

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### 17 DEAD IN 4-STORY BUILDING COLLAPSE IN VIRAR NEAR MUMBAI, RESCUE OPS ON

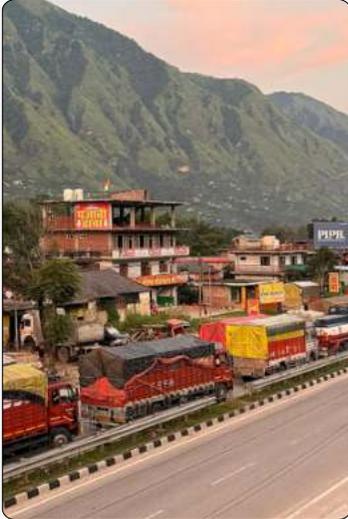
**Diary Times Desk :** At least 17 people have lost their lives after a part of a four-storey building collapsed in Maharashtra's Palghar district on Wednesday morning. So far, nine people have been pulled out of the debris, while two have reportedly suffered injuries and are undergoing treatment. The Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation Fire Department and two teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) are involved in rescue operations. The rear portion of the four-storey building of the Ramabai Apartment, located in Virar East, collapsed on the chawl below. The incident occurred on the intervening night of August 26 and 27, at 12:05 am.

### 'MY BROTHER RAJIV GANDHI...': BJP MOCKS MK STALIN'S FAUX PAS, DMK'S 'PATCH'

**Diary Times Desk :** A faux pas by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin - referring to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi as 'Rajiv Gandhi', his father and ex-Prime Minister - at a 'Voter Adhikar' rally in poll-bound Bihar this week, has been gleefully pounced upon by the BJP and Tamil actor-politician Vijay's TVK. Mr Stalin was speaking at a rally hosted by the Congress-led INDIA bloc, which is protesting the Election Commission's 'special intensive revision' of Bihar voter lists - an exercise taking place months before the election and amid oppositions claims of 'collusion' to commit voter fraud. In a video that has been widely shared online, the Tamil Nadu leader begins his speech by acknowledging (or trying to) Rahul Gandhi as one of the organisers of the 'Voter Adhikar' rally. Unfortunately for Mr Stalin, he referred to Rajiv Gandhi instead. The blooper was noted and rectified by the Chief Minister's DMK; the party's tech gurus patched him saying 'Rahul Gandhi' over that bit. But the patch just did not sync with the rest of the video. At the time of publishing this report the edited video - with the jarring 'Rahul Gandhi' swap-out for 'Rajiv Gandhi' - is still available on MK Stalin's YouTube channel.

## HIMACHAL NEWS

### 50-KM TRAFFIC JAM ON CHANDIGARH-KULLU HIGHWAY, HUNDREDS OF TRUCKS STUCK



**Diary Times Desk :** Heavy rainfall and multiple landslides have triggered a 50-km-long traffic jam on the Chandigarh-Kullu highway, stranding thousands of vehicles including hundreds of trucks carrying fruits and vegetables bound for Delhi-NCR.

Authorities said the Chandigarh-Manali highway has been blocked at several points, forcing passengers to wait for hours and halting the movement of essential goods.

Truck drivers stranded on the route said consignments of apples, tomatoes and other vegetables worth crores of rupees are rotting. Each truckload is valued at around Rs 4-4.5 lakh, with apples alone estimated at more than Rs 50 crore stuck in transit.

Gaffar, a truck driver, said his load of apples was supposed to reach Sahibabad fruit market but has been stuck in Kullu for five days. Thousands of trucks headed for Azadpur and Sahibabad mandis are trapped, he said.

While the highway has been opened for small vehicles, trucks remain trapped. Landslides have occurred at half a dozen locations between Mandi and Kullu, delaying clearance operations.

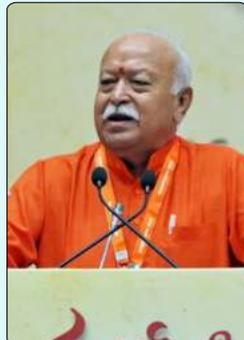
Ashok Chauhan, an engineer with the National Highways Authority of India (NHA), Kullu-Manali, said the Beas River's strong flow has damaged several portions of the highway, with repair work underway. Local Jai Bhai said that houses near Ramshila in Kullu have been damaged. He urged the authorities to take corrective measures, or the area could face destruction in future monsoons. Manali Sub-Divisional Magistrate Raman Sharma added that Manali's connectivity from one side has been cut off.

### "NEVER SAID SOMEONE SHOULD RETIRE": RSS CHIEF MOHAN BHAGWAT ON 75-YEAR AGE LIMIT

**Diary Times Desk :** Speculation Prime Minister Narendra Modi will 'retire' after his 75th birthday in September - i.e., he will stand down in accordance with an unspoken 'rule' within the BJP and its ideological mentor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh - has been dismissed by RSS boss Mohan Bhagwat.

Mr Bhagwat, who will turn 75 six days before the Prime Minister, told reporters Thursday evening, "I never said I will retire or that someone else should retire when they turn 75..." "We will do what the Sangh tells us," he said, as the RSS celebrates its 100th anniversary.

"In the Sangh, we are swayamsevaks... we are given a job, whether we want it or not," he said, declaring also that he would continue to run the RSS "even if I am 80 years old." "We do whatever we are told to do," he explained. The BJP has repeatedly said there is no rule requiring Mr Modi to resign after turning 75. The party has pointed to the federal government, in which there is already one member - 80-year-old Bihar leader Jitan Ram Manjhi, the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Minister - over that 'limit'. Others, including the Prime Minister are within a year or two of that mark. The party has also repeatedly said - Home Minister Amit Shah led that charge in May last year, before a federal election the opposition jibed Mr Modi could not contest (because of the 75-year rule) - that the Prime Minister will not retire from politics post-September 17, his birthday.



### TOP COURT GRANTS BAIL TO GANGSTER ARUN GAWLI IN MURDER CASE



**Diary Times Desk :** The Supreme Court on Thursday granted bail to gangster-turned-politician Arun Gawli in the 2007 murder case of Mumbai Shiv Sena corporator Kamalakar Jamsandekar.

Gawli, 76, had been booked under the provisions of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999 MCOCA.

While granting him bail, a bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and N. Kottiswar Singh considered Gawli's advanced age and the fact that his appeal seeking bail had been pending before the top court for 17 years and three months. The bench posted the matter for final hearing in February 2026.

Earlier, in June 2024, the top court had stayed the Bombay High Court's decision granting premature release to Gawli.

Following this, the top court extended its stay order on Gawli's premature release. Gawli, in his plea, claimed that the state authorities' rejection of his application for premature release was unjust, arbitrary, and liable to be set aside. The Maharashtra government opposed his plea before the High Court for premature release. The High Court had rejected the State government's contentions and gave authorities four weeks to pass a consequential order in that regard.

### HUM DO, HUMAARE TEEN: RSS CHIEF SAYS EVERY FAMILY SHOULD HAVE 3 CHILDREN



**Diary Times Desk :** RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat has said every Indian couple should have three kids, pointing to the replacement-level birth rate of 2.1 children per woman.

Answering questions on demographic change and population control during a press conference on Thursday, Mr Bhagwat said experts say communities with a birth rate of less than three slowly go extinct. So, a birth rate of over three should be maintained, he said, adding that this happens in all countries.

"Doctors have told me that marrying at the right age and having three children ensures that both the parents and children remain healthy. Children in homes with three siblings also learn ego management and there is no disturbance in their family life in the future. This is what doctors have said... Our country's population recommends a birth rate of 2.1, which is fine as an average, but you can never have 0.1 of a child. In math, 2.1 becomes 2, but when it comes to births, after two, it has to be three," the RSS chief said.

Every Indian couple, he said, should, thus, try and have three children in the interest of the nation. There is a concern as well. Population can be a boon, but it can be a burden as well. You have to feed everyone at the end of the day. This is why the population policy exists. So, to ensure that the population remains controlled and enough at the same time, every family should have three children but not too many more than that. This is to ensure their upbringing is proper. This is something everyone should accept," he stressed.

## INDIA - CANADA NEWS

### CANADA APPOINTS VETERAN DIPLOMAT CHRISTOPHER COOTER AS NEW ENVOY TO INDIA



**Diary Times Desk :** Canada and India announced new high commissioners to each other's countries on Thursday, in the latest sign of improving ties frayed by former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegation that India was linked to the killing of a Sikh separatist leader on Canadian soil.

India's previous high commissioner left Canada in October. Ottawa said he was among six diplomats who were expelled after they were linked to the murder of separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, while India said it had withdrawn the envoy.

India also said that same day that it had ordered the expulsion of six high-ranking Canadian diplomats, including the then-acting high commissioner.

Trudeau's successor, Mark Carney, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to reinstate senior diplomats when they held their first bilateral meeting in Canada in June.

Canada's foreign ministry said in a statement on Thursday that veteran diplomat Christopher Cooter would take up the post, which had been vacant since the previous incumbent left last year.

"The appointment of a new High Commissioner reflects Canada's step-by-step approach to deepening diplomatic engagement and advancing bilateral cooperation with India," Foreign Minister Anita Anand said in a statement. India's foreign ministry said its new high commissioner, Dinesh K. Patnaik, was "expected to take up the assignment shortly."

### "IF INDIANS DON'T BUDGE...": TRUMP ADVISER'S NEW TRADE WARNING TO NEW DELHI



**Diary Times Desk :** Donald Trump's top economic adviser has warned that if India fails to curb its Russian crude trade, the US President will not ease his stance on Washington's punitive tariffs on Indian imports. US National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett called trade negotiations with New Delhi "complicated", as he accused India of "intransigence" in opening its markets to American products.

"If the Indians don't budge, I don't think President Trump will," he said. The United States on Wednesday doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a staggering 50 per cent, the highest for any country other than Brazil. This includes a 25 per cent additional duty for India's purchase of Russian crude oil.

Hassett said trade negotiations with India were "complicated", claiming part of it "has been tied to the pressure we've been trying to put on Russia in order to secure a peace deal and save millions of lives. And then there's the Indian intransigence about opening their markets to our products."

**NO CYLINDER BLAST: COPS REVEAL WHY NIKKI MAY HAVE HIDDEN TRUTH ABOUT FIRE**

**Diary Times Desk :** The cylinder blast angle in the alleged Greater Noida dowry death has been ruled out by the police, who say that an empty thinner bottle and a lighter recovered from the house where the victim was allegedly set afire by her in-laws are key evidence.

Nikki Bhati, 28, died of burn injuries after allegedly being set afire by her husband Vipin and in-laws on August 21 in their house in Greater Noida's Sirsa. Among key evidence is videos recorded by Nikki's sister Kanchan, claiming to be of the day of the incident.

Sisters Nikki and Kanchan were married into the Bhati family, to two brothers, in 2016.

The case has been in the news due to continuous developments and claims, one of which is that a cylinder blast caused burn injuries to Nikki, something that even she reportedly told the hospital where she was rushed to.



**THE GLARING OMISSIONS: WOMEN JUDGES OVERLOOKED BY SUPREME COURT COLLEGIUM, CENTRE**

**Diary Times Desk :** In August 2021, for the first time, three women judges were elevated to the Supreme Court of India in one single swoop.

With the elevation of Justices Hima Kohli, BV Nagarathna and Bela Trivedi, the top court, for the first time in its 70-year history, had four sitting women judges, including Justice Indira Banerjee, who was already serving as a judge at the time.

Back then, the Collegium's recommendation to elevate the women judges and the Centre's quick notification of their appointment was lauded and celebrated as a historic moment for gender representation in the top echelons of India's judiciary. This was a remarkable moment considering the fact that only 8 women had graced the Supreme Court until then.

But time has proven that it was too early to celebrate. While the individual women judges shattered the proverbial glass ceiling.

**JAPAN TO SHIFT LEGACY SEMICONDUCTOR, LCD AND BATTERY PRODUCTION TO INDIA TO REDUCE CHINA DEPENDENCE: REPORT**

**Diary Times Desk :** Japan and India are reportedly moving forward with plans to transfer production of older semiconductor and LCD screen technologies to India, as both nations seek to reduce their dependence on Chinese manufacturing and strengthen economic security cooperation.

The initiative focuses on so-called legacy technologies that rely on mature manufacturing tools and techniques rather than cutting-edge processes, Nikkei Asia reported.

These older semiconductors remain crucial for various applications, including voltage control in electric vehicles and inverters that improve energy efficiency in air conditioners and refrigerators.

**XI JINPING'S SECRET LETTER TO NEW DELHI THAT LIKELY BROUGHT INDIA-CHINA TIES BACK TO LIFE**



**Diary Times Desk :** Chinese President Xi Jinping wrote a letter to Indian counterpart Droupadi Murmu to test the waters on improving ties, an Indian official familiar with the matter told Bloomberg. The letter expressed concern about any US deals that would harm China's interests and named a provincial official who would steer Beijing's efforts, the person said, adding that the message was sent across to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It wasn't until June that Modi's government began making a serious effort to improve relations with China, the person told Bloomberg, asking not to be identified in order to discuss internal matters. At the time, trade talks with the US were turning contentious and officials in New Delhi were bristling over Trump's claims of brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan following four days of fighting in May.

**YOUR HOROSCOPE**  
 29-08-2025

<p><b>Aries</b>                  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.</p>	<p><b>Taurus</b>                  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.</p>
<p><b>Gemini</b>                  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.</p>	<p><b>Cancer</b>                  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.</p>
<p><b>Leo</b>                  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.</p>	<p><b>Virgo</b>                  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.</p>
<p><b>Libra</b>                  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.</p>	<p><b>Scorpio</b>                  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.</p>
<p><b>Sagittarius</b>                  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.</p>	<p><b>Capricorn</b>                  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.</p>
<p><b>Aquarius</b>                  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.</p>	<p><b>Pisces</b>                  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.</p>

## FROM BOOM TO BAN: THE RISE AND FALL OF INDIA'S BETTING APPS

**Diary Times Desk :** Kartik Srinivas (name changed) still flinches at the mention of online betting. What began as a thrill to earn a quick buck spiralled into a five-year addiction that cost the 26-year-old his savings, peace of mind and nearly his future.

Between 2019 and 2024, Srinivas lost more than 1.5m rupees (\$17,000; ₹13,000). The money included three years of his earnings, as well as savings and loans from friends and family.

"I tried everything - apps, local bookies, international platforms. I was hooked," he says.

By 2024, he was neck-deep in losses. Srinivas' story reflects the darker side of India's once booming Real Money Games (RMG) industry - where players use online platforms to bet cash on poker, fantasy sports and other games.

Days ago, India passed a bill to outlaw these games, arguing they had become increasingly addictive and were leading to financial distress among people.

## IN TEARFUL VIDEO, MAN'S ANTI-DEVELOPMENT APPEAL AFTER VAISHNO DEVI LANDSLIDE



**Diary Times Desk :** At least 34 people have been confirmed dead and more than 20 others injured after a massive landslide triggered by torrential rain struck the pilgrimage route on Trikuta mountain near Jammu and Kashmir's Katra on Tuesday afternoon.

The landslide occurred around 3 pm near an eatery located halfway along the 12-kilometre trek from Katra to the shrine. Heavy rain in the Reasi district had already swelled streams and destabilised the mountainside. Within moments, boulders and debris rolled down the slope, sweeping away devotees making their way uphill.

Several victims were swept away by the sudden gush of water caused by a cloudburst. By Tuesday evening, 34 deaths had been confirmed. More than 20 others were being treated for injuries at hospitals in Jammu and Katra.

A video from Katra shows local resident, visibly distraught, accusing the authorities of destroying the ecological balance of Trikuta mountain in the name of progress.

## "IF YOU WITHHOLD ASSENT FOR ETERNITY...": TOP COURT ON GOVERNORS CLEARING BILLS

**Diary Times Desk :** The Supreme Court on Thursday said the term 'as soon as possible' used in Article 200 of the Constitution in deciding the fate of bills will serve no practical purpose if Governors are allowed to withhold consent for "eternity".

A five-judge Constitution bench made the observation even as the Centre submitted that state governments cannot invoke writ jurisdiction in moving the apex court against the actions of the President and the Governor in dealing with the bills passed by state Assemblies for violation of fundamental rights.

The top court also said the framers of the Constitution deliberately replaced an earlier six-week limit with the phrase 'as soon as possible' in Article 200 and asked the Centre whether this phrase can be ignored in deciding the fate of bills.

Article 200 provides for the powers of the Governor regarding bills passed by the State Legislature, allowing them to either assent to the bill, withhold assent, return the bill for reconsideration or reserve the bill for the consideration of the President.

A proviso of Article 200 says the Governor may, as soon as possible after the presentation to him of the Bill for assent, return the Bill, if it is not a Money Bill, to the house for reconsideration and shall not withhold the consent after the assembly reconsiders and sends it back to him.

## GANGA, YAMUNA NEAR DANGER MARK IN PRAYAGRAJ; OVER 200 FAMILIES SHIFTED TO RELIEF CAMPS

**Diary Times Desk :** The rising water levels of the Ganga and Yamuna, both flowing less than a metre below the danger mark of 84.73 metres, have once again displaced over 200 families in nearly a dozen low-lying localities of the city, as well as eleven villages across three tehsils, as of Wednesday. In the past 24 hours, the Ganga has risen by 2.60 metres, while the Yamuna has swollen by 97 centimetres. Both rivers are expected to breach the danger mark by Thursday morning.

At 4 pm on Wednesday, the Ganga's water level was recorded at 83.98 metres near Buxi STP and 83.79 metres in Phaphamau, while the Yamuna's level in Naini stood at 83.98 metres - less than a meter from the danger mark of 84.734 metres. The Ganga was rising at a rate of 11 centimetres per hour, while the Yamuna rose at 4.5 centimetres per hour.

## NO QUICK RELIEF IN SIGHT, MONSOON MAYHEM TO CONTINUE IN SEPTEMBER, WARNS WEATHER BODY

**Diary Times Desk :** There's bad news for people in North West India who have been complaining that it has been wet; the region that has seen 23% excess rain in the monsoon that began June 1 is likely to see a wet September with weather models suggesting that widespread, heavy rain may continue well into September. There is likely to be above-normal rainfall over several parts of north, west and central India till September 4, but largely wet conditions are likely to continue till September 18, India Meteorological Department's extended range forecast (ERF) shows.

On July 31, IMD forecast that above normal rainfall in excess of 106% of the long period average is likely over the country during the second half of the southwest monsoon season (August and September). At the time, IMD officials said rainfall in August would be normal, and September, above normal.



## BIHAR POLL REVISION: 4 DAYS LEFT, OPPOSITION FILES 82 CLAIMS, OBJECTIONS

**Diary Times Desk :** The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday said it has so far received 82 objections from political parties and nearly two lakh applications from voters in Bihar seeking inclusion or deletion of names from the draft electoral rolls.

In its daily bulletin, the poll body said that the CPI(M) Liberation has filed 79 objections, while Bihar's Opposition party, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), has submitted three complaints.

The Commission also said it has so far received 1.95 lakh applications from individual voters. More than 8.5 lakh new electors have also applied for inclusion in the rolls.

The claims and objections period opened on August 1 and will remain active till September 1.

The poll body has said that the month-long opportunity has been provided to individuals, political parties, and their 1.6 lakh booth-level agents (BLAs) to flag errors.

The SIR in poll-bound Bihar began on June 24, based on enumeration forms collected during field-level enquiries.

## DELHI LAWYERS SUSPEND STRIKE AFTER GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO PAUSE NOTIFICATION ON POLICE STATION DEPOSITIONS

**Diary Times Desk :** Lawyers of Delhi's trial courts have decided to suspend their strike after Delhi Police said that its notification designating police stations as deposition spots will be implemented only after consultation with stakeholders.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has also said that he will hear lawyers' concerns against the government's decision.

The coordination committee for the All District Courts Bar Association of Delhi issued a notice on Thursday, stating that the strike will remain suspended till discussions with Shah.

Notably, a lawyer named Ravinder Sharma died of a heart attack today while agitating against the notification.

Lawyers across Delhi's district courts had been on strike since August 22. They have been protesting against the August 13 Delhi Police notification had designated all police stations.

## AFTER INDIA, MEXICO SUSPENDS POSTAL SHIPMENTS TO US OVER TARIFF CONFUSION

**Diary Times Desk :** Mexico said Wednesday its postal service was suspending package shipments to the United States ahead of an end to the exemption on tariff duties for low-value packages by the Trump administration. The announcement follows similar moves by postal services from the European Union and several other countries to pause shipping as they await more clarity on the US measure. It also comes during monthslong negotiations between the Mexican government and the Trump administration to avoid wider tariffs. The exemption – known as the “de minimis” exemption, which allows packages worth less than \$800 to come into the US duty free – is ending Friday. A total of 1.36 billion packages were sent in 2024 under this exemption, for goods worth \$64.6 billion, according to data from US Customs and Border Protection. Mexico's government said its postal service, Correos de Mexico, will temporarily suspend package deliveries to the US, starting Wednesday.

## ISRAEL LAUNCHES NEW OPERATIONS IN SYRIA AFTER STRIKE KILLS SOLDIERS

**Diary Times Desk :** Israeli forces have conducted a series of strikes on a former army barracks in Kiswa, southwest of the Syrian capital of Damascus, according to Syria's state-run al-Ekhbariya TV. Video verified by Al Jazeera's Sanad fact-checking agency showed Israeli aircraft attacking sites in the village on Wednesday. Meanwhile, a Syrian military source told Al Jazeera that the Israeli army carried out a landing operation in the barracks with the use of four helicopters.

According to the source, the Israeli army brought in dozens of soldiers and an unspecified amount of search equipment as it spent more than two hours at the site. No clashes took place between the Israeli forces involved in the landing and the Syrian army forces. The operation came a day after an Israeli drone strike killed six soldiers near Kiswa, and as Syrian officials in the government of interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa have increasingly accused Israel of seeking to expand its control in the region.

## ISRAEL LAUNCHES LATEST ATTACKS AGAINST HOUTHIS IN YEMEN'S SANAA

**Diary Times Desk :** The Israeli military has attacked the Yemeni capital of Sanaa as tensions in the region continue to escalate amid Israel's war on Gaza.

The Israeli military said in a statement that its forces on Thursday struck a Houthi “terrorist regime military target in the area of Sanaa”. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Images verified by Al Jazeera's Sanad fact-checking unit showed damage on Mount Attan, a prominent hill located southwest of Sanaa. The Houthi-affiliated Al Masirah TV earlier posted on X: “Israeli aggression on the capital Sanaa.”

Houthi official Nasr al-Din Amer denied reports in Israeli media that the strike had targeted the group's leaders, including the defence minister and chief of staff.

“What is happening is the targeting of civilian objects and the entire Yemeni people due to their supportive stance toward Gaza,” he posted on X.

## PILOT'S 50-MINUTE CHAT WITH ENGINEERS. THEN F-35 FIGHTER JET'S FREEFALL

**Diary Times Desk :** A US Air Force F-35 pilot was forced to eject from a fighter jet after spending 50 minutes on a conference call mid-air with engineers, trying to resolve a critical malfunction before the aircraft crashed onto an Alaska runway. Footage shared on social media shows the jet spiralling toward the runway earlier this year before bursting into flames. The pilot was seen floating safely to the ground using a parachute. Ice in the hydraulic lines of the nose and main landing gears caused the crash by preventing proper deployment, according to a CNN-obtained report. After takeoff, the pilot tried to retract the landing gear but failed. When lowering it again, the nose gear locked at a left angle. As the pilot attempted to fix the issue, the jet reacted as if it were on the ground. He then joined a call with five Lockheed Martin engineers while flying near the base, spending nearly an hour troubleshooting the problem. The pilot attempted two “touch and go” landings to straighten the jammed nose gear, but both failed, freezing the landing gears entirely.

## JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SHARES AI VIDEO TO SHOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF MOUNT FUJI ERUPTS

**Diary Times Desk :** The Japanese government recently released a video created by artificial intelligence (AI) to illustrate what would happen if Mount Fuji were to erupt. “The moment may arrive without any warning,” the video narrator said. The video released by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government is to raise awareness and highlight the need for preventive measures. Notably, Mount Fuji is not going to erupt any time soon. The video states that the volcanic ash would start falling in heavily populated Tokyo within 1-2 hours after an eruption, with 2-10 cm of ash expected to accumulate, and the western part of the capital city could see up to 30 cm of ash. According to the video, ash on train tracks and runways would halt trains and planes. Driving vehicles would become dangerous due to reduced visibility and slippery roads. Powerlines would be disrupted because of the wet ash, leading to widespread power outages. Phone and internet services would also be disrupted. Volcanic ash could cause health issues. People might suffer from irritation and breathing problems, especially people with pre-existing conditions like asthma. Stores would quickly run out of food and supplies, and officials might advise people to stock up on essentials for at least three days.



## BLAIR JOINS WHITE HOUSE MEETING WITH TRUMP ON POST-WAR GAZA

**Diary Times Desk :** Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has joined a White House meeting with US President Donald Trump to discuss plans for post-war Gaza.

Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff has said the US is putting together a “very comprehensive” plan on “the next day” after the war. However, little else has been disclosed about the meeting.

Blair served as Middle East envoy for a few years after leaving office in 2007 – focusing on bringing economic development to Palestinian areas and creating conditions for a two-state solution.

However, when Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar was asked by reporters what the plan was for a Palestinian state, he said there would not be any.

The White House meeting came after the Israeli military warned Palestinians that the evacuation of Gaza City was “inevitable”, as its forces prepare to conquer it.

The Israeli military is continuing operations around Gaza city, as well as Khan Younis and Jabalia.

In the past 24 hours, hospitals say dozens more Palestinians have been killed by Israeli strikes and gunfire, including while trying to get aid.

Thousands of people have already moved because of recent Israeli advances in Gaza City – mostly to other parts of the city, where about a million Palestinians still live.

## 'TOTAL IMPLOSION': HOW TRUMP FIRING OF CDC CHIEF MONAREZ SPARKED AN EXODUS

**Diary Times Desk :** The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has announced that it is firing Susan Monarez, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), just weeks after her official confirmation to the post, and days after 600 CDC staff were sacked.

Monarez's ousting has thrown the US's top health agency into a leadership crisis as it has prompted an unprecedented wave of high-profile resignations from several other senior officials in protest. On the same day as Monarez was sacked – Wednesday this week – Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr, who previously headed an anti-vaccine group, also announced that COVID-19 vaccine mandates.

## BEHIND PAKISTAN'S REPEATED FLOODS: MELTING GLACIERS, DEPLETED FORESTS

**Diary Times Desk :** It was a routine day, and 26-year-old Muntazer Mehdi had performed his mid-afternoon prayers. Then, after lunch, the mountains started growling.

The tailor, who lived in Chogogruning village at the foothills of the Siachen glacier – the world's second-largest non-polar glacier – knew what he had to do: Run.

Mehdi, his wife and their two children had to flee their home in late July after glacial melting led to a lake outburst. "We knew what was coming because of how loud the clanking of the rocks was, and the water stream stopped," he said. "We had just enough time to make it to a higher elevation and save ourselves, but all our life savings, home, livestock, it's all gone, wiped out in a few moments."

Mehdi and his family walked nearly 100km (60 miles) to the next village and from there hitched a car ride to get to Skardu, the largest city in the area.



## DONALD TRUMP TO TAKE OVER CHICAGO NEXT? US PRESIDENT SAYS 'STAY TUNED'

**Diary Times Desk :** After Washington, US President Donald Trump on Thursday hinted at a possible take over of Chicago, saying that the people are "desperate" for him to "STOP THE CRIME".

Earlier this month, Trump invoked the Home Rule Act and brought the Washington DC police department under direct control of the federal government. After this, he also deployed the National Guard in the capital.

Now, in a post on Truth Social, the President said, "Governor Pritzker had 6 murders in Chicago this weekend. 20 people were shot. But he doesn't want to ask me for help. Can this be possible? The people are desperate for me to STOP THE CRIME, something the Democrats aren't capable of doing. STAY TUNED!!! President DJT"

Last week as well, Donald Trump had hinted that he had his eyes set on Chicago. "Chicago's a mess. You have an incompetent mayor. Grossly incompetent. And we'll straighten that one out probably next. That'll be our next one after this. And it won't even be tough," he said.

The move is linked to the President's crackdown on crime, illegal immigration and homelessness. It could also include mobilising at least "a few thousand members of the National Guard as soon as September".

## "HAS BECOME TOTAL SCAM": REPUBLICAN GOVERNOR SLAMS INDIA OVER H-1B VISAS

**Diary Times Desk :** Amid US President Donald Trump's continued crackdown on immigration, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis labelled the H-1B -- the skilled foreign workers visa-- a "total scam", claiming it allows companies to hire cheaper foreign labour from India, hurting American workers in the process. The Republican Governor's remarks followed similar comments by US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, who signalled a massive shift in its H-1B visa and green card programme, impacting millions of foreign workers and students living in the US.

"I think you're right to say the H-1B, it's become a total scam. These companies game the system. Some of these companies are laying off large numbers of Americans while also hiring new H-1B workers and renewing existing H-1B visas." DeSantis said, speaking to Fox News' Laura Ingraham.

"...Most of them (H-1Bs) are from one country, India, there's a cottage industry about how all those people make money off this system," he added.

## XI SHOWS TRUMP WHO HOLDS THE CARDS AS HE SETS UP MEETING WITH KIM AND PUTIN

**Diary Times Desk :** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attending a military parade in the centre of Beijing, alongside Russian president Vladimir Putin and China's leader Xi Jinping, is quite the photo-op. It's also a key diplomatic win for Xi.

The Chinese leader has been trying hard to project Beijing's power on the international stage – not just as the world's second-largest economy, but also as a diplomatic heavyweight.

He has emphasised China's role as a stable trading partner while Trump's tariffs upended economic relationships.

Now, while a deal with Putin to end the war in Ukraine continues to elude the US President, Xi is getting ready to host him in Beijing.

Kim's attendance, a surprise announcement, is no less significant. Trump said earlier this week, in a meeting with the South Korean president, that he wanted to meet Kim Jong Un again.

His last shot at diplomacy with the reclusive dictator ended with no breakthroughs – despite two summits that captivated the world. Trump is suggesting he wants to try again.

Meanwhile, the Chinese leader is signalling that he may hold the geopolitical cards in this game, and that his influence – though limited – on both Kim and Putin may prove crucial in any deal.



## 'POVERTY IN CANADA': INDIAN MAN FILMS PERSON WASHING CLOTHES AT PUBLIC FOUNTAIN IN TORONTO

**Diary Times Desk :** An Indian man in Canada has captured attention online after posting a video from Toronto that highlights the struggles of the homeless in the city. The clip, shared on Instagram by Nitish Advitii, shows a man bending over a public street fountain to wash his clothes and later splashing water on his face.

In the short video, the Indian man filming can be heard speaking in Hindi, which when translated reads, "I never imagined I would see such a scene here. This person is, I guess, homeless, and this is the condition of the homeless here."

The text overlaid on the video read, "Poverty in Canada: Toronto's homeless people," while the caption accompanying the post stated, "Poor people in Canada wash their clothes like this."

## UK, FRANCE AND GERMANY MOVE TO REIMPOSE UN SANCTIONS ON IRAN

**Diary Times Desk :** The UK, France and Germany have begun the process of restoring major UN sanctions on Iran – lifted under a 2015 deal – as tensions once again escalate over Tehran's nuclear programme.

The move will trigger a so-called snapback mechanism, which could result in the return of sanctions in 30 days.

The three countries, participants in the 2015 deal, warned two weeks ago that they were ready to do this unless Iran agreed to a "diplomatic solution" by the end of August.

Iran's foreign ministry said the move would "seriously undermine" its ongoing process with the International Atomic Energy Agency, calling it a "provocative and unnecessary escalation" that "will be met with appropriate responses".

Talks between Iran and the US over its nuclear programme have not resumed since June when the US bombed Iranian nuclear sites and Iran barred UN-backed inspectors from accessing its facilities.

Years-long crippling economic sanctions were lifted in exchange for curbs to Iran's nuclear programme under a UN-backed deal between Iran and the US, UK, France, Germany, China and the EU.

But the deal unravelled after Donald Trump pulled the US out, calling it flawed and re-imposing nuclear-related sanctions in 2018 during his first term. Iran stepped up its nuclear activities in response, fuelling a renewed crisis.

The snapback provision was built into the 2015 accord and allows for a participant to initiate the process.

## "NUKE INDIA", "KILL TRUMP": MINNEAPOLIS SHOOTER'S CHILLING MESSAGES ON GUNS

**Diary Times Desk :** The shooter who opened fire on Wednesday on school children attending a church service in the US city of Minneapolis, killing two students, had "kill Donald Trump" and "nuke India" written on his guns, a video on his now-deleted YouTube channel showed.

The shooter, identified as Robin Westman, 23, used all three weapons – a rifle, a shotgun and a pistol – and fired dozens of rounds at the church at the Annunciation Catholic School. Westman was later found dead in the parking lot from what officials believe was a self-inflicted gunshot.

Court records show Westman's name was changed from Robert in 2020 because Westman identified as female.

On a YouTube channel titled "Robin W", there were at least two videos posted before site administrators took the channel down.

One of the videos, which was about 10 minutes long and shot on a mobile phone, showed a cache of weapons, ammunition and loaded magazines.

"Kill Donald Trump", "kill Trump now", "Israel must fall", and "Burn Israel" were written on the magazines.

## US CONCLUDE PLAN TO LIMIT VISA STAY FOR STUDENTS AND JOURNALISTS

**Diary Times Desk :** United States want impose stronger limits on how long foreign students, cultural exchange visitors, professors and journalists fit stay in di United States, to stop visa abuse and tighten di nation security.

Inside one proposed rule wey di US Department of Homeland Security publish on Wednesday, dem tok say Donald Trump administration no go allow foreign students to stay for more dan four years on student visas in di United States.

Dem also tok say, dem go limit US stay for foreign journalists to just 240 days, but dem fit apply to extend am to extra 240 days.

"Trump Administration announce propose rule wey go limit di length of time certain visa holders – including foreign students– go dey allowed to stay for di United States, e go stop visa abuse and increase di Department of Homeland Security ability to properly vet and oversee dis individuals," di statement tok.

## UN SAYS GAZA FAMINE EXPANDING, 10 MORE DIE FROM HUNGER AMID ISRAELI SIEGE

**Diary Times Desk :** United Nations officials and aid agencies have warned that famine in Gaza is now a reality, with children increasingly dying of hunger as Israel's siege and bombardment continue to block essential, life-saving aid.

In a stark address to the UN Security Council on Wednesday, officials said famine and widespread hunger in the besieged enclave are "engineered" and "man-made" catastrophes.

Joyce Msuya, the UN's deputy humanitarian chief, told the council that famine has been confirmed in the north-central Gaza governorate, where Gaza City is located, and is expected to spread to Deir el-Balah and Khan Younis to the south by the end of September.

## 14 KILLED, 48 INJURED IN MASS RUSSIAN DRONE AND MISSILE ATTACK ON UKRAINE'S KYIV

**Diary Times Desk :** A mass Russian drone and missile attack on Ukraine's capital, including a rare strike in the center of the city, early Thursday killed at least 14 people and wounded 48, local authorities said.

It was the first major Russian combined attack on Kyiv in weeks as US-led peace efforts to end the three-year war struggled to gain traction. Russia launched 598 strike drones and decoys and 31 missiles of different types across the country, according to Ukraine's Air Force, making it one of the war's biggest air attacks.

Among the dead were three children ages 2, 14 and 17, said Tymur Tkachenko, the head of Kyiv's city administration. The numbers are expected to rise. Rescue teams were on site to pull people trapped underneath the rubble.

"Russia chooses ballistics instead of the negotiating table," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a post on X following the attack. "We expect a response from everyone in the world who has called for peace but now more often stays silent rather than taking principled positions."

Russia's Ministry of Defense said Thursday it shot down 102 Ukrainian drones overnight, mostly in the country's southwest. A drone attack sparked a blaze at the Afipsky oil refinery in the Krasnodar region, local officials said, while a second fire was reported at the Novokuibyshevsk refinery in the Samara region.



## 11 KILLED AFTER ISRAEL LAUNCHES FRESH STRIKES ON GAZA: REPORT

**Diary Times Desk :** Israeli strikes across Gaza killed at least 11 people, including five aid seekers, medical sources said, as reported by Al Jazeera on Thursday.

The latest strikes were conducted in northern Gaza's Jabalia an-Nazla area, as per Al Jazeera.

As of Thursday, Israel launched a mass arrest campaign, arresting 12 people across the West Bank. The arrested people were journalists, reform activists, and freed prisoners amid intense raids and home invasions.

Gaza's Health Ministry has recorded four deaths "due to famine and malnutrition" over the past 24 hours, including two children. This brings the total number of hunger-related deaths in the enclave 317, including 121 children, Al Jazeera reported.

## PM MODI, XI BILATERAL LIKELY DURING PM'S FIRST VISIT TO CHINA IN 7 YEARS

**Diary Times Desk :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping during his China visit later this week. PM Modi will be in China between August 31 and September 1 to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin.

The summit will feature Modi's first visit to China in more than seven years as the two neighbours work on further defusing tensions roiled by deadly border clashes in 2020. The two leaders last shared the same stage at last year's BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia.

India's priorities at the SCO include trade, connectivity, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, Indian foreign ministry official Tanmaya Lal was quoted as saying by news agency Reuters.

The recent detente between New Delhi and Beijing after five years of heightened border frictions, as well as renewed tariff pressure on New Delhi from the Trump administration, is driving expectations for a positive meeting between Chinese President Jinping and PM Modi on the sidelines of the summit.

The Chinese President will gather more than 20 world leaders at a regional security forum in China starting Sunday, in a powerful show of Global South solidarity in the age of Donald Trump, while also helping sanctions-hit Russia pull off another diplomatic coup.

Aside from Russian President Vladimir Putin and PM Modi, leaders from Central Asia.

## AMRITSAR FLOOD CRISIS: 40 VILLAGES SUBMERGED IN RAMDASS-AJNALA BELT; ARMY LEADS RESCUE OPERATION

**Diary Times Desk** : Army units have reached the Ramdass area in Amritsar district, where around 40 villages have been submerged since Wednesday, for rescue operations along with the administration and the police. Jawans were seen using Army vehicles and boats to rescue those left stranded in their houses. River water entered their houses hours after Dhussi Bandh near the Ravi river gave way from at least three places.

Rescue operations continued till late last evening. The water level has increased a lot since Wednesday. Yesterday, over 20 villages were inundated, but the number of such villages has now gone up to around 40.

The worst-affected villages include Ghonewal, Machhiwal, Mangu Naru, Shahzada, Jattan, Kot Gurbaksh, Pashian, Nissoke, Singhoke, Mehmud, Mandrawala, Ghaggar, Dharmabad, Ramdass, Shampura, Kotli Shah Habib, Nangal Sohal, Rurewal, Khatra, Pandori, Thangai, Malikpura, Langarpur, Dujowal, Bedi Channa, Kot Razada, Sufian, Samrai, Bhadal, Chharpur, Galib, Darya Mansoor, Bal Labhe Darya, Nangal anab, Kamirpura, Bhaini Gill, Chak Wala, Jagdev Khurd, Sahowal, Dhari Singhpura and Bajwa village.



## EMPLOYEES ACQUIRING DISABILITY IN SERVICE ENTITLED TO PROMOTION UNDER PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED QUOTA: HIGH COURT

**Diary Times Desk** : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has ruled that employees acquiring disability during the course of service are equally entitled to reservation in promotion under the physically handicapped (PH) quota.

The Bench has held that the benefit cannot be restricted only to those inducted as PH candidates at the time of appointment.

The ruling came as Justice Harpreet Brar allowed a petition filed by an employee before directing the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited and other respondents to promote him as Assistant Engineer (Electrical) under the PH quota, with all consequential benefits from July 16, 2023 – the date on which his juniors were promoted. The exercise has been ordered to be completed within eight weeks.

The petitioner through senior advocate Pawan Kumar and counsel Vidushi Kumar was seeking directions to quash the speaking order dated March 11 whereby the corporation refused immediate consideration of his claim.

## WARRING, PARGAT BURY THE HATCHET; PRESENT UNITED PUNJAB CONGRESS FRONT AHEAD OF 'SAMVIDHAN BACHAO' RALLY



**Diary Times Desk** : In a surprising turn of events, Punjab Congress leaders Amrinder Singh Raja Warring and Jalandhar Cantt MLA Pargat Singh, known for their longstanding differences, appeared united ahead of the 'Samvidhan Bachao' rally.

Warring visited Pargat at his residence in Mithapur, Jalandhar, marking a significant thaw in their strained relationship.

The visit comes amid speculation, as Pargat has reportedly been eyeing Warring's position in the party. At a rally, Warring said, "All other parties are tense because our pictures from yesterday showed unity."

He emphasised that their focus is on fighting for farmers and marginalised communities, not internal rivalries. He also dismissed any speculation about him being in the race for the Chief Minister's post, stating, "I'm not in the CM race."

## ARMY, BSF, NDRF, AND SDRF JOIN HANDS TO RESCUE OVER 2,400 PEOPLE IN FLOOD-HIT NORTH-WEST INDIA



**Diary Times Desk** : The Indian Army has activated 28 columns, including medical teams and communication resources, to reinforce ongoing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations in flood-affected areas of north-west India. Initially, 13 columns were deployed, and these columns are providing immediate ground support, evacuation assistance, restoration of connectivity, and medical aid to displaced families across various sectors.

The sectors include Jammu, Mamun, Pathankot (Samba, Kachle, Sujanpur), Gurdaspur (Makaura Pattan, Adalatgarh), Amritsar, and Ferozepur. All actions are being undertaken in close coordination with the local state administration.

Army Aviation assets are playing a crucial role in rescue missions, with 12 helicopters, including three Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) and nine Cheetah helicopters, executing challenging winching and hovering operations to rescue civilians stranded on rooftops and in inundated villages. Additionally, boats and safety ropes are being used to ferry stranded people to safer areas.

A total of 1,211 civilians have been evacuated to safety so far, including 11 Punjab Government officials stranded at Madhopur Barrage and 180 paramilitary personnel. Nearly 2,300 kg of essential supplies, including food, water, and medicines, have been dropped or distributed in cut-off areas by Army helicopters and ground teams. Medical teams are providing on-the-spot aid to the injured and vulnerable.

## ESCALATE NDPS CASES WITH FOREIGN LINKS TO MEA FOR GLOBAL ACTION: HC

**Diary Times Desk** : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has made it clear that the fight against the drug menace cannot be confined to local investigation and cases with foreign links must be escalated to the Ministry of External Affairs. The ruling came as the bench pushed for an international crackdown by directing the Punjab Police to send details and phone numbers of a person allegedly operating a drug cartel from the US to the Centre "to enable them to consider about communicating such inputs to their counterparts and intimate the US about his involvement in heroin trafficking".

Taking cognisance of the growing trend of heroin smuggling by the Indian drugs mafia from Pakistan's border, the court directed that senior police officers must promptly communicate details of probe and accused to the ministry for possible sharing with counterparts abroad whenever investigations revealed the role of foreign nationals or overseas-based drug operations. The bench also ordered that the judgment be forwarded to the DGPs of Punjab, Haryana and UT "to consider internal communications to their officers".

## FLOODWATERS ENGULF VILLAGES IN PUNJAB'S AJNALA TOWN, RESCUE EFFORTS UNDERWAY

**Diary Times Desk** : The breach of earthen embankments in the Ramdass area has led to severe flooding in several villages of Ajnala town in Punjab. Villages such as Gaggomahal, Chahrpur and Sofian are among the worst affected, with many residents stranded in their homes and forced to take shelter on rooftops and upper floors.

Religious organisations are providing 'langars' to stranded people using tractor-trolleys.

Deputy Commissioner Sakshi Sawhney said the relief camps have been set up for the flood victims with Additional Deputy Commissioner Amandeep Kaur appointed as the nodal officer.

Other than this, helpline numbers have been issued for those affected by the floods.

However, Gurjit Aujla, Member of Parliament from Amritsar, visited the affected areas and termed the rescue operations 'inadequate'.

## PONG DAM WATER LEVEL REMAINS ABOVE DANGER MARK, HIGH DISCHARGE CONTINUES

**Diary Times Desk :** The water level in Pong Dam continued to stay above the maximum permissible limit of 1,390 feet on Thursday morning, posing a critical situation in downstream areas.

According to an official data, the current level stands at 1,393.61 feet (525.929 meters), which is over three feet above the danger mark.

The inflow into the reservoir was recorded at 79,780 cusecs in the morning, while the outflow remains constant at 94,845 cusecs to manage excess water.

Earlier readings showed fluctuating inflows between 57,183 cusecs and 1,10,224 cusecs over the past several hours.

The BBMB authorities are maintaining high discharge levels to prevent further rise in water level, which has shown only a slight downward trend since the peak reading.

## HIMACHAL SCHOOL LECTURERS PROTEST PROMOTION PANEL BASED ON OUTDATED SENIORITY LIST

**Diary Times Desk :** Discontent is mounting among school lecturers in Himachal Pradesh after the Directorate of Higher Education called for names to prepare a panel for promotion to the post of principal based on seniority. The Himachal Pradesh School Lecturers' Association has opposed the move, alleging that the seniority list has not been updated for years, rendering the process unjust and exclusionary.

In a joint statement, association leaders — including state chairman Surender Pundeer, executive member Narendra Negi, patron Ramesh Negi, senior vice-president Sanjay Sharma, Sirmaur district president Dr ID Rahi, district general secretary Dinesh Sharma, senior vice-president Om Prakash Sharma and treasurer Lal Singh Thakur — highlighted glaring discrepancies in the existing list. They noted that the last official seniority list of lecturers was issued on February 4, 2012, covering cases only up to 2010.

## FLASH FLOODS DEVASTATE BADA BHANGAL VILLAGE IN HIMACHAL'S KANGRA, ALL GOVT BUILDINGS SWEEP AWAY

**Diary Times Desk :** Flash floods in the Ravi river have caused large-scale destruction in Bada Bhangal, a remote tribal village in Dhauladhar mountain ranges of Kangra district, washing away all government buildings and damaging critical infrastructure.

The village, situated at an altitude of 7,800 feet, is accessible only by foot through treacherous high-altitude passes. Currently, both approaches—via Thamsar Pass (4,700 metres) and Kalihani Pass (4,800 metres)—have been rendered impassable.

Mansa Ram Bhangalia, Sarpanch of Bada Bhangal, said the village has been completely cut off, with all trekking routes blocked. "More than 300 residents are stranded in the village, while at least 150 shepherds and hundreds of goats, sheep and cattle are marooned on high pastures," he said.



## POLICE WORKING TO TRACE MISSING CHILD, ACCUSED IN MURDER CASE OF LAHAUL-SPITI WOMAN, SAYS DY CM

**Diary Times Desk :** Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri on Wednesday said joint efforts were being made by the Himachal and Punjab police to nab the accused in the murder of a 28-year-old woman at Madgraon village in the Udaipur area of Lahaul-Spiti.

Agnihotri was replying to the issue raised by Lahaul-Spiti MLA Anuradha Rana during zero hour in the Vidhan Sabha today. He said Sapna, who had gone to Kullu for her daughter's medical treatment on August 4, had gone missing and an FIR had been registered for murder and kidnapping on her husband's complaint on August 13.

He said it was on August 14 that her body was found in Kiratpur. "Her daughter is still missing and the Punjab and Himachal police are jointly making efforts to locate her. The accused is suspected to be from Jammu and Kashmir, who had been living in Lahaul-Spiti," he said.

## MANDI-KULLU PARCHED: RAINFALL KNOCKS OUT 152 WATER SCHEMES

**Diary Times Desk :** A major water crisis has gripped Himachal Pradesh's Mandi and Kullu districts as relentless rainfall has rendered 152 water supply schemes non-functional over the past two days. The disruption has severely affected the daily lives of thousands of residents, with restoration efforts underway.

In Mandi district alone, 64 water supply schemes have been damaged or shut down, leaving several towns and villages without potable water. The worst-affected areas include Karsog division with 17 disrupted schemes, followed by Thunag (16), Padhar (10), Mandi (9), Sundernagar (5), Dharampur (4) and Baggi (3).

The crisis is particularly acute in the Mandi Municipal Corporation area, where the main water supply from the Uhl river has been disrupted since yesterday. The high silt content in the river, a result of continuous heavy rainfall, has hampered water treatment operations and posed a major challenge for the Jal Shakti Department.

## FOUR DEAD, TWO HURT IN LANDSLIDES CAUSED BY HEAVY RAIN IN CHAMBA

**Diary Times Desk :** Continuous heavy rain claimed the lives of four people in separate landslide incidents in Chamba in the past 24 hours. Two others sustained serious injuries and were brought to hospital after an arduous journey on foot.

In the first incident, a brother and sister lost their lives in the Basodhan panchayat near the district headquarters. According to local sources, the duo had stepped out to witness a landslide occurring close to their house when they were buried under the debris. Despite efforts by villagers to rescue them, both were found dead on the spot.

In another incident, four women were caught in a landslide in the Bhimla panchayat under the Mehla development block. The women were reportedly engaged in work near their homes when boulders began tumbling down the hillside. Two of them died on the spot while the other two sustained critical injuries.

The injured women were given first aid at the local level and they were then brought on a cot to the government medical college and hospital at Chamba on foot. Since, the roads were blocked, they had no option other than to carry the injured women on a cot on foot.



## Walmart in the online shopping

Between the Covid-19 pandemic, decades-high inflation and unprecedented tariffs, it's been a tumultuous half-decade for retailers.

Some major chains have done a better job at navigating those challenges than others, a point that Walmart and Target underscored in their quarterly earnings this week. Walmart reported that sales jumped by 4.8% at its US stores that were open for at least a year, although it fell short of profit expectations. Meanwhile, Target saw sales fall for the third straight quarter on top of a CEO shakeup.

Target and Walmart are among the largest department stores in the US, but the latter has surged ahead in the big-box competition. Target's

troubles are the result of years of missteps, from overstocking on home-centric items during the pandemic to walking back its diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives earlier this year.

In contrast, Walmart has better positioned itself over the last decade to compete with the places people shop online, from Amazon to TikTok. That's crucial considering e-

commerce sales are growing faster than in-store sales, even though more money is still being spent in physical retail stores, according to a report from Capital One Shopping Research.

Walmart "can essentially get to 95% of the country in three hours or less and sell product to the consumer at the same price as you would pay if you were in their stores," Bradley Thomas, managing director for consumer and retail hardlines at KeyBanc Capital Markets, said in an interview with CNN.

Walmart's larger footprint and focus on affordable staples like groceries also make it a more appealing option for shoppers.

"It's not easy to all of a sudden have half your store be grocery, and it's not going to happen overnight," Brad Jashinsky, an analyst covering retail at market research firm Gartner, told CNN. "And so part of this is Amazon and Walmart have executed really well, and Target has stumbled in certain areas."

"It's really tough for any retailer to compete with Walmart right now on price and increasingly on selection," Thomas said.

The digital divide has grown between the two retailers: Walmart's global e-commerce business grew by 25% in its fiscal second quarter, while Target's comparable digital sales grew by 4.3% in roughly the same time period, according to the companies' earnings reports this week.

Although Amazon leads e-commerce sales in the United States by a wide margin, accounting for 40.6% of sales, Walmart comes in second with 9.4%, according to market research firm eMarketer. Target only accounts for 1.6%, coming behind the Home Depot, Temu, eBay and Apple, in addition to Walmart and Amazon.

Walmart's Plus membership program and its focus on speeding up delivery times has driven its e-commerce sales, analysts say. But it also comes down to fundamental differences in Walmart and Target's businesses. Walmart excels in everyday essentials, such as groceries and other household must-haves – the types of products people are likely to order with the press of a button on a regular basis.

"They're really killing it in online grocery," Sky Canaves, principal analyst for retail and e-commerce at eMarketer, told CNN in reference to Walmart. "That's made Amazon, for one, sit up and take notice."



**Lisa Eadicicco**

"Trying to convey that like treasure hunt, or fun in-store experience, doesn't translate as well online," Canaves said. "...



**Matt Egan**

**Mahedy, now the CEO and chief economist at Access/Macro, fears the very independence of the Fed from political interference is at stake.**

# FDA Approves Fed A MAGA Makeover

If President Donald Trump successfully ousts Lisa Cook from her role as a Federal Reserve governor, it could give him a path to radically reshape the US central bank in an unprecedented way to achieve his goal of lower interest rates.



**Regional Fed presidents are selected and reappointed, initially, by each bank's local directors, who typically include local business and nonprofit leaders. But those selections must be approved by the Washington-based Fed Board of Governors.**

Trump, during his marathon Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, made a curious comment that hinted at this desire.

"We'll have a majority very shortly and that will be great," Trump said of the Fed Board.

If Cook's firing withstands a likely legal challenge, Trump could indeed claim a majority of the seven members of the Fed's powerful Board of Governors.

In addition to Cook's seat, Trump has tapped loyalist Stephen Miran to fill a sudden vacancy. And during his first term, Trump nominated current Fed governors Christopher Waller and Michelle Bowman. (Trump also originally nominated Fed Chair Jerome Powell in 2017, but the president has since soured on Powell, who was later renominated by President Joe Biden.)

Fed watchers say a Trump-appointed majority on the Fed Board could then exert greater influence over future decisions on interest rates by using a little-known process.

While it's typically a routine event that gets little attention, every five years the Fed Board must approve the new terms of regional Fed presidents, who vote on a rotational basis on interest rates.

That event is coming up soon, with the terms of all 12 regional Fed presidents scheduled to expire – simultaneously – at the end of February.

That means, in theory, a Trump-nominated Fed Board could reject regional presidents, for whatever reason they wish, or no reason at all.

"The President could push his majority to reject reserve bank presidents unless they agree to back lower rates and are comfortable with

more White House influence over monetary policy," Jaret Seiberg, financial services policy analyst at TD Cowen Washington Research Group, wrote in a note to clients this week. "That would give Trump a more cooperative FOMC," he wrote, referring to the Fed's rate-setting committee.

While the Fed chair gets all the attention, decisions on interest rates are voted on by all 12 members of the Federal Open Market Committee. The committee consists of the seven members of the Fed Board, as well as five regional Fed presidents: the New York Fed president and four rotating regional presidents.

There are major obstacles to any potential effort to pack the Fed with Trump loyalists, including the willingness of existing Fed governors to go along, and significant uncertainty over whether the potential firing of Cook will withstand judicial scrutiny.

Still, it's telling that Fed watchers and economists are openly discussing this path for Trump to give the Fed a MAGA makeover. "I think this is the most likely outcome," Tim Mahedy, a former top official at the San Francisco Fed, told CNN.

INFA

## Past Years

### MASS SHOOTINGS IN 2025 COMPARE

Mass shootings in the United States using data from the Gun Violence Archive, a nonprofit group formed in 2013 to track gun-related violence. Both CNN and GVA define a "mass shooting" as a shooting that injured or killed four or more people, not including the shooter.



**Mohammed Haddad**

**Other countries do experience school shootings, but these occur rarely. One such incident in this year was at a school in Graz, Austria, on June 10, when a former student opened fire, killing 10 people and injuring 11 others. This incident was the worst school shooting in Austria's history.**

Last year recorded the lowest number of mass shootings since 2019, before the increase in America's gun violence during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the total number of mass shootings in 2024 surpassed the totals recorded in any year from 2013 to 2019. Read the full breakdown from 2024.

On Wednesday, as students continue to return to schools this week after the summer break, a man armed with three guns fired dozens of rounds into a school mass at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, killing two children and injuring 17 others.

The shooting ended when the suspect, 23-year-old Robin Westman, "took his own life" at the rear of the church, Minneapolis police chief Brian O'Hara said, and authorities are still investigating the motive.

School shootings have become a grim reality, occurring far too often in the United States, yet efforts to impose stricter gun ownership laws continue to face strong opposition from conservative groups and politicians.

Counting these incidents is not always straightforward, and totals can differ depending on how shootings are defined, whether injuries or deaths occurred, and which database is used. Al Jazeera breaks it all down for you.

School shootings: Why the numbers vary Like mass shootings, school shootings are tracked by multiple databases that use different criteria. Some apply broad definitions, while others include only the most severe incidents.

It records every incident on K-12 school property where a gun was fired, brandished with intent, or a bullet struck school property, regardless of whether anyone was injured or killed. This includes gang shootings, incidents of domestic violence, shootings at sports games or after-school events, suicides, fights that escalate into gunfire, and accidental discharges.



Another source, Everytown for Gun Safety, uses data from the K-12 School Shooting Database to map and analyse firearm discharge incidents on school grounds.

Everytown tracks gun incidents that resulted in a person being killed or wounded, as well as those in which a gun was discharged and no one was shot. Incidents in which guns were brought into schools but not discharged are not included.

According to this definition, there have been 91 incidents of gunfire on school grounds this year.

Strictest definition – 8 incidents A third database, Education Week, employs the strictest definition.

It counts only shootings causing injuries or deaths on school property or buses during school hours or events.

## IS GRIMSBY'S DEFEAT OF MAN UNITED THE BIGGEST UPSET IN LEAGUE CUP HISTORY?

**Diary Times Desk :** Manchester United's shock Carabao Cup exit at the hands of League Two side Grimsby Town is a game that will not be forgotten any time soon.

The result was a new low for a United side that found themselves 2-0 down at half-time courtesy of goals from Charles Vernam and Tyrell Warren and were lucky not to be 3-0 down with a Cameron Gardner strike disallowed in the second-half.

New signing Bryan Mbeumo pulled one back for United before an 89th-minute equaliser from Harry Maguire spared United the ignominy of losing in 90 minutes.

The shootout went on past the first round of takers from both sides. Mbeumo scored his first but missed on the second time round in sudden death to cue a Grimsby pitch invasion and confirmation of a famous win in the north east. For United, it was their first ever cup elimination from a side in England's fourth-tier.



## 'IF WE CHANGE THE MANAGER THEN WE'RE JUST BACK TO SQUARE ONE AGAIN'

**Diary Times Desk :** Questions over whether Ruben Amorim is the right man for the job have arisen again after their defeat to Grimsby Town in the Carabao Cup, but Burdett doesn't think it is as simple as that.

"Amorim said 'the better players lost and the better team won,' and it is hard to argue against that," said Burdett on BBC Radio 5 Live Breakfast. "Grimsby thoroughly deserved their victory and I don't think anyone will disagree with that.

"We are in a constant conundrum because we have been through so many managers and so many players, but we seem to still be repeating the same patterns.

"If we change the manager then we are just back to square one again.

"But the players are obviously not doing what they should be for Amorim. He can't change all 22 players but we are stuck in this cycle of bringing in new players and nothing changes.

"There's only a finite amount of managers out there, so how many do we have to go through until we find one that fits what we need?"

"Ineos have come in and we have more of a structure at the club, which we have been crying out for, yet somehow it is still not quite working.

## BARCELONA RAISE FERMÍN LÓPEZ PRICE TAG TO €90 MILLION AMID CHELSEA TRANSFER TALK



**Diary Times Desk :** Barcelona are putting their foot down when it comes to Fermín López and his transfer status amid the rumors of strong interest from Chelsea.

After setting a price tag of €70 million for the midfielder on Tuesday, the Catalans have now raised their asking price to €90 million, according to Fernando Polo of Mundo Deportivo. Barça's stance on the matter is clear: they have zero desire to sell and will only consider Fermín's exit if the player himself requests a move and Chelsea are willing to meet the Blaugrana's new asking price.

Chelsea gave Fermín 48 hours on Tuesday to decide whether he wanted to join them, and the deadline is quickly approaching. Fermín has been promised a "protagonist role" in Enzo Maresca's team and Chelsea certainly have the money to meet Barça's asking price, but the Blaugrana have now taken such a strong position that Chelsea may have no choice but to back off.

## LIONEL MESSI: 'PLAYED WITH FEAR' IN LEAGUES CUP SEMIFINAL WIN

**Diary Times Desk :** Lionel Messi admitted to "playing with fear" as he returned from injury to score twice in Inter Miami's 3-1 Leagues Cup semifinal win over Florida rivals Orlando City.

Messi converted a 77th-minute penalty at Chase Stadium and then added another goal in the 88th minute -- after combining with Jordi Alba -- as Miami came back from a goal down to clinch a place in the final.

"I wanted to be here," Messi said after the game. "When I came back against [LA] Galaxy [on August 17] I felt some discomfort, I didn't feel comfortable, but I wanted to play the game.

"It was really important to be here because it's a difficult opponent, they'd beaten us in the two games we played against them this year. In the first half I was playing with a bit of fear, but after that I felt a bit [more] free."

Orlando had beaten Miami 4-1 when the teams last met on Aug. 11, with Messi absent.

## GERMAN CUP SCARE PROVES BAYERN MUNICH NEED REINFORCEMENTS BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

**Diary Times Desk :** German Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich made a statement start to the new season with a resounding 6-0 thrashing of RB Leipzig in the opening game of the league. Such a scoreline might be expected against a side fighting relegation, but Leipzig are Champions League contenders. This astounding start for Bayern has triggered questions about head coach Vincent Kompany's demand for a larger squad, with echoes of Uli Hoeness' suggestion of greater youth inclusion sparking debate among fans and pundits.

However, Bayern's squad depth was truly tested in their DFB Pokal match on Wednesday, where the club narrowly escaped an upset against third-division side SV Wehen Wiesbaden.

England international Harry Kane's brace rescued Bayern after they let a two-goal lead slip against the minnows. Bayern started with reserve players like Lennart Karl, Raphael Guerreiro, Sacha Boey, and Jonas Urbig in the starting XI but had to bring on established stars like Serge Gnabry, Leon Goretzka, and Konrad Laimer in the second half upon realizing the challenge posed by Wiesbaden in midfield.

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE LEAGUE PHASE DRAW: ALL 36 TEAMS LEARN THEIR OPPONENTS

**Diary Times Desk :** Record 15-time Champions League winners Real Madrid have been given a daunting draw for this season's competition after being handed matchups against Premier League giants Liverpool and Manchester City on Thursday.

Defending champions Paris Saint-Germain also face a tough journey to reach the knockout phase with matchups against the champions of Spain, Barcelona, and German champions Bayern Munich as well as Premier League sides Tottenham Hotspur and Newcastle United.

Madrid will visit English champions Liverpool in what could be a first return to Anfield for Trent Alexander-Arnold, who joined the Spanish giants this summer after 20 years at his boyhood club.

- UEFA Champions League draw as it happened Madrid, who got two English opponents from the pot of highest-ranked teams, lost 2-0 at Anfield in the league phase last year. Xabi Alonso's side will host 2023 winners Man City, whom they beat in the knockout playoffs last season.

