panel assured that safety of fans at

Printed, Published and Owned by
MOHAMMED SHAFI

Printed at **Standard Enterprises & Printer**
Ashtavinayak Housing Society, L-153, (MHADA), Behind Banthnal Math, Jule Solapur,
District : Solapur - 413004, Maharashtra and
Published from Ashtavinayak Housing Society, L-153, (MHADA), Behind Banthnal Math, Jule Solapur,
District : Solapur - 413004, Maharashtra.

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Assam & Chhattisgarh share thrilling 2-2 draw; Amenity Public School nets record 20 Goals

New Delhi, Aug 20 (UNI) : Day 2 of the Subroto Cup International Football Tournament saw contrasting shades of footballing drama — from the nail-biting 2-2 draw between Assam’s Betkuchi High School and Chhattisgarh’s Mata Rukhmani Kanya Ashram, to an unforgettable record where Amenity Public School, Rudrapur (Uttarakhand) scored 20 goals against Air Force School, Kanpur in one of the tournament’s most emphatic wins.

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Meanwhile, Amenity Public School’s ruthless finishing saw standout performances from Kamal (5 goals), Sonam (6 goals), Anjali (3 goals), and Sonakshi (3 goals) in a 20-0 rout.

Other Highlights of the Day: Kerala vs Gujarat: Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial

Alonso expects more after Real Madrid's opening win

Madrid, Aug 20 (UNI) : Real Madrid coach Xabi Alonso has expressed satisfaction after his side kicked off its 2025-26 La Liga campaign with a 1-0 home win over Osasuna. Kylian Mbappe’s penalty early in the second half decided the game, but despite the narrow margin of victory, Alonso was pleased with a display that limited Osasuna’s options in attack, and noted that his side had only been together for a couple of weeks after having competed in the FIFA World Club Cup in the United States this summer. “There are positives, starting with the result, which is the most important thing. Osasuna has had more time for preseason, and it showed,” he said.

“There were good things and others that we need to improve,” added Alonso, while also admitting his players “lacked freshness in the final third, and we struggled to create clear chances. We’re in that fine-tuning phase, but the win gives you peace of mind.” The coach also expressed satisfaction with the displays of Dean Huijsen, Trent Alexander-Arnold, Alvaro Carreras and Franco Mastantuono in their home debuts. “They had good, decent performances; they played seriously, didn’t make mistakes, and weren’t nervous. I’ve seen positive things. And I’m very happy to be back at this new Bernabeu,” said Alonso.

Western Railway to run Two More Pairs of Ganpati special Trains

(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, Aug 20 : For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand during the festive season of Ganpati, Western Railway will run 2 more pairs of Ganpati Special Trains on Special fare between Udhna - Ratnagiri and Vishvamitri - Ratnagiri stations.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, the details of these trains are as under:

- 1. Train No. 09022/09021 Udhna – Ratnagiri Weekly Special [6 Trips]
- Train No. 09022 Udhna

– Ratnagiri Special will depart from Udhna every Thursday at 10:00 hrs and will reach Ratnagiri at 20:00 hrs, the same day. Similarly, Train No. 09021 Ratnagiri – Udhna Special will depart from Ratnagiri every Thursday at 21:00 hrs and will arrive Udhna at 10:20 hrs, the next day. The above pair of train will run from 21st August to 04th September, 2025.

Enroute, this train will halt at Valsad, Vapi, Dahanu Road, Palghar, Vasai Road, Bhiwandi Road, Panvel, Pen, Roha, Mangaon, Veer, Khed, Chiplun and Sargamshwar Road stations in both directions. This train comprises of

Sleeper Class and General Second Class Coaches.

- 2. Train No. 09120/09119 Vishvamitri – Ratnagiri Weekly Special [6 Trips]

Train No. 09120 Vishvamitri – Ratnagiri Special will depart from Vishvamitri every Monday at 08:00 hrs and will reach Ratnagiri at 20.00 hrs, the same day. Similarly, Train No. 09119 Ratnagiri – Vishvamitri Special will depart from Ratnagiri every Monday at 21:00 hrs and will arrive Vishvamitri at 11:45 hrs, the next day. The above pair of train will run from 25th August & 08th September, 2025.

Enroute this train will halt at Bharuch, Surat, Valsad, Vapi, Dahanu Road, Palghar, Vasai Road, Bhiwandi Road, Panvel, Pen, Roha, Mangaon, Veer, Khed, Chiplun and Sangameshwar Road stations in both directions.

This train comprises of AC 2-Tier, AC 3-Tier, Sleeper Class and General Second Class Coaches.

The booking for Train Nos. 09022 & 09120 is open at all PRS counters & on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

Sadbhavna Day celebrated in Bhiwandi Municipal Corporation



(By Rajesh undi)
Bhiwandi, Aug 20 : As per the government directives, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi, 20th August, is celebrated

as Sadbhavna Day every year across the country. As per the government circular and as per the directives of Hon. Administrator and Commissioner Shri Anmol Sagar (B.P.S.), a wreath was

offered to the statue of Late Rajiv Gandhi by the auspicious hands of Hon. Additional Commissioner Shri Vitthal Dake. After that, the oath of Sadbhavna Day was taken in the

presence of officers and employees.

Since the main objectives of this day are to increase the feeling of unity, goodwill and avoidance of violence among the people of different religions and languages in different regions of the state, the oath was taken on the ground floor of the new administrative building of Bhiwandi Municipal Corporation.

On this occasion, Hon. City Engineer Mr. Jamil Patel, Assistant Commissioner (Administration) Mr. Ajit Mahadik, Tax Assessment Officer, Mr. Sudhir Gurav, Chief Park Superintendent Mr. Nilesh Sankhe, Sports Officer Mr. Milind Palsule, Chief Health Inspector Mr. Harish Bhandari and a large number of officers/employees were present.

India Post and World Trade Centre, Mumbai Sign Historic MoU to empower MSMEs and Entrepreneurs

(By PIB, Mumbai/Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, Aug 20 : India Post and the World Trade Centre (WTC), Mumbai today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance global market access for Indian businesses, with special focus on MSMEs and entrepreneurs.

This strategic collaboration combines India Post's extensive postal network with WTC Mumbai's global trade expertise to boost exports, facilitate cross-border partnerships, and empower Indian enterprises to expand internationally.

The Department of Posts, with its wide network, provides domestic and international mail services across the country. Through its international facilities, the Department offers exporters support in customs and export compliance,



including mandatory documentation such as invoices and export declarations.

The MoU signing ceremony was attended by Postmaster General, Navi Mumbai Region, Ms. Suchita Joshi; Assistant Postmaster General (Business Development), Maharashtra Circle, Dr. Sudhir Jakhere and Chairman, WTC Mumbai, Dr. Vijay Kalantri.

On the occasion, Assistant Postmaster

General (Business Development), Maharashtra Circle, Dr. Sudhir Jakhere highlighted India Post's initiatives including the International Business Centre in Mumbai, National Logistics Organization, and Dak Ghar Nirayat Kendras, aimed at strengthening logistics and export facilitation. With operations spanning over 70 countries and connectivity to even the remotest parts of

Maharashtra, India Post is emerging as a key driver of trade, exports and inclusive growth.

Chairman, WTC Mumbai, Dr. Vijay Kalantri expressed happiness over the partnership and underlined that WTC Mumbai will actively support and create awareness among the trade and industry fraternity about India Post's connectivity and services. He further emphasized that both organizations will

One-Trip Ganesh Chaturthi Special Train between Hubballi-Mangaluru Central : SWR

(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, Aug 20 : To clear the extra rush of passengers during Ganesh Chaturthi, South Western Railway will run a one-trip special train service between SSS Hubballi and Mangaluru Central.

Train No. 07341 SSS Hubballi–Mangaluru Central Express Special will leave SSS Hubballi at 16:00 hrs on 26th August, 2025 (Tuesday) and reach Mangaluru Central at 11:45 hrs the next day. In the return direction, Train No. 07342 will leave Mangaluru Central at 14:15 hrs on 27th August, 2025 (Wednesday) and arrive at SSS Hubballi at 09:45 hrs the following day.

En route, the train will stop at SMM Haveri, Harihar, Davangere, Birur, Arsikere, Tumakuru, Yesvantpur, Kunigal, Channarayapatna, Hassan, Sakleshpur, Subrahmanya Road, Kabakaputtur, and Bantawala stations in both directions.

The train will run with 17 coaches comprising 01 AC Two Tier, 01 AC Three Tier, 10 Sleeper Class, 03 General Second Class, and 02 Second Class Luggage-cum-Brake Vans with Disabled Friendly Compartment.

For more information, passengers may visit the official Indian Railways website or call the Railway Helpline number 139.“

jointly conduct programmes showcasing the vital role of India Post in logistics and trade facilitation.

The ceremony was also attended by Vice Chairman, WTC Mumbai, Captain Somesh Batra; Senior Director, AIAI, Ms. Sangeeta Jain; Director, WTC Mumbai, Ms. Priya Pansare; and Export Promotion Team Member, Mr. Vipul Mandlesha.

The collaboration is expected to create new global opportunities for Indian businesses and contribute towards the vision of making India a hub for international trade and entrepreneurship.

It will enable exporters, particularly SMEs, to benefit from DoP's export facilitation services and WTC Mumbai's training and networking ecosystem, thereby strengthening India's participation in global trade.

charged.Outlining his party's alternative vision, Kishor said that Jan Suraj has a clear roadmap and vision to address the crisis. The solution lies in building a Water Grid. Until that is done, floods will continue to devastate North Bihar.

Passenger Safety First: MMRDA's Immediate and Long-Term Measures

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Aug 20 : The safety of our Monorail passengers remains our highest priority. Following yesterday's incident, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) and Maha Mumbai Metro (MMMOCL) have swiftly initiated both short-term and long-term measures to ensure passenger safety and to prevent any recurrence of such events.

We want to reassure all commuters that MMRDA is fully committed to providing a safe and reliable travel experience. Clear instructions have been issued to MMOCL to strengthen safety systems and operational vigilance. MMRDA have taken Short term and long term measures.

Immediate Measures

1. Passenger Load Regulation:

Monorail coaches are designed for a maximum load of 104 tonnes. To avoid exceeding this capacity, station staff have been instructed to strictly regulate passenger entry. If overcrowding is observed, trains will be halted and passengers safely deboarded before resuming operations.

2. Additional Staff Deployment:

Each train will now carry a dedicated security personnel to monitor in-coach crowding. Alongside the Monorail Pilot, a trained technician will also travel to handle any technical issues promptly.

3. Emergency Window Checks & Labelling:

Every Monorail has 8 ventilation windows (2 in each of the 4 coaches). These are being immediately inspected and clearly labelled for easy identification so that passengers remain calm and guided in case of emergencies.

4. Enhanced Signage:

Clear, visible signboards have been installed inside trains, instructing passengers on safety protocols and emergency exits. More signage will be added to make instructions even more prominent and accessible.

5. Comprehensive Safety Inspections:

The Director (Maintenance) has been tasked with conducting thorough inspections of all Monorail trains to ensure all safety measures are

being strictly implemented.

- Long-Term Measures
- Introduction of New Rakes:

MMRDA has already procured 10 new Monorail rakes. Seven of these have reached the depot and are undergoing detailed trials and certification. Once cleared, they will be added to passenger service, increasing capacity and reducing strain on the existing fleet.

Monorail continues to be an important mode of transport for Mumbaikars. From emergency fixes to the induction of new trains, every step we take is aimed at ensuring a safer, more comfortable, and trustworthy journey.

It is important to note that during yesterday's incident, not a single passenger was injured. All commuters were safely evacuated — a reflection of the swift response by our teams. We sincerely thank the Municipal Corporation and the Fire Brigade for their prompt support.

MMRDA remains deeply committed to passenger safety and comfort. We will continue to strengthen our systems so that every Mumbaikar can travel with complete confidence.

Facility created for 9 Lakh additional Commuters Metro Gift to Kolkata



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Aug 20 : Kolkata, the city that introduced Metro services to India, is now entering a new era of connectivity. Soon, with openings and augmentation of three new lines, nearly 9.15 lakh passengers can travel by Kolkata Metro every day. This change is being powered by 366 new Metro train services across three sections, designed to provide faster and more regular travel.

On 22 August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate three new stretches of the Metro network — the 2.45 km Esplanade to Sealdah section of the Green Line, the 6.77 km Noapara to Jai Hind Airport section of the Yellow Line and the 4.4 km Hemanta Mukhopadhyay to Belegkata section of the Orange Line. He will also flag off three Metro trains on these lines.

The Green Line will see the biggest benefit with services increasing to 186. The Orange Line will now run 60 services while the Yellow Line will operate 120. With more trains running, waiting times will come



down and overcrowding will ease.

Green Line – Esplanade to Sealdah (2.45 km)

This stretch will be a huge relief for the city. Today it takes 40 to 45 minutes by road to travel between Howrah and Sealdah, two of the busiest railway terminals. With the Metro, the journey will now take only 11 minutes. For lakhs of daily commuters, this time-saving will feel like a blessing.

Yellow Line – Noapara to Jai Hind Airport (6.77 km)

Getting to the airport will now be quicker and more comfortable. Domestic and international passengers, airline staff and airport workers will all benefit from a fast, safe and convenient ride. With an interchange at Dum Dum Cantonment, passengers will also get direct connectivity to the rest of the city and major

railway stations. The journey from Esplanade to the airport will take only 30 minutes.

Orange Line – Hemanta Mukhopadhyay to Belegkata (4.4 km)

This extension connects Science City, hospitals, schools and business hubs. Passenger numbers here are expected to double. The journey from Belegkata to Kavi Subhash will now take only 32 minutes, making travel between South and East Kolkata much easier.

These new Metro lines will not only benefit Kolkata but also passengers from North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas. Journeys that earlier took hours will now be completed in minutes, making travel across the city faster, easier and smoother than ever before.

PK accuses Nitish govt of failure on Kosi floods, proposes 'Water Grid' solution

Purnea, Aug 20 (UNI) : Jan Suraj leader Prashant Kishor popular as PK today launched a scathing attack on the Nitish government of Bihar, alleging that despite ruling the state for nearly two decades, it has failed to find a permanent

solution to the recurring flood menace in the Kosi region. Kishor told news persons here that distributing Rs 7,000 as relief to the affected families cannot solve a problem that has displaced lakhs for generations. He said it is not a new story, the people

of Kosi have been enduring this suffering for decades.

Several people still remain displaced since the catastrophic 2008 Kosi floods, and they have received no adequate rehabilitation, he said. He alleged that large swathes of Seemanchal,

Bhagalpur, and Munger are submerged every year, but relief operations have become a source of profit for corrupt officials. “The Water Resources Department has effectively turned into an extortion department,” Kishor