

FAIR REPORT

THE DAWN OF A FEARLESS PEN

Jaipur, Tuesday, 14 July 2026

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Primary school teachers take part in a protest march organised by the Usthi United Primary Teachers' Welfare Association, demanding a resolution of TET-related issues in Kolkata, Monday.

BRAVING THE RAIN

US attack Iran as Tehran retaliates AGAINST UAE TANKERS IN STRAIT OF HORMUZ AND BAHRAIN

FAIR REPORT
DUBAI

United Arab Emirates (AP) — The U.S. launched strikes on Iran early Tuesday morning, hours after President Donald Trump said Washington is “reinstating” a blockade on Iran in the Strait of Hormuz. Trump separately suggested the United States will charge other ships for safe passage, upending hundreds of years of American policy supporting freedom of navigation across the globe. Iran responded with attacks targeting Bahrain and two tankers associated with the United Arab Emir-



ates traveling through the strait, killing one mariner and wounding eight others. The Emirates threatened to retaliate against Iran, potentially drawing the nation home to Abu Dhabi and Dubai back into fight-

ing with Tehran.

The attacks come as Iran and the U.S. both vie for control of the strait through which a fifth of all crude oil and natural gas once passed in peacetime. The price of benchmark

Brent crude oil rose to a one-month high of over \$84 in trading early Tuesday, still well below the nearly \$120 reached at the height of the war but threatening to make costs everywhere higher.

Trump insists strait will be open

The U.S. military's Central Command said it struck areas around Abu Musa, Bandar Abbas, Bushehr, Chahbahar, Jask and Konarak, targeting Iranian “coastal defense systems, missile and drone sites and maritime capabilities.” Iran acknowledged strikes

around those areas, but provided no immediate casualty or damage assessments. “These strikes will continue imposing a heavy cost on Iranian forces and degrade their ability to attack innocent civilians and commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz,” the U.S. military said.

Moments after the military announced the new strikes, Trump called it “another major attack.” “We’re hitting them very hard. And it’ll continue, and we’ll see what happens,” he told reporters in the Oval Office. “We’re knocking out all of their of-

fensive capability and we’re controlling the straits. We’re putting the blockade back.” Trump also provided new details on his administration doing an about-face and suggesting it will charge tolls for ships going through the strait, after previously suggesting that it wouldn’t.

Attacks resume across the Mideast

The United Arab Emirates’ Defense Ministry said early Tuesday that Iran attacked two tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, killing one mariner and wounding eight others.

Bhajan Lal Cracks Down on Crime, Warns Officials of Accountability

FAIR REPORT
JAIPUR

Signalling a tougher stance on law enforcement, Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma on Monday directed the state police to intensify action against criminals under a “zero tolerance” policy, while making it clear that officers would also be held accountable for lapses in maintaining law and order. Chairing a high-level review meeting attended by the Chief Secretary, the Director General of Police, senior range officers and district police chiefs, Sharma instructed officials to ensure



swift and stringent action against offenders to curb crime across the state. In a significant administrative message, the Chief Minister said responsibility for crime would be fixed on the concerned officers, underscoring the government’s intent to strengthen accountability within the policing system alongside stricter enforcement against criminal elements.

Operation Sindoor: India Clears ₹10 Lakh Crore Defence Pipeline, Shifts to Long-War Preparedness

FAIR REPORT
NEW DELHI

In the aftermath of “Operation Sindoor”, India has significantly reshaped its defence procurement strategy, signalling a shift from preparing for short, limited military responses to building capabilities for prolonged, multi-domain warfare. Over the past 14 months, the “Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)” has approved “55 major procurement proposals” worth more than “9.80 lakh crore”. While the entire amount will not be spent immediately, it represents a long-term investment in defence con-



tracts, indigenous manufacturing, logistics, and military modernisation over the coming years. The change in procurement priorities reflects

three major strategic realities. First, military conflicts have become increasingly frequent. Second, once wars begin, they are becoming harder

to contain or end quickly. Third, adversaries are increasingly attempting to prolong conflicts in order to inflict sustained military and economic costs.

Consequently, India’s latest acquisition plans focus not only on advanced weapons but also on ensuring the armed forces can sustain operations for months through adequate ammunition stockpiles, maintenance capabilities, repair infrastructure, and resilient logistics networks.

Defence experts say the prolonged conflicts in “Ukraine” and “West Asia” have influenced India’s military planning. However, they caution that delays in acquiring next-generation submarines and fifth-generation fighter aircraft remain key capability gaps.

Bhilwara Mandi Secretary’s Return Reignites Corruption Row, Puts Rajasthan’s ‘Zero Tolerance’ Pledge to Test

FAIR REPORT
JAIPUR

A transfer order posting Rajneesh Singh as secretary of the Bhilwara Krishi Upaj Mandi has triggered sharp criticism from local public representatives, with sources alleging the officer carries a trail of corruption complaints from his previous postings.

Singh, who held the same post during the previous government’s tenure, was reportedly at the centre of multiple corruption allegations during that period. According to sources, cases linked to his conduct are pending scrutiny with the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB)—in addition to separate ACB-related matters

said to involve his postings in Jaisalmer, Rajsamand and Jodhpur.

Several public representatives from Bhilwara have written to the state government objecting to the transfer, questioning why an officer with an alleged history of controversy was chosen for one of Rajasthan’s largest agricultural markets over other available candidates.

“Wherever Rajneesh Singh has been posted, allegations of scams have followed,” said one local representative, requesting anonymity. The remark echoes a broader complaint gaining traction in Bhilwara’s political circles—that the government’s much-publi-

cized zero-tolerance stance on corruption is being contradicted by its own transfer decisions. The Krishi Vipanani (Agricultural Marketing) Department has not issued a public explanation for the appointment. Questions are now being raised over why the department bypassed several officers with clean records to place a controversy-linked official in charge of a mandi as significant as Bhilwara’s.

Calls for the government to review the transfer order are expected to intensify in the coming days, with local leaders indicating they may escalate the matter directly with senior ministry officials if the posting is not reconsidered.

FAIR NATION FAIR REPORT 02

The Pioneer launches Keralam edition

FAIR REPORT

Thiruvananthapuram

The Pioneer marked a significant milestone in its journey with the launch of its Keralam edition at a function held at the Hycinth Hotel in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday evening, reaffirming the newspaper's commitment to credible, independent and impactful journalism in the State.

The Keralam Edition was formally inaugurated and released by Chief Minister VD Satheesan, who delivered the inaugural address, highlighting the vital role of a free, responsible and people-centric media in strengthening democracy.

"This is a time when we cannot say anything new," he said. "What we say is being twisted. We have to think very seriously about how it will affect society. But if we are convinced that what we do is right, then no matter what controversy comes up, the Government should go ahead and do it courageously. "The beauty of democracy is in discussion. We need to have positive discussions about the state, about the next generation, and about children. The media has a huge role to play in that," Satheesan added.



Keralam Chief Minister VD Satheesan releasing the Keralam edition of The Pioneer by handing it over to Deputy Speaker Shanimol Usman in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. CPI State secretary Binoy Viswam, Kerala Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala, The Pioneer Keralam Editor Bandi Sudhakara Goud, The Pioneer group of newspapers and magazines Chairman Prashant Tewari, Gururathnam Jnana Tapasy and Palayalam Imam VP Suhaib Moulavi also graced the occasion

The inaugural copy of the edition was received by Deputy Speaker of the Kerala Legislative Assembly, Shanimol Usman.

Welcoming the gathering, J Gopikrishnan, Associated Editor of The Pioneer, New Delhi, outlined the newspaper's editorial vision and its commitment to delivering

accurate, balanced and public-interest journalism to readers in Kerala.

Presiding over the function, Bandi Sudhakara Goud, Managing Director and Editor of The Pioneer Keralam edition, described the launch in the Capital city as an important step in the publication's expansion and

reaffirmed its commitment to journalistic excellence, editorial independence and credible reporting.

Ramesh Chennithala, Minister for Home Affairs, Government of Kerala, attended the programme as the Guest of Honour and addressed the gathering. He appreciated The Pioneer's

decision to launch its Keralam edition. He recalled that The Pioneer carried out several turbulent stories in the country. He also recalled his decades-long friendship with Sudhakara Goud from the time when both of them were Youth Congress leaders. He wished The Pioneer to be a strong pres-

ence in the Kerala media landscape. He noted that it is only the print media that is willing to correct itself, whereas the visuals don't correct wrong news. Congress Media and Publicity Chairman and Rajya Sabha MP Pawan Khera graced the occasion.

In his felicitation address, Prashant Tewari, Chairman & Managing Director of The Pioneer group of newspapers and magazines, New Delhi, congratulated the team on the launch of the Keralam Edition and conveyed his best wishes for its success, expressing confidence that the new edition would uphold The Pioneer's legacy of credible, independent and impactful journalism.

The function was also attended by several distinguished personalities, including Binoy Viswam, State Secretary of the CPI; Swami Gururethnam Jnana Thapaswi, General Secretary of Santhigiri Ashram; Dr VP Suhaib Maulavi, Imam of Palayam Juma Masjid; and KP Reji, State President of the Kerala Union of Working Journalists.

The programme commenced with a prayer and concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Saritha S Balan, Deputy Bureau Chief, The Pioneer, Thiruvananthapuram.

Nation Focus



FADNAVIS MEETS PAWAN KALYAN IN MUMBAI HOSPITAL

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday visited Andhra Pradesh Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan at Mumbai's Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital where the latter is recovering after undergoing surgery. Fadnavis said he wished Kalyan a speedy and complete recovery. "Visited Andhra Pradesh DCM Pawan Kalyan ji at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai, where he is recovering after a surgery. Wishing him a speedy and complete recovery," Fadnavis said in a post on X. In a statement on Sunday, the hospital said Kalyan was diagnosed with a right shoulder rotator cuff injury, comprising an extensive tear of the supraspinatus and infraspinatus tendon with an associated avulsion fracture of the greater tuberosity bone. He underwent successful arthroscopic repair of the injury at Kokilaben Hospital. (PTI)



MP GOVT PANEL ON UCC SUBMITS REPORT TO CHIEF MINISTER

The committee constituted to draft a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) for Madhya Pradesh has recommended exclusion of tribals from its scope in its report submitted to CM Mohan Yadav on Monday, an official statement said. The report of the Government-appointed multi-member panel, which was headed by retired SC Judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, has been forwarded to the Law Department, it said. After revision and process (consideration) of the Senior Secretary Committee, a bill on UCC is likely to be tabled in the Assembly during the upcoming monsoon session after approval by the Cabinet, said the statement. The five-day monsoon session of the State Assembly will be held from July 20. CM Yadav thanked all panel members, including the chairperson, for submitting the report within the stipulated time, said the statement. Committee memb Prof Gopal Sharma, Budhpal Singh, Shobha Paithankar, and Member Secretary Ajay Katesaria were present. (PTI)

Centre approves ₹14,300 crore Budget for Puducherry



Puducherry CM Rangasamy

FAIR REPORT

Puducherry

The Union Home Ministry has conveyed the Centre's approval of the Puducherry Government's proposal for a ₹14,300 crore Budget for the fiscal 2026-2027.

In a letter to the Chief Secretary of the Puducherry administration on Monday, the Under Secretary to the Home Department said the proposal was examined in consultation with the Finance Ministry.

He said the President of India had accordingly approved the laying of the annual financial statement for 2026-2027 before the Legislative Assembly of Puducherry.

The AINRC-Bharatiya Janata Party coalition Government was formed in May, in the wake of the Assembly polls on April 9. The Assembly is likely to meet later this month, when the budget for the new fiscal year will be presented by Chief Minister N Rangasamy, official sources said.

Row erupts as Govt plans to shift mosque inside NSI airport

FAIR REPORT

Kolkata

There was political controversy after the Government suspended indefinitely the offering of namaz at Bakra Mosque (Gouripur Jame Masjid), which is situated inside the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport at Dum Dum in Kolkata.

Rejecting the Government's claim that a running mosque inside an international airport and barely a few hundred

metres from the runway with regular public access was a security concern, senior Trinamool Congress MP Sougato Roy on Monday said that he was always for doing things on the basis of consensus and not arbitrarily. "The fact is that they want to extend the runway... there is no question of security or safety... If at all a change has to take place, then let it be on the basis of consensus and not by force as this BJP Government is doing it," Roy



said, while there was no statement from the Left.

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari had earlier said that it was indeed a

security concern and the mosque should be shifted from the area "because nowhere you will find a public place inside an airport and so near the run way... this is a security sensitive issue... remember we are near international border... China and Bangladesh are nearby... an international airport which receives top VIPs and dignitaries everyday besides handling scores of flights cannot be kept open like this for common entry... it has to be

shifted from there because national security is supreme... National security and the security of the airport will gain priority over everything else... I cannot say more as a Chief Minister."

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar too said that he had heard since his childhood that the runway of the airport could not be extended because the mosque came in the way. All this was because of appeasement politics.

3 BJP RS nominees file papers

FAIR REPORT

Kolkata

Three BJP nominees, Sukhendu Shekhar Roy, Sushmita Dev and Prakash Chik Baraik, on Monday filed their nominations for the three Rajya Sabha seats from Bengal.

All three candidates were sitting Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha members but resigned their posts and left their party soon after the Bengal Assembly election results last May. The three leaders joined the BJP a couple of days ago.

Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari accompanied the BJP nominees to the returning officer's enclosure after they met him in his chamber in the Assembly.

While Roy refused comments regarding his quitting the TMC and joining the BJP,



saying it was not ideal for a candidate to talk when the model code was in effect. Dev, on the other hand, expressed his gratitude to the BJP leadership and offered to work for both Assam and Bengal because "I have connections in both the States." A caste Bengali Dev is from Assam.

On alleged discontent in the BJP rank and file over nominating three leaders

just after they left their party and joined the saffron outfit, Dev said she valued their grievances because "many of them sacrificed a lot for the party during their struggle against the TMC rule" and vowed to assuage their feelings. "I will try to work harder for the party and the people of Bengal... raise more issues so that I can justify my nomination," she said.

TMC accuses ED of targeting Opposition

FAIR REPORT

New Delhi

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Monday alleged that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) is being used as a "political weapon" against opposition parties and questioned why the agency had not acted on allegations of financial irregularities in the Ram Temple Trust.

Addressing a press conference here, TMC leaders Sagarika Ghose and Mahua Moitra alleged that while the ED froze the bank accounts of Opposition parties, it failed to initiate action over allegations against the Ram Temple Trust.

"If the ED is truly impartial, why has it not acted in cases involving allegations against leaders in BJP-ruled States?...



If serious allegations have emerged against the Ram Temple Trust, why has the ED not initiated action? If such allegations had arisen in an Opposition-ruled State, the ED would have immediately registered a PMLA case," Ghose said.

Moitra reiterated the party's demand for a court-monitored investigation, saying millions of devotees donated to the temple in

good faith. "If the authorities can freeze the bank accounts of Opposition political parties, they should also be prepared to freeze the funds connected with the Ram Temple Trust while the allegations are investigated. There cannot be one standard for the Opposition and another for institutions associated with the ruling establishment," she said.

She alleged that if there had been any misuse of donations, "it is not merely financial wrongdoing — it is a betrayal of the faith of ordinary devotees."

Ghose alleged that constitutional institutions such as the Election Commission and the ED were being used to weaken the Opposition.

"The BJP wants to create a one-party state by eliminating every Opposition party... The ED is no longer functioning as an impartial agency. Since 2014, around 95 per cent of ED cases have been registered against opposition leaders," she claimed. Speaking on West Bengal politics, Moitra alleged that the BJP Government's implementation of welfare schemes would result in a sharp reduction in beneficiaries under the Lakshmi Bhandar scheme.

Jal Shakti ministry releases 3 key water management documents

FAIR REPORT

New Delhi

Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil on Monday released three key water management documents, including a city-level action plan for the reuse of treated water in Varanasi.

The documents released at the All India Water Secretaries' Conference here include the city-level action plan for the reuse of treated water for Varanasi, which provides a roadmap for the safe reuse of treated wastewater and promotes a circular water economy.

The documents also include the operation and maintenance manual for artificial recharge and groundwater conservation structures jointly developed by the National Water Mission and the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), and the schedule of rates for drilling and allied works prepared by the CGWB to bring transparency and standardisation in drilling and allied works.

The conference, organised by the Department of Water



Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil

Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, was chaired by Patil in the presence of Minister of State for Jal Shakti Raj Bhushan Choudhary.

Secretary of the department V L Kantha Rao, senior secretaries from all states and Union Territories, and officials of the Ministry of Jal Shakti attended the conference. Around 200 participants took part in the event. The conference deliberated on eight priority agenda items, including the status of the Modernisation of Command Area Development and Water Management (M-CADWM) scheme, the special one-month nationwide Catch the Rain campaign, revised draft project appraisal guidelines for irrigation, multipurpose and flood management projects.

Ram Temple trust sets July 18 deadline for first CEO applications

FAIR REPORT

Ayodhya

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has set July 18 as the deadline to submit applications for the position of the first chief executive officer (CEO) of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

According to a post on X, the trust will accept applications until 4 pm on July 18. This appointment is significant as it follows allegations of embezzlement of temple donations, prompting the trust to create the CEO position to strengthen administrative and financial management.

The trust's notification states that the CEO will be appointed on a three-year contract, extendable based on satisfactory performance. The position is based in Ayodhya. Salary and benefits will be determined through mutual discussion, as detailed by the trust on X.

Applicants must have at least a Bachelor's degree from a recognised university, be between 50 and 70 years old, and possess a minimum of 20 years of managerial experience in a



large public organisation, institution, Government department, or company.

Candidates should have experience overseeing administration, finance, accounts, human resources, public relations, information technology, security, and legal affairs.

"Preference will be given

to candidates who have served as Chief Administrative Officer or have experience managing a temple or Hindu religious institution. Retired officers who meet the eligibility criteria may also apply," it added.

The notification further stated that applicants must be

"actively practising Hindus," and that "being a devotee of Lord Ram belonging to the Vaishnava tradition will be considered desirable."

Candidates must have a working knowledge of both Hindi and English.

On Sunday, Ram Temple Construction Committee chairman Nripendra Mishra

stated that the trust will determine the responsibilities and powers of the first CEO, with no Government interference in the trust's or the CEO's operations.

"The primary responsibility of the CEO will be to uphold the faith of devotees in the trust," Mishra had told reporters.

He stated that the CEO will oversee the temple's financial arrangements, ensure necessary facilities for devotees visiting Ayodhya, and serve as an assistant to the trust while remaining accountable to it.

Mishra added that the trust will determine the extent of authority delegated to the CEO, who will be free to appoint necessary staff. At the same time, overall administration will remain under the trust's control.

The notification states that the CEO will report to the trust's general secretary and be responsible for statutory, administrative, and financial affairs.

The CEO will also oversee institutional systems, organisational development, regulatory compliance, transparency in financial transac-

tions, asset management, and implementation of policies approved by the Board of Trustees.

Key responsibilities include ensuring the smooth conduct of religious rituals, festivals, and ceremonies; maintaining security in coordination with local, State, and central authorities; ensuring the safety and convenience of pilgrims; arranging visits for dignitaries and saints; and strengthening the trust's reputation while promoting Sanatan traditions.

Earlier this month, the trust formed a three-member panel consisting of retired Justice Pramod Kohli, retired Lieutenant General Vishnukant Chaturvedi, and former NIT Raipur chairperson Suresh Haware to review applications and recommend suitable candidates.

Mishra clarified that he will not be on the panel and will decide whether to attend the trust's July 22 meeting after reviewing the agenda. He stated that committee members associated with the temple's construction are ex officio members of the trust without voting rights.

India, Japan review defence ties at Tokyo policy dialogue

FAIR REPORT
 ■ New Delhi

India and Japan on Monday reviewed the entire spectrum of their bilateral defence ties and discussed ways to deepen cooperation in emerging domains, including defence industrial collaboration, technological innovation, cyber security, space and other areas of shared strategic interest, the defence ministry said.

The key meeting followed soon after Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to India from July 1 to 3 for the 16th India-Japan annual summit. It was Takaichi's first official visit to India. Giving details of the latest parleys, the defence ministry said the talks were held under the aegis of the 8th Defence Policy Dialogue in Tokyo. The Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, and the Japanese delegation was led by Vice Minister of Defence for International Affairs Kano Koji.

Both sides reviewed the significant progress made in bilateral defence cooperation since the previous Defence Policy Dialogue and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

The two countries held comprehensive discussions



Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, right, and Japan's Vice Minister of Defence for International Affairs, Kano Koji, during the 8th India-Japan Defence Policy Dialogue in Tokyo, Japan

on the prevailing regional and global security environment and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The dialogue reviewed the whole gamut of bilateral defence engagements, including military-to-military exchanges, co-operation between joint headquarters, maritime cooperation, defence exercises, capacity building, defence equipment and technology cooperation, including maritime technology, and enhanced institutional interactions.

Both sides welcomed the steady expansion of defence cooperation and underscored the importance of maintaining regular high-level exchanges and dia-

logue mechanisms. They discussed probable outcomes for the forthcoming Ministerial visits, including 2+2 later this year.

The two delegations also discussed ways to deepen cooperation in emerging domains, including defence industrial collaboration, technological innovation, cyber security, space, and other areas of shared strategic interest.

Both sides expressed satisfaction with the growing convergence between India and Japan on regional and global security issues and agreed to continue working closely in the Indo-Pacific. They reiterated their commitment to promoting a free, open and rules-based

Indo-Pacific region founded on respect for international law. Defence Secretary appreciated Japan's continued engagement with India in the defence sector and highlighted the importance of strengthening practical cooperation under the framework of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. Kano Koji reaffirmed Japan's commitment to further expanding defence ties with India across priority areas.

Earlier in the day, Defence Secretary called on Japanese Minister of Defence Shinjiro Koizumi, and conveyed greetings of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. Both sides reaffirmed the growing momentum of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. He also presented an invitation from the Raksha Mantri to the Defence Minister of Japan for his visit to India at the earliest opportunity.

Defence Secretary commenced his visit by laying a wreath at the Self-Defense Forces Memorial Stone in Tokyo, paying tribute to the members of the Japan Self-Defense Forces who have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of their nation.

The visit underscored the growing and deepening defence ties, mutual respect, and shared commitment of India and Japan towards peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Varanasi gets reuse action plan for treated wastewater

FAIR REPORT
 ■ New Delhi

Varanasi has joined the list of cities with its own reuse action plan for safe reuse of treated wastewater, with the National Mission for Clean Ganga describing it as a "landmark" moment in India's journey towards the reuse of treated wastewater.

The action plan for Varanasi was unveiled by Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil at the water resources secretaries' conference in New Delhi on Monday in the presence of Minister of State for Jal Shakti Raj Bhushan Choudhary and Water Resources Secretary VL Kantha Rao. The Mission said the action plans show how the national framework on safe reuse of treated wastewater (SRTW) gets translated into ground reality.

The plans map out exactly



where treated water can go, including t l mal power plants, railways, urban landscaping and irrigation, matching supply from sewage treatment plants with real demand centres in each city.

"India generates approximately 72,368 million litres per day (MLD) of sewage every day from urban households. Only 44 per cent of that has treatment infrastructure, and much of what gets

treated is never reused. That's a resource going to waste, literally," the Mission said in a post on social media.

It said the SRTW initiative is a national push to stop treating used water as waste and start treating it as "Apna Jal" — Our Water", a resource to be safely reused instead of freshwater.

The Mission said the national framework on SRTW, released in November 2022, lays the foundation through uniform quality standards, State-level policies, financing mechanisms and a shift from "treat-and-dispose" to "treat-and-reuse".

Noting that India is the world's 13th most water-stressed country, the Mission said groundwater is over-exploited across much of the country and "every of treated water saved is a drop of freshwater water reused for drinking, farming and industry".

3 kids die of Chandipura virus in Gujarat

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Gandhinagar

Gujarat has reported seven confirmed cases of the Chandipura virus (CHPV) in the last few weeks, of which three patients have died, while four are under medical treatment, Health Minister Praful Pansheriya said on Monday.

All the patients were under the age of 10, he said.

The minister, who chaired a high-level meeting in Gandhinagar to review the CHPV outbreak in the State,



said blood sample reports of eight suspected patients of the virus are still awaited.

The health department is continuously working towards control of the virus, treatment of patients and

surveillance operations, he maintained. The Chandipura virus causes fever, with symptoms similar to the flu, and acute encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). The pathogen is a member of the Vesiculovirus genus of the family Rhabdoviridae. It is transmitted by vectors like mosquitoes, ticks and sandflies. "Blood samples of 27 suspected patients of the virus were earlier sent for testing. Of these, reports of seven came back positive, while 12 tested negative," he informed.

Dry Gujarat logs over 300 alcohol-linked assault calls daily

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Ahmedabad

Despite Gujarat's long-standing prohibition policy, alcohol-related violence continues to place a significant burden on the State's emergency response system, with official data indicating that police receive more t 00 calls every day involving assaults linked to intoxicated individuals.

According to emergency response statistics for the period between September 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, the State's 112 emergency helpline registered 83,747 alcohol-related assault incidents, making it the third most common category of police emergencies after general assault cases and public disturbances.

During the ten-month period, the emergency service handled 8.30 lakh police-related calls, averaging 2,741 calls per day.



Vice President CP Radhakrishnan is briefed by Minister of State for Defence and senior Ministry of Defence officials on the National Cadet Corps and Sainik Schools in New Delhi

VP urges States to strengthen NCC, expand Sainik schools

FAIR REPORT
 ■ New Delhi

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan on Monday called for greater participation of States to strengthen NCC and expand Sainik Schools. He was briefed on the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and Sainik Schools by the Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, along with officers of the Ministry of Defence in New Delhi.

Appreciating the NCC's contribution to nation-building, the vice president described the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Camps as an excellent initiative for strengthening national integration. He also lauded the NCC's community service initiatives, including the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and welcomed the establishment of the NCC Alumni Association.

Emphasising that strengthening the NCC is a shared national responsibility, Radhakrishnan called for greater infrastructure development, enhanced coordination with State Governments on issues such as land and training infrastructure, and assured all possible support in engaging with the States.

Radhakrishnan was also briefed on the functioning and expansion of Sainik Schools, including the existing and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models.

Suggesting that the growing demand among students and parents be addressed, the vice president observed that each State could aim to have three to five Sainik Schools.

He also proposed exploring the possibility of increasing the intake capacity of existing Sainik schools.

Bihar CM launches subsidised heli-tourism service

FAIR REPORT

■ Patna

Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Monday launched the subsidised 'Bihar Heli-Tourism and Air Tourism Service Scheme-2026' to provide affordable air services to the public for select tourist destinations in the State.

Bookings under the scheme commenced on Monday, while helicopter services will operate every Saturday and Sunday from July 18.

The scheme was launched at a function in the State Capital.

According to a statement by the Chief Minister's Office, "The CM launched the subsidised 'Bihar Heli-Tourism and Air Tourism Service Scheme-2026' to provide affordable air tourism services to the general public for select tourist destinations in the State. The initiative aims to establish Bihar on the global tourism map." Under the scheme, subsidised helicopter services have been introduced



Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary with others during the inauguration of Bihar Heli-Tourism and Air Tourism Service Scheme-2026 in Patna

from Patna to Rajgir, Valmikinagar and Kaimur. The Government will provide a subsidy of up to ₹15,422 per ticket, the statement said.

"Expansion of the tourism sector will create new employment opportunities for local youth and promote

homestays, local handicrafts and rural tourism. Private investment in the tourism sector will be encouraged through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. The CM urged the people of Bihar to become ambassadors of the state's brand and

Datia bypoll: Narottam back BJP candidate Ashutosh Tiwari

FAIR REPORT

■ Bhopal

The campaign for the Datia Assembly by-election gathered momentum on Monday as the BJP and Congress put up a show of strength during the filing of nominations by their candidates, while emotional appeals and sharp political exchanges dominated the day's events.

Former Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra turned emotional while addressing a BJP public meeting, dismissing the Opposition's claims of divisions within the party. His voice choked with emotion as he pledged to campaign tirelessly for BJP candidate



BJP candidate Ashutosh Tiwari files his nomination papers in the presence of Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav and Narottam Mishra in Datia

Ashutosh Tiwari. "Congress says there is a rift in the BJP. Look around, we are all standing together. I will bow before every household in Datia to ensure Ashutosh Tiwari's victory," Mishra said.

CM Mohan Yadav sought to reinforce the message of unity, saying, "Narottam, we are entrusting our younger brother Ashutosh Tiwari to you. It is now your responsibility to ensure your victory."

Taking a swipe at the Congress candidate, Mishra described Ghanshyam Singh, popularly known as Raja Saheb, as "an expired homoeopathy pill that may be sweet but has no effect." He also contrasted the two candidates, saying one was born into privilege while the other had dedicated his life to public service from a young age.

Earlier in the day, Congress nominee Ghanshyam Singh filed his nomination in the presence of Pradesh Congress Committee president Jitu Patwari, Leader of Opposition Umang Singhar, former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh, former MLA Rajendra Bharti and Samajwadi Party State

president Manoj Yadav. Later, BJP candidate Ashutosh Tiwari submitted his nomination papers accompanied by CM Mohan Yadav, BJP State president Hemant Khandelwal, Narottam Mishra and other leaders. Nayak expressed disappointment over being denied the party ticket despite assurances after the 2023 Assembly elections. He alleged that the state leadership had repeatedly overlooked him and said all political options remained open. Nayak claimed that during a recent meeting, Digvijaya Singh had acknowledged positive feedback about him but expressed concerns over his past association with the

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and his proximity to BJP MP VD Sharma. "I have no issue with Congress candidate Ghanshyam Singh, but the state leadership has treated me unfairly. Ashutosh Tiwari is like my younger brother. I am still considering my future course of action," he said.

Addressing the Congress gathering, Digvijaya publicly apologised to Nayak, acknowledging that he had opposed Nayak's candidature in 2023 because he had only recently joined the Congress from the BJP. He praised Nayak's commitment during the previous Assembly election campaign and apologised if his actions had caused any hurt.

INS Sudarshini joins Grand Parade of Sails in Boston

FAIR REPORT
 ■ New Delhi

The Indian Navy's sail training ship INS Sudarshini has taken part in the Grand Parade of Sails in Boston, days after representing the country at a grand nautical event hosted in the New York Harbour to mark the 250th anniversary of the US' independence.

The ship arrived in Boston on July 12, India's defence ministry said on Monday.

After her successful participation in the Sail 4th 250 celebrations in New York, INS Sudarshini took part in the Grand Parade of Sails, marking the commencement of Sail Boston 2026, it said in a statement. Raghuram Sastry, Consul General of India in Boston, embarked on the vessel for



Indian Naval Sail Training Ship (STS) INS Sudarshini participates in the grand parade of Sails at Boston in USA

the Grand Parade of Sails and the ship's ceremonial entry into Boston.

Sailing proudly with the Indian tricolour, INS Sudarshini passed prominent landmarks including Castle Island and the Seaport District before berthing at

Boston Fish Pier, the ministry said. "Joining an international fleet of over 60 tall ships from more than 20 nations, INS Sudarshini is representing India as a maritime ambassador of goodwill during her ongoing Lokayan 2026 transoceanic

expedition," it said.

Lokayan 2026 is the ship's 10-month transoceanic expedition, which reflects the Indian Navy's commitment to strengthening maritime cooperation, building international goodwill and deepening engagement with partner navies.

Reinforcing the Indian Navy's commitment to maritime diplomacy, international goodwill and cultural exchange, the ship will remain open to visitors from July 12 to 15, the statement said. Following successful port calls at Norfolk, Baltimore, and New York, INS Sudarshini's participation in Sail Boston 2026 "further strengthens the growing India-US maritime partnership and showcases India's rich seafaring heritage on the global stage," it said.

TN CM visits Perambur, launches grievance app

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Chennai

In his first official engagement in Perambur after the Assembly election, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay formally opened his newly renovated MLA office on Monday.

He also unveiled a technology-driven public grievance mobile application specifically for Perambur residents.

The upgraded facility in Sharma Nagar First Street in Vyasarpadi includes a dedicated workspace for the CM, CCTV surveillance, and a 10-member staff tasked with managing daily public petitions, according to official sources.

CM Vijay contested and won from both the Perambur and Tiruchy East constituencies, eventually vacating the Tiruchy East seat to retain



Perambur. The MLA office also houses an integrated common service centre (E-Sevai maiyyam) to expedite civic requests. Meanwhile, the newly launched app allows citizens to directly submit and track complaints

related to electricity, water supply, roads, sanitation, and access to government welfare schemes.

He is also expected to launch the State's new ration card distribution scheme; the CM will inspect a ration shop

in MKB Nagar. He is scheduled to hand over new ration cards to the first 50 eligible beneficiaries, along with essential commodities and land ownership patts.

The schedule includes a visit to an MTC electric vehicle (EV) charging station near the Vyasarpadi Metro and a review of commuter amenities at a local MTC bus depot.

Coinciding with his visit, the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has floated a Rs 48 lakh tender to prepare a comprehensive Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the constituency. The integrated area development plan aims to address long-standing urban challenges across Perambur's lower-income neighbourhoods, targeting flooding hotspots, drinking water issues, parking shortages, and the heavily polluted Captain Cotton Canal.

States Focus
BJP slaps ₹100 cr defamation notice on Omar Abdullah



DMK SUBMITS HORSE-TRADING EVIDENCE TO TN GOVERNOR

DMK Organising Secretary RS Bharathi on Monday said that his party "submitted evidence on horse-trading in Tamil Nadu" to Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar. "The material evidence" included the statement made by MDMK chief Vaiko on the horse-trading of MLAs and a public remark by former AIADMK legislator MR Vijayabaskar, which were submitted to the Governor, Bharathi said. The evidence was submitted to DVAC as well to corroborate the systematic practice of horse-trading in the State, he added. "We submitted the evidence as supplementary to our complaint dated July 1, on the systematic practice of horse-trading by the ruling TVK," Bharathi told reporters. The party had included the statement made by Vijayabaskar, who had recently made the remark during an informal press meet that he was approached by the TVK, he added. (PTI)

FAIR REPORT
Jammu

The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday served a legal notice to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah demanding that he either substantiate or withdraw his serious allegations that the national party had attempted to bribe National Conference legislators with cash and ministerial berths in a bid to topple his Government.

The notice, which includes a demand for a written retraction and an unconditional public apology within seven days, threatens civil and criminal defamation proceedings, including a ₹100 crore damages suit, if the Chief Minister fails to comply.

In response to the legal notice, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah took a light-hearted yet defiant tone, calling the communication a "love letter" from the BJP.

Interacting with the media persons at the party head-

quarters in Srinagar, on the sidelines of a homage ceremony, Omar said that he felt "honoured" to be the only politician in Jammu and Kashmir to receive such attention, signalling that the notice only underscored his growing relevance as a political force the saffron party could not ignore.

The chief minister, while addressing National Conference (NC) workers at Hazratbal last week, alleged that the BJP is trying to bring down his Government by engineering a split in his party. He also claimed that an NC MLA from Jammu told him that he was offered ₹20-30 crore and a ministerial berth to switch sides to the saffron camp.

The notice has been issued through advocate Parimoksh Seth on the instructions of BJP J&K Unit president and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Paul Sharma. It contends that the chief minister's statements have caused serious damage to the reputation and public standing of



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

the BJP and its office-bearers.

According to the three-page notice, Abdullah alleged that BJP functionaries had approached certain National Conference MLAs from the Jammu region with offers of ₹20-30 crore, ministerial berths and restoration of Statehood in an attempt to persuade them to switch allegiance to the BJP. It refers to the chief minister's allegation that a senior BJP office-bearer, who is also

a lawyer practising in the Supreme Court, allegedly played a role in offering the inducements. Rejecting the allegations, the BJP has described them as "entirely untrue, malicious and without any factual basis."

The notice states that the allegations were deliberately made to tarnish the party's image and have been widely circulated, thereby causing substantial reputational harm.

The legal notice asserts that the allegations amount to defamation under both civil and criminal law and calls upon the chief minister to withdraw his charges in writing.

"Issue an unconditional public apology within seven days of receiving the notice. Refrain from publishing or circulating any further defamatory material concerning the BJP. Immediately cease and desist from making or repeating any such statements," it said.

The BJP has warned that if the demands are not complied with within the stipulated period, it will initiate appropriate civil and criminal proceedings before a competent court. These would include a defamation suit seeking damages of ₹100 crore, apart from other legal remedies available under the law.

Interacting with the media persons, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said he was expecting a political response from

the BJP since he had made a political statement; however, they chose the legal route.

"It is symbolic of the way the BJP fights. They take political fights and hide behind the courts. I could have made the same statement and hid behind the assembly. I could have taken advantage of the privileges afforded to me by making the statements in the Assembly which cannot be challenged outside the assembly, but I did not," he said. Abdullah noted that several BJP leaders from Jammu and Kashmir have made slanderous accusations against the NC and its leadership over the past few months.

"Particularly, one leader has time and again levelled unfounded and slanderous allegations against us, but we have been fighting him politically. Going on now, we will begin the process of sending legal notices to that particular BJP leader and a few others and let's see where this process ends," he said.

1,679 illegal immigrants sent back: Himanta

FAIR REPORT
NEW DELHI

More than 1,600 illegal immigrants from Bangladesh have been repatriated from Assam in the last two years, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday.

Replying to a question from AIUDF legislator Badruddin Ajmal, Sarma laid in the Assembly that the State follows the Central Government's directives in the matter of citizenship, and enough safeguards have been ensured so that human rights violations do not take place while implementing laws in this regard.

"A total of 1,679 illegal immigrants have been repatriated (deported/sent back/expelled) from Assam to Bangladesh in the last two years," Sarma, who also holds the Home and Political Department, said.

Sharing the list in the House, he



said the repatriation took place between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2026, after identification of the illegal immigrants.

While some of the illegal immigrants were 'sent back', others faced 'expulsion', while a few were returned to their home country through the process of 'deportation'. Sarma said no identified illegal immigrant is repatriated if any appeal is pending in the High

Court or the Supreme Court.

Asked about the procedure followed by the Government to 'push back' the infiltrators, the CM said that the subject of citizenship is a matter under the Central Government.

The State Government follows the existing provisions of law as well as the directions issued by the Centre from time to time while taking action against illegal immigrants. The Assam Government does not deal directly with any other foreign country, bypassing the Centre, he said.

"The State Government implements the provisions of law as well as directions issued by the Centre pertaining to the citizenship matter. While implementing such laws and directions, enough safeguards are put in place so that the human rights of an individual are not violated," Sarma added.

Brewers body calls for Bihar liquor policy reset

FAIR REPORT
New Delhi

The Brewers Association of India (BAI) has urged the Bihar Government to undertake a comprehensive review of the State's liquor prohibition policy, arguing that the law has failed to eliminate alcohol consumption while creating severe social, economic and administrative consequences.

In a letter to Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, BAI Director General Mr Vinod Giri has stated that Bihar stands at a critical policy crossroads and has an opportunity to replace "an ineffective prohibition model with a socially responsible and economically sustainable regulatory framework."

BAI, the apex body representing India's largest beer manufacturers, including AB InBev, Carlsberg and United Breweries, said the evidence accumulated over the last decade suggests that prohibition has merely shifted alcohol consumption from regulated and taxed channels to an underground and unregulated economy. Representing India's largest beer manufacturers, includ-



ing AB InBev, Carlsberg and United Breweries, BAI pointed out that over 11.3 lakh cases have been registered and more than 17 lakh people have been arrested under prohibition laws since 2016, while illegal liquor seizures continue to rise year after year.

The Association argued that the policy has diverted enormous police and judicial

resources toward enforcement while organised bootlegging networks have expanded across the State.

Calling the fiscal implications of prohibition "staggering", BAI estimated that Bihar has foregone up to ₹60,000 crore in excise revenues over the last decade, in addition to losses suffered by hospitality, tourism, logistics and ancillary industries.

BAI has proposed a phased and carefully regulated approach focused on moderation and harm reduction.

Its recommendations include introduction of low-alcohol beverages such as beer and wine as the first step, limited rollout in urban areas and economic zones with good regulatory oversight, adoption of alcohol-content based taxation models to encourage lower-strength beverages, creation of dedicated funds for de-addiction programmes and rehabilitation services and mandating allocation of over 50 per cent of the factory floor jobs to women to support their economic empowerment amongst others.

FM calls for enhanced NRI outreach to sustain foreign currency mobilisation momentum

FAIR REPORT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday asked banks to enhance outreach to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) for greater mobilisation of foreign currency deposits. South Asians & Diaspora Chairing a review meeting with CEOs of public sector banks and financial institutions on the Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank), or FCNRR(B) deposits, External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) and Overseas Foreign Currency Borrowings (OFCBs) swap initiatives, Sitharaman appreciated the encouraging and enthusiastic initial response. She called upon banks to further intensify outreach to the NRI diaspora, introduce inno-



vative deposit products and sustain the momentum of mobilisation during the remaining period of the schemes, the finance ministry said in a statement.

During the meeting, CEOs informed that banks are offering attractive re-

turns on FCNRR(B) deposits, including on five-year deposits, supported by the suspension of the interest rate ceiling on fresh FCNRR(B) deposits under the scheme.

The CEOs stated that there has been significant

interest from NRIs residing in Singapore, Hong Kong, West Asia, the United Kingdom, the United States and other overseas jurisdictions. They outlined their plans to capitalise on the positive sentiment and accelerate de-

posit mobilisation during the remainder of the scheme period, it said.

They expressed confidence that ECB mobilisations would gather stronger traction during the third quarter (October-December 2026) of the current fiscal year, it said. Public sector banks (PSBs) also informed that they have put in place customised outreach strategies, including digital channels, to engage with the non-resident Indian (NRI) diaspora and enhance deposit mobilisation, it said.

They further noted that FCNRR(B) deposit mobilisation has shown a clear accelerating trend, supported by attractive returns being offered by banks, it said.

Action Against Misleading Labelling: 6,300 Bottles of Caffeinated Beverages Seized in Chittorgarh



Samples of 5,850 Sting and 450 Campa bottles sent to Udaipur laboratory for testing; further action will be taken after the report

FAIR REPORT
CHITTORGARH

The Food Safety Department has seized 6,300 bottles of caffeinated beverages and sent samples for testing as part of a special drive against misleading labelling. The action was taken at a beverage warehouse where the word "Energy" was found on product labels in violation of food safety standards. Further action will be taken against the concerned firm under the Food Safety and Standards Act after the test report is received. Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. Tarachand Gupta said that, under the

directions of Food Safety and Drug Control Commissioner Dr. T. Shubhamangala, a special campaign is being conducted across Rajasthan against misleading labelling, misbranding, and violations of food safety standards. As part of the campaign, Food Safety Officers Ghanshyam Lal Sharma and Manish Kumar Sharma inspected a beverage warehouse in Chittorgarh. During the inspection, officials seized 5,850 bottles of Sting and 450 bottles of Campa caffeinated beverages and collected samples for testing. They said action was taken after the word "Energy" was found on the product labels. The CMHO said that according to the guidelines of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), claims such as "Energy

Drink," "Sports Drink," "Stimulates Mind," and "Energizes Body" or similar statements on caffeinated beverages are considered misleading for consumers. In this connection, FSSAI has also issued notices to several major beverage companies seeking explanations. He said that beverages with high caffeine content may be harmful to the health of pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children. Therefore, strict compliance with labelling standards and food safety regulations is being ensured. All the samples collected during the action have been sent to the Public Health Laboratory in Udaipur for testing. Further action will be taken under the Food Safety and Standards Act after the test report is received.

Congress Boycotts UCC Public Hearing, Demands Draft Before Consultation

District Congress President Pramod Sisodia says public hearing should be held only after the official draft is made public

FAIR REPORT
CHITTORGARH

The District Congress Committee boycotted the public hearing on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), which was held through video conference at the DRDA Hall in the Collectorate on Monday. Congress leaders protested against holding the public hearing without releasing the official draft of the pro-



posed law. District Congress Senior Vice President Ahsan Pathan said that Congress office bearers and workers did not participate in the public

hearing as per the directions of Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee President Govind Singh Dotasra. District Congress President Pramod Sisodia said

that Govind Singh Dotasra has written to the Chief Secretary of Rajasthan, stating that the official draft of any important law should be made public before conducting a public hearing. This would allow people to study the proposed law and give their suggestions and objections in a proper way. He said that without the draft, the public hearing becomes only a formality. Sisodia said that the Congress party is not against the democratic process, but supports public discussion and public participation on a sensitive issue like the UCC. He said the government should

first release the official draft of the law. He also alleged that the people of Rajasthan are facing issues such as inflation, unemployment, poor law and order, drinking water and electricity problems, farmers' issues, women's safety, and the future of youth. Instead of solving these problems, the government is trying to divert public attention by holding a public hearing on the UCC without making the draft public. The Congress demanded that the government should reconsider the public hearing process until the complete draft of the UCC is released.