

FAIR REPORT

THE DAWN OF A FEARLESS PEN

Jaipur, Sunday, 30 August 2026

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A car passes by a site of a Russian drone strike as smoke rises, amid Russia's attack on Kyiv, . the economy in the Ukrainian capital and severely disrupted civilian life Three days of almost constant Russian air raids on Kyiv have choked.

RELENTLESS STRIKES

Odisha Rejects IPS Jagmohan Meena's Resignation: Bhubaneswar DCP Stays Put, Future Plans Remain Unclear

■ FAIR REPORT
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has declined to accept the resignation of 2013-batch IPS officer Jagmohan Meena, leaving the senior police officer in service and continuing in his present assignment as Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Bhubaneswar. Meena had submitted his resignation in July, citing personal reasons. His decision had attracted attention not only because of his position in the Odisha Police but also because of speculation that he could eventually return to Rajasthan, his home state, and join the family business. The IPS officer, however, had sought to draw a clear line between his decision and any political or administrative controversy. After submitting his resignation, Meena said he had taken the



decision after discussions with family members and friends. He also made it clear that there was no external pressure or political intervention behind his move and appealed to the government to respect his decision. That request has now run into a bureaucratic roadblock, with the Odisha government refusing to accept his resignation. For the moment, therefore, Meena remains an IPS officer and continues to discharge his responsibilities as Bhubaneswar DCP.

From Tashkent to Bishkek: India Takes Its Central Asia Outreach to the SCO High Table

■ FAIR REPORT
NEW DELHI

India is set to intensify its engagement with Central Asia over the next few days, with a high-level visit to Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic combining bilateral diplomacy, historical ties and multilateral outreach at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit.

The visit will begin in Tashkent, where bilateral talks with Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev are expected to focus on strengthening the long-standing India-Uzbekistan partnership and expanding cooperation across areas of mutual interest.

The Tashkent leg will also carry a strong historical and cultural dimension. A visit to the Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial and the Mahatma Gandhi Centre at



Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies is scheduled, underscoring the deep historical links between India and Uzbekistan. From Tashkent, the focus will shift to Bishkek, where India will participate in the SCO Summit in the Kyrgyz Republic. The summit will provide an important platform for India to engage with other member states through both multilateral deliberations and bilateral meetings.

For New Delhi, the SCO engagement comes at a time

ously with major regional powers and Central Asian states. The Uzbekistan visit is particularly significant. Tashkent has emerged as one of India's important partners in the region, with both sides seeking to expand economic and strategic cooperation while building on longstanding cultural connections. The itinerary therefore combines two distinct but complementary messages: India's relationship with Central Asia is rooted in history, but its strategic ambitions are firmly focused on the future. With bilateral diplomacy in Tashkent followed by multilateral negotiations in Bishkek, the visit gives New Delhi an opportunity to reinforce its regional presence while pursuing practical partnerships in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

Jaipur's Dating-App Nightmare: Man Lured for "Date," Slapped With ₹23,473 Bill by Honeytrap Gang Operating From Club

Woman vanishes mid-date on washroom pretext; police say scam has run for years by changing club names and locations
■ FAIR REPORT
JAIPUR

A chilling honeytrap racket operating out of a club in the city's Mansarovar area has come to light, after a 28-year-old man from Mahesh Nagar found himself trapped in an elaborate extortion scheme dressed up as a romantic date.

The victim told police he connected with a woman through a dating app and Telegram, who invited him to the club for what he believed was a genuine date. She stayed with him for a while — then excused herself to the washroom and never returned. Moments later, the club operator confronted him with an outrageous bill of ₹23,473. When

he protested, he was allegedly intimidated and strong-armed into paying up.

It was only after watching the operator and the woman's coordinated act unfold that the man realized he'd been set up — a suspicion confirmed when he discovered her name wasn't even entered in the club's register.

Police allege this is no one-off con. According to the complaint, girls are hired by the club and its associates to lure men through dating apps and social media, before exorbitant sums are extorted from them. Those who resist are allegedly met with physical assault and sexual harassment — with the racket reportedly kept alive for years by repeatedly changing the club's name and location to dodge the law.

Nepal's Fury Unleashed: 669 Dead, 3,000 Vanish as New "Killer Lakes" Threaten Fresh Catastrophe

287 Indians missing, 400 more stranded in Tibet as rescue teams race against time
■ FAIR REPORT
KATHMANDU/NEW DELHI

Nature's wrath in the Himalayas has claimed at least 669 lives across Nepal and Tibet, with a staggering 3,000 people still missing — including 287 Indian nationals — as authorities scramble to contain a fresh disaster brewing at the epicentre of Wednesday's catastrophic floods.

Two ominous new lakes have emerged near the Nepal-China border, formed by the very landslides that triggered the devastation. One is haemorrhaging water uncontrollably; the other is swelling by the hour — and officials warn either could unleash a second wave of destruction on communities already brought to their knees. The original disaster struck with terrifying speed. A sudden flood tore through the region on Wednesday, sending a violent surge of mud, sand, gravel and boulders crashing downstream, flattening homes and burying entire settlements in debris. Around 400 additional Indians remain stranded in Tibet, cut off as rescue and evacuation efforts continue in punishing terrain. Dramatic visuals of an avalanche near the Tibet-Nepal frontier have already surfaced, underscoring how unstable the region remains. With death tolls climbing and thousands still unaccounted for, the coming days will be critical — not just for search operations, but to prevent the swelling lakes from turning a tragedy into a full-blown catastrophe.

Fertiliser Queue Goes Digital: Shahabad's Tribal Farmers Enter a New Era of Smart Agriculture

■ FAIR REPORT
BARAN

Shahabad: For generations, access to fertiliser in Rajasthan's tribal belt has often meant a familiar rural ritual—long journeys, crowded dealer counters and uncertainty over whether the required stock would still be available. In Shahabad, that equation is now beginning to change. The Agriculture Department has launched an awareness drive among tribal farmers to bring fertiliser distribu-

tion onto a digital platform through the Framework for Fertilizer (FFS) app, potentially turning the fertiliser queue into a thing of the past.

Agriculture officials and field staff are travelling to villages, taking the technology directly to farmers rather than waiting for farmers to navigate it themselves. They are helping cultivators download the application, register, enter Aadhaar and other farmer details, identify the required fertiliser and

complete online bookings.

The new system allows farmers to check fertiliser availability with authorised dealers in their vicinity and book supplies digitally. Once a booking is confirmed, the farmer can collect the fertiliser from the designated dealer using a digital booking ID and QR code.

The significance goes beyond convenience. In a region where geographical distance and limited access to information

can complicate agricultural supply chains, real-time digital visibility could give farmers greater control over when and where they obtain essential inputs.

Officials believe the system can reduce repeated trips to fertiliser shops, minimise queues and strengthen transparency in distribution. It could also help plug gaps that create opportunities for black marketing, hoarding and irregular allocation.

Assistant Agriculture



Officer Neeraj Kumar Sharma, accompanied by agriculture supervisors, is visiting villages and personally explaining the process to farmers. The emphasis is not merely on launching an app but on creating digital literacy at the grassroots.

The larger experiment is significant: can a smartphone become the new fertiliser counter for India's tribal farmer?

If implemented effectively, Shahabad's initiative could offer a glimpse

of the future of agricultural governance—where availability is visible, bookings are traceable and access to fertiliser is increasingly determined by a digital record rather than a crowded queue.

The Agriculture Department has urged farmers to adopt the FFS platform and make maximum use of its online booking facility.

For Shahabad's farmers, the next agricultural revolution may not begin in the field—it may begin on the phone.

FAIR NATIONFAIR REPORT 02

ED arrests 3 more, including a CA, in Goa digital arrest probe

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Panaji

The Enforcement Directorate's Panaji office has arrested three more people accused of being part of a nationwide money-laundering network. This group is suspected of converting proceeds from "digital arrest" cyber fraud into cash and foreign currency. Bhushan Suryakant Moye, a chartered accountant, along with Vilas Narayan Pawar and Shailesh Dagdu Chavan, were taken into custody on August 27 under Section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. A special PMLA court in Goa has ordered that the three remain in ED custody until September 1. With these arrests, five people have now

been detained in the case. Earlier, Fahim Moin Hussain Sayed and Naim Mueen Sayyed were arrested on August 23 and are still in custody. The investigation started with FIR No. 17/2025, filed on June 9, 2025, at the Cyber Crime Police Station in North Goa. In this case, a Goa resident was kept on a video call, convinced she was under investigation, and forced to transfer ₹2,60,33,634 between May 21 and June 2, 2025, into accounts falsely called "Secret Supervision Accounts." ED investigators say the victim's money entered an organised apparatus designed to receive cyber-fraud proceeds as banking credits, convert them into cash, and then convert the cash into foreign currency through companies holding

Reserve Bank of India licences as Full Fledged Money Changers. The funds were fragmented across more than 400 beneficiary accounts and routed into companies whose directors of record were persons of no means; the accounts were operated by others so that the proceeds of crime would appear untainted. Those same entities' accounts figure in 330 victim complaints, and 163 first information reports filed across more than 20 states and Union Territories. Reported losses in those cases total ₹417.49 crore. The network's banking transactions total more than ₹27,850 crore. Earlier, the ED reported cash deposits of about ₹2,904 crore, including ₹584.70 crore deposited through 61,448 bulk-note-



acceptance-machine transac-tors at different locations. The agency says Moye set up 21 companies using identity documents provided to him and treated these companies

and their 43 dummy direc-tors as a single group, filing their tax returns together rather than separately. Pawar handled the RTGS transfers that moved the illegal funds

into the network's accounts, while Chavan provided cash for those transfers. All three had their premises searched on August 21. The ED said that money

laundering continued even after searches on July 17, right up until just before the first arrests on August 23. This made it necessary to question the suspects in custody. Earlier searches under Section 17 of the PMLA took place at 20 locations in Mumbai and Goa on July 17, and at more places on August 21. These searches found ₹3.25 crore in cash. Accounts linked to the syndi-cate with over ₹30 crore were frozen. Investigators also seized digital devices, account books, financial records, and statutory regis-ters, which are still being examined. This case shows a common pattern in digital-arrest frauds. Callers imperson-ate officials, keep victims on continuous video calls,

show fake documents, and convince them to transfer large sums by claiming the money is going into official "supervision" accounts. Law enforcement agencies have repeatedly said that no real agency would arrest someone over a video call. People who get such calls should hang up and report the incident to the national cybercrime helpline at 1930. The investigation is still ongoing. Because there are so many records to review and the banking and cash trails are so large, more arrests and asset seizures may happen. The ED has not yet said where the foreign currency ended up or named the licensed money changers involved. Officials say these details are still being investigated.

State prepared for possible glacial lake outburst floods incidents: Himachal Guv

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Jammu

Himachal Pradesh Governor Kavinder Gupta on Saturday expressed concern over the devastation caused by the recent flash floods in the Nepal-Tibet region, describing climate change and global warming as major challenges for the world. "It is a very tragic incident and has become a challenge for the entire world. Climate change and global warming are major issues for all of us. We pray to God that such an incident does not happen again," Gupta told PTI Videos here. Asked about a recent joint report by IIT Ropar and the University of Technology



Himachal Pradesh Governor Kavinder Gupta

Sydney warning Himachal Pradesh about the threat of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), the governor said the possibility of such incidents in the Himalayan region was a matter of concern. "Our concern is that such

an incident should not occur anywhere in the Himalayan range. Our Disaster Management Department has been prepared for such situations," Gupta said. He said there was also a need to focus on helping the

families and people affected by the disaster, noting with satisfaction that the Government of India had promptly begun extending assistance to the affected region. "There has been massive destruction, and if such devastation continues in this manner, the world will have to think seriously about finding a solution," he said, adding that people must come forward and participate in relief efforts to help those affected rebuild their lives. On the formation of a task force involving universities in Himachal Pradesh, Gupta said the initiative was aimed at preparing the state's youth to contribute to the Prime Minister's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India).

"There are around two dozen universities in Himachal Pradesh, and I am the Chancellor of some of these universities. Naturally, in view of the discussions taking place in recent days about Viksit Bharat, we have been thinking about how we can prepare our youth for the future," he said. Gupta said the Vice-Chancellors of all universities had been invited for discussions on employment, livelihood opportunities and the potential of local resources. "One of the major issues we face today is employment. We discussed what livelihood opportunities can be created and how we can generate income from local products," he said.

The man who outran death inside the tunnel

FAIR REPORT ■ New Delhi

Eyewitness Kiran Kumar's terrifying account of survival after a wall of water, mud and debris tore through the SLBC tunnel. For Kiran Kumar, it began like any other morning shift deep beneath the earth. Within minutes, it became a fight for survival. Kiran was among nearly 60 workers about 14 kilometres inside Audit-t-1 of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel in Nagarkurnool, Telangana, working near the Tunnel Boring Machine when disaster struck. At first, there were warning signs. "Everything was normal, then suddenly the water

seepage increased," Kiran recalls. "Mud and soil started falling from the roof. We were told to keep working." Then came the roar. A roughly three-metre section of the tunnel roof suddenly collapsed. Almost instantly, water, silt and debris came rushing through the under-ground passage. "Someone shouted, 'BHAGO, BHAGO!' We dropped everything — our tools, our helmets — and just ran." There was no time to understand what was happening. There was no time to look back. The workers ran through pitch-black darkness as water rose around their knees. Behind them came



the terrifying sound of earth and concrete collapsing. They ran for nearly three kilometres. "We couldn't see the end. We thought we would be buried alive right there," Kiran said. For those trapped underground, every second mattered. Then, in the dark-

ness, they saw something that offered a glimmer of hope — a loco train used to ferry material through the tunnel. The workers scrambled aboard. The train carried them away from the danger zone and towards safety. Kiran survived. But the escape came at a terrible cost. Thirteen workers were injured and rushed to Genco Hospital, while eight others remained trapped deep inside the tunnel. For Kiran, however, survival did not mean the nightmare was over. The memory of that moment remains etched in his mind — the darkness, the rushing water and the deaf-

ening roar of the collapsing tunnel. "I can still hear that roar," he said. "If that train had been two minutes late, I wouldn't be here to tell this story." His account is a chilling reminder of how quickly an ordinary workday can turn into a battle between life and death. Kiran entered the tunnel that morning as a worker. He emerged as one of the men who had narrowly escaped a disaster deep beneath the earth. For him, those two minutes — and that approaching train — were the difference between a terrifying story of survival and a tragedy no one would ever forget.

Mumbai pilgrims remain untraceable after Nepal floods

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Mumbai

Anxiety is mounting for families in Mumbai as a 61-member Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage group led by doctor-mountaineer Milind Chitley remains untraceable after the flash floods devastated the Nepal-Tibet border region. The group, led by Dr Chitley

and his wife Janhavi, had departed Mumbai on August 23 for Kathmandu and was last heard from on August 25 evening, hours before high-altitude torrents destroyed key immigration infrastructure on the morning of August 26. Dr Chitley's brother-in-law Sandeep Padhye said, "We were in touch with my sister till August 25, but the messages

sent on August 26 remain unread." It is still unclear whether the group crossed into China before or during the floods, he said. As per the itinerary, the group was to drive from Timure to the China border in the early hours of August 26 and reach Mansarovar on Saturday. "We haven't got any information from the authorities. An official of the Hills and Trails, a

travel company founded by Dr Chitley, has travelled to Nepal to check. Till then, we are keeping our fingers crossed. We have to accept whatever the situation is," he said. The group was to return to Mumbai on September 6 after completing their Kailash Parikrama on September 2. Dr Chitley, who founded Hills and Trails and has led treks to the Himalayas for nearly

three decades, had posted a notice outside his clinic, stating it would remain closed until September 6. The missing group also includes Dr Anand Deshpande, a consultant in Transfusion Medicine at PD Hinduja Hospital, and his wife Dr Gayatri Deshpande, head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Nanavati Max Hospital.

Nepal floods: 338 of 404 tourists from Maharashtra safe, 37 being shifted to India; 60 untraceable

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Mumbai

Among 404 people from Maharashtra stranded in the Nepal-Tibet region following August 26 flash floods, authorities have established contact with 338 and confirmed their safety, and 37 of them are being transferred to India, a State Government report said on Saturday. It said 60 tourists, who had travelled to Nepal through Mumbai-based Richa Tours, are still untraceable. The report further said the Ministry of External Affairs has provided a list of 149 Indians-all from different districts of Maharashtra and currently safe in the China/Tibet region to the State Government. The Government has forwarded the list to all the district collectors for identification and further coordination, according to the report. A group of 37 people, among the 404 people from Maharashtra stuck in the



Nepal-Tibet region, have left Saga (in Tibet) and are being transferred to India, the report said. Of the 404, authorities have established contact with 338 people and confirmed that they are safe, it said. "The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has also provided a list of 149 Indian citizens currently in the China/Tibet region to the Maharashtra government. Since these people belong to different

districts of Maharashtra, authorities are working to collect their details through the respective district administrations," the report said. As many as 105 citizens from Nagpur have already returned to India, and they are among the 404 people who were reported safe, it said. The report said 60 citizens had travelled to Nepal through Mumbai-based Richa Tours Pvt Ltd and authorities had not yet established direct

contact with this group. Information about six other citizens was received through an online link, but officials could not contact them either, the report said. The State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) is coordinating with the MEA control room and regularly sending updated lists. Rescue teams have been deployed at the affected locations as required, while efforts to trace missing citizens are underway. District authorities are verifying information about stranded citizens, while officials are maintaining contact with travel agencies and family members through helplines. The flash floods swept through Rasuwa and other parts of central Nepal on Wednesday, causing loss of life and widespread damage to settlements, roads, bridges and hydropower infrastructure, while leaving nearly 2,000 people missing.

‘We can’t lose hope’: Gujarat families anxiously await word from loved ones stranded in Nepal

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Ahmedabad

For families of pilgrims, including NRIs with a Gujarat link who were on the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage when the flash floods struck the Nepal-Tibet region, the anxious wait is traumatising, and the devastating visuals of destruction are distressing, but they have not lost hope. The number of untraceable persons rose to 26, including several NRIs from Gujarat, according to a list released by the State Emergency Operations Centre on Friday. Several NRIs from the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have links to Ahmedabad, Anand, Rajkot, Valsad, Surat, Kheda, Amreli, Gandhinagar and Vadodara, it said. "It's difficult to see the horrific visuals of flash floods in Nepal, but we can't lose hope," said Rajkot resident Viral Nathwani, whose cousins are among those



Sonu Adhikari looks for remains at her house that was destroyed in the devastating flash floods at Galchhi area in Dhading district of Central Nepal on Saturday

currently untraceable. Nathwani said his cousin Jay Kotecha, a Mumbai resident, and Roma Intwala of Valsad were last contacted on Wednesday when they were near the Friendship Bridge and heading towards the immigration building. He said around 56 people who had travelled through the same Mumbai-based Hills and Trails travel agency are currently unreachable. In Vadodara, Chirag Patel is anxiously awaiting news of his sister Kinnari Patel and her husband Mihir Patel, both NRIs who have been

living in New Zealand for the past 25 years. The couple had travelled to Kathmandu on August 23 to undertake the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. "I was waiting to hear from my sister yesterday on Raksha Bandhan. We were supposed to celebrate it after their arrival back in Gujarat," Chirag said. The couple had travelled to Kathmandu on August 23 to undertake the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, Chirag said. "I hope they are fine and come back soon. I am just praying to Lord Shiva that they come back," he added. For another family,

hope rests on the possibility that poor network connectivity, rather than the floods, has cut off communication with their loved ones. Paresh Patel and his wife Jyoti Patel, and his sister Minaxi Ramani had completed immigration and were proceeding towards Kailash Mansarovar when they became unreachable, a relative, Gita Patel, said. Paresh and Jyoti are US residents, while Minaxi had joined them from Mumbai for the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage. "Paresh had called his mother, Sushilaben Patel, who is around 80 years old, and told her that they had completed immigration and were going to Kailash Mansarovar, where there might be a network issue," Gita Patel recalled. She said the family hopes that it is just a network issue and that they will contact them soon, as her sister is desperately waiting for them.

States Focus



J&K SHOULD ASPIRE TO HOST GLOBAL SPORTS EVENTS: LG

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said Jammu and Kashmir should aspire not only to participate in international sporting events but also to host them and showcase its talent to the world.

Addressing a function on National Sports Day, Sinha said the region's achievements in sports over the past six years showed that dedicated preparation could create "an entire era of champions".

He also paid tribute to hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand and called upon the youth to contribute to building a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

"Champions are forged through discipline and effort, not shortcuts," Sinha said, urging corporate houses to support athletes at the talent-recognition stage rather than only after they win medals. He said society, coaches, support staff and parents had a collective responsibility in shaping sporting champions. Sinha outlined three duties for young people – to lead by example, compete with dignity, accept defeat gracefully and inspire future generations.

(PTI)



BJP CHIEF NITIN NABIN HOLDS MEETING ON YOUTH OUTREACH

BJP president Nitin Nabin on Saturday held a crucial meeting with party leaders to discuss and formulate the party's youth outreach plan, sources said.

According to sources, the party's preparations for the upcoming Assembly polls in seven States, including Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Gujarat, were also a key agenda for the meeting.

The meeting was attended by newly appointed BJP Yuva Morcha president Hemang Joshi. Former presidents of the party's Yuva Morcha, Anurag Thakur, Poonam Mahajan and Tejasvi Surya, were also present at the meeting.

(PTI)

PM Modi must order filing of FIR: Rahul on Kharge purification row

FAIR REPORT
 ■ New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked the BJP-RSS over the 'shuddhikaran' (purification) ceremony carried out at the venue of a rally addressed by AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in Haldwani earlier this month, saying it was a "crime", and Prime Minister Narendra Modi must order the registration of an FIR in the matter.

The Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha said this incident shows the BJP-RSS mindset that they do not want the Dalits to progress and live with respect and be successful.

"We are demanding justice for the Congress president. Give the Congress president justice in Uttarakhand. It is the duty of the Central and State Governments to ensure that Kharge gets justice," he said at a press conference.

Gandhi also accused the Uttarakhand BJP chief Mahendra Bhatt of defending the purification act and said 20 days have passed since the "crime" was committed, but no action has been taken.

"We demand that an FIR be



LoP in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi addresses a press conference at Indira Bhawan in New Delhi on Saturday

PTI

lodged against those who have done this. PM Modi states that he belongs to every caste and is the prime minister of the country, but his party chief of Uttarakhand defends 'shuddhikaran,' Gandhi said.

It is the RSS people who did it, and the PM should order an FIR under the SC/ST Act against these people, Gandhi demanded, asserting that the Congress will ensure justice for its party chief.

"There is a fight between two ideologies – the Constitution given by the likes of BR Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru on one side, and the BJP-RSS on the other side," he said.

"For thousands of years,

violence was perpetrated against Dalits. This is illegal under the Constitution, but today also in schools, Dalit children are made to clean toilets. This is the reality of the country," Gandhi said.

"Dalits are not allowed to drink water from wells. In tea shops, there are two cups – paper ones for Dalits and glass ones for others. In a Baraat in India, a Dalit groom wears a helmet as he could be beaten up for riding a horse. This is the reality in the country," Gandhi said.

Citing the examples of Congress president, the party's Rajasthan leader Tikaram Jolly and NDA minister Jitan Ram Manjhi - who all reportedly faced 'purification' situations at different

times - Gandhi said the more successful the Dalit person is, the attack on him or her is more fierce.

"This is another name for untouchability.

"The BJP people practice untouchability. When they do shuddhikaran, they say that Dalits cannot touch as they are impure," Gandhi said.

"They did shuddhikaran on August 10, two days after the rally of Kharge ji in Haldwani. This is a crime. On August 13, Kharge ji raised this issue in Parliament," Gandhi recalled.

The Congress on Thursday accused Uttarakhand BJP chief Mahendra Bhatt of "justifying" the purification ceremony and asked whether the ruling party would take action against the leader as he "defended untouchability".

Bhatt had reportedly said the place was polluted with slogans not fit for a religious place, as he dismissed the criticism over the ritual by the opposition.

The alleged purification took place at Ramlila Maidan in Haldwani, where Kharge had addressed a gathering on August 8.

Bihar Govt to replace term fail with eligible for skill training in marksheets of Class 10, 12

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Patna

The Bihar Government has decided to replace the word "fail" with the phrase "eligible for skill training" in the mark-sheets of students appearing for Class 10 and Class 12 board examinations from the current academic session, officials said on Saturday.

The move is aimed at enabling the students to pursue vocational training programmes offered by the Bihar Board of Open Schooling and Examination (BBOSE), they said.

"The Education Department will amend the



Bihar Education Minister Mithlesh Tiwary

rules accordingly to implement this change. The department will soon issue necessary instructions to the BSEB. Instead of 'Fail', the certificates will carry the term 'Eligible for Skill

Development'," Bihar Education Minister Mithlesh Tiwary told reporters .

Tiwary said students' talent does not disappear merely because they fail to secure the expected marks

in an examination.

"Students appearing for the Class 10 board supplementary examinations will be provided special sessions for one month to help them prepare and improve their chances of success," he said.

The initiative is part of broader efforts to provide remedial support and prevent students from falling behind after an unsuccessful examination attempt, Tiwary said.

The Bihar Government has been taking measures to provide students with greater exposure to activities beyond conventional textbook-based learning, the officials said.

BJP to go ahead with foot march despite Karnataka minister's resignation

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Bengaluru

The BJP will go ahead with its scheduled 10-day foot march from Raichur to Ballari beginning September 1, former minister B Sriramulu said on Saturday.

The saffron party decided to continue with its plan despite Planning and Statistics Minister B Nagendra resigned on Friday over allegations of ₹89 crore scam in the Maharshi Valmiki



Ex-Karnataka minister B Sriramulu
 Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation in 2024. The padayatra will begin at

Lingasugur on September 1 and conclude in Ballari on September 10, covering nine Assembly constituencies, Sriramulu said.

The march was earlier announced as a campaign demanding Ballari Rural MLA Nagendra's resignation.

"The speciality of the Government today is that it has accepted a resignation for the second time on the same charges," Sriramulu said.

He said the march would be

inaugurated at Lingasugur by BJP state president BY Vijayendra, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy and Union ministers, including Pralhad Joshi and former Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

The march will pass through Maski, Sindhanur, Hanchanal Camp, Kanakagiri, Gangavathi, Kampil, Sandur and Ballari Rural

before culminating in Ballari city, he said.

Sriramulu credited the BJP and JD(S) legislators' protests in the Assembly with forcing Nagendra's resignation, saying, "They ensured that a minister resigned within about 25 days." He alleged that the ₹187-crore irregularity involved funds meant for the development of Scheduled Tribe communities, and was used during the Lok Sabha elections in Ballari and Koppal.

Maratha activist Jarange begins fast over Kunbi certificates

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar

Quota activist Manoj Jarange launched an indefinite hunger strike on Saturday, demanding that the Maharashtra Government immediately issue caste certificates based on the 58 lakh Kunbi records identified earlier and asserted that the community will not grant any further time.

Speaking to reporters at Antarwali Sarati village in Jalna district, Jarange warned

that this would be his "final agitation" and accused Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of bearing a "grudge" against the Maratha community and Deputy CM Eknath Shinde of quietly supporting him.

He also demanded the elimination of the caste verification committee, and threatened to march to the Chief Minister's residence in Mumbai if the Government fails to resolve all pending quota issues.

"Devendra Fadnavis is deliberately bearing a grudge



against the Maratha community, and Eknath Shinde is giving him covert support

through Social Justice Minister Sanjay Shirsat. If they do not resolve our

issues, we will march to the 'Varsha' bungalow (the CM's official residence in Mumbai). We will speak to the Government delegation if they come to negotiate, but they must arrive with concrete solutions," he said.

Jarange has led several agitations demanding that eligible Marathas be recognised as Kunbis, an agrarian community that enjoys reservation benefits in education and Government jobs under the Other Backward Class (OBC) category.

FSSAI proposes label on food products high in fat, salt, sugar



FAIR REPORT
 ■ New Delhi

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has told the Supreme Court that it has proposed to provide a prominent front-of-pack warning label in red colour for food products which are high in added saturated fat, added sugar and salt.

In a compliance affidavit filed in the apex court, the FSSAI said the proposal is intended to provide a simple, prominent and easily comprehensible warning to consumers regarding food products which are high in specified nutrients of concerns.

It said the warning label shall indicate the applicable declarations, such as "High Fat", "High Sugar", "High Salt" and/or "Highly Sweetened Beverage", as the case may be, to enable consumers to readily identify products high in the specified nutrients.

The affidavit was filed in compliance of the apex court's August 13 order passed while hearing a plea of public charitable trust '3S and Our Health Society'.

The petitioner, represented by advocate Rajiv Shankar Divvedi, has sought directions to the Centre, states and Union territories to implement mandatory front-of-package warning labels (FOPL) on packaged foods.

While hearing the matter on August 13, a bench of justices JB Pardiwala and K Vinod Chandran had slammed the FSSAI over the delay in introducing warning labels on packaged foods and asked if the Government "does not want its people to

be healthy". In its compliance affidavit filed in the court, the FSSAI said it has prepared a proposal for providing information relating to added sugar, added fat and salt in pictorial form on the front-of-pack (FoP).

"The warning shall be displayed in a font size one point larger than that used in the nutrition information table on the back of the pack," it said.

It said the following categories are proposed to be exempted from the front-of-pack warning requirement – single-ingredient food products, and food products which are inherently rich in fat, sugar or salt, such as ghee, edible oil, salt, sugar, jaggery and honey, subject to the applicability of other requirements under the food safety and labelling regulations.

The affidavit said it is proposed that front-of-pack nutrition labelling (FoPNL) be implemented in phases to facilitate consumer acceptability and provide industry adequate time for reformulation.

It said while phase I would cover products high in two or more specified nutrients – added fat, added sugar and salt – and specified sweetened beverages, phase II would extend the warning to products high in any one of these nutrients.

"The proposed approach is intended to address the need for an effective and consumer friendly FoP labelling mechanism and to facilitate informed food-choices, particularly in relation to children and other vulnerable group of the population," the affidavit said.

Bombay HC disposes plea by cab drivers as Govt grants one-year time to learn Marathi

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Saturday disposed of a petition filed by four cab drivers seeking a stay on the Maharashtra Government's Marathi language mandate after it was informed about the State's decision to extend the timeline to learn the language by a year.

Additional Government pleader Jyoti Chavan told a bench of acting Chief Justice Ravindra Ghuge and Justice Gautam Ankhad that the Government has decided to extend the time given to auto rickshaw and taxi drivers to learn the language by one year.

The high court accepted the statement and disposed of the petition.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced the timeline extension after a delegation met him on Thursday, halting immediate action against non-Marathi drivers and giving them more time to learn the language.



Bombay High Court

The public interest litigation (PIL), filed through advocate Vivek Shukla, had said the Government notification dated August 12 was violative of the fundamental rights of citizens.

The petitioners - Mohd Kasim Ahmad, Mohd. Tauseef Shaikh, Siyad Ahamad, and Sadik Nasir Ali Khan - had claimed that the rule violates their fundamental rights under Articles 14 (right to equality), 19 (freedom to carry on trade and profession) and 21 (right to life) of the Constitution and is ultra vires the Motor Vehicles Act, which does not prescribe any language requirement for driving licences.

"The Motor Vehicles Act confers no power upon the State Government to prescribe working knowledge of any language as a qualification for a driver, as a condition of a badge, or as a condition of a permit, and confers no power to suspend or revoke a badge on such a ground," the plea had said.

It added that lakhs of poor and migrant drivers, including themselves, face the imminent threat of suspension of badges and cancellation of permits, due to the implementation of the "working knowledge" of Marathi rule, which they said will affect their livelihoods.

Patnaik urges BJP MPs from Odisha to call for reversal of mining law amendments

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Bhubaneswar

BJD president Naveen Patnaik on Saturday wrote to BJP MPs from Odisha, urging them to call for reversal of the MMDR Act amendments that seek to restrict States' powers to levy taxes on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land parcels.

Patnaik, who is also the leader of the opposition in the State Assembly, appealed to the MPs of the ruling party to safeguard the interests of people who elected them to Parliament.

"I earnestly appeal to you (BJP MPs) to listen to your



BJD president Naveen Patnaik

conscience and think about the future generations of Odisha. I appeal to you to challenge and call for a reversal of the amendment made in the MMDR Act that takes away the powers of the State

Government," Patnaik said in the letter.

He also said August 13, which saw the passage of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the

Lok Sabha with Odisha BJP MPs' support, was a "black day" for the State.

Noting that Parliament is the highest temple of Indian democracy, Patnaik said MPs are the voice of Odisha in this tallest forum of democracy.

"The people of Odisha elected you in good faith to protect their interests. It is therefore a matter of utmost concern that you voted in favour of one of the most arbitrary legislations that will have far-reaching adverse implications for the people of Odisha who put their trust in you," the BJD chief said in the letter.

Goa police hunt for suspects who fired at casino director

FAIR REPORT
 ■ Panaji

The Goa Police have launched a search to trace two unidentified men who allegedly opened fire at the director of a casino group outside his hotel in Porvorim, a senior officer said on Saturday.

The director escaped unhurt while his security personnel returned fire, police said, adding that the shooting occurred on Friday night outside a five-star property, located near the local police station.

The incident has prompted the opposition Congress to allege that law and order has collapsed in the



BJP-ruled State.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Saturday said that those involved in the incident will not be spared.

Superintendent of Police (North Goa) Harishchandra Madkaikar said that two men fired three rounds at Srinivas

Nayak, director of Majestic Pride Hotels and Resorts at Porvorim, around 8.45 pm.

Nayak, who was sitting in his car along with his bodyguards, escaped unhurt, he said.

The CCTV footage from the location, which was made public, showed two men waiting near the hotel gate before firing three rounds at Nayak's car. Nayak escaped unhurt while his security personnel returned fire, forcing the assailants to flee.

A manhunt has been launched to apprehend the duo, Madkaikar added. When contacted, Nayak said that he was unhurt and safe.

The Congress, meanwhile, claimed the incident

reflected the collapse of the law and order situation in the State.

"A firing incident reportedly took place just metres away from the Porvorim police station. If criminals can allegedly open fire in the vicinity of a police station, how safe is the common Goan?" Goa Congress chief Girish Chodankar said in a social media post.

"Today, even those seen as close to the BJP establishment are not safe. What does this say about the state of law and order under the BJP Government?" he asked.

CM Sawant said this is the first such incident during his tenure as the chief minister.

