

IN BRIEF

Tuition teacher arrested for molesting minor student

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) A tuition teacher of a reputed academy in the Nalasopara area of neighbouring Palghar city was arrested by the police for allegedly repeatedly molesting a minor girl who was a student at the coaching centre.

The tutor, identified as Rahul Dubey, was arrested by local Nalasopara police under the various sections of the POCSO Act and other laws, officials said here on Monday.

According to reports, a minor student was allegedly subjected to repeated harassment by Dubey over the past several days.

The girl reportedly resisted his advances multiple times but did not disclose the incidents to her parents out of fear.The situation came to a head yesterday when the girl finally confided in her parents. Shortly after, the tutor allegedly sent all other students home, then tried to block the girl from leaving the classroom. The girl managed to escape and fled to safety. Her parents, enraged by the revelation, rushed to the academy and reportedly thrashed the accused tutor.Dubey was subsequently handed over to the police, who have launched an investigation into the matter.

One more leopard caught in Jaibhavani Nagar

Nashik Aug 25 (UNI) One more leopard was caught by the forest department in the wee hours today in Jaibhavani Nagar, Pimpalgaon Khamb, near here.

According to the information received, this leopard was captured in the early morning today while a cage was installed in the farm of Balasaheb Amrita Jadhav at Pimpalgaon Khamb.

The forest department has installed about 25 cages in Vadner Dumala, Pimpalgaon Khamb, Wadala and Indiranagar areas. There was an atmosphere of fear among the citizens of the area due to the sighting of leopards in these areas. In addition, the citizens have breathed a sigh of relief as two leopards have been captured in a span of three days.

Viksit Maharashtra 2047 document should reflect resolution, views of masses: CM

Mumbai, Aug 25 (IANS) : Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said the Viksit Maharashtra 2047 document should reflect the resolutions, views and concepts of masses and it should be a guide while pursuing any plan, initiative or decision in the future. He was speaking at the meeting where the presentation was made on Viksit Maharashtra 2047 document. The departments of Agriculture, Urban Development, Home, Cultural Affairs, Public Health, Medical Education, Tourism , General Administration (Services), Transport and Ports and Public Works made presentations about their contributions in the vision document.“A vision document is being prepared to make the state Viksit Maharashtra by 2047,



including short-term , medium-term and long-term goals. For this, more than four lakh citizens have registered their participation in this initiative. This vision document should reflect the concepts, resolutions and views of the people,” said the chief minister.

CM Fadnavis said that once the goal is set, the path to achieving the goal is also paved. From that perspective, the path is

being prepared through this 'Vision Document' for the achievement of the goal of a Viksit Maharashtra.“The measures suggested in the draft Vision Document should be implemented to make the state the best not only in the country but also at the global level. The goal set by each department is achievable. For this, the agencies should take action keeping in mind modern technology, new concepts

and the current situation in the world,” he added.

CM Fadnavis thanked the people for their active participation in the preparation of this document, saying that it underscores their sentiments towards the development of the state. Expressing satisfaction that this vision document is being prepared through a thorough thinking process, he said that the challenges facing the state for the overall development have come to the fore in it preparation.He pointed out that preparing the vision document has also made it clear that although this path is difficult it is not impossible. He also expressed confidence that this will emerge as a very important document for the creation of a Viksit Maharashtra.

Heavy rainfall alert for next five days across Maharahstra

(Standard Post Bureau)

Pune, Aug 25 : The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a warning of continued heavy rainfall across several states, including Maharashtra, until August 29.

A total of 11 states have been advised to remain on high alert.

In Maharashtra, heavy showers are expected in the Konkan, Marathwada, and Vidarbha regions. Districts like Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg in the Konkan belt, as well as Nandurbar, Dhule, Jalgaon, and Nashik in North Maharashtra, are likely to experience intense rainfall. Marathwada districts, including Parbhani, Hingoli, Latur, and Nanded, may also see thunderstorms accompanied by heavy rain.

We expect partly cloudy skies, lightning, and scattered rain in other parts of the state. The IMD has indicated that rainfall intensity will likely increase compared to the past two days

Nashik-Sinnar bus service suspended after driver attack

Nashik, Aug 25 (UNI) : The Nashik Municipal Corporation's Sinnar-Nashik City Link Bus Service has been completely suspended for two days following an alleged violent attack on a bus driver, causing severe difficulties for daily passengers.

The incident occurred at around 7:30 pm when an unidentified person assaulted the driver of the City Link Bus, creating anger and fear among transportation staff.

Drivers and conductors have unanimously refused to operate on the Sinnar route following the attack, paralysing the crucial transport service that normally runs every 15 minutes with stops at all major and minor stations before terminating at Sinnar Court. The suspension has particularly affected thousands of daily commuters from Sinnar who rely on this service. The route typically operates 14 buses completing 56 total trips daily, with each bus making four round trips.

A police complaint has been filed regarding the attack, but staff members feel increasingly insecure as no action has been taken against the perpetrator.City Link General Manager Milind Band revealed this was the fourth or fifth such incident on the Sinnar route within the past year, creating intimidation among employees. Band noted that local residents have not been cooperating in addressing these security concerns, exacerbating the situation for affected passengers.



Gaurav Gogoi urges BCCI for steps to avoid any cricketing

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and Assam Congress Chief Gaurav Gogoi has urged BCCI to take a clear stand to avoid cricketing engagements with Pakistan until conditions are favourable and conducive to the nation's interest. Gogoi said this to BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia in a letter while expressing concern regarding Indian Cricket team's matches against Pakistan. "I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the Indian cricket team's participation in matches against Pakistan. While cricket has always been a sport that brings Joy among people,

(See on page 7)

130th Constitution Bill is unconstitutional, BJP will



Shiv Sena UBT leader and former minister Aaditya Thackeray on Monday alleged that the bill, tabled in the parliament proposing the removal of Prime Minister, Chief Minister and Minister from office if they are arrested and detained for 30 days in relation to a criminal offence,

(See on page 3)

US not placing more tariffs on China as existing ones



The US is not introducing new import tariffs against China for its trade partnership with Russia, since the current rate on US imports of Chinese goods is already high, US Vice President JD Vance said on Sunday.

(See on page 5)

Fiji set to boost health sector, as PM Rabuka meets union



Fiji is set to boost its health sector with India through new hospitals, affordable medicines and expanded medical training. This follows a meeting between visiting Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka and union Health Minister JP Nadda here.

(See on page 8)

Students' money deducted but no payment confirmation

Nagpur, Aug 25 (UNI) Hundreds of students faced payment issues on the final day of application submission for the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) Group-C examination, with money being debited from their accounts, but no payment confirmation appeared on the website.

Candidates reported that while amounts were deducted from their bank accounts, the MPSC website failed to display payment confirmation, leaving them uncertain about their application status.

The MPSC had announced results of the Group-C preliminary examination held on June 1, 2024, and scheduled the main examination for September 21. Considering flood conditions in parts of the state, the Commission extended the application deadline until August 25.

However, candidates encountered major technical problems during online fee transactions after the extension. Several students complained that despite successful payment deductions, the portal failed to confirm receipt, creating uncertainty about their eligibility for the main exam.

According to published results, 26,740 candidates have qualified for the main examination. Only those completing the application process, including fee submission, within the stipulated timeframe will be permitted to appear.

In its official notification, the MPSC clarified that the candidature of any ineligible candidate would be cancelled at any stage. The Commission also stated that results are subject to ongoing judicial proceedings in various courts.

Eligible candidates will receive SMS notifications on their registered mobile numbers.Students have urged the Commission to immediately resolve the technical glitch.

Minister assures justice in Sambhajinagar murder case

Ch. Sambhajinagar, Aug 25 (UNI) : Guardian Minister Sanjay Shresath visited the residence of the Padwasan family in Sambhaji Colony, SIDCO N-6, offering condolences following a fatal land dispute incident that resulted in one death and left two family members seriously injured. The minister assured stringent action against the perpetrators, emphasizing that the guilty would receive no leniency.Opposition Leader in Maharashtra Legislative Council Ambadas Danve separately met with the grieving family, pledging full support through legal channels to ensure maximum punishment for the accused. Danve affirmed his personal commitment and that of the Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray faction to stand by the family during proceedings.

The incident involved Pramod Ramesh Padwasan, 38, who was fatally attacked

by miscreants over land encroachment issues. The police have registered a case and formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) under senior officials as directed by the Commissioner of Police. The SIT will examine all evidence, including CCTV footage and forensic reports from mobile crime teams, with a preliminary report expected by August 30.

A protest was held at the collector's office, where family members and supporters demanded justice and expedited investigation. Authorities confirmed the investigation would remain transparent and impartial, with arrests anticipated shortly. Political leaders including Shiv Sena's Chandrakant Khaire, Metropolitan Chief Raju Vaidya, City Chief Digvijay Sherkhane and Dnyaneshwar Dange were present during visits with the affected families.

Avoid plastic bottles in govt offices: Ajit Pawar

Kolhapur, Aug 25 (UNI) Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar today urged citizens to completely stop the use of single-use plastic in daily life to protect the environment.

He said the use of plastic bottles should be avoided in all offices, including

government and semi-government ones.Pawar was speaking at the launch of a 100-day plastic ban campaign in the district, an initiative of District Collector Amol Yedge.He called on representatives of various parties, institutions, and organisations to participate

in the campaign's programmes.He also urged NGOs and citizens to get involved and to spread information about the ill effects of plastic.Pawar gave instructions for meticulous planning and coordination among various departments to ensure the campaign's

success.Meanwhile, Yedge said that the district administration had decided to ban plastic due to the serious pollution problems caused by its unlimited use.

He added that plastic was clogging underground channels, drains, and rivers, creating health issues.

Mumbai Rain ; IMD issues yellow alert

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) After a brief pause from the heavy downpours earlier this month, Mumbai woke up on Monday morning to light to moderate showers, marking the beginning of yet another wet spell, with several areas recording over 20 mm of rainfall in just an hour.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert for August 26-27, Tuesday and Wednesday, warning of heavy to very heavy spells in isolated parts of the city and suburbs.

According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) rainfall data, the city (CT) received

an average of 12.41 mm, eastern suburbs (ES) 13.84 mm and western suburbs (WS) 18.04 mm of rain between 8 am on Sunday and 7 am on Monday.

The heaviest showers were concentrated between 6 am and 7 am on Monday.

In the city region, B. Nadkarni Park Municipal School in Wadala logged 29 mm, Sewri Koliwada Municipal School recorded 25 mm and the Storm Water Drainage workshop in Dadar registered 24 mm. Several other locations, including Dharavi's Kala Killa school (19 mm) and Worli Naka (16 mm), also reported heavy rainfall.



People carry an idol of Lord Ganesh ahead of the 'Ganesh Chaturthi' festival, in Agartala on Monday.

BJP accuses Oppn of rejecting morality, advocating ‘Work from Jail’ model

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) today strongly criticised the Opposition for their protest against the Constitution Amendment Bill 2025, accusing them of rejecting morality in favour of “nirlajjita” (shamelessness).
“When the entire nation has embraced this instrument of morality and good governance, a small section of the Opposition is openly declaring that they stand not with morality but with shamelessness.

They proclaim, ‘hum toh nirlajjita ke saath hain,’” BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla told reporters here.He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government has introduced the 130th Amendment Bill in Parliament to combat corruption and end the “criminalization of politics,” but the Opposition intend to promote corruption by adopting a “work from jail” model, similar to “work from home.”Poonawalla said that once this bill is implemented, if the Prime

Minister, Chief Minister, or any minister is imprisoned for a serious offence and does not receive bail within 30 days, they will have to resign from their post.
He added that this law supports morality and good governance. According to him, the biggest obstacle to good governance is the “criminalization of politics,” and this bill will be the greatest boon in eradicating it.
The BJP leader said that during the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone

worked from home. Now, for the first time in the country, the Opposition seeks the freedom to “work from jail.” He questioned whether it is practical for a Chief Minister to hold meetings from inside jail and asked where public hearings would take place. Although these leaders are cut off from the public, he asked if they expect separate rooms for public hearings inside jail and what kind of arrangement they desire. “Such a notion is neither moral nor practical,” he added.

Mumbai rains inundate Bachchan bungalow

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) : Bollywood veteran Amitabh Bachchan's iconic Juhu bungalow 'Prateeksha' today suffered significant waterlogging during heavy rainfall, with ankle-deep water accumulating outside the property and seeping into the premises.
Viral social media videos showed muddy rainwater rising to calf level around the bungalow, with the actor personally clearing accumulated water while a vehicle remained stranded outside due to severe waterlogging.The India Meteorological Department (IMD) recorded varying precipitation levels across the financial capital, with western suburbs receiving the highest rainfall at 18.04 millimetres, followed by eastern suburbs at 13.84 millimetres and the city region at 12.41 millimetres during the 24-hour period ending this morning.
The IMD issued an orange alert for South Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, indicating moderate to heavy rainfall, while a yellow alert remains in effect for the Sion, Chembur, Ghatkopar, Mulund and Kalyan

regions.Civic authorities have advised residents to remain vigilant, particularly during high tide timings in low-lying areas prone to waterlogging. Actor-turned-politician Shatrughan Sinha's Juhu residence 'Ramayana' also experienced significant waterlogging in the same neighbourhood. Other prominent Bollywood residences affected included the homes of Ajay Devgn-Kajol, Aditya Chopra-Rani Mukerji and the Deol family.The flooding at Prateeksha holds significance as both Shweta and Abhishek Bachchan were born there, and the property was recently gifted to daughter Shweta Bachchan Nanda. The bungalow was purchased after Bachchan's 1975 film 'Sholay's success.
The Met department has forecast continued heavy rainfall at isolated places tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, with moderate rain expected through the week.
Flight operations at Mumbai airport have been disrupted, with airlines issuing travel advisories due to persistent rainfall.

PM Modi, Fijian PM Sitiveni Rabuka hold delegation level talks

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi today welcomed visiting Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka at Hyderabad House, ahead of holding talks that are set to focus on climate resilience, renewable energy, digital transformation, health, education, and people-to-people ties.The MEA spokesperson said in a post on X: “Welcoming an important Global South and FIPIC partner. “PM @narendramodi received PM Sitiveni Rabuka @slrabuka of Fiji at Hyderabad House for delegation level talks.”
Following the talks, the two sides are set to ink a number of Memorandum of Understandings, aimed at promoting economic cooperation between the two sides.
PM Modi will also host the Fijian delegation for lunch. Earlier in the morning, the Fijian PM paid floral tributes at the Raj Ghat.
The Fijian PM arrived in the Indian capital yesterday on a three-day visit, accompanied by his wife, Sulueti Rabuka, and a high-level Fijian delegation that includes the Minister for Health and Medical Services, Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu, and senior government officials.
He is expected to pay a courtesy call on President Droupadi Murmu later in the day. President Murmu had visited Fiji in August 2024.
On Tuesday, the Fijian PM will deliver a keynote address on his vision for the Pacific as an “Ocean of Peace” at the Indian Council of World Affairs.
He is also expected to explore opportunities to enhance cultural and economic linkages between the two nations.
This is the first visit to India by Prime Minister Rabuka in his present capacity.Prime Minister Rabuka's visit underscores the longstanding and enduring ties between India and Fiji. It reaffirms the continued commitment of both countries to further strengthen the bilateral relationship across all sectors and deepen our close people-to-people ties, the MEA said in a statement.Fiji is an island nation located in Melanesia in the South Pacific Ocean.

India, Japan strengthen energy cooperation through Ministerial Dialogue

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) :India and Japan today reaffirmed commitment to Energy Security and Inclusive growth and agreed to expand cooperation on Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage green chemicals, biofuels and advanced technologies in Energy Sector.A Ministerial-level

India-Japan Energy Dialogue was held today through Video Conferencing, co-chaired by Minister of Power and Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal and Mr. Muto Yoji, Japan’s Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry. The two sides welcomed progress in areas like Energy efficiency clean

hydrogen, ammonia, renewable energy. The Ministers also emphasized that India–Japan partnership would continue to play a pivotal role in advancing secure, resilient, and sustainable energy systems in the Indo-Pacific region.
Both countries have been deepening their partnership in the energy

sector under the Japan-India Clean Energy Partnership, with a focus on energy security, clean energy transition and addressing climate change.The two sides have institutionalized this cooperation through the India-Japan Energy Dialogue and sectoral Joint Working Groups (JWGs).

Brainstorming is best way to resolve people' issues in democracy: Shah

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that debate and discussion in the Parliament and Assemblies are the most effective means of addressing public issues in a democratic system, and it must be ensured that the House functions as per rules of the respective legislature.
Shah, while addressing the All India Speakers Conference 2025 held at the Delhi Vidhan Sabha said that debates, in Parliament and Assemblies should take place through healthy discussion, but disrupting their functioning for narrow political interests cannot be called a debate.
He said that the people of the country and the elected representatives should reflect upon the tradition that is being established by not allowing the Houses to function for the entire session, in the name of protest.

Shah underscored the need to work towards enhancing the dignity of the House and respect of the post of the Speaker, and added that it is the responsibility of every legislator to ensure that the functioning of the House is carried on according to the rules, and the discourse must be towards people and the nation's interest.
He said that a democracy flourishes only when legislatures follow the basic mantra of

prudence, deliberation and legislation.
Hm stressed that when discussions in the House are stalled, the role of the legislature in the nation’s development is greatly diminished.
He highlighted that holding discussions rising above the party interest, and going as per the interest of the nation is the path which takes to the utmost heights of democracy.
The union Home Minister said that Vitthalbhai Patel laid the foundation for India’s legislative traditions, strengthening today’s democracy.
He said that if anyone established the framework for running the country democratically based on Indian values, it was undoubtedly the valiant Patel, as he established numerous traditions that continue to guide everyone, especially in legislative functions and the responsibilities of the Speaker, like a radiant beacon.
Shah said that during Patel’s tenure, the Legislative Department and the Legislative Assembly Secretariat were established in the Centre and all states.
He highlighted that Vitthalbhai’s remark at the time was significant: no legislative assembly can function under the control of elected governments.
The assembly must remain independent to

ensure the meaningfulness of debates held within it.
Shah said that the decision taken by Patel to establish an independent legislative department was also accepted by the nation's constituent assembly.
Meanwhile, he also urged the Delhi assembly speaker Vijender Gupta to ensure that a compilation of the speeches delivered by all dignitaries in this historic House is made available in the libraries of every legislature across the country.
As the conference marks the centenary of Patel's election as the first speaker of the Central Legislative Assembly, HM also said that as back then country's freedom was important, it is equally essential to make sure that nation runs democratically following independence, and credited Patel for laying the foundation for establishing democratic governance based on Indian ideas.
Shah released a commemorative stamp honouring Patel, while he also inaugurated an exhibition specially organized at the assembly premises, showcasing archival records, photographs, and documents on the country's first elected speaker and the evolution of the nation's parliamentary institutions.

Congress stages protest outside Nagpur Municipal Corp over pothole menace

Nagpur, Aug 25 (UNI) Congress leaders and workers staged a protest today outside the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) office, demanding immediate action on the issue of pothole-ridden city roads.
The agitation was led by Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) General Secretary Ketan Thakre, who slammed the civic authorities for their alleged negligence.
“We are not able to understand whether there are potholes on Nagpur roads or roads in potholes,” Thakre remarked, accusing officials of ignoring the problem.
He warned that if the potholes are not filled within eight days, Congress workers would launch a symbolic protest by placing photographs of civic officials inside the potholes.
Thakre further said the demonstration was aimed at “opening the eyes” of the administration and ensuring that timely measures are taken to make Nagpur roads safer and more navigable.

Those alleging vote theft have lost their minds: Maha BJP

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) : Maharashtra BJP State Media Chief Navneet Ban today accused Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut and Congress leaders of making "baseless allegations of vote theft" and said they have "lost their minds."
Speaking at a press conference at the BJP state office here, Ban questioned the Opposition's silence during voter list preparation.
"Where were their booth agents and workers when the voter lists were being prepared? At that time, no one raised objections," he said.
Ban pointed to the contradiction in the Maha Vikas Aghadi's stance.
"When the MVA got

more votes in the Lok Sabha elections, Raut was silent. But as soon as MVA suffered a crushing defeat in the Assembly elections, they immediately started making accusations," he said.
The BJP leader accused Raut of spreading "fake narratives" through Saamana editorials without evidence. "Sanjay Raut is not the editor of Saamana, the mouthpiece of the Uddhav Sena, but of Daily Misguidance," Ban said, adding that Raut has "abandoned the ideals of Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray."
Ban also criticised what he called Raut's "double standard" on voter list revision. "On one hand,

Priyanka slams police action on SSC students, calls it "inhumane and shameful"

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra today condemned the police action against SSC aspirants protesting at Delhi’s Ramlila Maidan, calling it “inhumane and shameful.”In a post on X, Gandhi slammed the central government for its handling of the recruitment system and the treatment of protesting students.
“The use of force by the police on SSC students protesting at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan is inhumane and shameful,” she said.
She further alleged that under the BJP government, irregularities, scams, and paper leaks have become routine in examinations and recruitment drives, leaving millions of young aspirants depressed. “Irregularities in every exam, scams in every recruitment, and paper leaks have distressed the youth across the country. Under BJP rule, the rampant corruption in recruitment processes and examinations is ruining the future of the youth,” she said.Priyanka Gandhi also criticised the government’s approach of suppressing dissent rather than addressing the root causes of the problem.
“Instead of addressing these issues and listening to the concerns of the youth, it is unfortunate that they are being beaten with lathis. Rather than showing cruelty towards students, their voices should be heard,” she added.
Raut loudly accuses of vote theft, and on the other, opposes voter list revision in Bihar. Why doesn't Raut firmly tell (Congress leader) Rahul Gandhi that voter list revision is necessary in Bihar?" he asked.
Responding to Raut's criticism regarding the selection of Mumbai BJP president, Ban defended the party's "one person, one post" policy. He said the "hardworking and capable" Amit Satam was selected for the post through democratic processes.
"In BJP, even ordinary workers get justice. BJP believes in democracy—positions are not inherited through dynastic politics, unlike Congress," Ban added.

Mumbai-Nanded Vande Bharat service begins August 26

Ch. Sambhajnagar, Aug 25 (UNI) :The Indian Railways has extended the Mumbai-Jalna Vande Bharat Express service to Nanded from tomorrow, fulfilling a long-standing demand of passengers from Mumbai and the Marathwada region.
The train will depart from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai at 1:10 pm and arrive at Nanded at 10:50 pm, an official said.
The train will cover the 610-kilometre distance in 9 hours and 25 minutes.

The return journey will depart from H.S. Nanded Railway Station daily at 5:00 am, arriving at CSMT Mumbai at 2:25 pm.
The service will operate six days a week, remaining non-operational on Wednesdays.
The route includes stops at Dadar, Thane, Kalyan, Nashik Road, Manmad, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Jalna, and Parbhani before terminating at Nanded.
The extension is expected to benefit passengers from Parbhani

and Nanded, particularly reducing travel time between Nanded and Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar to just three and a half hours.
Ticket prices have been set at Rs 1,750 for AC chair car and Rs 3,300 for executive chair car classes.
The service promises enhanced convenience, speed, and comfort for passengers, and is expected to strengthen transportation links between the Marathwada and Western Maharashtra regions.

Govt. will be overthrown unless demands are met, warns Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) : Manoj Jarange Patil, a prominent Maratha reservation activist, has given the Maharashtra government a 48-hour ultimatum, threatening to launch an indefinite hunger strike at Mumbai's Azad Maidan starting August 29 if their reservation demands are not met by August 26.

"If reservation is not given, the government will be overthrown," Jarange said during a press conference in his native village of Antarwali Sarati.

He called on Marathas across the state to join the Mumbai movement, urging them to leave their businesses, jobs and agricultural activities to participate. He emphasised that the protest would be peaceful and that community members had arranged for water tankers, medicines, and transportation. Jarange specifically warned against arson or stone-pelting.

Jarange claimed to have

spoken with Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis two months ago, inviting him to Antarwali Sarati to see the poverty of the Maratha community. He alleged that the government had not taken the issue seriously.

His core demands include the immediate passing of an ordinance that would declare Marathas and Kunbis as one community, using historical records like the Hyderabad Gazette. He also wants permanent reservation rights instead of a temporary 10 percent quota. Jarange announced a detailed march schedule, with the procession departing from Antarwali Sarati on August 27. It will travel through Paithan and Ahmednagar, with an overnight halt at Junnar. On August 28, the march will proceed via Shivneri Fort, Chakan, Lonavala, Vashi, and Chembur, with the goal of reaching Azad Maidan by evening. The agitation

is scheduled to begin at 10 am on August 29.

Jarange defined "Sage-Soyare" as individuals with traditional matrimonial relations over generations, asserting that those with Kunbi records should receive reservation under the OBC category.

He criticised the government for including 29 other castes in the OBC category while excluding Marathas. He warned that this approach would bring shame to both the state and the country.

Despite his strong words, Jarange reiterated that the protests would remain peaceful and asked for designated routes to avoid traffic disruptions. He highlighted the government's inaction despite having access to 150-year-old records and having conducted a 13-month study. He concluded by stating that he would not leave Mumbai without securing permanent reservation.

CM Fadnavis pulls up urban development officials for delays in Central schemes

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis expressed strong displeasure over delays in the implementation of centrally sponsored public welfare schemes during a review meeting with officials of the Urban Development Department.

He directed that these projects must be expedited and the central funds fully utilised before the end of the financial year. Highlighting the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT 2.0), Fadnavis noted that the scheme, launched in 2021 and set to

conclude in 2026, has an allocation of 9,000 crore for water supply, parks, waterbody rejuvenation, and sewage works.

He instructed officials to speed up project execution to ensure timely completion. The Chief Minister also emphasised that the Health Department must accelerate the establishment of Health and Wellness Centres under the National Health Mission. Additionally, the Medical Education Department has been asked to assess the rising demand for doctors, nurses, and technicians and adjust admissions and curricula accordingly to meet future requirements.

Dy. CM, Shinde faction steps into Kumbh mela preparations amid Guardian Minister tug of war

Nashik Aug 25 (UNI) : After BJP leader Girish Mahajan and NCP (Ajit Pawar faction) minister Chhagan Bhujbal held review meetings for the upcoming Kumbh Mela, the Shinde faction has now joined the fray. Minister Dada Bhuse announced that Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde himself will

chair a meeting to assess preparations for the mega event. Despite the Mahayuti alliance's majority in the Assembly, there is ongoing contention between the BJP and Shinde faction over the guardian minister posts for Raigad and Nashik districts. Adding to the competition, Bhujbal has demanded the post for his faction, citing

their seven MLAs.

With Nashik lacking a guardian minister, these review meetings are being seen as an opportunity for each party to assert its claim. Mahajan was first to organize a meeting, asserting his right to the post. Bhujbal followed, saying that even without the title, as a cabinet



Left to right, farmer leaders P. Krishna Prasad, Rajan Kshirsagar, Rakesh Tikait, Hannan Mollah, and Prem Singh Gehlawat during a 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' organised by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, at Jantar Mantar, in New Delhi.

130th Constitution Bill is unconstitutional, BJP will weaponise it to poach leaders: Aaditya Thackeray

Mumbai, Aug 25 (IANS) : Shiv Sena UBT leader and former minister Aaditya Thackeray on Monday alleged that the bill, tabled in the parliament proposing the removal of Prime Minister, Chief Minister and Minister from office if they are arrested and detained for 30 days in relation to a criminal offence, is unconstitutional and it will be weaponised by the BJP to poach political parties and political leaders.

"Till now they were using ED and CBI, now they will use the bill which has been referred to the joint select committee. The bill is anti-national and it must be taken back," he said after visiting a slew of development works being carried out in the fishermen's colony and in his Worli constituency.

On the Union Ministry of Sport's announcement with India playing a cricket match with

Pakistan in the Asia Cup cricket tournament, Aaditya claimed, "Even though Operation Sindoor was announced, as of now, the BCCI is not going back on playing cricket with Pakistan. They want to play cricket with Pakistan, that is, for TV and ad revenues and also for their own salaries. It is very selfish of BCCI, and it should rethink playing with Pakistan."

Aaditya taunted that the BJP, saying, instead of talking about the past, should talk about the present, as it has been their government in the last 11 years at the Centre.

Earlier, Shiv Sena UBT in the party mouthpiece Saamna editorial slammed the BJP-led government at the Centre for tabling three bills for the removal of PM, CMs and ministers arrested and detained on serious criminal charges, saying that it is an insult to Babasaheb Ambedkar's

constitution.

Thackeray camp alleged that the government has moved these bills to cover up its corruption and misdeeds, as it is shaken by the opposition unity, uprising of the people and the sins they themselves have committed. "This is treason. This is a sham. These bills have been tabled to end democracy and individual freedom in India and lead the country towards dictatorship, and therefore, they must be burned," it said.

Thackeray camp questioned the government's intentions, claiming that they are not clean. The PM Modi-Shah combine has tied this new noose to imprison their political opponents.

Similarly, the Thackeray camp argued that playing cricket with Pakistan is not only an insult to the valour of our soldiers but also to every

martyr who sacrificed their life for Kashmir, including Shyama Prasad Mukherjee.

"These matches are happening in Dubai. If they were held in Maharashtra, Balasaheb Thackeray's Shiv Sena would have disrupted them. By prioritising cricket with Pakistan over Hindutva and patriotism, you are treating the sentiments of the nation's people as worthless. The Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) condemns your decision," it said. Thackeray camp further claimed that the Union Ministry of Sport's decision is deeply painful for the people of India. Shiv Sena UBT remarked, "The blood of the Indians killed in the Pahalgam attack has not yet dried, and the tears of their families have not yet stopped. Even so, playing cricket matches with Pakistan is inhumane."

ED raids five star hotel in Mumbai, arrests accused in 117.06 cr PMLA case

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) today said that they have arrested one Amit Ashok Thepade in connection with an ongoing investigation related to a bank fraud of Rs.117.06 Crore involving Canara Bank. The arrest was made from a five star hotel where the accused was reportedly hiding.

The arrest was made by its Mumbai Zonal Office.

"He had been evading authorities for a considerable period. Based on actionable intelligence gathered, ED officials located him at a prominent five-star hotel in South Mumbai, where he had been staying for the past two months," said the official. The official said that search conducted at the hotel premises led to the

freezing of more than 50 bank accounts, seizure of cash amounting to Rs. 9.5 Lakh, bullion, gold and diamond jewellery worth Rs. 2.33 Crore, two vehicles, and digital devices suspected to contain crucial evidence of financial transactions.

The accused was later produced before a special PMLA court which remanded him to five days of police custody. The ED initiated investigation on the basis of two FIRs registered by the CBI, ACB, Pune, against Galaxy Constructions & Contractors Pvt. Ltd. (GCCPL) and Mitsom Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. (MEPL). Both companies, owned and controlled by Amit Thepade, had availed credit facilities from Canara Bank by mortgaging various immovable properties. Investigation revealed that

the accused conspired to defraud the bank by mortgaging properties that had already been sold or by double-mortgaging the same properties, thereby securing loans and subsequently siphoning off the funds for personal use. Further investigation by the ED has established that Amit Thepade played a pivotal role in creating a complex financial network for layering and integrating illicit funds derived from criminal activities.

His arrest follows extensive surveillance and forensic financial analysis, which uncovered multiple transactions aimed at concealing the true origin of the Proceeds of Crime and projecting them as legitimate assets.

Further investigation into the matter is ongoing.

SC Stays FIR against Psephologist Sanjay Kumar over erroneous Maharashtra Poll Tweet

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) : The Supreme Court today stayed proceedings in two FIRs registered by Maharashtra police against Professor Sanjay Kumar, psephologist and Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), over a tweet carrying a mistaken analysis of the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai and Justice N.V. Anjaria passed the interim order while issuing notice on Kumar's writ petition seeking quashing of the FIRs.

On August 17, Kumar had posted on X (formerly Twitter) about changes in the number of voters in specific constituencies.

Realising the analysis was erroneous, he issued a clarification and apology on August 19.

Despite this, police officers reporting to the Election Commission registered two FIRs, one in Nashik and another in Nagpur under sections 175, 353(1)(b), 212, 340(1)(2), and 356 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

Challenging the FIRs, Kumar argued before the apex court that the allegations were baseless and amounted to "an abuse of State power."

His petition stated, "A tweet giving wrong information cannot form the basis of an FIR for offences such as forgery. The allegations are demonstrably inapplicable as there was no criminal intent. The post was a bona fide and inadvertent error, for which a public apology was issued." The plea further contended that the FIRs lodged by officials attached to the Election Commission amounted to harassment of a respected academic and created a "chilling effect" on free speech. The petition was filed through Advocate-on-Record Sumeer Sodhi. The matter will now be taken up after notices are served.

Govt waives fees for Ganesh Mandals

Nashik, Aug 25 (UNI) : The government has issued an order waiving permission fees charged by municipal corporations on pavilions and other structures erected by Ganesh Mandals during Ganeshotsav. The festival begins across the state from August 27.

Water Resources Minister Girish Mahajan has written to the Nashik Municipal Corporation administration in this regard. The decision follows repeated requests from Ganesh Mandals.

"Since Ganeshotsav is a festival of public sentiment, instructions have been given to cancel the permission fee for pavilions and stages to provide financial relief to citizens," the order states. Municipal corporations have been directed to take appropriate action in this matter.

Missing girl found dead in Arabian Sea at Nariman Point

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) : A 24-year-old girl, who was reported missing, was found dead in the Arabian Sea at Nariman Point in South Mumbai, police said here today.

The body of the girl, identified as Manita Gupta, was found floating in the sea near Free Press Road at Nariman Point this afternoon, officials said.

Cuffe Parade Police, after receiving information, rushed to the spot and recovered the body.

According to preliminary details, the body was spotted by locals who alerted the authorities.

Police have launched a probe into the incident to ascertain the circumstances leading to her death.

SP announces solo bid for Mumbai civic polls

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) Mumbai unit president Advocate Yusuf Abrahani announced that the Samajwadi Party will contest the upcoming Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation elections independently, fielding candidates across 150 seats. The announcement, made alongside senior leader Abu Asim Azmi, signals a potential challenge to established parties like Congress and NCP in the civic polls. Abrahani said the party's internal surveys indicate strong prospects in 89 constituencies, with historical performance suggesting certain victory in at least 50 seats. He recalled the party's peak years between 1995 and 2003, when it had 23 corporators, 4 MLAs, and ministerial representation, asserting that even ordinary corporators could directly approach the chief minister to resolve local issues during that period. Azmi credited Abrahani's leadership with revitalising the SP's presence among Muslim and OBC communities through rallies and public programs, which he said have eroded Congress's traditional voter base.

Both leaders ruled out any electoral alliances, insisting the party would rely solely on its organisational strength. "The Samajwadi Party has preserved its identity through sustained struggle," Azmi said, noting that he himself has secured four consecutive assembly election victories despite past attempts by rival parties to engineer splits.

Party sources revealed that high-profile inductions are expected soon, which could further strengthen the SP's position and potentially establish it as a major opposition force in Mumbai and Maharashtra politics.

Ahead of Mumbai civic body poll MLA Ameet Satam appointed as BJP President

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) Ahead of the upcoming Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis today announced the appointment of senior party legislator Ameet Satam as the new president of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Mumbai unit. Satam, represents the Andheri west constituency and has been elected as MLA for three consecutive terms.

Before being elected to the Assembly, he had also served as a municipal corporator and has long been active in city politics.

Bhuse asks workers to ready candidates for all wards

Nashik, Aug 25 (UNI) : Minister Dada Bhuse today directed Shiv Sena workers to prepare candidates for every ward and committee ahead of local body elections, signalling the party's readiness to contest independently if required. "Be ready to hoist the saffron flag in every municipal and district council constituency, even if it means contesting alone," Bhuse told party workers at a meeting here. The directive has triggered speculation whether the Eknath Shinde-led faction is genuinely preparing for solo contests or pressuring ally BJP for better seat-sharing arrangements. Political observers point to underlying tensions

between Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Minister Shinde, with reports suggesting Fadnavis is seeking to curtail Shinde's influence within the alliance. Local body elections remain crucial for parties to strengthen grassroots networks and empower cadres. Parties often avoid alliances in civic polls to maximise opportunities for workers. Bhuse's remarks in Nashik could resonate across other districts, potentially pressuring the BJP, which, as the dominant Mahayuti partner, is keen to wrest control of Mumbai civic body from the Thackeray faction. However, Shinde's exact electoral strategy remains unclear.

STANDARD POST

Experts urge shots for elderly, children, chronic patients

India has aligned itself with the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) updated influenza vaccination guidelines for the Northern Hemisphere 2025–26 season, health experts said at a symposium here today.

The WHO has recommended removal of the B/Yamagata strain from quadrivalent influenza vaccines, citing the absence of naturally occurring cases since March 2020. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) excluded the strain last year, while India’s National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has also endorsed the move.

Despite influenza accounting for nearly 1.27 lakh deaths annually in India—65 per cent among people over 65 years and up to 20 per cent among children under five—flu vaccination coverage in the country remains less than 1.5 per cent. In contrast, nearly half of the population in the United States and Europe is immunised each year.

“Good health starts with prevention, and vaccines play a key role in protecting people and improving health. Vaccination reduces the spread of infection, lowers disease severity, and prevents complications, especially among high-risk groups,” said Dr. Sharvil Patel, Managing Director, Zydus Lifesciences Limited.

Experts pointed out that influenza in India follows year-round circulation, with peaks during the monsoon and winter, but estimating mortality is difficult due to weak surveillance, limited testing, and under-reporting.

They stressed that infants, the elderly and those with chronic conditions must be prioritised for annual vaccination.

Health specialists also noted that unvaccinated adults, especially with co-morbidities such as kidney, heart, lung or liver disease, are driving higher hospitalisations this season. “If you are unvaccinated, you don’t have immunity, and that is why high-risk patients are landing in hospitals more than others,” one physician said.

The surge, they added, coincides with the monsoon and school reopening, when children carry infections back home. Doctors said vaccination should ideally precede the rains, but regional variations—such as delayed peaks in southern cities like Chennai—pose challenges.

Due to financial limitations, a long-standing initiative to include influenza shots in the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) has not been successful. According to a senior immunization expert who has advocated for this change for ten years, the final decision rests with the Finance Ministry.

The expert pointed out that the current healthcare spending, which is only 1–1.6% of the GDP, is insufficient to support the program’s expansion.

Experts also noted that India tends to have a reactive rather than proactive approach to healthcare.

Experts further highlighted India’s reactive approach to healthcare. Despite free health camps, public response is low, with preventive care seen as a low priority. They said insurance coverage and awareness are critical to boosting vaccine uptake. “In Europe and the US, insurance makes vaccination affordable. Here, out-of-pocket expenses put it beyond reach for most middle and low-income families,” a doctor noted.

On whether vaccines should be made mandatory for healthcare workers or children, panellists warned against compulsion, citing global backlash. Instead, they favoured strong recommendations, targeted campaigns and prioritisation of high-risk groups.

Concluding the session, doctors called for insurers, policymakers and the public to act ahead of the next flu season. “One hospital admission costs more than vaccinating a thousand people,” a senior expert remarked, underlining the cost-effectiveness of prevention.

Navi Mumbai tops the 'Super Swachh League' of the cleanest cities in the country in 'Swachh Survekshan 2024'

Awarded the title of the best city in the country in the 'Citizen Feedback' category



(Standard Post Bureau)

Under the 'Swachh Bharat Mission', a separate category of Super Swachh has been announced for the cities that have consistently topped the rankings for the last 3 years, and Navi Mumbai is included in the list of the best cities in the country. The Super Swachh League includes Navi Mumbai, Indore, Surat and Vijayawada, among the big cities with a population of more than 10 lakhs, and due to this, Navi Mumbai has achieved a higher position in the ranking of clean cities, thereby enhancing the pride of the state of Maharashtra.

Similarly, Navi Mumbai has retained the highest 'Seven Star' rating for a waste-free city and the highest 'Water Plus' rating in the ODAC category. It has also won the title of 'Best City' in the country among cities with a population of more than 1 million in the 'Citizen Feedback' category.

The inclusion of our Navi Mumbai city in the 'Super Swachh League' of the cleanest cities in the country that maintain cleanliness is a matter of pride for every citizen, and every Navi Mumbaikar citizen and sanitation worker has contributed greatly to this, said Commissioner Dr. Kailash Shinde. Therefore, sanitation workers were also present at the award ceremony in New Delhi.

Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has always set a benchmark for other cities in India by implementing

innovative and comprehensive sanitation initiatives. While facing the 'Swachh Survekshan 2024', it was mandatory to maintain a score of more than 85 percent for inclusion in the 'Super Swachh League'. In this, Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation, under the guidance of Municipal Commissioner Dr. Kailash Shinde, implemented many remarkable projects with emphasis on public participation, successfully organized activities and secured its inclusion in the highest category of 'Super Swachh League'. In this, notable projects were implemented on priority.

* Use of modern technology in waste classification, collection and transportation systems:

In addition to emphasizing waste segregation into three categories at the point of generation - wet, dry, and household hazardous - separate collection of sanitary waste has begun this year.

A waste collection and transportation (C&T) system has been implemented. A fleet of 206 vehicles including mini tippers, electric trucks and waste compactors is being deployed. RFID-enabled GPS is being used for real-time tracking and route monitoring and control.

Also, 7 mechanical vehicles are operational for cleaning the main roads, 5 of which are eco-friendly.

Similarly, 10 eco-friendly electric vehicles received under the United Nations Development Program are



being operated by women waste collectors from the local community.

* ICCC: Smart sanitation through information technology based cutting-edge system :

The Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) at the NMC headquarters effectively monitors the sanitation operations in Navi Mumbai through various means such as GPS-enabled vehicles, CCTV feeds and citizen feedback. Real-time data analytics have made it easier to monitor and control vehicle availability, waste collection tracking and service compliance.

* Landmark project in the country that converts textile waste into opportunities:

Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has started implementing an innovative project 'Textile Recovery Facility (TRF)' to reduce the waste load at the solid waste project site and convert waste into recyclable resources in collaboration with the Textile Industry Committee under the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. This is the first innovative project in the country to utilize textile waste to be implemented on a pilot scale.

* C&D Waste Project:

A 150 tonne per day construction and demolition waste (C&D) processing plant is operational at the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation's solid waste management project site, and the paver blocks made from it are used for

construction. Importantly, 85 percent of C&D waste is used in the production of these paver blocks.

* Fertilizer production from wet waste and recycling of dry waste (MRF & RDF):

Out of the approximately 750 tons of waste per day received at the project site, 350 tons of wet waste is processed into fertilizer, and 400 tons of dry waste is separated into plastic, glass, cloth, paper, etc. and recycled. The plastic in this is used for boilers in RDF cement industries, and plastic granules are used for coating during the construction of asphalt roads.

* Coconut waste processing project:

An innovative project is being implemented at the solid waste project site to process coconut waste with a capacity of 10 tons per day and separate the fibers from it, which is used to make coir and various idols and decorative items.

* Integrated Processing Center (ISWM) :

A project to process the leachate, the water produced in the process of solid waste, is also operational here. After purifying the leachate, the processed water is used to grow trees there. In this way, efforts are made at the solid waste management project site to make maximum use of all waste.

* Emphasis on waste disposal at the point of generation (BWG):

Societies, hotels, and institutions that generate more than 100 kg of wet



waste per day should dispose of their wet waste on their premises. Biogas production/fertilizer production projects from wet waste are being implemented at 38 locations, which has resulted in significant savings in the labor, cost, and time required by the Municipal Corporation to transport the waste to the project site and process it there.

* Zero Waste Slum Model: Local composting from waste, community empowerment, clean environment

Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has taken the initiative and implemented the innovative concept of the zero waste slum model.

In this, women garbage collectors have been brought together through the NGO Prasad Sakhi and assigned to their area-wise teams, each of which goes to 250 households and collects waste separately.

This work has created sustainable employment for them. This has improved their standard of living and contributed to the progress of their children's education.

* Advanced wastewater management

Navi Mumbai city has a 99.9% sewage management network. The remaining are only 42 septic tanks, which are also cleaned regularly by mechanical devices.

Modern infrastructure for sewage disposal -

100% of the wastewater is processed daily, amounting to 235 D.L.L. The total capacity of all the centers is much more than

454D.L.L.

7 sewage treatment plants are operational using cutting-edge technologies like SBR and C-Tech and have SCADA automation facilities.

More than 30% of treated wastewater is used for purposes other than drinking, such as irrigation of gardens and plantations, construction, and cleaning of public places and facilities.

Currently, there are 3 Tertiary Treatment Plants (TTPs) with a capacity of 45 D.L.L. and now a TTP with a capacity of 7.5 D.L.L. has been set up in Belapur.

To promote water reuse in industrialization, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with MIDC in January 2024, through which recycled water is currently being provided to 54 industrial clusters for non-drinking purposes. This water is also being used for construction and gardening purposes.

Smart monitoring and control -

KPI-based maintenance and repair (O&M) tracking system for efficiency, compliance and complaint resolution.

Implement a data-driven system that ensures transparency and drives continuous improvement.

All such unique projects and works have earned Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation a place in the Super Clean League, a higher ranking than the Clean City ranking, and Navi Mumbai's cleanliness drive has become an inspiration for other cities.

India, Fiji resolve to cooperate for free, open Indo-Pacific, strongly condemn Pahalgam attack, terrorism

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) : India and Fiji today underscored the importance of a free, open, secure and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and announced their intent to collaborate on strengthening regional maritime security, contributing to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

A Joint Statement issued after delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his visiting Fiji counterpart Sitiveni Rabuka said the two countries reaffirmed commitment to supporting an “open, inclusive, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific where sovereignty and territorial integrity are respected.”

Prime Minister Rabuka expressed Fiji’s interest in joining the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and highlighted the concept of 'Ocean of Peace' in the Pacific Region which emphasizes building a

peaceful, stable, secure, and sustainable future and well-being for the region. Prime Minister Modi welcomed Fiji into this partnership which “seeks to manage, conserve and sustain the maritime domain.”The two Leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation against terrorism and condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They condemned in strongest terms the Pahalgam terrorist attack, reiterated zero tolerance against and rejected double standards on terrorism.Both countries acknowledged the need to counter radicalization, combat financing of terrorism, prevent the exploitation of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes and tackle terrorist recruitment and transnational organized crime through joint efforts and capacity building. They agreed to work together at the UN and other multilateral fora

to combat terrorism.

The Fiji Prime Minister who arrived here yesterday on a three-day official visit, held “comprehensive and forward-looking” discussions with Prime Minister Modi on “full spectrum” of bilateral matters, and regional and global issues of mutual interest.Both Leaders agreed on the urgent need for comprehensive reforms of the United Nations, including through the expansion of the UN Security Council in both categories of membership to better reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.

Fiji reaffirmed its support for India as a Permanent Member in a reformed and expanded UN Security Council as well as its support to India’s candidature for the UNSC non-permanent membership for the term 2028-29.The Leaders reaffirmed continued support to strengthening of South-South cooperation

as a necessary step in effectively addressing contemporary global challenges and agreed to work together on issues of common concern to the Global South, including enhanced, equitable representation in institutions of global governance.

The Leaders reaffirmed commitment to climate action, resilience building and sustainable development in the spirit of India’s Mission LiFE, the 2050 Strategy for Blue Pacific Continent and promoting biofuels as sustainable energy solution within the framework of the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA).

Acknowledging the steady growth in bilateral trade they recognized the substantial untapped potential for trade and investment between India and Fiji and expressed intent to deepen sectoral cooperation in areas of mutual interest to further

consolidate economic partnership, diversify trade portfolios and enhance resilience of supply chains.

Prime Minister Modi welcomed the grant of market access to Indian ghee by the Government of Fiji.Reiterating their shared vision for a robust, inclusive, and sustainable Indo-Pacific economic architecture, both Leaders committed to working closely to promote mutual prosperity.

Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed India’s commitment to development partnership in the region through wide-ranging initiatives keeping priorities of Fiji at the centre.

Reaffirming healthcare as a key priority area, he highlighted India’s support for the establishment of Jan Aushadhi Kendras (Peoples’ Pharmacies) in Fiji to provide low-cost generic medicines.Prime Minister Modi announced the 2nd Jaipur Foot Camp to be organized in Fiji. India will

also extend specialized/tertiary medical care services in Indian hospitals for upto 10 Fijians under the ‘Heal in India’ programme to supplement Fiji’s Overseas Medical Referral programme.

The two leaders recognized people-to-people ties as a natural foundation and multiplier for deepening India-Fiji relationship, especially economic and cultural ties and welcomed the signing of the Declaration of Intent on Migration and Mobility to facilitate mobility of professionals and students between the two countries.

Prime Minister Modi also extended India’s support for training to a cohort of Pundits from Fiji in India who would also participate in the ‘International Geeta Mahotsav’ (IGM 2025) in India later this year. An International Geeta Mahotsav event will also be organized in Fiji coinciding with IGM 2025 celebrations in India.

Russian Ambassador Sees Serbia Protests as Early Attempt to Destabilize Country

Belgrade, Aug 25 (UNI) : The current protests in Serbia are only the "first roller" that should destabilize the country and the government, then the leaders of the protest movement will take the stage, Russian Ambassador to Belgrade Alexander Botsan-Kharchenko told Sputnik.

"As soon as the protest movement — the first roller in the plans [of the West], which should sweep away the government — immediately after it, some people appear who will promote the European Union. They will say that these are those who can be relied upon, who will lead Serbia to a 'happy European future,'" Botsan-Kharchenko said.

According to the ambassador's assumption, now these are some little-known people in Serbia, who have not previously shown themselves in any way.

"Most likely, few will know them. As, by the way, many leaders of other countries who are nearby," the diplomat predicts.Student and opposition protests began in Serbia after the collapse of a canopy at the railway station in the city of Novi Sad on November 1, 2024, which resulted in the death of 16 people.

China issues yellow alert for Typhoon Kajiki

Beijing, Aug 25 (UNI) :China's national observatory activated a yellow alert the third highest level in its four tier color coded weather warning system for Typhoon Kajiki today, forecasting gales and rainstorms in the nation's southern and southwestern regions through tommorow.

The National Meteorological Center (NMC) reported that as of today morning, Typhoon Kajiki was positioned in the southern Beibu Gulf waters, moving west northwest at 15-20 km/h with expected landfall in coastal Vietnam today night. Due to its impact, from 2 p.m. today to 2 p.m. tommorow, strong winds will affect the western part of the South China Sea and waters near Xisha Islands, Beibu Gulf and Qiongzhou Strait, as well as the coastal areas of Hainan, Guangxi and Guangdong. During the same period, Yunnan, Guangdong and Hainan provinces, as well as the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, will experience heavy rains and rainstorms, according to the NMC. The NMC urged the local authorities to implement emergency preparedness measures for the typhoon, and potential flooding and geological disasters triggered by the heavy rainfall.

US not placing more tariffs on China as existing ones Already High : Vance

Washington, Aug 25 (UNI) : The US is not introducing new import tariffs against China for its trade partnership with Russia, since the current rate on US imports of Chinese goods is already high, US Vice President JD Vance said on Sunday.

"Obviously, we have a 54% tariff on the PRC [People's Republic of China] right now, so we have already applied pretty hefty sanctions on the Chinese," Vance said in an interview with NBC News when asked about why Washington was not imposing secondary sanctions on Beijing as the largest buyer of Russian oil.The US authorities have had "a number of conversations at all levels of government" to try and persuade China to assist the US in resolving the Ukrainian crisis, the vice president added.

Hungary calls for Ukraine to not threaten it, tells it to stop disrupting its energy post attack on oil pipeline

Budapest, Aug 25 (UNI) In a sharp attack on Ukraine, Hungary has called on Kyiv to stop disrupting its energy supply following a targeted attack on the Soviet-era Druzhiba (Friendship) oil pipeline to Central Europe, reports RT.The attack has sparked the ire of both Hungary and Slovakia, both of whom have taken the matter to the European Commission. Ukrainian drones have struck the Druzhiba pipeline several times, most recently on August 2 and 13.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto told Ukraine not to threaten Budapest, and slammed the drone attacks on the Druzhiba pipeline, which he said was critical to the country's energy supply.

Further calling it an attack on the country's sovereignty, he wrote on X: "In recent days, Ukraine has conducted serious attacks on our energy supply, while attacking a country's energy security is, in fact, an attack on that country's sovereignty."

He stressed: "We call on the President of Ukraine to stop his threats against our country and to end reckless attacks on Hungary's energy security."

The spat escalated into a war of words with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiha retorting that Budapest has no right to tell Kyiv what to do.

"You don't need to tell the Ukrainian President what to do or say, and when. He is the President of Ukraine, not Hungary. Hungary's energy security is in your own hands. Diversify and become independent from Russia, like the rest of Europe," he wrote on X.

The Hungarian FM in turn simply wrote "Stop attacking our energy security! This is not our war!"

The Soviet era pipeline is one of the longest pipelines in the world, and has now become a flashpoint in the wider energy war between Kyiv and Moscow, with diplomatic skirmishes also resulting from other European states, which are heavily reliant on it for energy supply.

Canadian PM announces new military assistance for Ukraine

Ottawa, Aug 25 (IANS) : Visiting Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney announced in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv new military assistance for Ukraine, according to a news release issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

The funding of 2 billion Canadian dollars (\$1.45 billion) was committed at the June G7 Summit held in Canada's Kananaskis, Xinhua news agency reported.

About 835 million Canadian dollars (\$603 million) of the total are planned to procure a range of critical equipment for Ukraine, including armored vehicles, medical equipment, spare parts, small arms, ammunition, and explosives, as well as additional drone capabilities and other urgently needed equipment and supplies for Ukraine, the release said.

About 680 million Canadian dollars (\$491

Russia's Pulkovo Airport Cancels 90 Flights During Airspace Restrictions

Moscow, Aug 25 (UNI) The Pulkovo international airport in the northwestern Russian city of St. Petersburg canceled 90 flights and delayed or diverted dozens others due to the recent airspace restrictions, the airport authority said on Sunday.

"The airport operated under restrictions for about 20 hours. During this time, 90 flights were canceled, about 80 were delayed for more than 2 hours, and 42 were diverted to spare airfields," the statement read.Earlier in the day, the Russian Federal Air Transport Agency reported that restrictions on takeoffs and landings at St. Petersburg's Pulkovo had been lifted.

The airport is operating in an enhanced mode. Airport and airline staff are making every effort to normalize the flight schedule as soon as possible, the airport administration said.

Death toll from Israeli airstrikes on Sanaa rises to 6

Cairo,Aug 25 (UNI) The death toll from Israeli airstrikes against the Yemeni capital of Sanaa has risen to six, with 86 people injured, the country's health ministry said on Monday.Earlier reports indicated that four people were killed and 67 were injured in the airstrikes.

"According to the final figures, the death toll from the Zionist aggression has risen to six and 86 people were injured," Houthi health ministry spokesman Anis Al-Asbahi said on X. On Sunday, a Yemeni source told Sputnik that Israel had carried out airstrikes on the Yemeni capital and its outskirts. The airstrikes targeted a military camp near the presidential palace in Sanaa, a power plant, and an oil company facility, the source said.



million) are for the purchase of military equipment sourced from the United States to strengthen Ukraine's air defence capabilities and provide other urgently needed military assistance, the release said.

About 220 million Canadian dollars (\$159 million) will be used to purchase drone, counter-drone, and electronic

warfare capabilities, including investments in joint ventures between Ukrainian and Canadian industry, it said.

Zelensky welcomed Canada's readiness to allocate \$500 million under the Prioritized Ukraine Requirements List initiative to help Ukraine procure US weapons.

He also proposed that Canada join major energy

projects in Ukraine.

"We have the necessary port infrastructure and storage capacities. Ukrainian storage facilities can be used for the supply of Canadian gas," Zelensky said.

He further expressed hope that Canada could play an active role in implementing security guarantees for Ukraine.

India informs Pakistan of possible flooding in Jammu, in first major contact since military standoff

Islamabad/New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) : India has informed Pakistan of possible flooding of the River Tawi in Jammu, though not via the mechanism of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).

This marks the first major communication between the two countries since the May 10 ceasefire following the Pahalgam terror attack.

The alert was sent by the Indian High Commission in Islamabad to the Pakistan Foreign Office, warning of a "significant flood situation".Islamabad issued warnings to residents following the

notification, as well as alerted its National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), irrigation departments, and defence personnel to be ready, reports Geo News.

Torrential rainfalls have caused significant waterlogging and flooding in both Jammu & Kashmir and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK).

India suspended the Indus Waters Treaty following the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, with New Delhi no longer being obligated to inform Pakistani authorities of water discharges from dams or construction of any hydropower

infrastructure in India, or otherwise sharing any crucial data.

While Pakistan has objected to this several times and even taken up the issue in international forums, India has kept the treaty in abeyance, citing Islamabad's continued promotion of cross-border terrorism.

The Pahalgam terror attack also led to India launching cross-border attacks on terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir on May 7 under Operation Sindoor, which led to a four-day military standoff between the two nations, ending in a ceasefire on May 10.

Donald Trump threatens to expand National Guard deployment to Baltimore

Washington, Aug 25 (UNI) : United States President Donald Trump yesterday threatened to expand the military deployment to Baltimore in a clash with Maryland Governor Wes Moore, who critici?ed the deployment of National Guard in Washington, D.C., and invited Trump to visit his state and discuss public safety.Trump said in a post on Truth Social, "Wes Moore's record on Crime is a very bad one, unless he fudges his figures on crime like many of the other 'Blue States' are doing." "But if Wes Moore needs help, like Gavin Newsom (Newsom) did in L.A., I will send in the 'troops,' which is being done in nearby DC, and quickly clean up the Crime," he added, Trump's remarks were in response to the

Maryland governor's recent offer that Trump could "walk the streets of Maryland" and discuss public safety, an offer Trump viewed as being delivered in a "nasty and provocative tone."

"The reason that I asked the president to come and join us is because he seems to enjoy living in this blissful ignorance, these tropes and these 1980s scare tactics," Moore said in an interview with CBS.

"While the President is spending his time from the Oval Office making jabs and attacks at us, there are people actually on the ground doing the work who know what supports would actually work to continue to bring down crime. But it's falling on deaf ears of the president of the United States," Moore said.

Australian greenhouse gas emissions down 1.4 pct in 12 months to March

Canberra, Aug 25 (UNI) : Australia's greenhouse gas emissions fell by 1.4 percent in the 12 month period to March 2025, according to a government report published today.

The quarterly report on emissions from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) said that Australia produced 440.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions in the year to March, down from 446.7 million tonnes in the preceding 12 months.

The report said,

WFP Chief Says World in Midst of Worst Humanitarian Crisis on Earth

Tokyo, Aug 25 (UNI) UN World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director Cindy McCain said the world was in the midst of the worst humanitarian crisis on Earth and described the situation in the Gaza Strip as catastrophic, stressing that she feels intense anger over the inability to provide aid to people due to Israel's ongoing military operation.

"There's very serious malnutrition. You've seen people die of hunger there," she said in an interview with the Japanese broadcaster NHK.McCain added that she was extremely angry that aid efforts were being hampered by ongoing Israeli military attacks, which were exacerbating food shortages."It's very difficult when they're pointing guns at us or tanks or anything else. There's been aid stoppage

because all of a sudden that road is blocked. We can't get in," McCain added.The WFP chief noted that other regions facing disastrous humanitarian crises included Sudan and South Sudan, DRC Congo and the Sahel.On Friday, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization declared a state of catastrophic famine in the Palestinian semi-exclave for the first time.

The UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) distinguishes five stages of food insecurity, with levels three through five representing severe food insecurity.

The final stage, stage five, represents catastrophic famine. It estimates that by the end of September, more than 640,000 people in Gaza will face catastrophic levels of food insecurity, classified as phase five on the IPC.

South Korean president's approval rating falls to 64.2 pct says poll

Seoul, Aug 25 (UNI) South Korean President Lee Jae myung's approval rating fell 3.8 percentage points from a week earlier to 64.2 percent last week, a weekly poll showed today. The negative assessment on Lee's conduct of state affairs rose 3.4 percentage points to 34.3 percent, according to the computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATT) by local pollster Flower Research.

The ruling liberal Democratic Party's support decreased 4.3 percentage points to 49.7 percent, while the conservative opposition People Power Party's approval score gained 4.1 percentage points to 28.6 percent. Support rate for the minor left-leaning Rebuilding Korea Party and the minor rightist New Reform Party logged 4.6 percent and 3.2 percent each last week.

The pollster's separate survey of automated response system (ARS) showed that Lee's approval rating retreated 2.2 percentage points to 56.4 percent last week compared to the previous week. The CATI and the ARS surveyed 1,005 and 1,007 voters each from Friday to Saturday. They had plus and minus 3.1 percentage points in margin of error with a 95 percent confidence level.

Australia's emissions in the year to March were 28 percent lower than in the calendar year 2005. Under the Paris Agreement, Australia has committed to cutting its emissions by at least 43 percent from 2005 levels by 2030.

"We are on track to achieve our emissions reduction goals if we stay the course and continue to lift our efforts," Chris Bowen, the minister for climate change and energy, said in a statement today.

The DCCEEW report said that emissions from the electricity, industrial processes and stationary

energy sectors were lower in the year to March than in the preceding 12 months, attributing the fall to technology improvements, changes in production, and a decline in residential gas demand.

Preliminary data for the second quarter of 2025, also contained in the report, showed that emissions dropped further in the 12 months to June 2025 to 436 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, which would represent a fall of 2.1 percent from the preceding 12 months and of 29 percent from 2005 levels.

SL tightens security for former president Wickremesinghe remanded in hospital

Colombo, Aug 25 (Xinhua) :A special security detail has been assigned to the Colombo National hospital, where former President Ranil Wickremesinghe was receiving medical treatment after being remanded on Friday, a spokesperson for the Department of Prisons

said today. According to prison spokesperson Jagath Weerasinghe, seven jailors and four prison guards have been deployed to ensure Wickremesinghe's security.

Wickremesinghe was arrested and remanded on charges of misusing state funds. He was initially

admitted to the prison hospital and transferred to the Colombo National hospital later. This marks the first time in Sri Lanka's history that a former executive president has been arrested and remanded. His case is scheduled to be heard again tomorrow.

Home & Garden



Home decorating ideas for busy people

Wish to revamp your abode, but don't have the time to do it? Make use of cutlery, crockery and candles to beautify your nest.

Here we share some quick ways to spruce up your space:

- When it comes to a quick livening up of a living room, lighting helps. Add soft lighting devices like candles or votive to your living room. You can also place a few pillows on your sofa-set.
- Keep everything in your bedroom that makes you happy. Soft bed linens are a door to your blissful sleep. Place lamp shades for cozy lightings. Walls add dimensions to your room. Embellish them with your favourite colours and



loads of memories by hanging photo frames.

- Essentials of a good looking kitchen include cooking and serving tools. Don't hide your beautiful cutlery and crockery sets in cabinets. Rather, display them. Window in your kitchen is an ideal place. Make some shelves and display your collection. Plus, the light through the window will make it look beautiful.
- Adorn your dining table with details like coasters, a crystal vase filled with fresh flowers.
- Always make sure to keep things back at the place where you pick it up from. This will not create clutter, and obviously a neat and trimmed room is always good looking.

5 surprise cleaners for your home



Bread

Love to paint? Use white bread to dust an oil painting! Gently dab a slice of white bread over the surface to pick up dirt and grime.

Ketchup

Some tomato ketchup can be used to remove tarnish from copper and brass cookware. Squeeze the ketchup on a cloth and rub it on pots and pans. They should go back to their coppery colour in minutes. Rinse with warm water and dry with a towel.

Oatmeal

It is useful to scrub very dirty hands. Make a thick paste of oatmeal and water and rinse well.

Rice

Rice can be used to clean the inside of a vase or a thin-necked bottle. Fill three quarters of the vase with warm water and add a tablespoon of uncooked rice. Cup your hand over the opening, shake vigorously and rinse.

Tea

It can help in cleaning rusty garden tools. Brew a few pots of strong black tea. When cool, pour it into a bucket. Soak

What if we revealed some around-the-house staples that also moonlight as dirt-busting superstars? Here are five unexpected natural cleaners to help you with your kitchen woes:

the tools for a few hours. Wipe each one with a cloth. (Wear rubber gloves or your hands will be stained.)

Glycerin

If you want to remove dried wax drippings from candlesticks, a few drops of glycerin will be very helpful. Peel off as much wax as possible, then moisten a cotton ball with glycerin and rub until clean!

Club soda

A scuffed stainless-steel sink can be made to shine, with a little bit of club soda.

Cornstarch

If you've stained your favourite carpet with grease, here what you can do to prevent it from getting completely ruined. Pour cornstarch on the spots and let it sit for 15 to 30 minutes before vacuuming.

Rubbing alcohol

Erase permanent-marker stains from finished wood floors or solid-surface countertops, by pouring some rubbing alcohol on it.

Be smart when you Shop online

While online shopping has grown at an exponential rate in the past few years, industry experts say that it is still in its nascent stage when compared to Internet shopping abroad.

In India, shopping websites have multiplied so quickly that consumers are literally being spoiled for choice and it quite literally, is raining discounts. However, don't get carried away when you see all the supposedly 'great' offers that lure you. Make sure that you do your homework before making any impulsive buy. Here's what you need to keep in mind...

- Competition is hotting up and consumers are reaping the benefits. With hundreds of websites, prices inadvertently vary. So, if you're looking for something specific, go on multiple websites and compare the prices so that you get the best deal.
- If you're unsure about a new website, avoid paying by debit or credit card. Instead, opt for the cash on delivery option to be on the safe side.
- Before purchasing any item, it is always a smart idea to go through the exchange and returns policy so that you aren't stuck with something you don't want or something of an inferior quality. Go through the conditions of exchange properly. There are some items that can't be returned or exchanged, no matter

- what.
- Sign up for newsletters on shopping websites. Members are always given something 'extra' for signing up. This can be discount vouchers, redeemable points or even prior information about a blowout sale.
- Grocery shopping has also become huge in Indian metros. However, avoid shopping for food on an empty stomach! You might just end up ordering more than what you actually need.
- A lot of shopping websites now have 'special sale days' where many items are sold at whopping discounts. Once you know the dates of the sale, make a list of the items you want so that you don't waste time browsing for them later. Once sale time begins (usually 8am), quickly buy your items before they get sold out or the server crashes.
- Unsure about a particular item? Read the reviews posted by users. That should give you a fair idea of whether it is worth buying or not.



Turns out a simple dose of salt can solve a whole slew of home disasters, like cracked egg messes and spills. And not only are the fixes incredibly easy, but they're also usually cheaper than using other fancy cleaning products.

Here are a few of our favourite ways to let salt save the day.

Get rid of caked-on pan grease

Cover the greasy residue with a layer of salt, then add some water and wait 10 minutes. The solution will dissolve the grease, allowing you to easily wipe it away.

Clean a grimy wood cutting board

You shouldn't put wood cutting boards in the dishwasher, but you can disinfect them with hot water, salt and lemon juice.

Clean up a cracked egg

There's no need for wads of paper towels. Cover the mess with salt, and wait 10 to 15 minutes. The salt will turn the egggy goo into a crumbly sand that's easy to wipe up.

Clear up a red wine stain

Sprinkle salt on the fresh stain, and wait 5 minutes. Splash with cold water, and rub until the stain disappears.

Clear up a hair clog in the drain

Make a natural drain cleaning mix by mixing 1/4 cup of baking soda and 1/4 cup of salt. Remove as much hair from the drain as you can with your (gloved!) hands, and then pour the mixture down the drain. Follow with 1/2 cup of white vinegar, and let sit for 15 minutes. Rinse everything down with a pot of boiling water. Voila!

Get sticky gunk off your iron

Turn your iron on high, and sprinkle a generous amount of salt onto a piece of wax paper. Move the hot iron over the paper, and watch the salt cause your gunk to fall right off.

Get rid of mildew

To banish mildew stains and smells from clothes or towels, make a paste from salt and lemon juice. Rub the paste on the stain, then let dry (ideally in the sun). Run clothes through the washing machine for good measure.

DIY dishwasher soap

If you find yourself in a pinch, make your own dishwasher detergent from salt, baking soda and regular dish soap. It works like a charm!

Clean a grime-covered sponge

Fill a container with 2 cups of water and a



72nd All India Railway Badminton (Men and Women) Championship – 2025-26 Concluded

(Standard Post Bureau)
Hyderabad, Aug 25 : 72nd All India Railway Badminton (Men & Women) Championship 2025-26 which was organized by Sports Association, South Central Railway from 20.08.2025 to 24.08.2025 at Multipurpose Indoor Stadium, Railway Sports Complex Grounds, Secunderabad got concluded today i.e., 24th August, 2025. Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway was the chief guest for ceremonial function and distributed the prizes among the winners. Shri Satya Prakash, Additional General Manager, SCR and other senior railway officials were also present.

Total 19 teams from Men's category and 12 teams from Women's category have participated in Mixed Doubles, Men's Doubles, Women's Doubles, Men's Singles, Women's Singles and Veteran's Doubles (aged



above 45 years) categories from all zones over Indian Railways. The matches were played in knockout rounds.

Men's Team Championship winners are South Eastern Railway; runners-up are North Eastern Railway and Northern Railway stood in third place. Women's Team Championship winners are West Central Railway; runners-up are North Eastern Railway and North Western Railway stood in third place.

In the veteran's category winners are Shri Sanjeet Prathan & Yogesh from Central Railway and runners-up are Shri Lalit Kumar & Praveen Kumar from Railway Board.

While addressing the players, Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, stated that sports events like badminton tournament will boost the morale of the staff and improves the commitment towards serving organization.

Hockey Asia Cup 2025 Trophy unveiled

Rajgir, Aug 25 (UNI) : union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports and Labour & Employment, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya today unveiled the glittering Hockey Men's Asia Cup 2025 Trophy here, marking the countdown to the tournament's 12th edition, scheduled to be held from August 29 to September 7, 2025 at the Rajgir Hockey Stadium in Bihar.

The Rajgir edition is set to be historic, being the first major international hockey tournament hosted in Bihar, adding to the growing sporting stature of the state. Also present on the occasion of trophy unveiling on Monday evening were Harbinder Singh - three-time Olympics medalist, Ashok Dhyanchand - bronze medalist at 1972 Olympics, Zafar Iqbal - gold medalist at 1980 Moscow Olympics, as well as officials from the Bihar State Government and Hockey India.

This year's Asia Cup will also serve as a direct qualifier for the 2026 FIH Men's Hockey World Cup in the Netherlands and Belgium. The tournament winner will secure an automatic berth, while the teams finishing second to sixth will proceed to next year's World Cup qualifiers.

Gaurav Gogoi urges BCCI for steps to avoid any cricketing engagement with Pakistan

Guwahati, Aug 25 (UNI) : Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and Assam Congress Chief Gaurav Gogoi has urged BCCI to take a clear stand to avoid cricketing engagements with Pakistan until conditions are favourable and conducive to the nation's interest.

Gogoi said this to BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia in a letter while expressing concern regarding Indian Cricket team's matches against Pakistan.

"I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the Indian cricket team's participation in matches against Pakistan. While cricket has always been a sport that brings Joy among people,

in the context of current India and Pakistan relations such engagements should not be prioritized over national interest," Gogoi said in his letter to the BCCI Secretary.

"The cross - border tensions still persist and we all are aware of the sacrifices of our armed forces. In such circumstances playing bilateral cricket with Pakistan appears contrary to the national interest," he said

"We had sent our delegation across the globe in order to spread the fact that Pakistan is behind the Pahalgam terrorist attack. We have also been taking certain steps to avoid any sort of engagement with Pakistan at international level. Even our Honourable Prime Minister mentioned that water and blood cannot flow together. Engaging with Pakistan at this stage sends out a message that undermines the sentiments of the people of India who stand firmly against any compromise on national security," said the chief of Assam Pradesh Congress Committee.

Gogoi further said that Pakistan had backed out of playing Hockey in India, mentioning the security concerns.

"Resuming cricket ties under the present circumstances may dilute the seriousness of our national concerns regarding security and diplomacy," he said while requesting that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) must take a clear stand to avoid cricketing engagements with Pakistan until conditions are favourable and conducive to the nation's interest.

FIFA launches host city tender for FIFaE Festival

Zurich (Switzerland), Aug 25 (UNI) : FIFA is launching a new global experience with the FIFaE Festival, kicking off next year. This event will place host cities at the heart of one of the world's fastest-growing entertainment spaces – where football, esports, gaming and youth culture come together.

With multiple games in play, the event opens the doors for fans and newcomers alike to dive into the world of digital football.

In line with Goal 3 of FIFA's Strategic Objectives for the Global Game: 2023-2027, part of which centres on engaging more young people through football, the FIFaE Festival represents a unique opportunity for prospective host cities and Member Associations.

With the tender process now officially open, FIFA invites pioneering cities to become founding destinations of a landmark

event that will shape digital football's future.

The FIFaE Festival will take esports beyond the competition arena, turning it into a vibrant global celebration. By blending gaming experiences, live music, creator showcases, career opportunities and industry engagement, the event aims to become the ultimate community hub for the entire digital football scene. Complementing the elite, competition-focused FIFaE Finals, the FIFaE Festival opens the door to a wider audience, helping to grow and diversify the ecosystem. Prospective host cities can express their interest in staging the first-ever FIFaE Festival next year or the editions in 2027 and 2028 by emailing FIFaE.I.T.T@fifa.org, according to FIFA media statement. The tender process will conclude on October 31, 2025, while the deadline to express an interest is September 12.

Top coaches see KIWSF as springboard for global success

Srinagar, Aug 25 (UNI) : The sun may have set on the Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025, but the first-ever consolidated, national-level, Open-age competition featuring kayaking, coaching and rowing has set a new chapter in the history of water sports in the country.

The Games, hosted by the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council under the supervision of the Sports Authority of India, has lifted the enthusiasm of water sports athletes and their coaches as they eye qualification for Los Angeles Olympics 2028 and aim to win medals in other global competitions.

All the 24 gold medals, 10 were in rowing, decided at Dal Lake from August 21-23 were Olympic events.

Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Kerala emerged the top three states in the Khelo India Water Sports Festival. An iconic lake in Bhopal, a water sports training centre alongside the Bay of Bengal and a SAI Centre of Excellence in the

lap of Kerala's enchanting backwaters in Alappuzha gained headlines after athletes from these facilities made a big splash at the Dal.

The performance of water sports exponents like Rasmita Sahoo, Bidya Devi Oinam and Shruti Tanaji Chougule, who train at SAI's Jagatpur centre in Odisha; Dally Bishnoi, Shikha Chauhan and Pallavi Jagtab of MP and, Vishal Dangi of Uttarakhand have given the kayaking and canoeing fraternity great hope. Shikha and Pallavi were part of an Indian trioka that recently won a historic silver in the Asian Canoe Slalom Championship in Guizhou, China.

The performance of kayakers and canoeists who train at the five SAI centres across India were noteworthy. Forty-seven SAI athletes won five golds, seven silvers and three bronze medals. Jagatpur, which had 15 athletes at KIWSF 2025, was the best with three golds and five silvers.

Under the new sports

policy (Khelo Bharat Niti) aimed at upliftment and exposure, the KIWSF festival aims to be a gamechanger. The Dal Games have already motivated the water sports fraternity and given government's support through its TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) and TAGG (Target Asian Games Group) schemes, the impact could be seen in the Asian Games in Japan next year. More than 30 gold medals each are at stake in the Olympics and Asian Games in kayaking and canoeing alone and India can certainly think of winning a medal at these global meets, feel experts. Coaches associated with SAI's National Centres of Excellence in Odisha and Kerala sound motivated already. Team champions Madhya Pradesh, which won 10 of the 24 gold medals in KIWSF, are equally bolstered.

The powerhouse performance Madhya Pradesh displayed in Srinagar wasn't by chance.

Haryana Steelers unveil 'Team Jersey' with principal partner JSW Cement

Mumbai, Aug 25 (UNI) : The Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) defending champions, Haryana Steelers, launched their official team jersey for the upcoming season with their Principal Partner JSW Cement.

The launch took place at the JSW Centre in the presence of Gurminder Singh, Head of Marketing, JSW Cement, and Divyanshu Singh, CEO, Haryana Steelers and JSW Sports, alongside the team captain, Jaideep Dahiya, and Vice-Captain Rahul Sethpal, who came together to reveal the new look. JSW Cement, part of the JSW Conglomerate, has been associated with the team for the past two seasons and continues its support into the third consecutive season as Principal Partner.

The event celebrated

the team's championship spirit and determination to get off to a flying start in the new season. Having finished runners-up in Season 10 and lifting the championship title in Season 11, the Steelers have showcased their consistency and grit on the PKL stage. JSW Cement, one of the key partners in the Steelers' journey, showed their continued commitment towards promoting sporting excellence and reinforced their association with one of India's most exciting kabaddi teams through its presence at the launch.

"JSW Cement is delighted to continue its association with the Haryana Steelers as their Principal Partner for the third consecutive year," said Gurminder Singh, Head of Marketing, JSW Cement.

"The energy and dedication of the team are a powerful reflection of our brand's character and spirit. As the Steelers take to the mat to defend their title, we wish them the best for their upcoming season."

On the occasion of the launch, Divyanshu Singh, CEO, Haryana Steelers and JSW Sports said, "At JSW Sports, we are focused on building teams that embody resilience, hard work, and a winning spirit; values the Steelers have consistently displayed. With the continued support of partners like JSW Cement, and the passion of our fans, we are confident the team will deliver yet another electrifying season as the defending champions." As the countdown to the season begins, the team is confident, battle-ready, and eager to rewrite history.

Mbappe at double as Real Madrid wins in Oviedo

Madrid, Aug 25 (UNI) : Kylian Mbappe scored twice as Real Madrid maintained its perfect start to the season with a 3-0 win away to newly promoted Oviedo.

The home side pushed Madrid hard in front of a packed Carlos Tartiere Stadium but was undone by a controversial call and missed chances at key moments on Sunday.

Mbappe opened the scoring in the 38th minute after a pass from Aurelien Tchouameni, although Oviedo players protested that the referee had failed to call a foul in the buildup.

Oviedo nearly equalized in the 83rd minute when Kwasi Sibon struck the post. Moments later, Mbappe

netted his second after receiving a pass from substitute Vinicius Jr., who then added Madrid's third deep into stoppage time.

Villarreal cruised to a 5-0 home win over Girona after racing to a 4-0 lead inside 28 minutes. Nicolas Pepe struck in the seventh minute before Tajon Buchanan scored twice and Rafa Marin added another.

Buchanan completed his hat trick in the second half as Villarreal claimed its first victory of the campaign, while Girona has conceded eight goals in just two games.

Ante Budimir's powerful early header gave Osasuna a 1-0 win at home to Valencia, which played most of the match with 10

men after Jose Gaya was sent off midway through the first half. Valencia pressed late but saw a potential equalizer ruled out for offside.

Espanyol squandered a 2-0 lead away to Real Sociedad. Pere Milla scored in the 10th minute and Javi Puado converted a stoppage-time penalty to put Espanyol 2-0 ahead at the break, but Ander Barrenetxea and Orri Oskarsson struck in the 61st and 69th minutes to salvage a draw for Sociedad.

On Saturday, FC Barcelona came down to 2-0 down to win 3-2 away to newly promoted Levante. Ivan Romero and Jose Luis Morales, from the penalty

spot, gave Levante a halftime lead before Pedri's long-range strike and Ferran Torres' goal quickly pulled Barcelona level.

In stoppage time, Lamine Yamal's cross was deflected into his own net by Unai Elgezabal to complete the comeback. Atletico Madrid struggled again, drawing 1-1 at home to Elche. Alexander Sorloth scored in the eighth minute for Atletico, but Rafa Mir equalized seven minutes later. Atletico pressed hard after the break but could not find a winner.

Elsewhere, Mallorca needed a late goal to draw 1-1 at home to Celta Vigo, while Betis edged Deportivo Alaves 1-0 on Friday night.

Harmanpreet Singh-led India optimistic about retaining Asia No.1 spot

Rajgir, Aug 25 (UNI) Indian Men's Hockey Team Captain Harmanpreet Singh today appeared confident of winning saying that the Indian team was not taking any team lightly.

After the Indian Men's Hockey Team arrived Bihar on for the prestigious Asia Cup Rajgir, Bihar 2025, Harmanpreet said, "We have never played in Bihar and it's exciting to see that Rajgir is already hosting it's second international hockey tournament within a span of one year. This shows the government's intent to support the game and we are looking forward to the love and support of hockey fans here throughout the tournament."

He said that India had

won the Bronze medal in the previous edition held in Jakarta where a young team with 15 debutants showed heart in their campaign by finishing on the podium. This time, however, with the World Cup qualification at stake, India has brought their best squad to the campaign and will be looking to showcase their A game in Rajgir.

Meanwhile Chief Coach Craig Fulton expressed his delight over playing in Bihar for the first time.

"We are very happy to arrive in Bihar for this prestigious tournament. It is great that international hockey is being hosted here and we want to inspire the people of this region with our game, and create more fans for the sport,"

Fulton stated. Speaking about the importance of this tournament, Fulton said, "The team's preparations have been solid for this tournament. Our approach will be similar to that of Paris Olympics where we began with good wins in the pool stage. We want to start well here, take

it game-by-game, build on our momentum and we are cognisant that it's been eight years since India last won the title (in 2017, Dhaka). "India is grouped in Pool A along with Japan, China and Kazakhstan while Pool B features Malaysia, Korea, Bangladesh and Chinese Taipei.

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PM dedicates railway projects worth more than Rs 1,400 core to the Nation in Gujarat

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Aug 25 : Mr Narendra Modi, Prime Minister dedicated to the Nation a series of Railway projects worth over ?1,400 crore during his visit to Gujarat on Monday, 25th August, 2025. These include the doubling of the Mahesana–Palanpur Rail Line, gauge conversion of the Kalol–Kadi–Katosan Road Rail Line and the Bechraji–Ranuj Rail Line along with the flagging off of a new passenger train between Katosan Road and Sabarmati and first dedicated automobile Freight Train from Bechraji station via Ranuj to North India. The main function was held at Ahmedabad and the event was attended by Shri Acharya Devvrat, Hon’ble Governor of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri C.R. Patil, Hon’ble Union Minister of Jal Shakti and other dignitaries. Also, local function were held at Kadi Railway station and Bechraji which was attended by concerned Members of Parliament, Members of Legislative Assembly, Local Representatives, etc. These projects will particularly benefit the districts of Mahesana, Patan, Banaskantha, Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad in North Gujarat. Collectively, they are expected to enhance regional connectivity, spur industrial development, improve logistics efficiency and create new avenues for



In 1st Photo Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi is addressing the gathering at a function held at Ahmedabad on 25th August, 2025. In the 2nd photo, Hon’ble PM is seen flagging off the Katosan Road – Sabarmati MEMU train from Kadi railway station, as well as First Dedicated Automobile Freight Train from Bechraji station via Ranuj to North India.

employment. The doubling of the 65 km Mahesana–Palanpur Rail Line has been executed at a cost of ?537 crore, while the 37 km Kalol–Kadi–Katosan Road Rail Line has also been converted to broad gauge at a cost of ?347 crore. Similarly, the 40 km Bechraji–Ranuj Rail Line has also been converted to broad gauge at a cost of ?520 crore. The completion of these projects have ensured smoother, safer and more seamless connectivity, especially for Mahesana, Banaskantha and Patan districts. They have significantly eased travel for daily commuters, tourists and businesses, while promoting regional economic integration. The doubling of tracks

has enhanced line capacity, making it possible to run higher-speed trains on the Ahmedabad–Delhi corridor. The completion of this project has eased out traffic congestions and unnecessary passenger train detentions due to crossing, ensuring punctuality in train movement. This development facilitates introduction of more passenger services as well as improves the efficiency of freight operations, thereby giving a fresh momentum to Gujarat’s economic activities. The 37 km long Kalol–Kadi–Katosan Road Rail Line has been converted to broad gauge at a cost of ?347 crore. This project has provided a vital boost to

passenger as well as freight connectivity in the region. The gauge conversion has ensured seamless integration with the national broad-gauge rail network, enabling faster and more efficient movement of goods and people. The project is particularly beneficial to local commuters, small businesses and industries around Kadi and Kalol, which are important industrial and agricultural hubs of Gujarat. It also reduces travel time, improves accessibility to Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, and enhances economic activities in the surrounding areas. The gauge conversion of the Bechraji–Ranuj Rail

Line has been carried out in alignment with the National Logistics Policy and the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan for Multimodal Connectivity. This initiative reduces logistics costs and further strengthens Gujarat’s position in the national Logistics Performance Index, accelerating the socio-economic progress of North Gujarat while setting a benchmark in India’s logistics and railway sectors. On this occasion, the Hon’ble Prime Minister also flagged off the inaugural service of Katosan Road – Sabarmati MEMU train from Kadi railway station, as well as the first dedicated automobile Freight Train

from Bechraji station via Ranuj to North India. The new passenger service provides improved access to religious destinations, benefits daily commuters in the region and stimulates economic activity at the grassroots level. The freight service will enhance connectivity to the state’s industrial hubs, strengthen the logistics network and generate employment opportunities. These sustainable and environment-friendly transportation initiatives will reduce travel time, attract new investments and boost regional industrial growth. All these Railway projects mark a significant step towards building a Viksit Bharat through a Viksit Gujarat.

Ganpati Special train services announced by Central Railway till date totals up to 310

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Aug 25 : Indian Railways has announced 380 Ganpati Special train trips till date for 2025. Central Railway is operating the highest number of 310 services addressing the heavy festive travel demand in Maharashtra and the Konkan region. The latest addition to Special Trains is 4 Special services between Mumbai - Sawantwadi Road Details are as under: **LTT-Sawantwadi Road –LTT Special (4 trips)** 01109 special will leave Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 01.00 hrs on

26.08.2025(Tuesday) & 27.08.2025 (Wednesday) and will arrive Sawantwadi Road at 15.55 hrs same day.(2 trips) 01110 special will leave Sawantwadi Road at 17.30hrs on 26.08.2025(Tuesday) & 27.08.2025(Wednesday)and will arrive Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 05.10 hrs next day. (2 trips) Halts: Thane, Panvel, Pen, Roha, Khed, Chiplun, Sangamesgar Road, Ratnagiri, Rajapur Road, Vaibhavwadi Road, Kankavali, Sindhudurg and Kudal. Composition: One 1st AC, One AC-2Tier, 5 AC-3Tier, 8 Sleeper Class, 4 General Second class, 1 Second Seating cum

Guard’s brake van, 1 Generator car and 1 Pantry Car. Reservation: Bookings of special train nos 01109 & 01110 is open at all computerised reservation centres and on website www.irc.co.in For detailed timings at halts of this special train please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or download NTES App Bookings for Unreserved Coaches can be done through UTS system with normal charges for unreserved accommodation as applicable for superfast Mail/Express trains. Passengers are requested to avail these special train services.

Safety Award Presented at Hubballi Railway Division : SWR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Aug 25 : South Western Railway Hubballi Division, organized a Safety Award Ceremony today at Railway Officers Club, Hubballi. 59 divisional railway staff from various Branch were presented with Safety Awards for their outstanding performance in safety-related activities. Shri Prem Chandra Harijan, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (ADRM/G) distributed the awards and addressed the gathering, he said that safety is the fundamental core of railway services and remains our top priority. Every employee must strictly follow duty protocols. He emphasized that staff should work with discipline, sincerity and dedication to uphold trust. The award recipients today have set an example for the Railway through their hard work and integrity. Such achievements will serve as an inspiration for fellow colleagues, he added. The event was attended by Senior Divisional Safety Officer (Sr.DSO) Shri Trinetra K.R, and other senior officials from various Branch and staff members.

CM, Devendra Fadvanis to Flag-Off Hazur Sahib Nanded – CSMT Inaugural Special Vande Bharat Express on today

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Aug 25 : Devendra Fadvanis, Chief Minister, Maharashtra, will flag off Train no 02705 Hazur Sahib Nanded – CSMT Inaugural Special Vande Bharat Express (through Video Conferencing) on 26.08.2025. Various dignitaries will grace the occasion with their august presence at a function to be held at Hazur Sahib Nanded station.. The 20706 CSMT-Jalna Bharat Express will be extended to run uptoHazur Sahib Nandedwith effectfrom27.08.2025.* The20705 Jalna-CSMT Vande Bharat Express will be extended to run fromHazur Sahib Nanded with effect from 28.08.2025.* The train will now connect Nanded in the Marathwada region with the State capital i.e., Mumbai, and cover districts of Nanded&Parbhaniapartfrom the already connected districts enroute, strengthening the ties between Nanded and Mumbai. The train will cover the distance of 610 Kms between Nanded and Mumbai within a short span of 9 hours 25 mins. Presently the fastest train between Mumbai and Nanded is the Devgiri Express which takes 11 hrs, 20 mins. The CSMT-



Nanded-CSMT Vande Bharat will reduce the journey time by nearly 2 hrs, offering passengers a much faster and more comfortable option. The train timings are very convenient, facilitating day time travel of passengers from Nanded&Parbhani to reach Mumbai by noon and also return by evening / night. The train will run 6 days a week (except Wednesday from Nanded and except Thursday from Mumbai). The train will have 20 coaches (Executive – 02, Chair Car - 18) with a combined seating capacity of 1440 seats. **Nanded:*** Situated on the banks of the Godavari river, Nandedhouses the “GurudwaraHazur Sahib”, which is an important pilgrimage site for Sikhs. In addition it also features several other pilgrimage places nearby like the RenukaMata temple at Mahur, Mahurgad * Kandhar Fort, the

Kedarguda and Gaitond Temples etc. Besides Nanded is also known for its educational institutions and Commercial Centre with industries largely focussed on agriculture and steel furniture manufacturing. The CSMT-Nanded-CSMT Vande Bharat Train will be the 1stVande Bharat at Nanded&Parbhani, fulfilling a long standing demand of passengers of the Marathwada region. It will not only provide fast rail connectivity to Businessmen, Students etc travelling to cities like Nashik and Mumbai, but will also give a fillip to pilgrim tourism in the region. Important pilgrimage centres like RajurGanapati Temple in J a l n a , GrishneswarJyotirlinga temple of Lord Shiva along with Ajanta and Ellora caves near Aurangabad and the Saibaba temple at Shirdi near Manmad will all be connected with semi-high

speed rail connectivity offering enhanced comfort and convenience to the pilgrim tourists. The details of Inaugural Special are:* Train no 02705 H S Nanded-CSMT Inaugural Hazur Sahib Nanded will depart Hazur Sahib Nanded at 11.20 hrs on 26.08.2025 and arrive CSMT at 21.55 hrs same day. Halts: Parbhani, Jalna, Aurangabad, Manmad, Nashik Road, Kalyan, Thane and Dadar The details of regular service are:* Train no 20706 CSMT-H S NandedVande Bharat Express will depart CSMT at 13.10 hrs -6 days a week (except Thursday) and arrive Hazur Sahib Nanded at 22.50hrs same day. Train no 20705 H S Nanded-CSMT Vande Bharat Express will depart Hazur Sahib Nanded at 05.00hrs-6 days a week (except Wednesday) and arrive CSMT at 14.25hrs same day.

Fiji set to boost health sector, as PM Rabuka meets union JP Nadda

New Delhi, Aug 25 (UNI) Fiji is set to boost its health sector with India through new hospitals, affordable medicines and expanded medical training. This follows a meeting between visiting Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka and union Health Minister JP Nadda here. PM Rabuka, during his meeting with union Health Minister JP Nadda here yesterday, outlined Fiji’s interest in deepening bilateral cooperation in healthcare.He thanked India for its ongoing support and noted the countries’ ties date back to 1879 with the arrival of the first indentured labourers. Key priorities include the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Children’s Heart Hospital

and a 100-bed Super Specialty Cardiology Hospital. Rabuka acknowledged India for committing to a grant-in-aid super specialty hospital in Fiji to be formalised through an MoU. He also welcomed the establishment of Jan Aushadi Kendras, which will improve access to affordable medicines and set pharmaceutical standards for the Pacific. Discussions also covered digital health services, hospital redevelopment through Public-Private Partnerships and training opportunities for Fijian medical personnel in India. Nadda welcomed the visit and expressed India’s commitment to enhance healthcare cooperation with Fiji for mutual benefit.