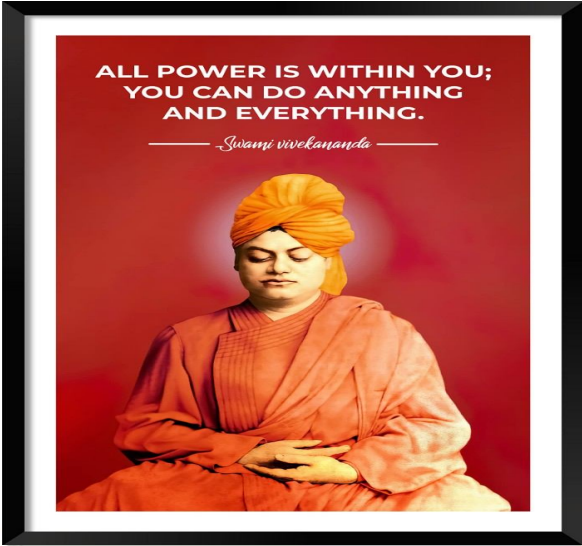
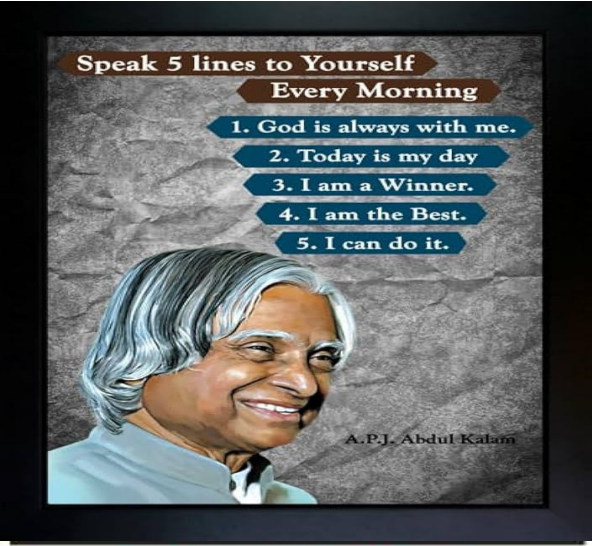




## Modi Hails Jan Dhan Yojana's Transformative Impact As Scheme Turns 12

**New Delhi:** Hailing India's Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said that PMJDY has completed 12 years on Friday and has had an unparalleled impact and transformative outcomes in the country. "Today, India's banking landscape tells a different story, with crores of Jan Dhan accounts, wider rural access, greater participation by women and banking reaching the last mile," he said in a social media post. Also Read - FDA Cancels Cipla Pharma & Life



Sciences' Pune Unit Drug Sale Licence Launched by the Prime Minister himself as one of his very first programmes on August 28, 2014, the

PMJDY has witnessed a transformation in India's financial landscape, and the scheme has become a torchbearer for financial inclu-

## CM Revanth Congratulates Praggnanandhaa For Winning Grand Chess Tour Title

**Hyderabad:** Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy congratulated Indian Chess Grandmaster Ramesh Babu Praggnanandhaa for clinching the Grand Chess Tour title in St. Louis, USA. Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy congratulated Indian Chess Grandmaster Ramesh Babu Praggnanandhaa for clinching the Grand Chess Tour title in St. Louis, USA. The Chief Minister applauded Praggnanandhaa for making history by winning the title and showcasing India's expertise on the international stage once again. It is a

proud moment for every citizen, the CM said that Praggnanandhaa's success serves as an inspiration to athletes and the youth aspiring to become ace sportspersons. CM Revanth Reddy hoped that Praggnanandhaa would achieve many more remarkable victories and bring further glory to the nation in the future. R Praggnanandhaa was declared the Champion of Grand Chess Tour 2026 - and is the first Indian player to become one! He defeated Fabiano Caruana 15-13 in the Grand Chess Tour Finals in the USA.



## Naga Babu Takes Charge Of AP Green, Targets 50 Pc Green Cover By 2047



**Amaravati:** Jana Sena MLC Konidela Naga Babu on Friday took charge as Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh Green Executive Committee and stated that he would adhere to the goal of expanding the state's green cover to 50 per cent of the geographical area by 2047. Speaking to the media after assuming office at Aranya Bhavan in Mangalagiri, he said that efforts would be made to transform environmental con-

servation from a mere government programme into a mass movement with public participation. stituency Action Plans to Make AP No. 1 Babu, who is the brother of Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan, was appointed Chair person of the Executive Committee of the 'Andhra Pradesh Society for Greening and Reforestation for Ecological Enrichment (AP Green)' on August 17 with a Cabinet rank holding

He thanked Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for placing their trust in him and entrusting him with key responsibilities. Also Read - Tanuku Couple Leave Child On Chinchinada Bridge, Commit Suicide He said that the state's current forest cover stands at 22.96 per cent. "Our primary objective is to increase the total green cover -comprising both forest

**Amaravati:** Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to implement Constituency Vision Action Plans to achieve the targets set for placing Andhra Pradesh at the forefront in all sectors. Addressing a video conference with ministers, MPs, MLAs, collectors, Young Professionals, Knowledge Partners and other officials as part of review on vision action plan, the Chief Minister said Andhra Pradesh was the first state in the country to formulate and

implement Vision Plans constituency-wise and added that the initiative had earned recognition at the national level. Also Read - Naga Babu Takes Charge Of AP Green, Targets 50 Pc Green Cover By 2047 He said ministers, MPs and MLAs have a crucial role to play in achieving the objectives of the plans. They should work towards achieving growth in various sectors in accordance with the identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Young Professionals, Knowledge



Partners and Swarna Office staff would play a key role in implementing the Constituency Vision Plans, he said. They

should think innovatively, focus on providing better services to people and contribute to the development of their respective

constituencies. Also Read - Tanuku Couple Leave Child On Chinchinada Bridge, Commit Suicide The Chief Minister called for preparing development plans based on the availability of local resources and the specific requirements of each constituency. He said the State Government had prepared constituency visions after taking all relevant aspects into consideration and directed officials to implement them more effectively in accordance with local conditions.

## TGHRC Orders Action over Delayed Salary Payment to Retired Engineer

**Hyderabad:** Telangana Human Rights Commission (TGHRC), headed by chairperson Dr. Justice Shameem Akther passed an order concerning the prolonged delay in payment of salary to a retired Executive Engineer and the consequent difficulties faced by him in complying with Income Tax requirements. The complainant had served as an Executive Engineer in the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMCO) from October 23, 2015 to February 24, 2017. His grievance was that his salary for the said period was not paid regularly and was ultimately paid



in a lump sum of Rs.14,24,488 in October, 2018, after his Last Pay Certificate (LPC) was received from his previous station of posting. Also Read - Telangana Govt's Scholarship For BC, EBC Students To Study Abroad He further complained that the requisite Form-16, bill-wise particulars and details relating to TDS remittances were not furnished to him in time,

resulting in show cause notices from the Income Tax Department regarding non-filing of Income Tax Returns. The Commission, on consideration of the reports submitted by the authorities concerned, observed that there had been a delay of more than one year in payment of the complainant's salary. The Commission held that when an employee is transferred, the



**Hyderabad:** Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Finance and Energy, Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, has directed officials to explore the possibility of setting up a joint venture between Singareni and Hutti Gold Mines, a Karnataka government undertaking with extensive experience in gold mining. He said that combining the technical capabilities and expertise of the two public sector undertakings could help achieve better results in increasing domestic gold production. Also Read - Telangana Govt's Scholarship For BC, EBC Students To Study Abroad As part of his second-day visit to the gold mining areas of Karnataka on Friday, the Deputy Chief Minister visited the

Hutti and UT gold mines in Raichur district. He thoroughly inspected the processes involved, from the extraction of gold ore to the production of refined gold. The Deputy Chief Minister said that Hutti Gold Mines has vast experience in gold exploration, mining, processing and refining. He suggested combining Hutti's expertise with Singareni's technical capabilities in the exploration and mining of coal and other minerals. Also Read - Sanjay Jaju Reviews Hyderabad Metro Rail Progress He directed Singareni officials to prepare an action plan for joint collaboration between the two organisations in areas such as gold exploration, mining, extraction, processing and refining,

adoption of modern technologies, deployment of technical experts and human-resource training. Bhatti Vikramarka stated that gold plays a crucial role in the country's economic security. He said that public sector organisations such as Singareni should take the lead in scientifically exploring and extracting the country's available gold mineral resources. Also Read - Hyderabad: Plans To Boost Medical Tourism At TMS For Foreign Patients He emphasised the need to reduce dependence on gold imports and increase domestic production. He said that a Hutti-Singareni partnership could contribute to increasing gold production, adopting advanced technologies, creating local employment opportunities and strengthening the country's economic development. The Deputy Chief Minister inspected the production unit, ore processing plant and electrowinning facility at Hutti Gold Mines. Officials explained to him the various stages

## Ponguleti Assures Transparent Selection for Indiramma Houses



**Hyderabad:** Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy here on Friday stated that the selection of beneficiaries for construction of Indiramma houses is being conducted with utmost transparency. He clarified that the selection of beneficiaries is taking place strictly based on eligibility, transcending caste, religion, and politics. He informed that the lucky draw is being conducted with utmost transparency for allotment of flats in Indiramma towers being launched in the first phase in the cure area. Also Read - Telangana Govt's Scholarship For BC, EBC Students To Study Abroad He said they are conducting the lucky draw in the

presence of eligible beneficiaries, and broadcasting the entire process live through all social media platforms. Lucky draws were held for Indiramma Towers flats in Nampally, Quthbullapur, Secunderabad, and Rajendranagar Assembly constituencies. Srinivas Reddy participated in the draw of lots in the lucky draw programs conducted here for allotment of indiramma towers flats to be built in red hills in Nampally Constituency, and at Lakshmiguda related to the Mylardevpally in Rajendranagar constituency. Also Read - Sanjay Jaju Reviews Hyderabad Metro Rail Progress Speaking on this

occasion, the minister said that from today onwards until August 31, lucky draws are being held for approximately 8,000 flats in 16 assembly constituencies and added that the lucky draw process will continue at the rate of four constituencies per day. He explained that in each constituency, 600 beneficiaries will be selected through lucky draw for 480 flats and later officials will conduct field-level final verification. If any selected individuals are found ineligible, opportunities will be provided to eligible candidates from the remaining 120. He clarified that through this policy they are ensuring justice for eligible poor people.

## 3 New NIA Courts Established as Govt Pushes Faster Disposal of Anti-terror Cases

**New Delhi:** In a major push towards disposal of anti-terror cases, the government, in consultation with concerned high courts, has established three new NIA special courts for Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar. Exercising the powers conferred by Section 11 of the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 (34 of 2008), the Central Government, in consultation with the Chief Justices of the high courts of Rajasthan, Patna and Andhra Pradesh, designated the special courts in Jaipur, Patna and Visakhapatnam as special NIA courts, respectively. Also Read - Naga Babu Takes Charge Of AP Green, Targets 50 Pc Green Cover By 2047 These courts will be "exclusively for the trial" of the Scheduled Offences investigated by the National Investigation Agency, having state-wise juris-



diction for matters related to the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, a gazette notification issued by the Home Ministry said. On December 16, 2025, the Centre told the top court that to ensure a speedy trial, it would set up a dedicated NIA court in each state and Union territory and more than one court at places where there are over 10 cases

under anti-terror laws. Also Read - Naidu: Implement Constituency Action Plans to Make AP No. 1 In February, the Union Home Ministry submitted a comprehensive status report before the Supreme Court, saying it has mooted a proposal to set up special courts in states where 10 or more cases probed by the National Investigation

Agency are pending trial. According to the MHA report, the Centre will provide a one-time grant of Rs one crore for non-recurring expenditure and Rs one crore per annum for recurring expenditure for each exclusive special court. These funds will cover infrastructure renovation, IT equipment, vehicles, and staff salaries, the report had said.

## CMC orders demolition of unauthorised under-construction buildings in Cyberabad

**Hyderabad:** Hundreds of trees which stood majestically and provided shade for decades have been felled by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) to make way for the SCB elevated corridor on Rajiv Rahadari (State Highway-1). More than 400 trees were recently felled at Bollaram for an 18-km elevated corridor being constructed by HMDA from Gymkhana Grounds to Outer Ring Road near Shamirpet in Cantonment. Tree removal is continuing along most of the route as land acquisition proceeds and the road network from Shamirpet is widened. The Tree Protection Committee (TPC) inspected and enumerated trees along the entire stretch before

construction of the elevated corridor, HMDA sources told Telangana Today. It subsequently recommended trees for felling and translocation. "At Bollaram in Secunderabad Cantonment, the tree-felling has been carried out as part of the corridor work, clearing the alignment for the proposed elevated stretch," the sources added. Sources said tree transplantation and sapling planting would be carried out at a 1:4 ratio for trees cut to compensate for the loss of lush greenery. HMDA would preferably make these arrangements in vacant spaces on defence establishment premises to protect greenery. The felled trees were moved from the premises at Bollaram in



heavy trucks and lorries. Some commuters and Bollaram residents said these trees along the stretch had provided shade and cool breezes for decades, particularly during severe summers. They said the area had become barren and lost its British-era character

after HMDA chopped them off for infrastructure projects. A city-based environmentalist said the trees had stood as ancient guardians of the roads, but were felled as engine noise replaced the decades-old rustle of leaves.

## Land controversies mount for Congress government in Telangana

**Hyderabad:** Since the Congress government came to power in 2023, it has faced severe criticism over acquiring farmers' lands, auctioning government lands and making plans to utilise government properties for various purposes. Several of the State government's initiatives have been mired in controversy, particularly over its unilateral decisions and plans. From Lagacherla and Kancha Gachibowli to colonies along the Musi riverbanks and the proposed Future City, the government has faced criticism over its focus on acquiring and utilising large parcels of land. Amid the controversy over the inclusion of several private properties under the prohibited 22-A list, the State government has triggered another row with its plans to utilise lands belonging to the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) and polytechnic colleges. The government is planning to allot six acres of prime TGSRTC land at RTC Crossroads to the



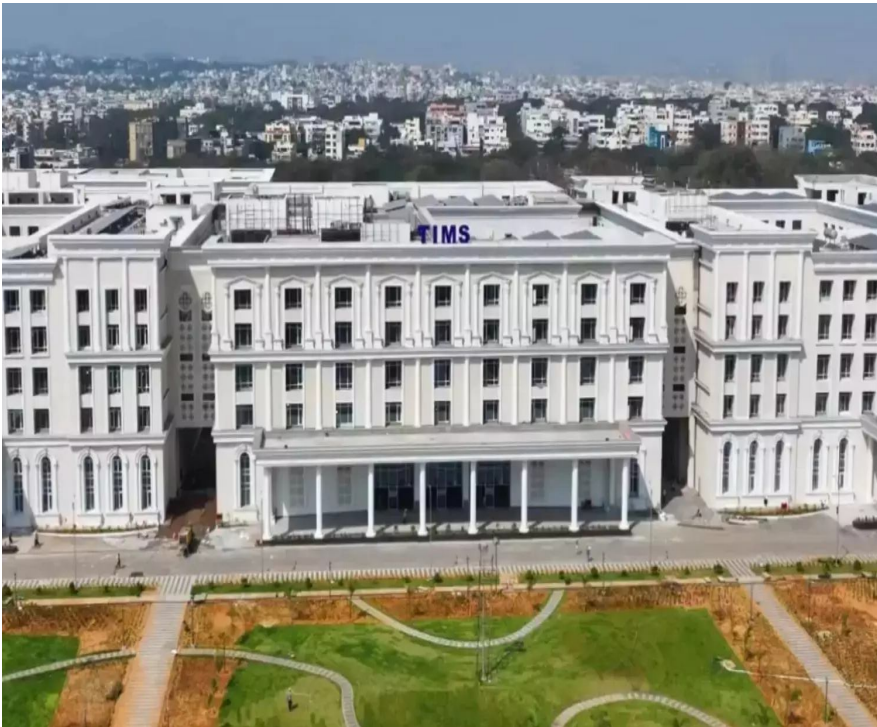
Housing department for the construction of Indiramma Towers. The proposal has drawn strong criticism from RTC unions. "The government should construct houses for the poor and needy, but that does not mean it can divert RTC lands. Previous governments allotted lands to the corporation to meet its future requirements. If these lands are diverted for other purposes, the corporation may not even have enough space to park its buses in the days to come," said a member of the RTC Employees Union. The government's proposal to allot RTC land to the Housing department has also raised questions as it had earlier assured employees that the corporation

would be merged with the government. "Instead of fulfilling the promises made to RTC employees, the government is eyeing the corporation's vast land holdings," the union member said. Similarly, the Telangana Polytechnic Joint Action Committee has alleged that the government is attempting to divert large parcels of land owned by polytechnic colleges for commercial development under the aegis of the Young India Skills University (YISU). The committee said using these lands for commercial purposes would leave colleges without adequate space to establish laboratories, research and development centres and other infrastructure. It alleged that this was one of the

objectives behind the government's plans to merge polytechnic colleges with YISU. Interestingly, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, while serving as TPCC president in 2021, had strongly opposed the then BRS government's plans to auction government lands. Contrary to those objections, however, the Congress government has since auctioned several plots owned by the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC). Now, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) is also preparing to auction its lands, primarily to generate revenue for the government. Irrespective of the purpose, the State government should discuss its plans with the stakeholders and take them into confidence. If RTC unions or polytechnic staff and students have any apprehensions, the government should clear them and protect their interests, said Forum for Good Governance president M Padmanabha Reddy.

## Plans To Boost Medical Tourism At TIMS For Foreign Patients

**Hyderabad:** The recently inaugurated Dr. Marri Chennareddy Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (Dr. MCR TIMS) in Hyderabad has launched a special initiative to provide medical services to foreign patients. As per reports, to oversee the management of special wards for international patients, monitoring, agreements (MoUs) with various countries, and translation services, the Health Department has constituted a special Medical Tourism Promotion Committee. Also Read - Telangana Govt's Scholarship For BC, EBC Students To Study Abroad The committee will ensure all necessary services for foreign patients are made available at TIMS. As part of the initiative, 50 beds have been exclusively earmarked for foreign patients. The government aims to make Telangana a medical tourism hub by offering treatment at affordable costs in specialities like organ transplantation, cardiac surgeries, cancer, neuro, ortho, urolo-



gy, nephrology, and pulmonology. Also Read - Sanjay Jaju Reviews Hyderabad Metro Rail Progress To ensure foreign patients do not face difficulties regarding health insurance and other issues, the government will enter into agreements with respective countries. Officials have already started

negotiations for MoUs to cater to patients coming from Africa and Arab countries. The Executive Council has recently decided to collect fees for TIMS medical services on the lines of NIMS. However, free medical services will continue to be provided to gy, nephrology, and pulmonology. Also Read

- Sanjay Jaju Reviews Hyderabad Metro Rail Progress To ensure foreign patients do not face difficulties regarding health insurance and other issues, the government will enter into agreements with respective countries. Officials have already started the poor under Aarogya Sri.

## Surrendered Maoist women celebrate Raksha Bandhan with police

**Narayanpur:** Affection and trust overflowed at the District Reserve Guard (DRG) campus, where Raksha Sutas were adorned on the wrists of the Superintendent of Police, Additional Superintendent of Police, and other officers. Once known for the dreaded Naxals, this area of Chhattisgarh witnessed the holy festival of Raksha Bandhan, conveying a message of peace, trust, and a changing Bastar. Raksha Bandhan, the sacred festival of love, trust, and a pledge of security between brothers and sisters, was celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm in an intimate and emotional atmosphere at the Narayanpur Police DRG campus.



On this special occasion, surrendered female Maoists, who have renounced the path of violence and Naxalism to join the mainstream of society, tied Rakhis on the wrists of DRG soldiers, giving a new and emotional dimension to the sacred bond of brother and sister. This sacred bond of Rakhi not only adorned the wrists of the soldiers but also

strengthened the bond of trust, security, and belonging, presenting a new picture of a changing Bastar. These sisters, who once lived under the shadow of guns and violence, today celebrated a festival of love, respect, and trust with the police family. During the programme, the surrendered female Naxalites also expressed their love and trust by

tying Rakhis on the wrists of Superintendent of Police Sandeep Kumar Patel, Additional Superintendents of Police Akshay Sabdra, Ajay Kumar, and Aishwarya Chandrakar, Deputy Superintendents of Police Ajay Singh, Avinash Kanwar, Manoj Mandavi, and Ashish Netam, Reserve Inspector Mohsin Khan, and Station House Officer Narayanpur Vineet Dubey. On this occasion, Superintendent of Police Sandeep Kumar Patel, along with all the officers and soldiers present, wished the sisters a happy Raksha Bandhan and extended his wishes for a safe, respectful, and bright future. A cordial communication and affinity were witnessed between

## TGHRC Orders Action over Lack of Basic Amenities in Government Schools

**Hyderabad:** The Telangana Human Rights Commission (TGHRC), headed by its chairperson Dr. Justice Shameem Akther has passed an order concerning the reported lack of adequate infrastructure and basic amenities in government schools across Telangana. The Commission took suo motu cognizance of a news report published in vernacular daily on July 3, 2026, which highlighted the shortage of classrooms and basic facilities in government schools, including reports of students attending classes under trees,



in verandahs and community buildings. The report also raised concerns regarding inadequate toilet facilities. Against Telangana Pursuant to the Commission's directions, reports were obtained from the authorities concerned regarding the position in Adilabad, Jangaon, Nalgonda and Suryapet districts. The reports revealed that several government schools continue to have infrastructure defi-

ciencies, including dilapidated classrooms, classrooms requiring major and minor repairs and shortage of toilet facilities. In Nalgonda district, the District Educational Officer inspected the school at Votkur Village, Nidamanur Mandal, referred to in the report. It was reported that students had temporarily been made to sit under trees during repairs to damaged tin-roof

classrooms following heavy rains. Demanding Reimbursement of Tuition Fees The Commission also noted that sanctioned construction had earlier not materialised due to non-availability of suitable land. The Commission observed that such deficiencies directly affect the safety, health, dignity and educational environment of students. It further observed that the Right to Education under Article 21A of the Constitution necessarily includes a safe and conducive environment for children to pursue their education.

# Major Rejig in Jammu And Kashmir Police Amid Fresh Challenges

**Srinagar:** Authorities ordered a rejig in the police on Wednesday, appointing Sujit Kumar as the new inspector general of Police in Kashmir and Tejinder Singh as his counterpart in the Jammu region.

At the centre of the reboot is Sujit Kumar, who was inspector general of police, J&K security. He replaced VK Birdi, who was repatriated to central deputation two months ago. But he was held back to ensure smooth conduct of the now-concluded Amarnath Yatra. Hailing from the 2007 batch of Indian Police Services (IPS), Kumar's career spans holding crucial assignments in Jammu and Kashmir Police and outside, including the paramilitary. He has held postings in the Naxal-hit belt in Jharkhand. He also had a stint in the Special Protection Group (SPG), responsible for the security of the Prime Minister.

On Thursday afternoon, he took over the charge and will now oversee the



entire security of the Valley.

Kumar's task will be to bolster internal security and deal with the emerging threats faced by Kashmiri Pandits. The community has been threatened by terror groups through posters revealing their personal details, including phone numbers and addresses etc. This prompted authorities to order minority employees working under the Prime Minister's employment package to work for a fortnight from August 5.

Kumar is seen as an experienced hand who has previously dealt with such challenges in Kashmir following the constitutional changes in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019. Between 2021 to 2024, he oversaw policing and law and order as Deputy Inspector General of Police in north Kashmir along the Line of Control and in central Kashmir, including the capital Srinagar.

His term was marked with several anti-terror operations and the dismantling of the network of hybrid terrorists, unlisted militants who were radicalised

to carry out terror attacks and blending back into society. Their presence was detected in the targeted killing of minority employees and targeted killings in the Valley.

"Kumar is known for professional policing and maintains calm temperament. His role will be to maintain confidence of people earned since 2019," said an official who previously worked with him. "His intense and detail-oriented investigations are well-known in police ranks. This has earned him accolades." In 2025, has got President's gallantry and received service medals for his meritorious services.

In the meantime, the Home Department has also ordered additional director general of police (ADGP) MK Sinha to replace the incumbent J&K CID chief Nitish Kumar. Now, Sinha will be the intelligence chief of the Union Territory.

Besides, Uttam Chand,

Inspector General of Police (IGP) IGP Police Operations & Services, PHQ has been posted as IGP Railways J&K vice Vivek Gupta. He will also continue to hold the additional charge of IGP Operations & Services. Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu Zone, has been posted as IGP Headquarters J&K. Vivek Gupta, IGP Railways, has been posted as IGP Security J&K

Shakti Kumar Pathak has been designated as Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau. Mubassir Latifi Ameer has been posted as Deputy Inspector General (DIG) IR Kashmir. Sahil Sarangal has been posted as Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Pulwama. Sunny Gupta has been posted as SSP Kishtwar. Tahir Saleem Khan has been posted as SSP Handwara. Muzaffar Ahmad Shah has been posted as SO to IG Kashmir Zone. Naresh Singh has been posted as SSP Rajouri.

## Ladakh Cuts VAT On Natural Gas From 21 Pc To 5 Pc To Boost Clean Energy Adoption

**Leh:** Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved a significant reduction in VAT on natural gas, including Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Piped Natural Gas (PNG), from 21 per cent to 5 per cent, a move aimed at promoting affordable clean energy and accelerating the City Gas Distribution (CGD) network in the Union Territory.



nections across Ladakh.

The decision is expected to make CNG and PNG more affordable for consumers, encourage adoption of cleaner fuels and facilitate the administration's plan to provide piped household gas con-

The move follows a June 22 communication from the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, seeking a concessional fiscal frame-

work for natural gas in Ladakh to make the CGD system more viable and affordable.

The PNGRB cited Ladakh's difficult terrain, dispersed population centres, extreme climatic conditions and high cost of

transporting energy over long distances as factors that could adversely affect the economics of CGD development in the Union Territory compared with other parts of the country.

Saxena subsequently approved the proposal to reduce VAT from 21 per cent to 5 per cent, bringing Ladakh at par with states such as Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, which levy 5 per cent VAT on natural gas. Natural gas remains outside the GST framework and is subject to VAT imposed by the respective states and Union Territories.

"Our objective is to make

essential energy more affordable to the people of Ladakh while creating an enabling environment for investment and infrastructure development," Saxena said.

"The reduction of VAT on natural gas will support the expansion of PNG and CNG services, strengthen the clean-energy ecosystem and improve the quality of life of our people," he added.

The PNGRB has authorised Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) to develop the CGD infrastructure in Ladakh. It had also recommended bringing PNG and

## 40 Hospitalised After Chlorine Gas Leak At Nagpur Water Treatment Plant



Nagpur: Forty people have been hospitalised after a chlorine gas leak at a water treatment plant in Maharashtra's Nagpur in the wee hours of Monday, police officials said. The incident occurred at around 1:00 am at the Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran's Godhni Municipal Council Water Treatment Plant in the Godhni area of Nagpur, when chlorine gas began leaking from a 900-kg capacity cylinder. As the gas spread rapidly across nearby residential localities, widespread panic gripped the area, with several residents developing cough and breathing difficulties, prompting the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to launch an immediate rescue operation. Local police personnel,

along with administrative officials, swiftly alerted residents living in the immediate vicinity and advised them to evacuate to safer locations. Some affected people were immediately rushed to Sparsh Hospital in Zingabai Takli and Mayo Hospital for treatment. "During the rescue operation, a 200-meter radius around the site was designated a 'no-man's-land' and barricaded; residents were advised to leave their homes and were relocated to a safe area," Hareesh Kalshekar, Police Inspector, Mankapur Police Station, said. "Currently, 90% of the leak has been stopped, and 40 people are undergoing treatment in the hospital. Additionally, 12 people have already been discharged," Kalshekar said.

Upon receiving the alert, the Nagpur Municipal Corporation Fire Department dispatched two water tenders along with personnel equipped with breathing apparatus to the site. Employees of Orange City Water (OCW) were also called in, and a team from the National Disaster Force (NDRF) was deployed at the site. The police inspector further ensured that the situation is "under control" and there is "no need to panic". He also informed that a dog died in the incident. The joint rescue operation concluded around 5:30 am after the intensity of the leakage decreased. Emergency personnel from the NDRF, Fire Department, and OCW successfully moved the 900-kg chlorine cylinder and submerged it into a

## Bengal Govt Announces 20% Reservation For Agniveers In Civil Defence, Police, Fire, Forest Depts



**Kolkata:** Chief Minister Anusree Banerjee announced a 20 per cent reservation for Agniveers in the state police, fire services, forest department and civil defence, asserting that the military training received by Agniveers would be useful in maintaining law and order, handling emergencies and responding to disasters. The announcement comes after similar measures in several states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Delhi, where governments have announced reservation for Agniveers in police and other government jobs. Addressing a Central government event in Garden Reach, CM Adhikari said, "We have allocated a 20 per cent quota for 'Agniveers' in the state police, fire services, forest department, and civil defence." Bengal To Form 200-Member 'Arjun Bahini' The state is also setting up a 200-member disaster response force

called 'Arjun Bahini', which will be formed in September. The force will be trained and equipped to strengthen quick-response and rescue operations during emergencies, the chief minister said. Adhikari said Agniveers would eventually be recruited into the force, but the first batch would not be available until January. In the meantime, 200 ex-servicemen have been inducted through the Sainik Board. Of these, 100 personnel will be stationed in Kolkata, 50 in Darjeeling and 50 in Sagar. "We have also initiated collaboration with the Sainik Board regarding ex-servicemen. A new 200-member disaster management team, named 'Arjun Bahini,' is being formed this September," Adhikari said. He said the force, which was planned after the Taratala incident in Kolkata, would be equipped with modern machinery to respond quickly to disasters. Further, the CM said, the deploy-

ment has been planned keeping in mind the different risks in handling urban emergencies in Kolkata, landslides in Darjeeling and cyclones in the coastal Sagar region. NCC Training To Return To Schools, Colleges The government is also working to reintroduce National Cadet Corps (NCC) training in schools and colleges across West Bengal, CM Adhikari said. "NCC opportunities were earlier available only in selected educational institutions. It is now planning to expand the programme to encourage discipline and a sense of patriotism among students from an early age," the chief minister said. "Training in NCC and its certification will also help students who are seeking to join the armed forces and paramilitary services. The certification is also expected to provide an additional qualification for recruitment in the state police and fire services," he added.

## 'For Those Fulminating In Outrage', Tharoor Clarifies 'Drama' Remark In Nepal Floods Post

**New Delhi:** Panned for using the word "drama" in a post on the Nepal flash floods, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Friday clarified that the term is also defined as "a state, situation or series of events involving intensely clashing forces" and that is the sense in which he intended it. Tharoor, however, said he regrets the choice of a word that could be so easily "misinterpreted".

"For all those fulminating in outrage about my use of the word 'drama' in my first tweet from Nepal, the word does not only mean something theatrical. It is also defined as 'a state, situation or series of events involving intensely clashing forces,'" the Thiruvananthapuram MP said on X. "That's the sense in which I intended it. But I do regret the choice of a word that could be so easily misinterpreted," Tharoor said.

His remarks came a day after he was panned for describing the Nepal flash

floods as "drama that had taken place in the hills"



and overlooking the nuance of the words. The comment led to a veritable backlash on social media, with one post questioning the "poor choice of words for someone with such a rich vocabulary" and others labelling him insensitive. Expressing concern over the disaster in an X post on Thursday, Tharoor said, "Took off for Kathmandu yesterday, blissfully unaware of the drama that had taken place in the hills and caused

such catastrophic damage."

He went on to say, "A severe, sudden flash flood struck northern Nepal's Rasuwa district near the Tibet border, causing widespread destruction along the Bhothe Koshi and Trishuli rivers. Global warming and/or an earthquake in Tibet may have caused a large chunk of a glacier to break off and fall into the valley below, experts surmise." The Thiruvananthapuram MP had said he learned on arrival about the loss of

life and the fact that some 2,000 or more people are estimated to be missing. Raging floodwaters destroyed at least 19 motorable bridges, washed away roughly 40 kilometres of the Betrawati Rasuwagadhi highway, and heavily damaged eight operational hydropower projects, Tharoor had said.

"I fully support the Indian government's immediate pledge of relief assistance. Nepal needs all the help it can get," he had said. "My heart goes out to the victims and their loved ones, who include large numbers of Indian tourists, including a hundred performing the Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra. Prayers for the missing; may they be rescued soon," the Congress leader had said. Notwithstanding the larger message, many social media users picked on his use of words, "blissfully unaware of the drama that had taken place in the hills". "Was nature's fury a 'drama'? How can you be so insensitive in your 'Mr Exasperating Farrago -- Is this 'drama'?" a user asked, recalling the rare word 'farrago' -- which means a 'confused mixture' -- that the wordsmith-author-politician introduced to the people's daily lexicon. "Drama?? You are a wordsmith, and this is what you came up with?" another post read.

## Journalist, Who Reported On Ram Temple Donation 'Theft', Moves SC Against FIR In Road Rage Case



**New Delhi:** A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court by a journalist, who flagged alleged irregularities in the handling of donations at Ayodhya's Ram temple, challenging an FIR lodged against him by Ghaziabad police in an alleged road rage case. The plea by journalist Abhishek Upadhyay claimed that the FIR is based on concocted allegations against him and is an attempt to harass him for his independent journal-

istic work.

In the plea, he has contended that the FIR copy has not been supplied to him and that the police were forcing nearby shopkeepers to delete the CCTV visuals of the relevant time. Upadhyay sought quashing of the FIR, or in the alternative, its investigation be transferred to an independent agency other than the Uttar Pradesh Police.

"The Petitioner apprehends imminent arrest and further physical

harm and states that, in view of the aforesaid sequence, he is not in a position to safely approach the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad." He apprehends that he may be arrested or subjected to physical harm by planted goons of the state machinery in the State of Uttar Pradesh before he can obtain effective judicial protection," the plea said. "He is therefore seeking quashing of the impugned FIR and in alternative ready and willing to join the investigation and cooperate with the Investigating Agency in accordance with law with a request that present FIR as well as other FIRs filed against him because he reported on the Ramjanmabhumi donation theft issue, may

please be directed to be investigated by Delhi police or Central Bureau of Investigation," his plea said. The FIR has been lodged against Upadhyay in Ghaziabad over an alleged road rage incident, which he has claimed was planted in connection with his reporting on alleged corruption in Uttar Pradesh. Upadhyay, who runs a YouTube channel, claimed a police team reached his residence late on August 20 and told him that a case had been registered at Indirapuram police station following allegations of road rage and abusive behaviour. According to Upadhyay, the alleged incident took place on August 18 near Shipra Mall in Ghaziabad, when a motorcyclist allegedly touched his car. He said the man subsequently called the police emer-

## Sri Lankan Navy Commander Holds Talks With Indian Navy Chief, Defence Secretary



**New Delhi:** The Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, Vice Admiral Damian Fernando, held talks with Navy Chief Admiral Krishna Swaminathan and Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, aiming to bolster maritime security cooperation and enhance training synergy between the two navies, officials said on Thursday. Vice Admiral Fernando is on an official visit to India from August 26-29, and the visit is aimed at further strengthening bilateral maritime cooperation and enhancing navy-to-navy engagements between India and Sri Lanka. V Adm Fernando assumed office as the 27th Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy on July 1. This is his first official visit abroad, they said.

He was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at the South Block lawn. He also paid homage to the fallen soldiers by

laying a wreath at the National War Memorial on Thursday. "He also held discussions with Navy Chief Admiral Krishna Swaminathan on furthering bilateral maritime cooperation, including joint operations, capacity building, training and measures related to maritime security," a spokesperson of the Indian Navy said. Chief of Defence Staff General N S Raja Subramani interacted with Vice Admiral Fernando. In a post on X, the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff said, "The leaders reviewed existing bilateral defence cooperation, explored new avenues for joint military training and capacity enhancement, and discussed key regional security matters to further deepen the India-Sri Lanka strategic partnership." V Adm Fernando also called on Vice Chief of the Air Staff Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit.

In a post on X, the Indian Air Force (IAF) said, "VAdm Damian Fernando, Commander of the #SriLankaNavy, called on Vice Chief of the Air Staff Air Mshl Ashutosh Dixit during his official visit to India. The interaction reaffirmed the shared commitment towards strengthening operational cooperation and enhancing interoperability. It also reinforced closer engagement and enduring ties between the two neighbours. #IAF #IndiaSriLanka" As part of the visit, V Adm Fernando will travel to Kochi to visit Indian naval training establishments and headquarters of the Southern Naval Command, with a focus on enhancing training linkages and professional exchanges between the two navies, the official said. The Sri Lanka Navy is an important and longstanding maritime partner of the Indian Navy.

"The visit of V Adm Damian Fernando is expected to further consolidate the longstanding and multifaceted navy-to-navy relationship between India and Sri Lanka, contributing to enhanced maritime cooperation and greater stability in the Indian Ocean Region," he added. In a post on X, the defence ministry here said V Adm Fernando paid a courtesy call on Defence Secretary Singh in New Delhi on Thursday. "The two sides reviewed activities and projects under the Bilateral Defence Cooperation Plan and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral defence cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Vice Admiral Damian Fernando is on a three-day official visit to India," it said. The Indian Navy, in a post on X on Thursday, shared some photos of his visit and the ceremonial welcome accorded to him. "#BridgesofFriendship VAdm Damian Fernando, Commander of the #SriLankaNavy, is on an official visit to India. He was accorded a ceremonial Guard of Honour at the South Block Lawns, New Delhi, followed by bilateral discussions with Adm Krishna Swaminathan, #CNS. The deliberations focused on strengthening #maritimesecurity cooperation, institutionalised training and capacity-building initiatives," it said.

## Union Min Nadda Meets Reservation Hatao Andolan Protesters; AAP, CJP Seek Clarity On Quota Policy



**New Delhi:** The government on Thursday reached out to the representatives of the group spearheading the Reservation Hatao Andolan, with Union minister J P Nadda holding a "cordial discussion" with them at a meeting. This comes within a week of several people holding a protest in the national capital on August 21, following a call by Reservation Hatao Andolan (Scrap Reservation), an

Instagram-based page.

"Following the movement that took place at Jantar Mantar on 21 August, cordial discussions were held, as per the pre-determined schedule, with Harsh Dubey, Ran Bahadur Singh Chauhan, and Mrityunjay Pathak, members of the team. In this connection, we will meet again soon," Nadda said in a post on X after the meeting. The Union minister did not share any further

details about the meeting and the venue where it took place. Those who held a protest under the aegis of Reservation Hatao Andolan at Jantar Mantar on August 21 are demanding scrapping of quota, saying that economic criteria be given precedence over caste in determining eligibility for government support and reservation. The Delhi Police detained several protesters who gathered at the site, saying no permission had been granted for any protest, procession, demonstration or assembly at Jantar Mantar. Heavy security, including police and paramilitary personnel, had been deployed in the area. Nadda's meeting with Reservation Hatao

Andolan representatives drew questions from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), which had led a "Gen Z" protest at Jantar Mantar last month over the alleged NEET paper leak. Both sought clarity on the government's position on the protesters' demand for a review of caste-based reservation. CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke asked Nadda to explain the Modi government's stand on the anti-reservation movement and questioned what Prime Minister Narendra Modi has to say about the August 21 protest. "What does the Prime Minister have to say about the movement of 21 August, whose name Mr Nadda is not taking? The country wants to know," he wrote in a post on X. AAP Delhi unit president Saurabh Bharadwaj

## Row Over Gor's Remarks: Cong Slams PM For 'Avoiding Media Questions' At G7 Meet

**New Delhi:** US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor's remarks on India's purported request for no-question media interaction after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with President Donald Trump at the G7 summit in France have provided the Congress with much grist to take a swipe at the Prime Minister. Gor on Sunday claimed that when PM Modi met President Donald Trump in Evian-les-Bains in eastern France on June 17, India's Ministry of External Affairs had requested the United States that the media persons should not be allowed to ask questions to the leaders. Wasting no time, the Congress pounced on Gor's comments to criticise PM Modi for avoiding questions from journalists, questioning India's global image and press freedom. "Why is Modi so afraid of press freedom — at home and abroad?" asked Congress publicity chief and MP Pawan Khera, sharing a video on X showing Gor mak-



ing the comments while speaking at an event in New Delhi on Sunday. Gor said the MEA had conveyed to the US officials that while the leaders could address the media persons after the meeting, they should not be taking any questions. Trump, however, had forgotten the request and had taken it. "It is painful to see what India has been reduced to under Narendra Modi. Once a formidable force. Today, taken for granted," he said. This is not

the first time the Congress has targeted Modi for not taking questions from the media. In May this year, Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha and Congress questions for almost 45 minutes after meeting Modi, the US Ambassador to India said. Referring to PM Modi as a "compromised PM", Khera, in a post on X, said: "Trump didn't forget what Narendra Modi said. He just didn't listen. A compromised PM is not taken serious-

ly." "It is painful to see what India has been reduced to under Narendra Modi. Once a formidable force. Today, taken for granted," he said. This is not the first time the Congress has targeted Modi for not taking questions from the media. In May this year, Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi had accused the PM of avoiding taking questions during a briefing in Norway.

## Delhi Plans Inter-State Transfer Of Undertrial Gangsters, High-Risk Prisoners

**New Delhi:** The Delhi Government has prepared a plan to transfer undertrial gangsters, organised criminals and high-risk prisoners from the capital's jails to prisons in other states whenever the need arises. For this, the government will implement the Transfer of Prisoners (Punjab Amendment) Act, 2025, in Delhi. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the objective is to enable inter-state transfer of such prisoners while keeping jail security, law and order, and public interest in mind, and to strengthen cooperation among states in tackling organised crime. Under the Delhi Government's proposal, undertrial gangsters, organised criminals and other high-risk prisoners can be transferred from one state's prison to another with the mutual consent of the states concerned or approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The move is also expected to make the criminal justice system more effective and improve prison management. Major Gap In Existing Law A large number of hardened and notorious criminals are lodged as undertrials alongside convicts in Delhi's prisons. In May 2026, authorities identified 188 members of 26 gangs in Delhi, of whom 107 gangsters had been arrested. Such hardened undertrial prisoners continue to engage in vio-



lent activities, including targeted killings, extortion, gang rivalry, threats and organised criminal conspiracies, even from inside prisons. Under the existing system, such undertrial gangsters and notorious criminals cannot be transferred from Delhi's prisons to those in other states. The Transfer of Prisoners Act, 1950, provides for the transfer of convicted prisoners only. Meanwhile, undertrials are held under special remand warrants issued by the concerned trial courts, while their transfer is governed by the Prisoners Act, 1900, which permits transfer only within the state. Amended System To Be Implemented In Delhi To address this legal gap, the Punjab government had introduced the Transfer of Prisoners (Punjab Amendment) Act, 2025. The amendment received the President's assent on April 21, 2025. It provides for the transfer of

undertrial prisoners from one state to another to maintain security, law and order, or the public interest. Judicial proceedings, wherever necessary, will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023. The same amended framework is proposed for implementation in Delhi, allowing serious and high-risk undertrial prisoners to be transferred to prisons in other states, depending on the circumstances. Some hardened undertrial criminals misuse welfare and correctional facilities available in Delhi's prisons to influence the trial process and expand their criminal activities. Even while in prison, they may use local networks and contacts with other gangs to expand their alliances. There have also been instances of gang wars and retaliatory actions among such prisoners. The Delhi

government believes that transferring such hardened and notorious undertrial prisoners to prisons outside Delhi could reduce their ability to influence witnesses and disrupt court proceedings. It could also help curb their criminal activities and reduce serious threats to citizens' lives, liberty and property. Model Prison Law Also Provides For Transfers Section 20 of the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023, provides that a person serving a prison sentence or death sentence, or a person imprisoned for failing to pay a fine, maintain peace or provide security for good behaviour, may be transferred to a prison in another state by order of the state government with the mutual consent of the other state's government. Section 20 also provides for the inter-state transfer of undertrial prisoners, for which the trial court's consent is

## As Super El Nino Strengthens, Study Suggests That Climate Change Is Intensifying El Ninos

**Washington:** A new study suggests that El Ninos — the natural climatic chaos agent that pops up periodically and spikes global temperatures — are getting stronger because of human-caused climate change.

El Ninos are more than 36% stronger than they were before the industrial age began in the mid 1800s, with a 16% jump in just the last 40 years showing that the increase is accelerating, according to a study in Thursday's journal Science. The findings come as a strong El Nino that formed a couple months ago is forecast to be the biggest on record in coming months.

El Ninos, which are a temporary warming of parts of the equatorial Pacific, warp weather worldwide and increase extreme events, including heat waves, floods in some places and droughts in others. They can cost trillions in dam-

age. "That's important because strong El Ninos have much stronger impacts on climate hazards and extremes worldwide. When we set out to answer the question of why this might be happening, we set our data up against a record of global temperature, and we found that the increase in El Nino's strength closely parallels the rise in global temperature that is due to human causes such as the burning of fossil fuels," said study lead author Julia Cole, a paleoclimatologist at the University of Michigan. Her study looks back at El Ninos going back 900 years or so.

Aggravating already nasty El Ninos "El Nino is the most violent aspect of climate variability worldwide, with effects ranging from local fisheries collapse, to widespread coral die-offs to severe droughts and food shortages around the world," said



Dalhousie University marine scientist Boris Worm, who wasn't part of the study. Worm quoted the late climate scientist Wallace Broecker who warned "the climate system is an angry beast and we are poking it with sticks." And then Worm added: "Human emissions are the stick and El Nino is of the 'angry' outbursts that can be so threatening to our collective safety." An El Nino's strength is determined by measuring water temperature in

a region of the central Pacific around the equator and comparing a three-month average to normal. If it's 0.5 degrees Celsius (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than normal, it's becomes an El Nino. The top of the scale is 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and is called "very strong." The most recent weekly El Nino figure is at 2.7 degrees (4.9 degrees Fahrenheit) and is expected to keep growing for another two to

## Norway's King Harald V Dies At 89; His Son Becomes King

**Stavanger:** King Harald V of Norway, who went into exile in the United States as a child during the Nazi occupation of his homeland and refused a string of European noblemen in order to marry his school sweetheart, has died. He was 89. The royal palace said he died at the National Hospital in Oslo on Friday at 6:35 a.m. Harald was Europe's oldest monarch. The popular king modernized the royal house but refused to follow in the footsteps of other aging monarchs who have abdicated in recent times. His son now automatically becomes King Haakon VIII.

Like other royal houses in Europe, the Norwegian monarchs serve a largely symbolic role, enjoying celebrity status while real power in the democracy of 5.5 million rests with an elected parliament. Harald was crowned king after his British-born father, King Olav V, died in January 1991, and reigned during an oil-and-gas-driven economic boom in his country.

Harald was born in 1937 in Asker, near Oslo, becoming the first Norwegian prince to be born in the country since King Olav IV in 1370. In the following centuries, Norway didn't have a king of its own until Harald's grandfather, Haakon VII, was elected king following the 1905 dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway. Harald was 3 years old when the Nazis occupied Norway at the start of World War II. To avoid capture, his mother fled with him and his sisters, Ragnhild and Astrid, first to Sweden and then by boat to the U.S., while Harald's father and grandfather went into exile in Britain with Norway's government. Haakon's refusal to go along with German demands garnered respect among his people. During their time in the U.S., the Norwegian royals were often guests at the White House. Harald was 6 when he carried out his first official duty, christening new warplanes at a Norwegian air base in Canada. The family was reunited in Norway in June 1945, shortly after the end of the war. Harald attended public schools, the Norwegian military college and Oxford University.

Like his father — an Olympic champion sailor in 1928 — Harald loved the sea and sailboats. He represented Norway at several Olympics, and in 1987 he skippered his yacht to gold in the World Championships. As a young man, Harald was



urged to find a bride among the princesses of Europe. For nine years he shunned a series of noblemen, holding out until he finally won his father's permission to marry his school sweetheart, Sonja Haraldsen, the daughter of a successful businessman. King Olav had feared the marriage would weaken Norway's still-young monarchy. Instead, Norwegians greeted the Aug. 29, 1968, wedding with jubilation, and later embraced Sonja as their queen. The couple had two children, Haakon and his older sister, Märtha Louise. The Norwegian Constitution was altered in 1990 to allow the first born, regardless of gender, to take precedence in the line of succession. However, it was not applied retroactively, meaning that Haakon continued to take precedence over his sister.

When Harald assumed the throne on Jan. 21, 1991, he adopted the same motto his father and grandfather had used: "All for Norway." He spent the next years trying to modernize the monarchy. "It has been my experience that the monarchy stands strong," he once said. "This is not least because my father and grandfather did most things right. That puts me under pressure, but I take it as a challenge."

Harald won the praise of the country with an emotional speech at a memorial service after a right-wing extremist, Anders Behring Breivik, killed 77 people in bomb and gun attacks in Norway in 2011. "I remain convinced that the belief in freedom is stronger than fear. I remain convinced in the belief of an open Norwegian democracy and society. I remain convinced in the belief in our ability to live freely and safely in our own country," the king said. In 2016, Harald gave an unexpected and impassioned speech in support of LGBTQ+ equality, refugees and religious tolerance,

saying "Norwegians are girls who love girls, boys who love boys, and girls and boys who love each other." He added that many Norwegians have emigrated from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Poland and other countries and that they "believe in God, Allah, the universe and nothing."

The public speech extolled the diversity of the Scandinavian nation and was viewed on social media by millions.

During his reign, the royal family suffered relatively few of the scandals that have plagued their peers in the Swedish and British royal families, though Harald's daughter Märtha Louise gave up royal duties after raising eyebrows by saying she could communicate with angels and becoming engaged to an American man who identifies as a shaman. The Norwegian royal family did face unflattering attention in early 2026 as Harald's daughter-in-law, Crown Princess Mette-Marit, faced renewed scrutiny over her connections with the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. That raised questions over her judgment, though she is not accused of any wrongdoing. Mette-Marit apologized for the situation she put the royal family in, part of a broader apology for all those she had "disappointed."

At around the same time, her eldest son, Marius Borg Høiby, was convicted of rape in a high-profile trial and sentenced to four years in prison. Høiby, Mette-Marit's son from a previous relationship before she met Haakon, has no royal titles or official duties. In January 2024, after the abdication of Denmark's Queen Margrethe — his second cousin — Harald said that he stood by the oath he made when ascending the throne: "It lasts for life." However, he was hospitalized twice on foreign trips after that, including during a 2024 vacation in Malaysia when he was fitted

## Zambia President Hichilema Has Been Reelected For A Second Term

**Lusaka:** Zambia's President Hakainde Hichilema has been reelected for a second five-year term, the Electoral Commission of Zambia announced early Tuesday. He was declared the outright winner of last Thursday's presidential election without the need for a run-off, having secured 61.4% of the 5 million votes cast.

According to the commission, Hichilema won with 2,965,326 votes and his closest competitor was opposition leader Brian Mundubile, who won 1,856,217 votes, which was about 38% of the total vote. "I therefore declare, Hichilema Hakainde S, to be president-elect of the Republic of Zambia this 18th day of August, 2026," commission chairperson Mwangala Zaloumis said. In a statement issued Tuesday, Hichilema welcomed the results and thanked Zambians for the reelection, but also reached out to those who voted for the opposition.

"To those citizens who preferred the ideas presented by our opponents,



we hear you, and we will continue to work for you to ensure that every Zambian benefits from the development we are delivering," he said in a statement. There was no immediate reaction from opposition leader Mundubile.

Hichilema's victory follows a closely watched election which saw the vote counting suspended last Friday and then restarted hours later under heightened security after the commission said there had been attacks against some polling station officials and some ballot papers had been stolen.

The government also confirmed that several

leading opposition figures were arrested on the night of the elections, with the police accusing them of posing a threat to state security. Mundubile said his home was raided by the police in what he called an attack on his life. Thursday's election was seen as a test of Hichilema's economic recovery plan after the copper-rich nation was plunged into a debt crisis in 2020. Hichilema was elected in 2021 and oversaw the restructuring of Zambia's sovereign debt while reigning in inflation and stabilizing the currency.

International observers, including the European

Union, said the election was largely peaceful, but said the "broader electoral process took place in an environment that limited fundamental freedoms."

"Late legal changes, legal uncertainty, and unequal campaign conditions distorted the playing field," said Michael McNamara, chief of the EU observation mission. In a pastoral statement, the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops expressed concern over the deployment of the army during the vote counting. "The maintenance of order during elections is constitutionally and statutorily the

## At Least 30 People Killed In A Landslide At A Landfil In Capital Of Guinea

**Conakry:** A mountainous heap of refuse collapsed at the largest landfill in Guinea's capital of Conakry early on Sunday, killing 30 people, according to the central government. Authorities said that heavy rains, which started at around 2 a.m., washed over the refuse at Dar Es Salam — the largest landfill in Conakry — and triggered a landslide that buried nearby shacks. A search and rescue operation was underway to find survivors. Six people were seriously injured, and several homes were destroyed. The site, an open-air waste dump which is the largest in the city, had been designated for closure on Sunday, accord-



ing to Lt. Col. Baldé Mamadou Bailo, the sanitation officer for the military engineering battalion. Locals living around the landfill had been given eviction notices, which forced many to leave the area, but many others were

still around at the time of the disaster, according to authorities.

"We will ensure that the remaining families are relocated elsewhere," Dienabou Touré, the minister of territorial administration and decentralisation, said at

the scene. Guinea is mineral-rich with huge deposits of bauxite — the largest in the world — and also has iron ore, gold, diamonds and minerals. However, according to the World Bank, 43.7% of the population lives below the national

## Experts Warn Against Nixing 60-Day Grace Period For Foreign Workers In US

**Washington:** The US proposal to eliminate the 60-day grace period for H-1B workers seeking employment after job loss will cause severe human displacement and loss of highly skilled talent, mostly from India, experts said. Indian nationals are among the largest beneficiaries of H-1B employment visas, comprising 71 per cent of all successful applicants in the 2024 fiscal year. The Department of Homeland Security has proposed eliminating the 60-day grace period that allows H-1B workers and certain other legal nonimmigrants to remain in the US after their employment ends while they find another sponsor, change status, or prepare to leave. "Scrapping the existing 60-day grace period entirely represents a severe regression that directly harms legal immigrants who have contributed significantly to the United States' technological and economic leadership," Ajay



Jain Bhutoria, a former White House advisor, said in a statement.

American attorney Adrian Pandev said all start-up founders quit their corporate jobs and utilise the 60-day grace period to file change of status petitions for their new ventures.

"Without it, the employee is incentivised to not mention anything to their current employer until the new petition is filed or even approved. That means the current employer could be finding out they are losing a team member on extremely short notice," Pandev said in a post on

X. "This would impact US employers as much as employees," he added. Bhutoria condemned the proposed policy of the Department of Homeland Security. "Eliminating the 60-day grace period is inhumane and unworkable. When a worker faces a sudden termination, 60 days is already dangerously short. Stripping away this protection entirely leaves thousands of law-abiding individuals with zero time to wrap up their lives," he said.

He urged South Asian community organisations, business leaders,

and advocacy groups to prepare for public comments once the rule is officially published in the Federal Register to ensure the administration hears the full impact of this proposal.

Bhutoria, during his tenure as advisor to then-President Joe Biden, had proposed extending the grace period from 60 days to 180 days, citing the reality of corporate hiring practices, where technical interview rounds and visa transfer paperwork often take months to complete. "This proposal strikes at the heart of the South Asian immigrant community and skilled workforce. I urge DHS and the administration to withdraw this proposal immediately and instead adopt a compassionate, pragmatic 180-day grace period that respects human dignity and protects America's competitive edge," Bhutoria said. According to him, hundreds of thousands of South Asian tech, healthcare, and engi-

# Counting the uncounted—why India's migration survey matters



The first dedicated comprehensive migration survey in India in nearly two decades is a chance to gain insight into a segment of the workforce that is key to the economy but has largely been ignored in policy-making. The migrant workforce became visible when India went under lockdown during the Covid-19 outbreak in March 2020.

Pictures of labourers walking hundreds of kilometres to reach their villages had a profound impact on policymakers. The crisis not only exposed their vulnerability; it also showed a clear opportunity to build our knowledge of those who make modern India tick. The issue is not just about migrants being uncounted. The assumption that people live, work, access welfare, and build their lives in one place continues to shape public policy today. However, more and more Indians are moving between districts, States and cities to find work, pursue education and seek opportunities. While mobility is emerging as a key part of India's development narrative, policies based on permanence are lagging behind. Therefore, the government's decision to carry out a nationwide Migration Survey from July 2026 to June 2027 by the National Statistics Office (NSO) is important. It will provide the most comprehensive migration survey in almost 18 years, after the National Sample Survey's special migration round in 2007-08. Rapidly evolving labour markets, urbanisation trends and economic aspirations make this an important time to understand one of the most critical but under-researched aspects of modern-day India.

**Scale And Patterns**  
 India's migration is far greater than what is realised. According to Census 2011, nearly 38 per cent of India's population consisted of migrants, with 45.6 crore counted in 2011 compared with 31.5 crore in 2001. The growth of about 45 per cent was significantly higher than the overall population growth of about 18 per cent over the decade, highlighting mobility as a key aspect of economic change.

annually, making labour mobility one of the most significant demographic changes in India.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2020-21 showed that almost 28.9 per cent of Indians were migrants. The migration rates were 47.9 per cent among women and 10.7 per cent among men.

The survey's success will depend not on the data collected, but on whether institutions and welfare systems become portable, inclusive and responsive to the workers who keep India's economy moving. The main motivation for women migrants is marriage and for men, it is work, but these answers do not necessarily tell the whole story. Women who migrate after marriage are often involved in the labour force, informal labour and care work, but their economic role is rarely included in the official discourse. Although people often think of migration as movement across State borders, the vast majority of migration takes place within States. Over 80% of migrants are estimated to move within their States, highlighting the significance of intra-State movement between villages, towns and emerging urban centres. Migration and labour force patterns are undergoing seasonal, circular and temporary shifts, which are poorly represented in existing data sources.

**Counting Matters**  
 This statistical invisibility has dangerous implications. When Covid-19 struck, the lack of regular stock-taking of migrants and the absence of databases posed challenges to relief activities and highlighted the shortcomings of welfare systems based on fixed places of residence. The cost of inadequate migration data goes beyond welfare delivery. Lack of migration data skewsHowever, solid estimates of climate-induced migration are still absent in India, and policymakers are not urban planning, workforce projections, infrastructure investments, and skill development plans. Both cities and the people who live and work within them need reliable information to plan housing, public transportation, health-care facilities and educational services that effectively meet the needs of residents.

## The Survey Should Measure

The survey has implications that go beyond demographic accounting. It is designed to record seasonal and short-term migration, return migration, employment characteristics, housing situation, income fluctuations and intentions to migrate. This information may contribute to understanding migration's impact on labour markets and local economies. Some key indicators include the duration and frequency of migration, reasons, job type and wages, social security enrolment (e-Shram, EPFO, ESIC), health insurance coverage, portability of ration card, housing tenure and safety, exposure to climate shocks (drought, flood, heat waves).

Household sampling frame includes specific modules for short-term, seasonal and return migrants. It will classify migrants by place-of-birth, place-of-enumeration, and length of stay and also will measure industry, occupation and earnings to differentiate economic migration from social migration. State-level results are anticipated 6-9 months after the completion of fieldwork, and microdata and dashboards will be made public.

But it is not just about counting movements; it is about understanding vulnerabilities.

Do migrants have higher wages than they did previously? Are they able to secure healthcare, insurance and social security? Do migrants have access to secure work and to a decent life? How many people are still outside of urban services, but play an important role in the city economy? Data collection without investigating the outcomes will only give a partial picture. Climate, Politics, Labour Markets  
 The survey also comes at a time when migration trends are beginning to change due to climate change. In many regions of India, unreliable rainfall and frequent droughts, causing groundwater depletion and reduced yield, are making rural livelihoods precarious. Migration has become a way of life for many households as a means of coping with environmental and economic uncertainty.

However, solid estimates of climate-induced migration are still absent in India, and policymakers are not well equipped to meet the future challenges of changing population patterns. The survey can bridge this important knowledge gap.

The federal aspect is also significant. To fill labour shortages in construction, manufacturing, logistics and services, States such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are relying increasingly on migrant workers. Thousands of migrant workers in construction, hospitality, transportation and domestic services, as well as in the platform economy, have contributed to Bengaluru's growth.

At the same time, regions such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha remain significant sources of labour out-migration. Improved migration statistics can assist both origin and destination States in developing policies relating to skills, labour rights and welfare portability. India's migration survey should be more than an exercise in counting workers; it must become a foundation for policy reform. The Covid-19 crisis exposed how migrant workers were excluded from welfare systems because benefits, services and administrative records were tied to fixed locations.

Survey findings should, therefore, drive portable social security, healthcare and pension entitlements, effective implementation of One Nation-One Ration Card, affordable housing near workplaces, stronger labour and occupational protections, and cooperation between source and destination States.

A joint mechanism involving the Labour Ministry, NSO, States and Urban Local Bodies, supported by public dashboards, can ensure accountability. Ultimately, the survey's success will depend not on the data collected, but on whether institutions anHowever, solid estimates of climate-induced migration are still absent in India, and policymakers are not welfare systems become portable, inclusive and responsive to the workers who sustain India's economy.

# An Income Tax law that finally speaks plain English



For decades, filing income tax returns in India has been less about calculating taxes and more about decoding legal language. Even educated taxpayers often struggled with terms such as "previous year," "assessment year," endless provisos, scattered exemptions, and cross-references spread across hundreds of sections. Tax compliance became an exercise in interpretation rather than understanding. That may finally be changing.

With Parliament approving the Income-tax (No. 2) Bill, 2025, India has embarked on one of the most significant legal reforms in direct taxation since the Income Tax Act of 1961. The reform is not about introducing new taxes or increasing tax rates. Instead, it seeks to make the law more accessible, transparent, and taxpayer-friendly. At a time when India is rapidly digitising governance and aiming to improve the ease of doing business, simplifying tax legislation is both timely and necessary.

**As Simple As That**  
 The most striking feature of the new legislation is its simplicity. The sprawling six-decade-old Act has been reduced from nearly 47 chapters and around 819 effective provisions to just 23 chapters and 536 sections. Hundreds of lengthy provisos and explanations have been absorbed into the main provisions, eliminating much of the complexity that accumulated through decades of amendments.

Rather than forcing taxpayers to navigate an intricate legal maze, the new law presents rules in shorter sentences, clearer language, and structured tables. Perhaps the most welcome change is linguistic rather than fiscal. The confusing distinction between the "previous year" and the "assessment year" disappears, replaced by the far more intuitive term "tax year." This may appear cosmetic, but for millions of salaried employees and first-time taxpayers, it removes one of the most persistent sources of confusion. A single reference point makes tax calculations

easier to understand while leaving the "financial year" to govern compliance deadlines and administrative procedures.

Organisation has also received overdue attention. Under the earlier law, provisions relating to salaries, gratuity, leave encashment, voluntary retirement benefits, pensions, and retrenchment compensation were scattered across different sections, forcing taxpayers and professionals alike to move repeatedly between chapters. The new Act groups these related provisions together, making it significantly easier to determine taxable income without constantly cross-checking multiple clauses. Similarly, exemptions that once crowded Section 10 have been shifted into well-organised schedules, while provisions governing charitable and non-profit organisations are brought together in dedicated parts of the legislation. This restructuring will particularly benefit trusts, educational institutions, and donors who have long struggled with fragmented compliance requirements. Perhaps, the most welcome change is linguistic rather than fiscal. The confusing distinction between the 'previous year' and the 'assessment year' disappears, replaced by the far more intuitive term 'tax year'. Another area receiving substantial attention is Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) and Tax Collected at Source (TCS). Instead of requiring taxpayers to search through numerous sections for rates, thresholds, exemptions, and applicable categories, the new law presents much of this information through simplified tables. Whether one is dealing with contractor payments, rent, bank interest, e-commerce transactions, or lottery winnings, the applicable rates and thresholds can now be located much more easily.

Take rental income as an example. The revised framework clearly specifies the applicable TDS rate once monthly rent crosses the prescribed

threshold, identifies the responsible deductor, and explains the relevant exceptions in one place. Such presentation reduces ambiguity and minimises errors in compliance. Importantly, the legislation preserves continuity where it matters most. It does not alter existing tax rates or tax regimes. The tax relief announced in Budget 2025 continues unchanged. Individuals opting for the new tax regime continue to enjoy zero income tax liability up to Rs 12 lakh through the enhanced rebate under Section 87A, while salaried taxpayers effectively remain tax-free up to Rs 12.75 lakh after accounting for the standard deduction. Taxpayers should, however, bear in mind that income subject to taxation at special rates, including certain categories of capital gains, is not eligible for this rebate. Existing Rights, LiabilitiesThe law has come into force with effect from 1 April 2026, providing sufficient time for the Income Tax Department, employers, banks, financial institutions, and software providers to align their systems. Equally important is the inclusion of a comprehensive "Repeal and Savings" provision that protects existing rights and liabilities during the transition. The government's proposed section-wise "old-to-new" navigation guide should also ease the adjustment for tax professionals accustomed to the 1961 Act.

Beyond legal drafting, the reform reflects a broader shift in India's approach to public administration. The country has increasingly embraced digital governance through faceless assessments, online return filing, pre-filled tax forms, Aadhaar-linked verification, and data-driven compliance. However, technology alone cannot simplify governance if the underlying law remains difficult to comprehend. Digital interfaces become genuinely user-friendly only when the legal framework itself is written in language that ordinary citizens can understand.

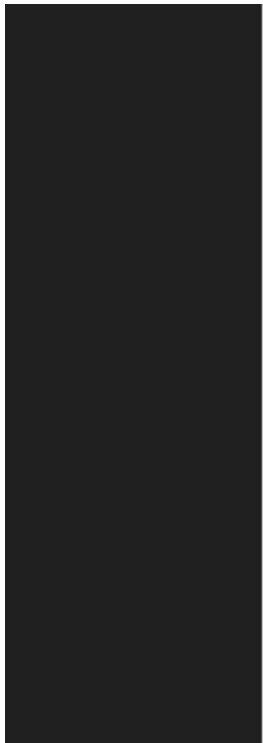
This reform also aligns with India's broader ambition of improving the ease of doing business. Investors and entrepreneurs value not only competitive tax rates but also certainty, predictability, and simplicity. A tax code that is easier to interpret reduces compliance costs, lowers litigation, and improves voluntary compliance. Internationally, countries that have modernised tax administration have often coupled digital transformation with legislative simplification. India's latest reform follows this global trend.

**Drafting Challenge**  
 Yet simplification alone cannot eliminate every challenge. The effectiveness of the new law will ultimately depend on how clearly the accompanying Rules, Forms, and administrative guidelines are drafted. Frequent amendments, inconsistent interpretations, or excessive procedural requirements could gradually reintroduce the very complexity the reform seeks to remove. Continuous taxpayer education, robust digital support, and transparent implementation will, therefore, be crucial.

The larger significance of the Income-tax (No. 2) Bill lies in its philosophy. Rather than asking in plain English not require specialised legal expertise for routine transactions. A simpler statute can improve volvedue inadvertent mistakes, minimise disputes, and build greater trust between taxpayers and the state.

India has not introduced a new tax system; it has introduced a new way of reading tax law. In an era where governance increasingly emphasises citizen-centric services, plain language is not merely a drafting choice; it is a democratic necessity. If implemented effectively, this reform could transform tax compliance from an annual exercise in confusion into a process that is transparent, predictable, and accessible to every taxpayer. That, perhaps, is the most meaningful tax reform of all.

# India Open To Be Moved To Guwahati In 2028: BAI



Badminton Association of India secretary general Sanjay Mishra on Sunday said the 2028 India Open Super 750 tournament will be held in Guwahati as the date will clash with the security arrangements in the National capital for the Republic Day. Top players, including Anders Antonsen, have criticized the India Open's January-February window due to New Delhi's severe winter air pollution and cold indoor stadium temperatures. The Badminton World Federation had moved the India Open to February 2-7 for the 2027 season to avoid the worst of New Delhi's winter weather, before returning it to late January for the 2028 season. In 2028, the event will be held from January 25-30, and Mishra said hosting the tournament in Delhi during that period would be difficult due to security and logistical issues. "The 2028 India Open will be held in the last week of January and due



to the tournament dates clashing with Republic Day security arrangements in the National capital, we felt that only for that year, we should shift the tournament to Guwahati. It will return to New Delhi in 2029," Mishra told reporters. Guwahati successfully hosted the 2025 World Junior Championships. Antonsen has repeatedly skipped the event and accepted mandatory fines, urging the BWF to reschedule the tournament. Mixed doubles pair of Thom Gicquel and Delphine Delrue, who on Sunday became the first French badminton players to become world champions, also urged BWF to host the India Open in a different window. "It was a better atmosphere compared to India Open when it's not the same, and also it's hard to breathe and the quality of the tournament is not as good as this week, so it was really good for us, and we hope that the BWF will change the month that when they

host India Open, because in January it's not very good for us," Gicquel said.

BAI also said they have bid to host the 2028 Thomas and Uber Cup. "We have bid for the tournament in 2028 and we are hopeful that we will get it after the World Championships. There are other countries also in the running but we are hopeful to host it."

BWF President Patama praises India for hosting 'amazing' World Championships

BWF President Khuny Patama Leeswadtrakul praised India for delivering an "amazing" World Championships, saying the country had lived up to the expectations surrounding its return to the event after 17 years.

"India waited 17 years for this moment, and India made every year count," Patama said in her message at the conclusion of the BWF World Championships 2026. "The BWF World Championships 2026 have won praise from every corner of our

sport. That praise belongs to the people." Patama said BAI had hosted the championships and held the event together over many months, while the government backed the tournament and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports drove it forward. She also praised the Sports Authority of India for delivering the arena, describing the facility as worthy of badminton's biggest stage despite the demanding timeline under which it was built. For Patama, however, the players remained the central focus of the event. "The players came first, and it showed," she said, praising the accommodation, transport and facilities provided to athletes and team officials. Reflecting on the reception from Indian fans, she added: "I am proud of the fans in India, who know this sport and cheer with real knowledge. And I am proud of a country that opened its heart to the ." "Thank you, India."

## India's FCNR (B) Inflows Projected To Touch USD 80-85 Billion;

New Delhi: India may now receive Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) deposits in the range of USD 65-70 billion by the end of the scheme and overall USD 80-USD 85 billion, according to an SBI Research report. The total amount mobilised so far in 45 days has crossed the total amount mobilised in 2013 over a three-month period. "Given the current trend, we believe that the total amount mobilised so far in 45 days has easily crossed the total amount mobilised in 2013 in 3 months! Overall, we believe India may now receive FCNR (B) deposits in the range of USD 65-70 billion by the end of the scheme and overall USD 80-USD 85 bn," the SBI Research report stated. The report noted that public sector banks served as the primary drivers of this mobilisation. Citing data from the Reserve Bank of India, the report noted that FCNR(B) deposits worth USD 17.41 billion were mobilised till July 17, 2026. The total deposit inflows reached USD 20.72 billion till July 17, which included USD 1.97 billion from Overseas Foreign Currency Borrowings (OFCBs) and USD 1.34 billion from External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs). The report mentioned that total FCNR deposits were expected to reach USD 26-28 billion by July 23 alone. SBI Research revised its total FCNR forecast at the end of the scheme



upward to USD 65-70 billion from an earlier estimate of USD 40-45 billion.

"We also believe that a significant majority of existing FCNR deposits which are going to mature in Aug/ Sep'26 will be renewed under the new scheme (gravitated by higher interest rates) and will boost the FCNR (B) inflows," the report added.

"Our preliminary estimate indicates that an amount worth USD 10 billion on a conservative basis, in addition to baseline estimates are going to be mobilised mostly through those economies where tax concessions are available," the report said.

Foreign Currency Assets (FCA) increased by USD 7.6 billion from June 8 till July 17. Meanwhile, deposit mobilisation recorded USD 17.4 billion for FCNR(B) flows, possibly reflecting that the exchange process at the

RBI by the banks was happening gradually, accounting for roughly 44 per cent of the total amount. "The next reporting for FCA for July is for the week ended July 24 and the week ended July 31, and we expect for the next 15-day period (17 Jul-31 Jul) FCA inflows could touch USD 10-12 billion based on current trends," the report said. "This should make most of the overall FCA accruals/growth (till July end) of USD 17-20 billion post the RBI measure. The report mentioned that total FCNR deposits were expected to reach USD 26-28 billion by July 23 alone. SBI Research revised its total FCNR forecast at the end of the scheme upward to USD 65-70 billion from an earlier estimate of USD 40-45 billion. "We also believe that a significant majority of existing FCNR deposits which are going to

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## Pakistan Lodge Complaint With Broadcaster After Interview With Imran



The second match of the three-match Test series between England and Pakistan is currently being played at Lord's, the 'Mecca' of cricket. Pakistan were not only in the news for their impressive performance on the first day, but also for threatening to pull out of the match. It is worth mentioning that Sky Sports aired an interview with the sons of former Pakistan captain and Prime Minister Imran Khan during lunch on the first day. The Pakistan Cricket Board objected to the

interview and threatened to boycott the match if it was not complied with. However, they walked into the field.

According to Cricinfo, the Pakistan Cricket Board contacted Sky Sports before the scheduled lunch and expressed its objection to the planned broadcast. The board also considered a protest, in which the Pakistan players would have refused to return to the field for the second session if the interview was shown.

Sky Sports initially sus-

pended the segment after discussions with the Pakistan Cricket Board. However, the 18-minute interview was later aired, and by the time it ended, the Pakistan players were preparing to resume play. They returned to the field at 2.40 pm local time. It is worth mentioning that former England captain Michael Atherton recorded this interview with Imran Khan's two sons, Suleman and Qasim, inside the Lord's Writers' Room on Wednesday morning. Sky Sports also promot-

ed the discussion ahead of the Test match. PTV, which holds the broadcasting rights in Pakistan, did not air the interview. During an interview with Sky's Michael Atherton, Imran Khan's sons expressed concern over the Pakistani government's treatment of the former prime minister, claiming that they were "trying to kill him". During the interview, Qasim Khan said, "It's not clear what they are doing; they are just trying to kill him openly there. They are trying to

# Biharis Have Begun Investing In SIPs And Mutual Funds, But The State's AUM Remains Low



Patna: Despite an increase in awareness about investing in mutual funds and systematic investment plans (SIP), Bihar's total assets under management (AUM) continues to remain low, compared to the national average. The number of investors in the state has risen from around seven lakh in 2018-19 to 1.17 crore at present, but the state's total AUM in June 2026 stood at only Rs 84,795 crore, which is estimated to be around 1 per cent of the country's total AUM of Rs 85.76 lakh crore. This means that while a large number of investors in Bihar have begun investing in mutual funds and SIPs, their investment amounts are still not significant. Many investors have even exited their investments after some time, especially in cities like Muzaffarpur, Gaya, Begusarai and Purnia have also been investing in mutual funds and

SIPs, with the small investors realising that a small SIP can grow into a substantial amount over time. However, experts say that simply starting an investment isn't enough. Staying invested over the long term is also crucial. Sources disclosed that equity funds account for 72 per cent of mutual fund investments in Bihar. This is followed by hybrid funds at 14 per cent, solution-oriented funds at 5 per cent and debt-income funds at 3 per cent. Experts say a key reason for greater equity investment is the expectation of higher returns. However, this also carries higher risks.

**Measuring AUM**

Mutual funds expert Sanjay Prasad explained that AUM can be measured in several ways. "In the context of a state, AUM helps us understand how much investors in that state have invested in the

equity markets and mutual funds,” he said while underlining that despite the growing number of investors in Bihar, a major problem is that investors aren't staying long-term. “Many investors enter the stock market and mutual funds through apps but they lack adequate information. When they see losses within six months or a year, they exit their investments,” he said. Prasad further stated that only 5 per cent of investors who come through apps stay for five years. Meanwhile, for those who invest under the guidance of an advisor or expert, this figure is 35 per cent. This is because advisors provide investors with investment information and encourage them to stay invested for the long ter.

He said that patience is crucial in investing.

"Previously, people would invest in land or gold and then let it go for long periods. Money grew there because investors stayed put," he said. Long-term persistence is also essential in mutual funds and SIPs. A key feature of the stock market, mutual funds, and SIPs is that investments can be withdrawn if needed. "Patience is a part of life. It's not like we start something today and profits start coming in tomorrow. Any endeavor requires five or ten years of patience. Same is the case with equity," Prasad underlined. He pointed out that the number of investors in small towns has certainly increased, but the investment period hasn't. Many investors lack proper guidance. Some start investing through banks but fail to stay in the market for long. He said that there is a need to educate people that

**N. Sai Ram****V. Ramaraju****B. Srinivas****K. Srikanth****A. Sreenivas & Family**

# Happy Anniversary

**Agirishetty**  
**Laxmi**  
**Sreenivas**

Wishing you both  
 a lifetime of love,  
 happiness and  
 togetherness.



From  
**Near & Dear**

