

CHIRAG
PASWAN

"MORALE OF CRIMINALS SKY-HIGH": CHIRAG
PASWAN'S FRESH FIRE AT BIHAR ALLIES

Diary Times Desk : Hours after five men walked into a Patna hospital and shot dead a criminal out on parole, Union Minister and NDA ally Chirag Paswan targeted the Nitish Kumar-led BJP-JDU government, saying that Bihar's law and order situation has become a cause for concern.

"Murders are happening every day. The morale of criminals is sky-high. The strategy of the police and administration is beyond comprehension. The attack inside Paras hospital in Patna's residential neighbourhood proves that criminals are openly challenging the law and administration," Mr Paswan said in a post on X. "Criminal incidents right before the Bihar Assembly polls are worrying. Hopefully, the administration will soon take firm steps to bring the law and order system back on track," he added.

This is the second time in a week that Mr Paswan has slammed the Bihar government over the state's crime graph. Earlier, on June 12, he had asked, "How many more murders will Biharis face now? It is beyond understanding what the responsibility of the Bihar Police is." Five armed men today entered a Bihar hospital, casually walked into a patient's room, shot him dead and escaped. The target, Chandan Mishra, was a hardened criminal with dozens of murder cases against him. He was out on parole on medical grounds. Police believe that a rival gang is behind the chilling attack.



BALLISTIC
MISSILE

INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TESTS PRITHVI-II, AGNI-I
BALLISTIC MISSILE OFF ODISHA



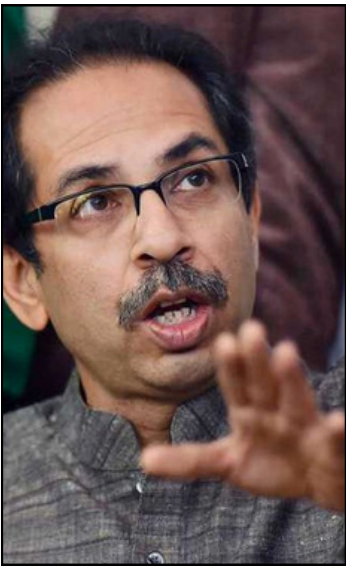
Diary Times Desk : India on Thursday successfully test-fired nuclear-capable short-range ballistic missiles Prithvi-II and Agni-I from an integrated test range off the Odisha coast, demonstrating its strategic deterrence capability. The test-firing of the missiles, conducted by the elite Strategic Forces Command, validated all operational and technical parameters, according to the defence ministry.

On Wednesday, India successfully test-fired the indigenously developed Akash Prime missile in Ladakh that has been customised to operate at an altitude above 4,500 metres. The test-firing of the missiles came over two months after the May 7-10 military conflict between India and Pakistan. The Prithvi-II missile has a range of around 350 km and it is capable of carrying a payload of up to 500 kgs. It can carry both conventional as well as nuclear warheads.

The Agni-I missile has a range of 700-900 km, and it can carry a payload of 1,000 kgs. Both Prithvi-II and Agni-I missiles have been an integral part of India's nuclear deterrence. "Short-range ballistic missiles -- Prithvi-II and Agni-I -- were successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur, Odisha on July 17," the ministry said in a brief statement. It said the launches "validated all operational and technical parameters. "These tests were conducted under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command," the ministry said. On the test-firing of the Akash missile, the ministry said it carries added significance as it follows the "exceptional performance" of India's indigenously developed air defence systems during Operation Sindoor. Akash Prime is an upgraded variant of the Akash weapon system built for the Indian Army.

DAY AFTER FADNAVIS' TONGUE-IN-CHEEK 'OFFER', UDDHAV,
SON AADITYA MEET CM

Diary Times Desk : Shiv Sena (UBT) head Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday met Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, the move coming a day after the latter's "come here" offer to his former ally set off political speculation in the state. Thackeray met Fadnavis in the chamber of legislative council chairperson Ram Shinde. During the meeting, which lasted for about half an hour, the former CM's son and Worli MLA Aaditya Thackeray was also present. On Wednesday, speaking at the farewell function of leader of opposition in the council Ambadas Danve, the CM, in a tongue-in-cheek remark, told Uddhav Thackeray that the BJP was not likely to join him in the opposition, but he can come over to the ruling side. "Uddhav ji, there is no scope (for a change in government) till 2029. We do not have the scope to come to the other (opposition's) side. You have the scope to come here, and it can be thought about. We can think about it differently," Fadnavis said. The undivided Shiv Sena led by Thackeray parted ways with the longtime ally BJP after the 2019 assembly elections over a dispute on sharing the CM's post.



INDIA-CHINA SHOW POSITIVITY IN
REVIVING A JOINT FORMAT WITH
RUSSIA

Diary Times Desk : As US and its NATO allies mount greater pressure on Russia on ending the conflict with Ukraine and threaten to impose secondary sanctions on crude oil, separate statements originating from New Delhi and Beijing have, today, been positive on reviving the Russia-India-China format. In New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, today, while answering media questions on the revival of Russia-India-China format said: "The revival will be worked out among the countries in a mutually convenient manner." This is a consultative format where three countries come and discuss global and regional issues of interest to them, Jaiswal said when asked about positive opinion of China and Russia on reviving the format. Earlier this morning, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian had set the ball rolling. "China stands ready to maintain communication with Russia and India on advancing the trilateral.

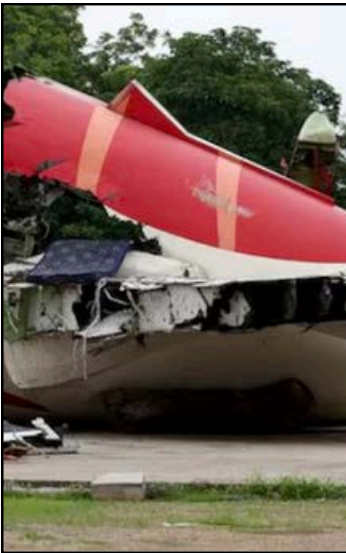
6 DETAINED AFTER MURDER CONVICT ON PAROLE IS
SHOT DEAD IN PATNA HOSPITAL



Diary Times Desk : A man, who was a murder convict and out on parole, was shot dead by gunmen inside a private hospital in Patna on Thursday, police said. The deceased was identified as Chandan Mishra (36), a resident of Buxar district, and was admitted to the hospital for treatment, a senior officer said. Police have identified all the accused and detained six suspects in Patna and Buxar. A purported CCTV footage of the incident, which went viral on social media, showed that five armed men were entering the ICU of the hospital and opening fire at the person. PTI couldn't independently verify the authenticity of the video. Speaking to PTI, Jitendra Rana, Inspector General (IG) of central range (Patna), said, "Several teams have been formed to nab the accused. Police have identified all the accused who were involved in the killing of Chandan Mishra. At least six people have been detained in Patna and Buxar." Patna (central) Superintendent of Police Diksha said, "We are examining CCTV footage collected from the hospital and other spots. Searches are under way to nab the accused at the earliest."

INVESTIGATION BUREAU SLAMS 'SELECTIVE' MEDIA
REPORTS ON AIR INDIA CRASH PROBE

Diary Times Desk : The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) of India has criticised sections of the international media for what it called "selective and unverified reporting" regarding last month's Air India crash in Ahmedabad. "It has come to our attention that certain sections of the international media are repeatedly attempting to draw conclusions through selective and unverified reporting," the AAIB said in an official statement. The response comes a day after US media reports claimed cockpit recordings from the ill-fated flight indicated the captain deliberately cut fuel supply to the engines. In a sharp rebuttal, AAIB Director General GVG Yugandhar stated that drawing conclusions while the investigation is under way is both "irresponsible and misleading". The agency warned that such premature narratives risk undermining public trust and affecting the integrity of the investigative process.



YOUR HOROSCOPE

18-07-2025

Aries

Today, you will meet old friends, which will refresh old memories. Employed people may be fired from the job due to heavy arguments with colleagues in the workplace. People doing business should thank God for getting financial benefits from the advice of their spouse. Due to irritation in the eyes, you should consult an ophthalmologist.

Gemini

Today you should include yoga and meditation in your daily routine. For employed people, your responsibilities may increase due to promotion in the workplace. People doing business may suffer financial loss from any unknown person today. There may be difficulty in walking due to nerve pain problems.

Leo

Today, you should offer water to Lord Shiva to avoid difficulties. A heated argument with HR in the workplace will spoil your whole day. Businessmen have to exercise patience, there are chances of improvement in business. Today, you may face stomach and pancreas problems due to eating too much fried food.

Libra

Today is going to be a busy day for you. Employed people will get a chance to work with senior officers due to advancement in their professional field. People doing business should avoid exchanging money with any unknown person today. Pregnant women may have to face problems due to changing weather.

Sagittarius

Today you should take all important decisions of your career thoughtfully. Employed people may have to face some problems due to the start of a new job in the workplace. Due to financial gain for business people, you can invest in a new business. Problems like leg pain and headache may bother you.

Aquarius

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employees will be suspended due to indiscipline in the workplace. People doing business should solve all the problems of their customers in time. Due to worsening weather, problems related to cold and cough may increase in the family.

Taurus

Today you will get success as your long pending legal proceedings will come in your favor. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family as employed people will get progress in their workplace. People doing business should make a budget and spend the money in order to get financial benefits. Housewives should change their food according to health and season.

Cancer

Today you will get relief from all your problems due to sudden financial gain. Employed people may have to get scolded by their boss due to being hasty in the workplace. People doing business may face increased difficulties in business due to arguments with business partners. As the problem of foot pain increases, you must consult a specialist doctor.

Virgo

Today you should take special control over your speech and behavior. People in employment will get success in the workplace with the help of friends. People doing business will get financial gain due to some special offer, your financial condition will be strengthened. Old diseases of elders in the house may emerge.

Scorpio

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employed people may have to face mental problems due to extra workload in the workplace. People doing business may have to travel abroad in connection with business expansion. Diabetic patients should get themselves checked by a doctor in case of any problem today.

Capricorn

Today you can invest especially in land and buildings. Employed people may have to travel long distances due to office work, due to which your health may deteriorate. People doing business may face difficulties in repaying business loans due to loss of money. High BP and cholesterol problems will increase the problems of your spouse.

Pisces

Today your interest in creative work will especially increase. Employed people may be given an important project by their boss to handle important projects in the workplace. People doing business should control their speech and behavior with their customers. You should walk carefully on the road, problems may arise due to injury.



HIMACHAL NEWS: CM SAID- GOVERNMENT WILL GO TO SUPREME COURT AGAINST THE DECISION TO CUT APPLE LADEN TREES

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said that the state government is not in favour of cutting down apple trees laden with fruits. Himachal High Court should give the state government adequate time to auction the apple trees. Himachal government is preparing to go to the Supreme Court against this decision. Before this, a meeting will be held with the Horticulture Minister and other senior officials to understand the legal aspects of the matter and to take their opinion. We will move forward only after considering all these legal aspects on what basis to go to the Supreme Court against this decision of the High Court. In an informal conversation with journalists in Shimla on Thursday, Sukhu said that the state government under the leadership of Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda is ready to go anywhere for disaster relief. He wants that at least five bighas of land should be allowed to be given to the disaster-affected families whose lands and gardens have been washed away under the Forest Rights Act.



PREPARATIONS TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO PRIVATE OPERATORS: A DECISION WILL BE TAKEN SOON ON REDUCING THE SEATING CAPACITY IN BUSES

Diary Times Desk : The government is keeping an eye on the doctors who perform operations on Himcare cards. A list is being prepared of the amount of money being spent on the operations of patients in hospitals. Doctors who charge more than the required amount will be punished. Treatment of patients up to Rs 5 lakh is free on Himcare cards. The state government gives the money for the operation to the hospital management. Bills worth lakhs of rupees are being made for operations. There has been fraud in Himachal in the name of Himcare scheme earlier also. Bills worth lakhs of rupees have been made for hernia operations costing Rs 25,000 in private hospitals. Investigation of such frauds is going on. The Himachal government has formed a cabinet sub-committee regarding the Himcare scheme. The committee is working under the chairmanship of Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri. It has come to the notice of the government that Himcare cards.

HIMACHAL: GOVERNMENT KEEPING AN EYE ON DOCTORS DOING OPERATIONS ON HIMCARE CARD, IF THEY SPEND MORE MONEY THAN REQUIRED THEN...

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HIMACHAL: RERA CHAIRMAN PRESENTED A CHEQUE OF RS 31 LAKH TO THE CHIEF MINISTER'S RELIEF FUND, OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ALSO DONATED MONEY

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu was presented a cheque of Rs 31 lakh for the Disaster Relief Fund by Himachal Pradesh Real Estate Regulatory Authority Chairman RD Dhiman in Shimla. On Thursday itself, Professor Suresh Kumar, a resident of Hamirpur district, presented a cheque of Rs one lakh to Chief Minister Sukhu for the Disaster Relief Fund in Shimla. Chairman and Director of Vardhman Group Baddi, Indra Mohan Singh Sidhu presented a cheque of Rs 50 lakh to Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu for the Disaster Relief Fund in Shimla. Vice President Corporate Affairs Atul Bhardwaj was also present on the occasion. Chief Minister Sukhu was presented a cheque of Rs 8.11 lakh for the Chief Minister's Relief Fund by Kutlehar Assembly Constituency MLA Vivek Sharma in Shimla on behalf of the people of the area. Managing Director of District Solan, Manjot Singh Purewal presented a cheque of Rs five lakh for the Chief Minister's Relief Fund in Shimla. A delegation of Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Drivers Association led by President Mahendra Singh met Chief Minister Sukhu and presented him a cheque of Rs 1.93 lakh for Chief Minister's Relief Fund on behalf of the people of Baijnath area of Kangra district in Shimla by MLA of Baijnath Assembly Constituency Kishori Lal.



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REVIEW MEETING: SHOW CAUSE NOTICE ISSUED TO 320 TEACHERS FOR GIVING POOR RESULTS IN BOARD EXAMS

Diary Times Desk : Notices have been issued to 320 teachers and lecturers who gave poor results in the board examinations of class 10th and 12th. Principals and headmasters whose schools gave less than 25 percent results have been asked to reply through show cause notices. Reasons have also been sought from TGTs and lecturers who gave less than 50 percent results. After the review meeting of the education department in the state secretariat on Thursday, Education Minister Rohit Thakur said that if satisfactory answers are not received from the teachers, action will be taken to stop increment and transfer them. While chairing a review meeting regarding the schools and colleges damaged during the recent disaster in Mandi, Thakur directed the officials to speed up the repair and reconstruction work. He will visit the affected areas soon. He said that now in future, the District Deputy Director will inspect the land and surrounding areas for school construction. Construction work will start only after the report of the district officials. There are many such damaged schools and colleges, whose construction site was selected wrongly or were built near rivers and ravines.

HIMACHAL NEWS: SCHOLARSHIP OF 1,465 STUDENTS STOPPED DUE TO NOT LINKING BANK ACCOUNTS WITH AADHAAR

Diary Times Desk : Scholarships of 1,465 students of the state are stuck due to non-linking of bank accounts with Aadhaar number. Scholarships have not yet been issued to these students for the academic session 2023-24 under the PM-Yashasvi Scholarship Scheme. The Directorate of Higher Education has issued instructions to the students to get their bank accounts updated soon. In the academic session 2023-24, scholarships have not been issued to OBC, EBC and DNT category students under the PM Yashasvi Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme due to non-linking of bank accounts with Aadhaar number. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India has given instructions to the state in this regard that pending cases should be settled expeditiously. The Directorate of Higher Education has directed all the concerned students, whose applications have been verified.

SUPREME COURT'S
"DISCRETION" REMARK AFTER
HIGH COURT BAIL FOR ACTOR
DARSHAN

Diary Times Desk : Expressing its displeasure, the Supreme Court on Thursday said it felt the Karnataka High Court did not "exercise its discretion properly" while granting bail to actor Darshan Thoogudeepa in the case involving the murder of his fan Renukaswamy. The 33-year-old was allegedly abducted by Darshan and his aides from Chitradurga and then tortured in a shed in Bengaluru in June last year over obscene messages sent to Darshan's alleged partner, actor Pavithra Gowda. After Renukaswamy died, his body was thrown into a drain. In December, the Karnataka High Court granted bail to Darshan. Hearing a petition by the Karnataka government against the decision, a bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan turned to the actor's counsel, Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, and asked, "What do you have to say, Mr Sibal? Honestly, we don't think the high court has exercised its discretion properly. You must have seen the manner in which the high court has dictated the order." Mr Sibal responded that the Supreme Court could keep the high court's decision aside and focus on the statements made by the witnesses.

INDORE BAGS CLEANEST CITY
TITLE FOR 8TH YEAR, NOIDA
TOPS IN 3-10 LAKH CATEGORY

Diary Times Desk : Indore has once again secured the top spot as India's cleanest city, marking its eighth consecutive win in the central government's annual Swachh Survekshan survey, followed by Surat and Navi Mumbai. In the 3-10 lakh population category, Noida has secured the top spot as the cleanest city, with Chandigarh coming in second and Mysuru ranking third. President Droupadi Murmu presented the Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 Awards during a national ceremony at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi today. Organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the event honoured cities and urban bodies for their efforts in maintaining cleanliness under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U). Swachh Survekshan is the world's largest urban cleanliness survey, assessing cities on parameters such as waste management, sanitation infrastructure, and citizen participation. Indore's feat is attributed to a series of innovative measures and active civic engagement. The city has enforced strict waste segregation, promoted an incremental garbage reduction policy, and fostered a culture of cleanliness among its residents.

KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT HOLDS RCB
ACCOUNTABLE FOR BENGALURU STAMPEDE



Diary Times Desk : The Karnataka government has held Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) accountable for the stampede that occurred outside M Chinnaswamy Stadium on June 4, resulting in 11 deaths and injuries to more than 50 people. The findings were outlined in the government's status report, which was made public on Thursday, two days after the Karnataka High Court rejected the government's request to keep it confidential and ordered its release. In the status report, a copy of which has been accessed by ESPNcrinfo, the government said: "The RCB Management, in association with its event management partner, DNA Networks Private Limited, and the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA), unilaterally decided to hold the victory celebration without prior consultation with the police and without obtaining the necessary permissions or license for such celebration." As per the report, KSCA CEO Subhendu Ghosh submitted an intimation on behalf of DNA Entertainment.

BANGLADESH HALTS DEMOLITION OF
SATYAJIT RAY'S ANCESTRAL HOUSE

Diary Times Desk : The demolition of legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray's ancestral home in Bangladesh's Mymensingh has been halted, and the authorities have formed a committee to look into how it can be reconstructed. This comes after India expressed concern over the ongoing demolition of Mr Ray's ancestral house in Bangladesh. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also protested the demolition, stating that the house is intricately tied to Bengal's cultural history. The house in Mymensingh belonged to Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury, a well-known Bengali writer and Ray's grandfather. Faisal Mahmud, minister (press), Bangladesh High Commission, told NDTV that Ray never lived in the Mymensingh house. "His grandfather Upendrakishore probably never lived here. He used to live in Kotiadi in the neighbouring Kishorganj district. His house there is a protected structure. We have 531 protected structures in our heritage list. This house belongs to Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury's ancestor.

TRACKED, LOCKED, CONFIRMED
KILL: NEW AKASH MISSILE
DESTROYS TARGETS IN LADAKH

Diary Times Desk : At 15,000 feet in Ladakh, the Army achieved a significant milestone with the Akash surface-to-air missile. The new variant of the system - Akash Prime - scored two confirmed kills during a test run. Akash Prime is a new variant of the Akash Mark 1 and Mark-1s, the systems that saw action during Operation Sindoor in May this year. The Prime variant destroyed two high-speed unmanned aerial targets. The test marked the first such trial of Akash Prime at high altitudes. Akash Prime will form the third and fourth regiments of Akash missiles in the Army. The weapon system has been modified to operate in altitudes above 4,500 metres and has the latest upgrades, including an indigenously developed Radio Frequency seeker, which beams out radio signals, and uses them during its terminal phase to track and destroy targets. Akash is a surface-to-air missile system with a range of 20 km. Dr Prahlada Ramarao, a former DRDO scientist, played a key role in developing the missile 15 years ago.

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ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE'S 1ST CHARGESHEET AGAINST
ROBERT VADRA IN GURUGRAM LAND DEAL CASE

Diary Times Desk : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a chargesheet against businessman Robert Vadra and 11 others in a Gurugram land deal case. He faces three cases, and this is the first chargesheet. The ED filed the chargesheet in Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court, which will take up the matter on Friday. Mr Vadra's office in a statement said the "proceedings are nothing more than an extension of the political witchhunt by the present government." Apart from Mr Vadra, the chargesheet has named his company Sky Light Hospitality Pvt Ltd, Omkareshwar Properties Pvt Ltd, and their heads Satyanand Yaji, Kewal Singh Virak, and others. The Gurugram Police had filed a first information report against them for allegedly buying 3.53 acres of land fraudulently in Shikohpur village in Gurugram Sector 83. Mr Vadra allegedly bought the land from Omkareshwar Properties in February 2008 using false documents and then got a commercial licence using his personal influence, investigators have said.



US SENATE APPROVES CUTTING BILLIONS IN FOREIGN AID AS TRUMP DEMANDS

Diary Times Desk : United States senators have passed a package of sweeping cuts that would slash Washington's foreign aid expenditures by about \$8bn as part of President Donald Trump's pledge to drastically shrink federal spending. The package, which passed in a 51-48 vote early on Thursday, cancels \$9bn in spending already approved by Congress, including more than \$1bn to be stripped from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Two of the Senate's 53 Republicans voted with Democrats against the legislation. The vote was seen as a test of how easily senators would approve spending cuts recommended by Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). The president, who has made slashing federal spending a domestic priority, established the department and had put billionaire tech mogul Elon Musk at the helm to identify areas for government cost-cutting before the SpaceX and Tesla CEO left in May. A public spat between Musk and Trump over deficit spending erupted a short time later.

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY APPOINTS YULIIA SVYRYDENKO AS NEW PRIME MINISTER OF UKRAINE

Diary Times Desk : Ukraine's economy minister and the key negotiator in the mineral deal with the US Yuliia Svyrydenko, was appointed as its new Prime Minister Thursday, becoming the country's first new head of government since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Svyrydenko is one of a group of officials taking on new roles in Ukraine's government, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reshuffles the Cabinet in a bid to energise a war-weary nation and boost domestic weapons production in the face of Russia's grinding invasion. At home, however, the Cabinet recalibration has not been seen as a major shift, as the Ukrainian leader continues to rely on officials who have proven their effectiveness and loyalty during the war, now in its fourth year. Zelenskyy submitted nominations on Thursday to shuffle top government positions, including the replacement of Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, the longest-serving head of government in Ukraine's history. Shmyhal now moves to become defence minister.

"THERE HASN'T BEEN ONE MOMENT...": OBAMAS ADDRESS DIVORCE RUMOURS

Diary Times Desk : Barack Obama and Michelle Obama's marriage was "touch and go for a while," the former US President has said. But the former first lady said there was never a moment she thought about "quitting on my man" in a new episode of IMO with Michelle Obama and Craig Robinson. "She took me back!" Barack Obama said, laughing. "It was touch and go for a while." The couple addressed persistent divorce rumours for the first time. Michelle firmly dismissed the rumours, saying, "There hasn't been one moment in our marriage where I've thought about quitting on my man. And we've had some really hard times and we've had a lot of fun times, a lot of adventures, and I have become a better person because of the man I'm married to." This was the first time the Obamas publicly responded to speculation about their marriage, which has intensified in recent months following Michelle's absence from several public appearances, including Donald Trump's inauguration and Jimmy Carter's funeral. "It's so nice to have you both in the same room together," said Craig Robinson, Michelle's brother and co-host of the podcast. Michelle replied, "I know because when we aren't, folks think we're divorced."



SYRIAN LEADER PLEDGES SECURITY FOR ALL, SLAMS ISRAELI STRIKES ON DAMASCUS



Diary Times Desk : Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa says protecting the country's Druze citizens and their rights is a priority as he announces that local leaders will take control of security in the city of Suwayda in a bid to end sectarian violence in the south and in the wake of deadly Israeli strikes in Damascus. In a televised speech on Thursday, the Syrian leader addressed days of fierce fighting involving Druze armed groups, Bedouin tribes and government forces in the predominantly Druze city of Suwayda. Israel, which sees the Druze as allies, launched a series of strikes near Syria's presidential palace and on the military headquarters in the heart of Damascus on Wednesday, warning Syria it would escalate its attacks further if government forces did not withdraw from the south and halt attacks against the Druze community.

UK TO LOWER VOTING AGE TO 16 IN LANDMARK ELECTORAL REFORM

Diary Times Desk : The British government said on Thursday it planned to give 16 and 17-year-olds the right to vote in all UK elections in a major overhaul of the country's democratic system. The government said the proposed changes, which are subject to parliament approvals, would align voting rights across the UK with Scotland and Wales, where younger voters already participate in devolved elections. "We are taking action to break down barriers to participation that will ensure more people have the opportunity to engage in UK democracy," Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner said in a statement. Turnout at the 2024 general election was 59.7%, the lowest at a general election since 2001, according to a parliamentary report. According to the House of Commons library, research from countries that have lowered the voting age to 16 shows it has had no impact on election outcomes.

TRUMP EYES TARIFF RATE OF 10% OR 15% FOR MORE THAN 150 COUNTRIES

Diary Times Desk : President Donald Trump said he would send letters to more than 150 countries notifying them their tariff rates could be 10% or 15% as he forges ahead with his trade agenda. "We'll have well over 150 countries that we're just going to send a notice of payment out, and the notice of payment is going to say what the tariff rate will be," Trump told reporters on Wednesday at the White House. "It's all going to be the same for everyone, for that group," Trump added, saying that the trading partners that would receive those letters were "not big countries, and they don't do that much business." In an interview with Real America's Voice broadcast later on Wednesday, Trump said the rate would "be probably 10 or 15%, we haven't decided yet." Trump in recent days has unleashed a barrage of tariff demands, informing other economies of new duties that will kick in on Aug. 1 if they cannot negotiate better terms with the US. The letters extended what was initially a July 9 deadline for another three weeks, setting off a frantic dash for trading partners looking to avoid higher levies.

AT LEAST 61 DEAD, 45 RESCUED IN HUGE FIRE AT HYPERMARKET IN IRAQ'S KUT

Diary Times Desk : At least 61 people have been killed and several more are missing in a huge fire at a hypermarket in Kut city in eastern Iraq, according to officials. The Iraqi Interior Ministry said on Thursday that 14 charred bodies had been found in the mall fire in the Wasit governorate and that civil defence teams had rescued 45 people from inside the building. Videos on social media showed flames engulfing a five-storey building in Kut overnight, where firefighters were trying to contain the fire. The mall, which had opened only a week earlier, also contained a restaurant and supermarket. The state-run Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported that people remained missing. Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al-Sudani said in a statement that he had directed the interior minister to go to the site of the fire to investigate and take measures to prevent a recurrence. The Wasit province governor, Mohammed al-Mayahi, said the fire broke out in both the hypermarket and a restaurant. Families were having dinner and shopping, he said. Firefighters rescued a number of people and put out the fire, the governor added. Three days of mourning have been announced and an investigation has been launched. Investigation results will be released within 48 hours.

AAP GOVT IN PUNJAB TO LAUNCH NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY

Diary Times Desk : In a significant move towards formulating a new industrial policy, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab on Thursday announced the establishment of industry-specific committees aimed at accelerating industrial development in the state. Industry Minister Sanjeev Arora said that a total of 22 committees would be formed, each headed by a prominent figure from the respective sector. These committees would advise the government on both fiscal and non-fiscal incentives required to support their industries. Three committees are being constituted for the textile sector alone, while others would focus on key areas such as auto and auto parts manufacturing, electric vehicles, sports goods, pharmaceuticals, agri-food processing, and more. "The committees are expected to submit their suggestions within 45 days, so that the government can move swiftly to unveil its much-anticipated Industrial Policy," Arora stated.



CAUGHT ON CCTV: MAN RUNS OVER BROTHER, HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER IN PUNJAB'S MOGA

Diary Times Desk : A long-standing property dispute between two brothers turned violent in Gatti Jattan village near Moga's Dharamkot, when one of them allegedly rammed his car into his elder brother and his family. The incident, which was captured on CCTV, has gone viral on social media. According to police, the incident took place when Gurwinder Singh, his wife, and daughter were standing at the gate of their house. Dilbag Singh, accompanied by his wife, arrived in a car. After dropping her off, he allegedly accelerated the vehicle and struck the three family members. All three sustained serious injuries and were rushed to a private hospital in Moga by neighbours who responded to their screams. Gurwinder Singh alleged that tensions escalated after their parents moved in with him a month ago, following their eviction from Dilbag's house. He claimed that his younger brother had been issuing threats over the past few weeks, culminating in the violent attack. DSP Ramandeep Singh confirmed that an FIR has been registered against Dilbag Singh and his wife based on Gurwinder's statement. Police said a detailed investigation is underway, and the accused remains absconding. Victim claimed his younger brother had been issuing threats over the past few weeks, culminating in the violent attack.

SC UPHOLDS PUNJAB AND HARYANA HIGH COURT'S ORDER DECLARING WIFE OWNER OF DECEASED'S LAND

Diary Times Desk : The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld a Punjab and Haryana High Court order declaring a deceased man's wife the rightful owner of his land, saying the non-disclosure of her status or the reason of her disinheritance in the will ought not to be examined in light of facts of the case. A Bench of Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Joymalya Bagchi dismissed the challenge to the High Court's order that declared the wife as the owner. The top court's order came on appeals filed by one Gurial Singh (dead) against the common judgment and decree dated November 13, 2009 passed by the Punjab and Haryana High Court setting aside the concurrent findings of the Trial Court and the First Appellate Court, and declaring the 1st respondent Jagir Kaur (dead) as the owner and in possession of the suit land. Writing the judgment for the Bench, Justice Bagchi noted after the man died in November 1991, his nephew filed a suit by propounding a will executed by his uncle in May 1991 bequeathing the land to him. The trial court declared the May 1991 will as genuine and by virtue of it, the nephew of the deceased was the lawful owner of the land. The high court subsequently overruled the decisions of the trial court and the first appellate court.

DESPITE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, SGPC PREPARES TO SEND JATHA TO NANKANA SAHIB IN NOVEMBER

Diary Times Desk : Even as uncertainty continues to loom over travel via the Attari-Wagah land route following the Union Government's restrictions imposed after the Pahalgam terror attack, the Shiromani Committee has started preparations to send a Sikh jatha for Guru Nanak Dev's birth anniversary to Pakistan. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) on Thursday said it would be sending a jatha of Sikh pilgrims to Gurdwara Sri Nankana Sahib in Pakistan in November this year. It has initiated the visa process for the same and invited Sikh devotees who wish to visit to the gurdwara to submit their passports by August 4. The SGPC will send a jatha for the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev's Parkash Gurburb (birth anniversary) to visit various historical gurdwaras in Pakistan," said SGPC secretary Partap Singh here today. He added that devotees wishing to visit Gurdwara Janam Asthan Sri Nankana Sahib and other historic Sikh religious places in Pakistan must submit their passports along with a recommendation from the area SGPC member to the SGPC's Yatra Department by August 4.



ED FILES CHARGESHEET AGAINST ROBERT VADRA IN SHIKOHPUR LAND DEAL

Diary Times Desk : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a chargesheet against Robert Vadra, husband of Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and others in connection with a 2008 money laundering case linked to a land deal in Haryana's Shikohpur,, reports PTI. This is the first time that any probe agency has filed a prosecution complaint against 56-year-old Vadra in a criminal case. Sources said the charge sheet has been filed against Vadra and some others before a local court here under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). He was questioned by the federal investigative agency for three consecutive days in April. Vadra's company, Skylight Hospitality, bought 3.53 acres of land for Rs 7.5 crore and later sold it to DLF for Rs 58 crore, allegedly without any development. The ED has accused Vadra of earning over Rs 50 crore in illegal profit. He has been named as an accused and questioned for over 18 hours.

KARNAL BAGS THIRD PLACE IN 'SWACHH SHEHAR' CATEGORY

Diary Times Desk : Adding another feather to its cap, Karnal has emerged as one of the cleanest cities in the country in the Swachh Survekshan 2024-25, the results of which were announced on Thursday by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in New Delhi. Karnal was adjudged third in the 'Swachh Shehar' category for cities with a population between 50,000 and 3 lakh, following Dewas and Karhad. The award was presented by President Droupadi Murmu. Haryana Urban Local Bodies Minister Vipul Goel, Karnal Mayor Renu Bala Gupta and Municipal Commissioner Dr Vaishali Sharma received this award on the behalf of state and city in the presence of the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar. Karnal became the first city in Haryana to be honoured by the President in the Swachh Survekshan awards. According to the information, the city achieved an impressive 11,067 points out of a total 12,500, earned a 3-star rating in the Garbage-Free City category and was also awarded Water+ status. Karnal has made progress in the cleanliness rankings over the years. It improved its position from 115th in 2023 in the category of cities with population above 1 lakh, 85th in 2022, 86th in 2021 and was ranked 17th in 2020, 24th in 2019, 41st in 2018, and 65th in 2017 among cities with populations over one lakh.

NON-VENOMOUS
SNAKE RESCUED FROM
HIMACHAL DGP'S
RESIDENCE IN SHIMLA

Diary Times Desk : A Himalayan trinket snake was rescued from the residence of Himachal Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Ashok Tewari in Shimla's Kasumpti area on Wednesday. The non-venomous snake, scientifically known as Elaphe hodgsoni, is native to the Himalayan region of Asia. Upon spotting the snake inside the DGP's residence in the police colony, the Forest Department's rapid response team (RRT) was alerted. The team reached the site promptly and rescued the snake within five minutes. It was later safely released into a suitable habitat. According to a Forest Department spokesperson, the Himalayan trinket snake poses no threat to humans due to its non-venomous nature. However, the rescue was executed with caution and professionalism to ensure the safety of both the residents and the animal. He added that such operations help in wildlife conservation and coexistence awareness.

MOUNTAINS TREMBLE,
VOICES RISE: PROTEST
ERUPTS AGAINST NHAI,
FIRM

Diary Times Desk : Shimla witnessed a powerful show of dissent on Wednesday as the Himachal Kisan Sabha and the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) staged a protest outside the Regional Office of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) at Chakkar. The demonstrators demanded immediate relief and compensation for residents whose homes have been damaged or are under threat due to the ongoing four-lane construction being executed by Gawar Construction Company. Hundreds of protesters, including farmers, workers and local residents, gathered outside the NHAI office, raising slogans and expressing serious concern over the adverse impact of highway and road-widening projects across Himachal Pradesh. They called on NHAI to blacklist Gawar company, accusing it of negligence and irresponsible construction practices that have endangered both people and property. Addressing the gathering, Dr Kuldeep Singh Tanwar, kisan sabha president, said, "If our demands are not fulfilled.

HEAVY RAINFALL TO CONTINUE ACROSS HIMACHAL TILL JULY 23

Diary Times Desk : Heavy rain is set to continue across the state till July 23 as the state's Meteorological Department has issued a yellow warning for Kangra, Kullu and Mandi districts for the next 24 hours. As a result, heavy rain in isolated areas of these districts is very likely to occur in the next 24 hours. Yellow weather warning has also been issued for several districts till July 21 while an orange weather warning has been issued for Shimla, Mandi, Kullu, Kangra and Sirmour districts for July 21, resulting in very heavy to heavy rain in isolated areas of these districts. According to the department, light to moderate rainfall is very likely to continue at many places in the state till July 23 with few spells of heavy rain at isolated places on July 18 and 20 and few spells of very heavy rain in isolated places from June 21 to 23. Maximum temperatures are very likely to fall by 2°C to 4°C during the next 24 hours and will gradually rise by 3°C to 5°C in the next few days. Similarly, minimum temperatures will also fall by 2°C to 3°C during the next 24 hours and will rise by 2°C to 3°C in the next few days.



STATE TO GET RS 250 CRORE MORE
FROM KINNAUR POWER PROJECT

Diary Times Desk : The state government will now get an additional income of Rs 250 crore from the 1,045 MW Karcham Wangtoo Hydroelectric Power Project in Kinnaur district after the Supreme Court gave a decision in favour of Himachal Pradesh. The government had moved the Supreme Court seeking 18 per cent of free power from the project instead of the present 12 per cent, as per the initial agreement. The decisions could have far-reaching implications as some other projects would also now have to give in to the demand of the state government for enhanced royalty. A spokesperson for the state government said that after the Supreme Court's decision, the government would get an additional annual income of about Rs 250 crore from the Karcham Wangtoo project. "The decision of the Supreme Court will have far-reaching implications as the state government had sought enhanced free power from other power producers also. As such, the state government is likely to get an additional income of Rs 250 crore every year. He said that Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu had flagged this issue and decided to fight the matter legally so that the state gets its legitimate right. This decision would not only increase the income of the state.

FLOOD LOSSES RS 883 CRORE,
EXPECT MORE RAIN TILL JULY 22

Diary Times Desk : The total losses caused by the rain disaster triggered by continuing heavy rain during the ongoing monsoon season in Himachal Pradesh has now reached Rs 883.15 crore. As per the records of the Revenue Department, as many as 64 persons have lost their lives during the ongoing monsoon season as a result of various natural disasters such as cloudbursts, landslides, flash floods, etc. Till now, the state has recorded at least 32 flash floods, 22 cloudbursts and 18 landslides. Also, as many as 202 roads, including 140 in Mandi district, 28 in Sirmaur, 21 in Kullu, 10 in Kullu and three in Una district, remain closed for traffic movement while as many as 47 distribution transformers, including 41 in Mandi, four in Chamba and two in Kullu districts, as well as 137 water supply schemes, including 119 in Mandi and 18 in Kangra districts, remain disrupted. Meanwhile, heavy rain is very likely to continue across the state till July 22 as the state's Meteorological Department has issued a yellow weather warning for various districts till July 20 and an orange weather warning for July 21 and 22. As per the department's forecast, the state will experience light to moderate rain at many places till July 20.

CYBERCRIME TSUNAMI HITS HIMACHAL: SIX VICTIMS EVERY 15 MINUTES
AS FRAUD TACTICS EVOLVE

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh is facing a staggering surge in cybercrime, with at least six people falling prey to online frauds every 15 minutes. The explosion in cybercrime cases comes as more people across the state become reliant on smartphones, social media and rapidly advancing digital technologies. According to records from the state's cyber cell, the average number of cybercrime-related complaints has seen a dramatic rise over the past three years. While the state received around 122 complaints per day in 2023, the daily average increased to 301 in 2024 and has skyrocketed to 629 in 2025, just within the first seven months. The total number of cybercrime complaint calls rose from 44,541 in 2023 to a staggering 1,10,431 in 2024. As of July 2025, that number has already climbed to 1,16,311, indicating a tripling of complaints in just two years. This surge has also led to massive financial losses. In 2023, residents lost approximately Rs 41.04 crore, with authorities managing to put Rs 3.75 crore on hold. In 2024, the amount lost jumped to Rs 114.92 crore, out of which Rs 11.29 crore was successfully blocked before being transferred to fraudsters. Between January and July this year alone, people have already lost Rs 63.78 crore to cyber scams.



SHUBMAN GILL, GAUTAM GAMBHIR URGED TO MAKE ONE BIG CHANGE FOR 4TH ENGLAND TEST: 'REPLACE...'

Diary Times Desk : Former wicketkeeper-batter Deep Dasgupta believes India should look to have B Sai Sudharsan over Karun Nair for the final two Test matches of the ongoing series against England, citing that the latter hasn't really nailed the number three spot. Nair, who's made a comeback to the Test team after eight years, has made just 131 runs in three games and is the only top-four batter from either side to have not hit a half-century in the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy series. Sudharsan, meanwhile, made zero and 30 in his debut Test at Leeds and has been benched since then as India brought in batting all-rounder Washington Sundar for the matches at Edgbaston and Lord's. "In the Playing XI, you don't want more than one change. If there is only one, it would be replacing Karun Nair with Sai Sudharsan. Because Karun Nair hasn't made any runs. He's got starts, but hasn't converted them into big scores. I also believe he doesn't look that comfortable at the crease either.



R PRAGGNANANDHAA FORCES MAGNUS CARLSEN TO 'RESIGN', CHESS GREAT STUNNED

Diary Times Desk : India's Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa delivered a sensational victory over world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen at the Freestyle Chess Grand Slam Tour in Las Vegas. The 19-year-old outplayed the five-time world champion in just 39 moves. Norwegian Grandmaster Carlsen, who recently faced consecutive defeats at the hands of India's reigning world champion D Gukesh, suffered another setback as he was beaten by 19-year-old R Praggnanandhaa in Round 4 of the group stage at an ongoing tournament featuring a 10-minute plus 10-second increment time control. Praggnanandhaa, who has already won three tournaments this year, has now defeated Carlsen in all three formats — Classical, Rapid, and Blitz. The Indian prodigy now hold a joint lead in the eight-player Group White, with 4.5 points. "Magnus about to resign...and he does!" the commentator exclaimed after Praggnanandhaa's win.

LAKSHYA SEN, SATWIKSAIRAJ RANKIREDDY-CHIRAG SHETTY EXIT JAPAN OPEN, INDIA'S CAMPAIGN ENDS

Diary Times Desk : Indian shuttlers continued to falter at the Japan Open with Lakshya Sen and the star men's doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty bowing out in the second round to draw curtains on the country's campaign at the Super 750 tournament in Tokyo on Thursday. World No. 18 Lakshya's inconsistent run resulted in a 19-21, 11-21 loss to Japan's Kodai Naraoka in the men's singles that lasted close to an hour. The 23-year-old, who had looked promising in the opener with a commanding 21-11, 21-18 win over China's Wang Zheng Xing, failed to carry the momentum forward. In the men's doubles, Satwik and Chirag were handed a 22-24, 14-21 defeat by the fifth-seeded Chinese combine of Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang in a battle between former world No. 1 pairs. With this win, Paris Olympics silver medallists Wei Keng and Wang Chang extended their head-to-head lead over.

DEEPTI THE BATTER MAKES A QUIET STATEMENT

Diary Times Desk : There's little doubt that Deepti Sharma could walk into India's ODI squad as a bowler alone. Her three five-wicket hauls — the most by an India player in Women's ODIs — speak volumes of her bowling pedigree. Her batting, however, has often been a subject of debate — not over her ability but her approach. Across 92 ODI innings, Deepti's strike rate sits at a modest 67.91. For someone who usually bats in the lower middle order, there's a general sense that she hasn't quite unlocked her full potential, despite being nearly a decade into her international career. She has struck at 77.74 since the start of 2022, but that's still in the bottom half (35th) of the 57 batters to have scored at least 500 ODI runs in this period. Which is why eyebrows were raised when she was promoted to No. 6, ahead of Richa Ghosh and Amanjot Kaur, in the first ODI against England on Wednesday in Southampton. India were 127 for 4 in the 28th over, with the required rate already nudging six an over. Deepti responded with an unbeaten 64-ball 62, forging crucial partnerships with Jemimah Rodrigues (48 off 54) and Amanjot (20* off 14) to help seal a four-wicket win with 10 balls to spare.

INDIA 'LEANING TOWARDS' PLAYING BUMRAH AT OLD TRAFFORD

Diary Times Desk : We return to the Jasprit Bumrah question once again: Will India play him in the fourth Test against England in Manchester or will be rested until the final Test at The Oval? A definitive answer should come by the eve of the fourth Test, which begins on July 23, but on Thursday India hinted that they are "leaning" towards Bumrah playing at Old Trafford. "No, we'll make that call [on Bumrah] in Manchester still," India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate said after the squad's one-off training session in Beckenham before the visitors head to Manchester on Saturday. "We know we have got him for one of the last two Tests. It's pretty obvious that the series on the line now in Manchester so there will be a leaning towards playing him. "But again, we have got to look at all the factors: how many days of cricket are we going to get up there, what do we feel is our best chance of winning that game, and then how that fits in together with The Oval. And looking at the last two games holistically as part of the series." Bumrah arrived in England for the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy with a pre-determined plan, worked out in coordination with the BCCI medical staff, of playing only three out of the five Tests to safeguard his back, having undergone surgery on it in March. He sat out of the second Test at Edgbaston after featuring in the series-opener.

ANDRE RUSSELL TO RETIRE AFTER FIRST TWO T20IS AGAINST AUSTRALIA

Diary Times Desk : West Indian all-rounder Andre Russell has decided to retire from international cricket. As reported earlier by Cricbuzz, Russell, who has been named in the T20I squad for the series against Australia, will only play the first two matches at Sabina Park in his home nation — Jamaica. Matthew Forde has been named Russell's replacement for the last three T20Is in St. Kitts & Nevis. The now 37-year-old Russell has made 84 appearances in T20Is for the West Indies with 1078 runs and 61 wickets to his name. He was also part of the winning team in the 2012 and 2016 T20 World Cup editions. With 561 T20 appearances across the global franchise circuit, he has amassed 9316 runs at a strike-rate of 168.31 and has taken 485 wickets. "Words cannot explain what it meant. To represent the West Indies has been one of the proudest achievements in my life," Russell said. "When I was a kid, I did not expect to get to this level, but the more you start to play and get to love the sport, you realize what you can achieve. This inspired me to become better because I wanted to leave a mark in the maroon colours and become an inspiration to others."

MAHEDI WAS LITTON'S 'FIRST NAME IN THE LINE-UP' FOR COLOMBO T20I

Diary Times Desk : Bangladesh captain Litton Das had earmarked offspinner Mahedi Hasan for the third T20I at the R Premadasa Stadium when he first saw their tour schedule for Sri Lanka. Mahedi repaid the faith by picking up career-best figures of 4 for 11 in Bangladesh's eight-wicket win, which also gave them their first series win — by 2-1 — against Sri Lanka. Two of Mahedi's wickets came in the powerplay, taking his tally to 30 in that phase since January 2021, the most for any spinner on that list. Litton said that Mahedi's skillset suited the pitch, where spinners have generally done well. Mahedi got into the act straightaway on Wednesday night, removing Kusal Perera in his first over before having Dinesh Chandimal mistime a slog in the fifth. "We felt that Mahedi's skills would be a perfect fit for the Colombo wicket," Litton said after Bangladesh's victory. "It doesn't mean he doesn't bowl well on other wickets. I had planned it as soon as I saw the schedule that Mahedi will be my first name in the line-up at this venue. It also doesn't mean that Mahedi [Hasan Miraz] is not a good bowler or batter. As a team leader, I will think deeply about the surface.