

NEWS IN BRIEF

**KOLKATA HORROR:
WOMAN GANG-
RAPED BY 2 MEN
AFTER HER
BIRTHDAY PARTY**
Diary Times Desk :

A 20-year-old woman was allegedly gang-raped by two of her acquaintances on her birthday in an upscale locality in Kolkata, police said on Sunday. The incident took place in Regent Park area in the southern outskirts of the city on Friday. The two accused, who went missing after the crime, were identified as Chandan Malik and Deep. Deep is reportedly a government employee. According to police sources, the survivor from Haridevpur alleged the assault took place when Chandan took her to Deep's house on the pretext of celebrating her birthday.

"The woman's birthday was on Friday. On that occasion, the accused Chandan and Deep took the victim to the latter's flat. There, they had a meal. She said when she wanted to return home, the accused stopped her. They allegedly locked the door and gang-raped her".

**MALLIKARJUN
KHARGE SLAMS
MODI-TRUMP TIES,
SAYS 'PM HAS
BECOME ENEMY OF
NATION'**

Diary Times Desk : Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday dismissed the significance of the professed camaraderie between US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asserting that he does not give "much credence" to their claims of mutual and lasting friendship. Speaking to reporters in Kalaburagi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha accused Prime Minister Modi of becoming "an enemy of the nation" by "spoiling the atmosphere". He further alleged that the Modi-Trump alliance had come at the cost of India's interests.

"Trump and Modi can be friends, but Modi has become an enemy of the nation. He spoiled the atmosphere... Trump imposed a huge tariff. After a 50 per cent tariff, he destroyed our people," Kharge said. He added that Modi "needs to realise" India's foreign policy has historically been rooted in neutrality and "should continue on that path".

**GST
SHORTFALL**
**'SPURT IN CONSUMPTION TO MEET FISCAL DEFICIT
TARGET OF 4.4%: NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**


Diary Times Desk : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has expressed confidence that revenue buoyancy driven by spurt in consumption will take care of the estimated GST shortfall of Rs 48,000 crore following reduction in tax rates on a host of items, and hence there will be no impact on public finances but definitely bolster GDP growth.

She also emphasised that consumption boost to be provided by landmark GST reform and better-than-expected first quarter GDP growth number may help in exceeding the projected pace of 6.3-6.8 per cent for FY26.

Asked about impact of GST rate cuts on fiscal deficit, Sitharaman said, Rs 48,000 crore financial implication is a static number based on a base year, but when it gets implemented, base situation changes.

"So, I think the consumption spurt from September 22 will increase income buoyancy. To a large extent, this Rs 48,000 crore amount we will be able to make it up this year itself. So I don't see an impact on my fiscal deficit or my fiscal management. I will stick to my numbers (of 4.4 per cent of GDP)". Sitharaman told PTI in an interview.

The Centre estimates the fiscal deficit during 2025-26 at 4.4 per cent of the GDP, or Rs 15.69 lakh crore.

Last week, the all-powerful GST Council headed by Sitharaman approved a two-tier structure of 5 per cent and 18 per cent taxes, as well as a 40 per cent slab.

Nearly 400 products - from soaps to cars, shampoos to tractors and air conditioners - will cost less when the rejig of the GST is effective from the first day of Navaratri on September 22. Premiums paid on individual health and life insurance will be tax-free.

In the revamped GST structure, most daily food and grocery items will fall under the 5 per cent GST slab with bread, milk and paneer attracting no tax at all. EVs and small cars will be taxed at 5 per cent while other white goods at 18 per cent - slabs that are lower than current rates.

**BUZZ OVER NEW MANIPUR GOVERNMENT FORMATION AFTER
GOVERNOR, BJP LEADERS MEET**

Diary Times Desk : In Manipur, a meeting between senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders, including former Chief Minister N Biren Singh, and Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla has fuelled speculation over the possible formation of a new government in the state.

On Sunday, Governor Bhalla convened an urgent high-level meeting at Raj Bhavan in Imphal. Those present included former Chief Minister N Biren Singh, Assembly Speaker Thokhom Satyabrata Singh, BJP's state unit president A Sharda Devi, Chief Secretary Puneet Kumar Goel, Security Advisor Kuldiep Singh, Director General of Police Rajiv Singh, and several BJP legislators.

Twenty-three BJP MLAs, led by Biren Singh, attended the meeting. The closed-door discussions lasted about 40 minutes. While the official agenda was not made public, senior BJP figures suggested the deliberations centred on the administrative and political preparedness for PM Modi's scheduled visit to the Northeast, including a possible stop in Imphal.

Manipur has been under President's Rule following months of violent unrest that left more than 260 people dead and tens of thousands displaced. The absence of an elected government has led to demands, both within and outside the state, for the restoration of a popular administration to stabilise governance.


**DOG BITES WOMAN ON FACE AS SHE
STEPS OUT OF TOILET IN
KARNATAKA COURT**


Diary Times Desk : A stray dog viciously attacked a woman on the premises of a court in Karnataka, leaving her bleeding profusely, said the police.

The incident, which happened on Saturday, took place on the premises of Gubbi Court in Tumakuru district. The victim has been identified as Gangubai (35), a resident of Beerasandra village in Tiptur taluk, who had come to the court in connection with a family dispute case.

According to witnesses, Gangubai had stepped out of the toilet when the dog pounced on her.

As she tried to escape, the animal repeatedly attacked, biting her on the face. The woman, who was propped up by a man, had blood streaking across her face.

Hearing her screams, locals rushed to her rescue and managed to free her from the dog's grip. Shocked and enraged by the incident, they later chased and killed the dog.

The injured woman was first taken to the Gubbi Taluk Hospital for treatment and later shifted to Bengaluru for advanced medical care.

In another incident, stray dog attacks in Honnali taluk's Mavina Kote and Sasvehalli villages left four children and one elderly person injured.

Victims are being treated at Shivamogga McGann Hospital.

**FIVE MADRASA STUDENTS ARRESTED FOR
MURDER OF 12-YEAR-OLD BOY IN ODISHA**


Diary Times Desk : Five minor students of a madrasa in Odisha's Nayagarh district were arrested for allegedly killing a 12-year-old boy of the institution and dumping his body into a septic tank, an officer said today.

The incident occurred on September 2 at a madrasa located within the Ranpur police station limits of Nayagarh district.

The police registered a case on September 3, and the accused boys - aged 12 to 15 years - were taken into custody on Saturday, a senior police officer, Subhas Chandra Panda, told reporters.

The preliminary investigation revealed the boy, who is from Badamba area in Cuttack district, had apparently threatened seniors that he would expose their sexual abuse of junior students.

The boy was allegedly sexually abused by a senior student of the madrasa for the last six months. There was also an attempt to kill him also on August 31, the officer said.

After recovering the body of the victim from the septic tank, initially it appeared an accident, Mr Panda said. Later, evidence showed he was physically tortured and killed. "It was learnt that the victim was sexually abused by two senior boys, including the 15-year-old senior inmate of the madrasa, before being killed and his body dumped into the septic tank," the ASP said.

The boy was strangled by the prime accused and his four associates. "All five were taken into custody and produced before a court," the officer said. A case was registered under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, murder charge and POCSO Act.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

**"FELLOW HYDERABADI":
ASADUDDIN OWAISI SAYS
AIMIM WILL BACK INDIA
BLOC'S SUDERSHAN REDDY
IN VEEP POLL**


Diary Times Desk : Hyderabad MP and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday said that his party will support INDIA bloc's nominee B Sudershan Reddy in the September 9 Vice Presidential election. Mr Owaisi said that he received a request from the office of Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to extend support to the retired Supreme Court judge, pitted against incumbent Maharashtra Governor CP Radhakrishnan (NDA nominee) for the post of Vice President. Taking to X, the Hyderabad MP wrote: "@TelanganaCMO spoke to me today and requested that we support Justice Sudershan Reddy as Vice President. @aimim_national will extend its support to Justice Reddy, a fellow Hyderabad and a respected jurist. I also spoke to Justice Reddy and expressed our best wishes to him."

Former Supreme Court judge B. Sudershan Reddy was on August 19 declared as the united Opposition parties' candidate for the Vice-Presidential election -- an exercise described by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge as an "ideological battle".

Introducing Reddy as a "pro-poor and champion of economic and social cause", Kharge had said that he represents the values which reflect our freedom struggle and on which our Constitution and democracy are based.

"Today, these values are under assault, and this is the reason that the Opposition decided to contest this ideological battle unitedly," he said.

Reddy, who has practised law in Andhra Pradesh and served as the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court, was appointed as a Supreme Court judge in January 2007. He retired in July 2011.

**"4 ACRES? I HAVE 40": M
KHARGE CHIDES FARMER
FOR CROP DAMAGE
COMPLAINT**


Diary Times Desk : A farmer who came to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge to complain about his crop, got an earful recently. The man had visited Mr Kharge's home in Kalaburagi -- a region still reeling under rain which has taken a massive toll on the crops.

A video clip of the meeting showed Mr Kharge asking the farmer how many acres he planted.

On hearing that it was 4 acres, he said he was suffering worse.

"I have planted in 40 acres and mine has been damaged worse than this," Mr Kharge said.

"This is like the saying that one who has delivered 3 kids comes to a person who has delivered 6 and talks about the struggle," he said.

"Anyways don't come here just for the sake of publicity, I am aware of this issue, I am aware of the crop losses this year. You may be able to sustain, but it is difficult for us. It is difficult to sustain with the size of our plantation," he said.

Reports said there have been demands that Kalaburagi - in north Karnataka --- of the Congress-ruled state be declared a flood-hit area and a special package be announced for the farmers of the area.

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW FARMERS TO MINE SAND FROM FLOOD-AFFECTED FIELDS

Diary Times Desk : The Punjab Government is set to introduce a new policy allowing farmers in flood-affected areas to extract and sell sand deposited in their fields by recent floods.

Manish Sisodia, Punjab affairs in-charge of the ruling Aam Aadmi Party, announced this development ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's September 9 visit to assess flood damage and announce relief measures.

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, currently recuperating from a bacterial infection, discussed the issue with Sisodia, highlighting the unprecedented silt and sand deposition in farmers' fields. The floods have not only destroyed the kharif crop, but also threaten the next Rabi season crop due to excess sand. Sisodia's visits to flood-hit villages in Tarn Taran and Gurdaspur revealed farmers' concerns about financial difficulties if the sand isn't removed.

"The CM, too, received a similar feedback during his visits to flood-hit areas. He has expressed his desire to immediately change the mining policy and allow farmers to extract this sand from their fields and sell it," said Sisodia.

The Punjab cabinet will discuss and approve changes to the mining policy after Chief Minister Mann is discharged from hospital.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit is expected to focus on damage assessment and relief announcements.

TRUMP ADVISER'S "CRAP NOTE" JIBE AFTER X FACT-CHECKS HIS ANTI-INDIA POST

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump's senior trade adviser, Peter Navarro - who has been making multiple attacks on India over its trade and foreign policies with Russia - yet again made an anti-India post on social media. However, this time, he got fact-checked by X, calling his claims "hypocritical".

Navarro, in a post, accused India of "profiteering" from the Russian oil imports.

"FACTS: India highest tariffs costs US jobs. India buys Russian oil purely to profit/Revenues feed Russia war machine. Ukrainians/Russians die. U.S. taxpayers shell out more. India can't handle truth/spins," he wrote.

The X's fact-checking note, however, corrected him, saying India's Russian oil purchases are for "energy security" and they "do not violate sanctions". "While India has some tariffs, the US has a trade surplus with it in services. The US also continues to import certain commodities from Russia, which is hypocritical," it said.

PM MODI TO VISIT FLOOD-HIT PUNJAB ON TUESDAY TO REVIEW RELIEF MEASURES



Diary Times Desk : Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Punjab on September 9 to take stock of the flood-hit areas and review relief measures, sources said on Sunday.

Punjab is facing one of its worst floods in decades, with the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi and several seasonal rivulets in spate due to heavy rain across north India.

The Centre has assured that Punjab "will not be left alone in this crisis" and is working on short-term, medium-term and long-term plans to help farmers recover.

During his visit, the Prime Minister is expected to focus on urgent issues like silt removal from fields, preventing the outbreak of diseases and ensuring the safe disposal of dead animals once floodwaters recede.

Officials said the Centre and the state government will work together on ground-level relief and rehabilitation.

Strengthening of embankments along the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi and Ghaggar rivers - many of which have weakened over the years due to illegal mining - is also likely to be on the Prime Minister's agenda.

Officials on Saturday said that 46 people have died due to the devastating floods in Punjab.

The highest number of deaths has been reported from Hoshiarpur and Amritsar (seven each), followed by Pathankot (six), Barnala (five), Ludhiana and Bathinda (four each), Mansa (three), Gurdaspur, Rupnagar and SAS Nagar (two each), while one death each has been reported from Patiala, Sangrur, Fazilka and Ferozepur.

LALBAUGCHA RAJA IDOL IMMERSION EXPECTED AT AROUND 11 PM



Diary Times Desk : The iconic Lalbaugcha Raja idol was shifted onto a raft on Sunday afternoon after delays since morning due to high tide and technical challenges, with final immersion, delayed by several hours, expected to take place around 11pm, officials said. Generally, the Lalbaugcha Raja idol is immersed into the Arabian Sea off Girgaon Chowpatty in south Mumbai before 9 am. The idol was moved to a raft, following several failed attempts, more than eight hours after it arrived at Girgaon Chowpatty and over 28 hours.

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.

PROBE INTO FORGED VOTER DELETION APPLICATIONS IN K'TAKA STALLS AS EC DOES NOT SHARE DATA: REPORT

Diary Times Desk : Even as the Congress has accused the Election Commission (EC) of electoral roll manipulation, an investigation into an attempt to delete 5,994 votes in the Aland assembly constituency in Karnataka's Kalaburagi district has hit a dead end as the poll body has not shared data crucial for completing the probe.

The Hindu reports that a case from 2023, ahead of the Karnataka state assembly election, pertaining to an alleged attempt to remove electors by forging Forms 7 has made little progress.

The issue came to light when B.R. Patil, then a candidate in Aland and a senior Congress leader, was tipped off about suspicious voter deletion applications. A complaint was promptly filed with the EC.

AJIT PAWAR'S NCP LEADER, WHO QUESTIONED IPS OFFICER'S DOCUMENTS, WITHDRAWS TWEET, APOLOGISES



Diary Times Desk : NCP MLC Amol Mitkari, who had questioned IPS officer Anjana Krishna's educational and caste certificates based on which she cleared the UPSC exam, on Saturday retracted his comments and apologised. A row erupted when Deputy Chief Minister and NCP president Ajit Pawar rebuked Krishna, sub-divisional police officer of Karmala, over the phone and asked her to stop action against illegal soil excavation. Facing flak after the video went viral, Pawar on Friday said he did not want to interfere but was trying to de-escalate a tense situation. Mitkari had tweeted that he had sought information from the UPSC on Anjana Krishna's educational and caste certificates, based on which she cleared UPSC examinations. The video, aired by Marathi news channels, showed Krishna talking to Pawar on a local NCP worker's phone. She did not recognise his voice at first. Pawar then made a video call to the police officer, and purportedly asked her in a stern tone to stop action against the illegal excavation of 'murrum' soil.

PM MODI PAYS TRIBUTE TO SREE NARAYANA GURU ON BIRTH ANNIVERSARY



Diary Times Desk : On the birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today recalled his vision and impact on society. In a social media post, Mr. Modi said that his teachings of equality, compassion and universal brotherhood resonate widely. The Prime Minister said that Narayana Guru's call for social reform and furthering education continues to inspire generations.

KID POPPING OUT OF RUNNING CAR'S SUNROOF GETS HIT BY TRAFFIC BARRIER IN BENGALURU, NETIZENS SLAM, 'IRRESPONSIBLE PARENTING'

Diary Times Desk : A new viral video is surfacing on the Internet from Bengaluru which is being criticised for bad parenting, as a kid was seen popping out of the car's sunroof and was unknowingly hit by a traffic barrier. There are no reports if the boy was injured or not. The incident is said to be from Bengaluru's Vidyanarayana. The onlooker reported that the car speed off with a kid popping out of sunroof and was suddenly hit by the traffic barrier.

THE WEST'S LAST TANTRUM AND ASIA'S INEVITABLE DAWN

Diary Times Desk : Donald Trump, in a fit of pique that has become his trademark, recently labelled the Indo-US trade relationship "a totally one-sided disaster!" The irony is, for once, he may have stumbled upon a grain of truth—just not the one he intended. His administration's decision to slap a punitive 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods is indeed part of a disaster, but it is a disaster of the West's own making. It is the desperate, flailing tantrum of a fading power, and it has done more to re-align the world order than two decades of diplomatic hand-wringing. It has pushed India to finally look in the mirror and then look next door, to China. Western powers constantly lecture us about who our friends should be. The latest absurdity is being penalised for purchasing Russian oil, a move India's foreign ministry rightly pointed out is steeped in hypocrisy, noting "it is revealing that the very nations criticising India are themselves indulging in trade with Russia."

KERALA'S CHILD MORTALITY RATE LOWER THAN THAT OF US, SAYS HEALTH MINISTER VEENA GEORGE

Diary Times Desk : Kerala's child mortality rate is now less than that of the US. "Kerala's child mortality rate is 5 per 1,000 births, lowest in the country as per the latest Sample Registration System report. Infant mortality rate for the United States is 5.6. Kerala's mortality is lower than that of developed countries," Health Minister Veena George said in a statement on Saturday. The minister congratulated health workers and other stakeholders who worked for this. Kerala's infant mortality rate is below 4 pc as against the national figure of 18. This too is on a par with developed countries. Kerala could bring down the child mortality rate from 6 in 2021 to 5. The minister said the government was giving much importance to infant, child and maternal care. Steps were taken to raise the standards of all hospitals with delivery care. Sixteen hospitals in the state won national LaQshya certification and six hospitals won national MusQan certification.

MEET PARUL DHADWAL, FIFTH-GENERATION WOMAN OFFICER COMMISSIONED INTO ARMY

Diary Times Desk : The Parameswaran Drill Square of Officers Training Academy (OTA), Chennai, witnessed a proud moment on Saturday as 155 Officer Cadets, including 25 women, were commissioned into the Indian Army during a spectacular Passing Out Parade. Additionally, nine foreign officer cadets and 12 foreign officer cadets (women) from nine friendly foreign countries successfully completed their training, fostering bonds of camaraderie and cooperation across international borders. The event also made history with the commissioning of Lieutenant Parul Dhadwal, the first woman officer from her illustrious military family's fifth generation, into the Army Ordnance Corps. A total of 130 male cadets and 25 women cadets completed their rigorous training, embodying the Army's values of duty, courage, and sacrifice. The immaculate parade, reviewed by Air Force Chief Amar Preet Singh, showcased precision and discipline.

SUPREME COURT TO HEAR PETITIONS AGAINST SIR IN BIHAR ON MONDAY

Diary Times Desk : The Supreme Court will take up on Monday petitions challenging the Election Commission's June 24 notification for conducting Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar. A Bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi will consider the response of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), AIMIM and other petitioners on the EC's claim that 99.5 per cent of the 7.24 crore electors in the draft electoral roll had already filed their eligibility documents.

The top court earlier had directed the poll panel to allow those excluded from the draft roll to submit their claims through the online mode, besides making physical submissions in the SIR exercise. Amid demands from opposition political parties for extension of time for filing claims and objections with regard to SIR of Electoral Rolls in Bihar, the EC had told the Supreme Court that it can be done even after the September 1 deadline. Senior counsel Rakesh Dwivedi, representing the poll panel, however, told the Bench that such claims and objections filed beyond the deadline will be considered after finalisation of the electoral rolls. Any extension of the deadline will lead to disruption of the entire SIR exercise and finalisation of the final electoral roll, Dwivedi had told the Bench, requesting it not to extend the deadline, saying it may become a never-ending process, if extended.

SMOKE SEEN RISING FROM UKRAINE'S CABINET BUILDING AFTER RUSSIAN STRIKES



Diary Times Desk : United States Navy SEALs shot and killed several North Korean civilians during a botched mission in 2019 to plant a listening device in the nuclear-armed country, reportedly approved by US President Donald Trump, a leading US news outlet reports.

The New York Times reported on Friday that the classified mission was carried out by the US Navy's SEAL Team 6 during high-stakes diplomatic negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang in early 2019.

The elite special forces unit – the same one that killed former al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in 2011 – was tasked with covertly going ashore in North Korea and planting a listening device to spy on the country's leadership.

But working in the dead of night with blackout communications, a series of errors led to civilians – several North Koreans reportedly diving for shellfish – inadvertently coming across the US special forces as they splashed ashore.

The SEALs opened fire, killing all those on board a small fishing vessel, the Times report said, without specifying the number of casualties.

A Russian drone attack on Saturday evening in Zaporizhzhia in the southeast wounded at least 15 people, four of whom were hospitalised, said Ivan Fedorov, head of the military administration in the region, which is partially occupied by Russia.

He published images of shattered residential buildings.

Peace efforts stall

The barrage came after two dozen countries, led by France and Britain, pledged Thursday to join a "reassurance" force to patrol any agreement to end the war, unleashed by Moscow's February 2022 invasion.

Kyiv says security guarantees, backed by Western troops, are crucial to any peace deal to ensure Russia does not invade again in the future.

TRUMP QUIETLY PREPARING TO TRAVEL NEXT MONTH TO SOUTH KOREA, WHERE HE COULD SIT DOWN WITH CHINA'S LEADER

Diary Times Desk : President Donald Trump and his top advisers are quietly preparing to travel to South Korea in October for the gathering of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation trade ministers, three Trump administration officials told CNN.

The summit, set to be held in the city of Gyeongju between late October and early November, is viewed as a key opportunity for Trump to meet with Chinese leader Xi Jinping. The officials said there have been serious discussions about a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of APEC, but no firm plans are in place. In a phone call last month, Xi invited Trump and his wife to visit China, an invitation the US president reciprocated, though no dates have been set.

Details are still being finalized and it's unclear whether the president may add other stops on the trip. The officials said the administration is also viewing it as an opportunity for the president to clinch more economic investments in the US – something that has been a key focus of his recent trips abroad, including during his trip to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

"A visit to South Korea is being discussed, which would focus on economic collaboration," a White House official told CNN. Other goals include a focus on discussions around trade, defense and civil nuclear cooperation, the official said.

Trump's presence in the region could also put him in a position to sit down once again with North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un, though whether Kim attends is still a question. Officials say more attention is being placed on organizing a potential meeting with Xi.

YEMEN'S HOUTHIS CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR DRONE ATTACK ON ISRAELI AIRPORT

Diary Times Desk : Yemen's Houthi group has claimed responsibility for a drone strike against Israel's Ramon Airport near the Red Sea city of Eilat that injured two people.

The attack on Sunday, which targeted the arrivals hall, had halted operations at the airport for around two hours.

"A drone targeted Ramon Airport, which, by Allah's grace, directly hit the airport and caused the airport to shut down and halt air traffic," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said in a statement.

He added that the attack was part of a broader drone operation that also targeted other sites in southern Israel.

Saree vowed that the Houthis will "escalate" their attacks against Israel in support of Palestinians in Gaza.

SOUTH KOREA REACHES DEAL TO RELEASE NATIONALS DETAINED IN HYUNDAI RAID IN US

Diary Times Desk : South Korea's government says it has reached an agreement with the US to release its citizens detained in a massive immigration raid at a Hyundai plant in Georgia.

The chief of staff of South Korea's president said a chartered plane would be sent to bring the detainees home if administration procedures were completed.

Kang Hoon-sik said the authorities were trying to improve the visa system to prevent such incidents in the future.

US officials detained 475 people – more than 300 of them South Korean nationals – who they said were found to be illegally working at the battery facility, one of the largest foreign investment projects in the state. The White House has defended the operation, dismissing concerns that the raid could deter foreign investment.

"They were illegal aliens and ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] was just doing its job," President Donald Trump said following the raids on Friday.

Video released by ICE officials showed Asian workers shackled in front of a building, with some wearing yellow vests with names such as "Hyundai" and "LG CNS".

JAPAN PM SHIGERU ISHIBA STEPS DOWN, BOWS TO PRESSURE AFTER POLL SETBACKS



Diary Times Desk : Under fire over back-to-back election losses, Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba stepped down Sunday. His resignation throws the ruling Liberal Democratic Party into a leadership battle at a turbulent time.

"I have decided to resign from my position as president of the Liberal Democratic Party," Ishiba said at a televised press conference. "I have told Secretary-General Morioka to carry out the procedures for a presidential election... I would like him to begin the process of selecting a new president."

The 68-year-old leader, who took office last October, had resisted calls to quit for weeks, warning that stepping down would create a political vacuum at a time when Japan faces "big challenges" – including US tariffs, rising prices, rice policy reforms and growing regional tensions.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SOUTH AMERICA AND WHY US IS SENDING WARSHIPS THERE

Diary Times Desk : The United States is continuing to boost its military forces near Venezuela to combat threats from Latin American drug cartels -- even after a US strike destroyed what President Donald Trump said was a drug-carrying boat operated by the Tren de Aragua gang. The US government has not signalled any planned land incursion from the thousands of personnel being deployed, and analysts and current and former government officials see no possibility of an invasion in Venezuela.

Still, Trump hailed an attack this past week that killed 11 people aboard a boat that had departed Venezuela, a rare instance of US military action in the Americas, and said "Venezuela has been a very bad actor."

Tensions have also dominated conversations in the streets and at dinner tables in Venezuela, where an alleged threat of invasion is spilling over from social media and state television. The government has capitalised on the speculation by appealing to people, primarily its diminishing base, to enlist in a beleaguered militia. The opposition is again characterising US actions as a sign of President Nicolas Maduro's rule nearing an end.

'WE ARE THE TROOPS': INSIDE CHICAGO'S SPLIT COMMUNITIES AS TRUMP
VOWS TO DEPLOY NATIONAL GUARD

Diary Times Desk : On the South Side of Chicago, few people seemed braced for President Donald Trump's troops.

But many here would tell you about another battle - one for the souls of the young.

We drove through neighbourhoods notorious for their levels of violent crime. In one, Bronzeville, we went to the spot where seven people were shot and wounded in a drive-by attack last weekend.

It was a block from Chicago Police HQ. The casualties were among at least 58 people shot, eight fatally, across the city over the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Rob White, a coach to young men trying to reverse their slide into gangs, told us: "You can imagine how the residents feel like with this [stuff] happening right up under their nose," referring to the attack that took place close to a giant, fortified police building.



MICROSOFT AZURE CLOUD SERVICE
DISRUPTED BY MULTIPLE FIBRE CUTS
IN RED SEA



Diary Times Desk : Microsoft announced on Saturday that some Azure users might experience higher latency because of multiple undersea fibre cuts in the Red Sea.

Azure users may experience increased disruptions when traffic from the Middle East originates in or terminates in Asia or Europe, the company said in a service health status update. Multiple subsea fibre optic cables in the Red Sea suffered simultaneous cuts on September 6, disrupting global internet and communications traffic. While connectivity remains available, rerouting has resulted in increased latency and congestion on key routes.

"Undersea fibre cuts can take time to repair, as such we will continuously monitor, rebalance, and optimise routing to reduce customer impact in the meantime. We'll continue to provide daily updates, or sooner if conditions change," Microsoft said.

"DON'T GIVE A SH*T": JD VANCE
DISMISSES CRITICS AFTER 11 KILLED IN
US STRIKE

Diary Times Desk : US Vice President JD Vance has defended the United States' deadly airstrike on an alleged Venezuelan drug-smuggling boat in the Caribbean, saying he "doesn't give a sh*t" if critics call it a war crime.

"Killing cartel members who poison our fellow citizens is the highest and best use of our military," JD Vance wrote on X on Saturday, a day after the administration confirmed that an airstrike had destroyed a quad-motor watercraft off Venezuela, killing 11 people.

The Donald Trump administration said the vessel was part of the Tren de Aragua gang, which the president recently designated a terrorist organisation. Trump claimed its members were working with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to ship drugs into the US. Political commentator Brian Krassenstein argued on X that "killing the citizens of another nation who are civilians without any due process is called a war crime." Vance replied, "I don't give a sh*t what you call it." International law experts warn the strike may breach the UN Charter, which permits force only in self-defence or with Security Council approval. Critics note there is no evidence the boat posed an imminent threat.

THOUSANDS THrong
JERUSALEM TO PRESS
NETANYAHU TO MAKE
HOSTAGE RELEASE DEAL

Diary Times Desk : More than 15,000 people have taken to the streets in Israel to call for an end to the war in Gaza and urge Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to agree to a deal to free the remaining hostages.

Families and supporters of the hostages still being held by Hamas thronged Jerusalem's Paris Square, with others gathering in Tel Aviv.

Of the 48 hostages still being held in Gaza, as many as 20 are believed to be alive.

Israel has yet to formally respond to a deal that would see the release of some hostages, but has previously demanded the return of all the hostages in any agreement.

Netanyahu insists total victory over Hamas will bring the hostages home.

Hamas took 251 hostages back to Gaza after its attack in southern Israel on 7 October 2023, in which some 1,200 people died.

CHILLING VIDEO SHOWS
UKRAINIAN REFUGEE
STABBED TO DEATH ON
AMERICAN TRAIN

Diary Times Desk : She fled the devastation of war in Ukraine hoping to build a safer life in America. Weeks later, 23-year-old Iryna Zarutka was brutally stabbed to death on a train by a career criminal. The attack was caught on surveillance camera.

The footage, made public Friday by the Charlotte Area Transit System, captures the final moments before Ms Zarutka was ambushed on the Lynx Blue Line before 10 pm on August 22 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Dressed in her pizzeria uniform, Ms Zarutka boarded the light rail at 9:46 pm and sat down, scrolling on her phone. Behind her, 34-year-old Decarlos Brown Jr waited. Four minutes later, he pulled out a folding knife and lunged forward, stabbing her three times, at least once in the neck, police said.



CABLE SNAPPED BEFORE LISBON FUNICULAR CRASH, INVESTIGATORS SAY

Diary Times Desk : Portuguese officials investigating Wednesday's deadly funicular crash in Lisbon say a cable along the railway's route snapped, but the rest of the mechanism was functioning properly.

"After examining the wreckage at the site, it was immediately determined that the cable connecting the two carriages had given way," a statement by the national transport safety office said.

The brakeman tried to apply emergency brakes but failed to prevent the derailment, the investigators add.

Sixteen people died and about 20 were injured when the upper carriage of the iconic yellow Glória funicular railway crashed into a building.

Five of those killed were Portuguese along with three Britons, two South Koreans, two Canadians, an American, a Ukrainian, a Swiss and a French national, police said.

The 140-year-old funicular is designed to travel up and down Lisbon's steep slopes, and is an important form of transport for the city's residents - and a popular tourist attraction.

Although the brakeman activated the pneumatic brakes and a manual brake when the cable came loose, it is not clear whether another, automatic brake came on as it was supposed to, the report states.



ZELENSKYJ REJECTS PUTIN'S MOSCOW INVITATION, SAYS 'KYIV IS THE PLACE TO TALK'

Diary Times Desk : Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has turned down Russian President Vladimir Putin's invitation to meet in Moscow, calling the proposed venue a signal that Russia is not genuinely interested in negotiations.

"I can't go to the capital of this terrorist," Zelenskyy told US media, noting that Ukraine continues to face daily missile strikes and bombardment. "(Putin) can come to Kyiv," he added, as quoted by EuroNews.

Trump's push for direct talks

US President Donald Trump has been lobbying for face-to-face talks between the Russian and Ukrainian leaders. One of the stated goals of Trump's recent summit with Putin in Alaska was to pave the way for either bilateral or trilateral discussions involving Zelenskyy.

Moscow doubles down on invitation

This week, Putin said he was "ready" to meet Zelenskyy but insisted on Moscow as the location. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov clarified that the Ukrainian leader had been invited "to talk, not to capitulate," EuroNews reported.

Zelenskyy, however, pushed back. Speaking in Paris after the "coalition of the resolute" summit, he remarked: "I believe that if you want the meeting not to take place, you should invite me to Moscow." Even so, he said that Moscow's willingness to discuss a personal meeting at all was a small step forward.

PAKISTANIS SAY MUNIR'S 'DUMPER TRUCK' STATEMENT DAMAGED COUNTRY'S IMAGE: REPORT

Diary Times Desk : Pakistan's public has been hurling criticism at their Army chief, Field Marshal Asmi Munir, over his recent remarks comparing the country to a "dumper truck" on the international front. During his recent engagements with the Saudi Arabia delegation, Munir, while comparing Pakistan to a "dumper truck", called India a "shining Mercedes", which sparked outrage among Pakistani citizens as people accused him of damaging the country's global image.

"India is like a shining Mercedes, but we are like a dumper truck loaded with stones; imagine what happens when the two collide," Munir had reportedly said during his meeting with the Saudi delegation. Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi quickly repeated his remarks, leading to memes, satire, and criticism on social media, including AI-generated images of a Mercedes beside an overturned dumper, Uzbekistan-based Zamin reported.

UNDERSEA CABLES CUT IN RED SEA, DISRUPTING INTERNET ACCESS IN ASIA, WEST ASIA



Diary Times Desk : Undersea cable cuts in the Red Sea disrupted internet access in parts of Asia and the Middle East, experts said Sunday, though it wasn't immediately clear what caused the incident. There has been concern about the cables being targeted in a Red Sea campaign by Yemen's Houthi rebels, which the rebels describe as an effort to pressure Israel to end its war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. But the Houthis have denied attacking the lines in the past.

POPE LEO XIV DECLARES 15-YEAR-OLD COMPUTER WHIZ WHO DIED IN 2006 A SAINT

Diary Times Desk : A teenager who died of leukaemia in 2006 became the first Catholic saint of the millennial generation on Sunday, in a Vatican ceremony led by Pope Leo and attended by an estimated 70,000 young worshippers from dozens of countries.

Carlo Acutis, a British-born Italian boy who died aged 15, learned computer code to build websites to spread his faith. His story has drawn wide attention from Catholic youth, and he is now at the same level as Mother Teresa and Francis of Assisi. Leo, the first U.S. pontiff, canonized Acutis on Sunday along with Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young Italian man who was known for helping those in need and died of polio in the 1920s. In impromptu remarks to crowds in St. Peter's Square at the opening of the event, Leo said Acutis and Frassati were examples of holiness, and of helping those in need.

"All of you, all of us together, are called to be saints," the pontiff told the young crowd, which had spilled out of the square down the main boulevard into the Vatican from Rome. "Carlo ... loved to say that heaven has always been waiting for us, and that to love tomorrow is to give the best of ourselves today," Leo said in a later sermon. The two new saints, said the pope, "are an invitation to all of us, especially young people, not to squander our lives, but to direct them upwards (to heaven)".



GODFATHER OF AI WARNS OF 'MASSIVE' UNEMPLOYMENT AS CORPORATE PROFITS SOAR

Diary Times Desk : Geoffrey Hinton, regarded by many as the 'godfather of artificial intelligence' (AI), has stated that the rise of technology will make companies more profitable than ever, but it may come at a cost. Responsible for laying the foundations of machine learning that is powering today's AI-based products, Mr Hinton warned that profits will come at the expense of workers who will lose their jobs, with unemployment almost certainly rising to catastrophic levels.

"What's actually going to happen is rich people are going to use AI to replace workers," Mr Hinton said in an interview with the Financial Times.

"It's going to create massive unemployment and a huge rise in profits. It will make a few people much richer and most people poorer. That's not AI's fault, that is the capitalist system."

Mr Hinton, who won the Nobel prize last year, has long been sounding the alarm about AI and how it could wreck the global economy if it is left unchecked.

'WANNABE DICTATOR': ILLINOIS GOVERNOR CALLS OUT TRUMP AS US PRESIDENT THREATENS 'WAR' AGAINST CHICAGO

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump's plan to dispatch National Guard troops and immigration agents into Chicago has put many Latino residents on edge, prompting some to carry their US passports while giving others pause about openly celebrating the upcoming Mexican Independence Day.

Though the holiday falls on September 16, celebrations in Chicago span more than a week and draw hundreds of thousands of participants. The festivities kicked off with a Saturday parade through the heavily Mexican Pilsen neighbourhood and will continue with car caravans and lively street parties. But this year, the typically joyful period coincides with Trump's threats to add Chicago to the list of other Democratic-led cities he has targeted for expanded federal enforcement. His administration has said it will step up immigration enforcement in Chicago, as it did in Los Angeles, and would deploy National Guard troops.

ONE IN THREE EUROPEANS NOW USES TIKTOK, ACCORDING TO THE CHINESE TECH GIANT

Diary Times Desk :

TikTok has more than 200 million monthly users in Europe, or roughly one in three citizens on the continent, the short video app platform said on Friday, the latest sign of its rapid growth among teenagers.

That is up from 175 million people last year, among users in 32 European countries. TikTok, owned by Chinese technology behemoth ByteDance, has more than 1 billion users globally who visit monthly, a spokesperson said.

While the company has faced regulatory challenges worldwide, it has faced particular ire from US President Donald Trump, who is pushing for divestment of its assets there.

In Europe, TikTok was fined 530 million euros (\$600 million) by its lead EU privacy regulator in May.

ByteDance is set to launch an employee share buyback that will value the Chinese firm at more than \$330 billion, Reuters reported in late August.

US OPEN ASKS BROADCASTERS TO AVOID CROWD REACTIONS TO TRUMP DURING MEN'S FINALS MATCH

Diary Times Desk :

The last time President Trump attended a US Open match, as a presidential candidate in 2015, the booing was so loud that multiple news outlets wrote stories about the critical crowd reaction. ESPN's live broadcast lingered on shots of Trump during a quarterfinal match.

Trump will be back on Sunday afternoon, attending the men's final, prompting a question: What will ABC show and how?

The tennis championship, a beloved event in Trump's hometown borough of Queens in deep-blue New York City, attracts a different crowd than, say, the UFC fighting matches that Trump has attended in recent months.

Whether Trump is met by jeers or cheers at Arthur Ashe Stadium on Sunday, the US Tennis Association says it wants the focus to be on the court.

AMERICA WILL REFUND ABOUT 'HALF THE TARIFFS' IF SCOTUS RULES TRUMP OVERSTEPS, BESSENT SAYS



Diary Times Desk :

The Treasury Department will issue rebates if the Supreme Court upholds a ruling that President Donald Trump's "reciprocal" tariffs were an overstep of power, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Sunday.

"We would have to give a refund on about half the tariffs, which would be terrible for the Treasury," Bessent said during an appearance on NBC News' "Meet the Press."

He added that, "If the court says it, we'd have to do it."

But there are "numerous other avenues" that can be taken on tariffs, though they would "diminish President Trump's negotiating position," Bessent said, without citing details.

During an appearance on CBS News' "Face the Nation," National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett said there are "other legal authorities" to implement tariffs if the Supreme Court does not rule in favor of the Trump administration. He suggested "Section 232" investigations, which were used to implement steel and aluminum tariffs, among other options.

OPEC+ WILL LIKELY RAISE OIL OUTPUT FURTHER FROM OCTOBER, SOURCES SAY

Diary Times Desk :

OPEC+ will likely raise oil output on Sunday but probably add less oil from October than in recent months as global demand might be slowing with the end of the driving season, OPEC+ sources said on Saturday.

OPEC+ has reversed its strategy of output cuts from April and has already raised quotas by about 2.5 million barrels per day, about 2.4% of world demand, to boost market share and under pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to lower oil prices.

But those increases have failed to significantly dent oil prices, which are trading near \$66 a barrel supported by Western sanctions on Russia and Iran, encouraging further production gains in rivals such as the United States.

Another output boost would mean OPEC+, which pumps about half of the world's oil, would begin to unwind a second layer of cuts of about 1.65 million bpd, more than a year ahead of schedule.

Talks are focusing on unwinding that whole cut in gradual monthly increments and the group has reached an agreement in principle to raise output by at least 135,000 bpd from October, two sources said.

A third OPEC+ source the October's hike could be closer to 200,000-350,000 bpd.

At their last meeting in August, OPEC+ raised production by 547,000 bpd for September.

OPEC+, which includes the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries plus Russia and other allies, will hold an online meeting on Sunday at 1230 GMT.

WHY TESLA JUST THREW \$1 TRILLION AT ELON MUSK

Diary Times Desk : That's what the Tesla board of directors have decided to offer CEO Elon Musk. They unveiled a new pay package Friday for shareholders to consider that could give Musk up to 423.7 million additional shares of Tesla stock in the next decade.

Those potential shares might "only" be worth \$148.7 billion as of Friday's closing price. But if Tesla shares appreciate as much as the pay package forecasts, they would be worth close to \$1 trillion once Tesla hits certain milestones: He gets all of those shares only if Tesla becomes worth \$8.5 trillion, about eight times as much as it is today, and twice as much as any company on the planet has ever been worth.

The company's board says in its filing to shareholders that it needs to offer Musk a historic pay package or risk losing the leader who has become synonymous – for better or worse – with the Tesla brand.

The board said that during the negotiations on the pay package, "Musk also raised the possibility that he may pursue other interests that may afford him greater influence if he did not receive such assurances."

The board said it "believes that Mr. Musk singularly possesses the leadership characteristics necessary to transform Tesla and realize its long-term mission at an unparalleled level."

"The simple message the board is sending to Elon: 'We want your attention on Tesla,'" wrote Gene Munster, managing partner at Deepwater Asset Management in a note Friday. "Implicit in that message is the promise that he'll have the control he's been seeking (a 25% stake) and that it will be worth his time."

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS TO RESUME
CLASSES ON SEPTEMBER
9

Diary Times Desk : All government schools in Punjab will reopen for students on Tuesday (September 9), said Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains today.

After reviewing the flood situation, Bains said though classes will resume on September 9, teachers have been called for duty on September 8 (Monday) to assess the condition of their respective schools and get the premises cleaned. However, private schools have been allowed to call students on Monday (September 8), provided they guarantee the safety of students and ensure their buildings are completely safe.

Schools across Punjab have been closed since August 27 due to heavy rains and floods. Announcing the decision to reopen schools, colleges and universities, Bains wrote on X: "All government, private, and aided schools, colleges, and universities in the state will reopen as usual from tomorrow (Monday). If any school or college is affected by floods, the decision to close it will be made by the respective district's Deputy Commissioner."

ACTOR SONU SOOD
PROMISES SUPPORT TO
FLOOD-HIT FARMERS IN
SULTANPUR LODHI

Diary Times Desk : Several houses collapsed in Mand Baupur village of Sultanpur Lodhi constituency after the Beas river overflowed due to recent floods, leaving local farmers devastated. Following an appeal by Charanjit Masih, Chairman of Christian Youth Fellowship Punjab, to Malvika Sood (Moga constituency in-charge) for help, Bollywood actor and philanthropist Sonu Sood, along with Malvika Sood, visited the affected villages of Mand Baupur and Sangra to assess the situation. Expressing solidarity with the victims, Sonu Sood assured that the Sood Foundation would extend full support to the displaced farmers. "Nature's fury has caused immense loss and it is our duty to stand with our farmer brothers.

RAIN ABATES IN MANY PARTS OF NORTH INDIA; RELIEF WORK ON IN
FLOOD-AFFECTED PUNJAB, HIMACHAL

Diary Times Desk : Rain in north India, which has been ravaged by floods triggered by heavy rain in recent weeks, seems to have slowed down, bringing much-needed breather to many parts, including Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, that require urgent relief work to be carried out for people displaced to camps due to the floods. Rajasthan, however, continued to receive heavy to very heavy showers, with the Jaipur Meteorological Centre on Sunday issuing a warning of more intense showers in parts of the state. According to the weather office, a well-marked low-pressure area over the southern part of the state has intensified into a depression, under whose influence, heavy to extremely heavy rain was recorded at isolated places in the southern districts during the past 24 hours. Officials said the highest rainfall of 210 mm was recorded at Sanchore in Jalore district. The met department said heavy rainfall activity may continue in Barmer, Jalore and Jaisalmer districts on Monday. Light rain was witnessed in parts of Himachal Pradesh, with Manali receiving 24.2 mm of rainfall since Saturday evening, which is the highest in the state. Meanwhile, a car carrying three police personnel plunged into the swollen Kshipra river after rain in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain district after skidding off a bridge, officials said. Rain lashed some parts of Punjab on Sunday but the amount of rainfall received was evidently less compared to previous days. Punjab has been among the worst-hit states by this year's monsoons, with hundreds of villages submerged under water due to the swollen Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers and seasonal rivulets.

LOSSES DUE TO NATURAL DISASTERS
IN HIMACHAL DURING MONSOON
CROSS RS 4,000 CRORE

Diary Times Desk : The total loss caused by natural disasters triggered by torrential rains during the monsoon season has breached the Rs 4,000-crore mark in Himachal Pradesh, with total loss now reaching Rs 4,080.97 crore.

As per the Revenue Department, the Public Works Department has been hit the worst as it suffered a total loss of about Rs 2,518.54 crore, followed by Jal Shakti Vibhag, which suffered a loss of Rs 1,254.92 crore till now. The power department has suffered a loss of about Rs 139.46 crore. Till now, at least 203 people have lost their lives as a result of 136 landslides, 95 flash floods and 45 cloudbursts that have been reported across the state since the onset of monsoon season. Also, as many as 826 roads, including two National Highways (NH), remain blocked across the state for vehicular traffic, affecting the road connectivity in many parts of the state. As many as 336 drinking water supply schemes including 130 in Shimla, 79 in Mandi, 63 in Kullu, 42 in Chamba, 11 in Kangra, seven in Solan and four in Hamirpur district also remain disrupted.

APPLE GROWERS STRUGGLE TO TRANSPORT PRODUCE AS 193 ROADS
CLOSED IN MANDI

Diary Times Desk : As many as 28 roads were restored to traffic in Mandi district today. However, transportation remained severely disrupted as 193 roads were still blocked in various subdivisions of the district. The restoration work continued to suffer setbacks due to inclement weather, which turned worse this morning, affecting not only the road clearance work but also the restoration of power and water supply in many parts of the district. According to the latest data acquired from the district administration, Seraj with 73 roads blocked has been the worst affected subdivision, followed by Thalaut with 45 roads blocked and Karsog with 31 roads closed. Sarkaghat and Dharampur subdivisions have 11 and eight roads blocked, respectively. A few roads have also been affected in Gohar, Sundernagar, Padhar, Nerchowk, Mandi and Jogindernagar. The prolonged disruption of road connectivity is taking a heavy toll on daily life and economic activity in the region, particularly in rural and remote areas. Of special concern is the apple-growing belt, where the ongoing harvest season is being severely hampered.

HARBHAJAN SINGH PITCHES IN
WITH RELIEF WORK IN FLOOD-HIT
PUNJAB

Diary Times Desk : Former India spinner and Rajya Sabha MP Harbhajan Singh has stepped in with relief measures for his flood-ravaged home state Punjab, sanctioning boats and ambulances while also mobilising funds through his personal network. Through his MPLAD fund, Harbhajan has sanctioned eight steamer boats for relief operations and added three more from his own resources, a source close to him told PTI. "Harbhajan donated 11 steamer boats in all. Eight from his MPLAD fund and three from his own pocket. Each boat cost around Rs 4.5 lakh to Rs 5.5 lakh. He has also bought three ambulances for smooth transfer of serious patients to nearby hospitals," the source said on condition of anonymity. Punjab has been battling a severe flood situation over the past few weeks, triggered by heavy monsoon rain and breaches in river embankments, leading to large-scale displacement of people and damage to crops. Several districts remain waterlogged, with the state government and voluntary groups pressed into rescue and relief work.



Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Apoorv Devgan has directed the Public Works Department (PWD) and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to expedite the restoration work, particularly on the Kiratpur-Manali National Highway and vital link roads in the apple-producing areas. "Ensuring smooth transportation of the apple crop is the top priority and all departments concerned have been instructed to deploy additional manpower and machinery, wherever necessary," he said. Devgan appealed to local residents, particularly those living in landslide-prone zones, to remain cautious and avoid unnecessary travel until conditions improve.

Israel's Netanyahu Has 'Lost The Plot'

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said Wednesday that his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu has "lost the plot" and that Israel's planned occupation of Gaza City is "utterly unacceptable."

Luxon's comments come as his conservative coalition government weighs whether to join other members of the Five-Eyes security alliance, Australia, Britain and Canada, in moving to recognize a Palestinian state; and as international condemnation and anger builds over Israel's recent decision to expand its war to take control of Gaza City, the throttling of aid and mass starvation in the enclave.

Luxon, who leads the right-leaning National Party, said Netanyahu is "not listening" to the international community's demands for "unfettered" humanitarian aid to be delivered to Gaza.

"I think Netanyahu has gone too far. I think he has lost the plot. And I think what we are seeing overnight with the attack on Gaza City is utterly, utterly unacceptable," Luxon said, in some of his strongest comments against Israel's actions in Gaza to date.

Netanyahu's office has not yet responded to Luxon's comment. But Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Sharron Haskel posted a response on X, saying: "I guess when you don't really need an army because your most deadly enemy is a possum or a cat, you wouldn't comprehend the challenges that come with facing Hamas."

Israel has continued its intense aerial attacks on Gaza this week and Netanyahu's planned military takeover of Gaza City, expected to force up to a million people to leave the city, has been widely condemned.

Chaotic scenes continue to emerge from Gaza, with violence and starvation deepening amid Israel's tight control of aid to the territory. At least 227 people – including 103 children – have died from malnutrition since the beginning of the war, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

Foreign ministers from dozens of countries on Tuesday jointly said that suffering has reached "unimaginable levels" and "famine is unfolding before our eyes" as they demand that Israel allow more aid into Gaza and permit humanitarian organizations to operate there.

Luxon is not the only western leader to openly criticize Israel's Prime Minister in recent days. On Tuesday, Australia's leader Anthony Albanese said he had spoken to Netanyahu but found him to be "in denial" about the human cost of the war in Gaza.

"He (Netanyahu) again reiterated to me what he has said publicly as well, which is to be in denial about the consequences that are occurring for innocent people," Albanese told Australia's public broadcaster ABC.

Earlier this week, Australia announced it would move to recognize Palestinian statehood at the United Nations General Assembly meeting in September, leaving New Zealand as the only member of the Five Eyes security alliance, except the United States, not to pledge to do so. French President Emmanuel Macron has also said France will recognize a Palestinian state in an announcement to the United Nations General Assembly in September.

"The urgent need today is to end the war in Gaza and to rescue the civilian population," said Macron in a July statement, reiterating calls for an immediate ceasefire, access to humanitarian aid for the population of Gaza, the release of all hostages. Washington has found itself increasingly at odds with key western allies over Israel and how the war in Gaza is being conducted. Both Israel and the US have condemned moves to recognize a Palestinian state.



Helen Regan
Former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, who went on to lead the United Nation's Development Program after exiting domestic politics, lambasted Luxon's coalition government.



Rikka Altland

Now, if you're not in the market for a \$1,000 Lego set (and let's be honest, who actually is?), some other kits have recently come out that you may have missed. The following builds pack all the same vibes from a galaxy far, far away, just for price tags you can better justify. There are also all the kits from the recent Lego summer wave.

Star Wars Death Star Lego Just Revealed Its Most Expensive

Today, Lego announced the set that builders like myself have been waiting for all year: the upcoming Lego Ultimate Collection Series Star Wars Death Star. It's the very first Lego set to cross into the realm of a four-figure price tag at \$1,000, and with 9,023 pieces, there is so much to unpack. As someone who plans to buy this kit when it hits store shelves in October, I am taking a closer look to see just how far my cash will take me with this impressive display model.

That's no moon! It's the newest set in the Lego Ultimate Collectors Series, or UCS for short. And while this isn't the first Lego Death Star set released, it is certainly the biggest. The company has released a few of these models over the past 25 years of Lego Star Wars sets, ranging from kits with several thousand bricks down to smaller models that could fit on your desk. Now the brand is stepping into uncharted territory with its largest set ever.

While this technically isn't the Lego set with the most pieces, it is certainly the biggest model ever crafted by the company's team of builders. The current record holder for most bricks is the World Map, but considering that the mosaic is made from



Senior deals editor Rikka Altland has been building Lego since before she could form full sentences. She has also been writing about Lego professionally for nearly a decade and has been collecting kits for almost twice as long.

over 11,000 single studs, the new Death Star is still just as impressive as you'd expect from its stats.

Deemed set number 75419, the new Death Star includes over 9,000 bricks and comes packed with references to all three of the Original Trilogy movies, as well as some side projects like "Rogue One" and even the Lego Star Wars video games. The model isn't a perfect sphere like its on-screen inspiration but instead assembles a cross section of the fully armed and operational battle station first seen in "Star Wars: A New Hope." At 28 inches tall and 32 inches wide, the model packs in over 15 rooms that re-create various scenes from a galaxy far, far away. Highlights span everything from the iconic trash compactor setting from the original flick all the way to the showdown in the Emperor's Throne Room in "Return of the Jedi." There are even a few hidden rooms with Easter eggs for more dedicated Star Wars fans like myself.

To really fill in the space, Lego is also including 38 minifigures. It's the most that a Lego set has ever included by a fairly wide margin and puts the measly 21 figures included in the Lego Star Wars Mos Eisley Cantina from a few years ago to shame. There are, of course, staples like Luke Skywalker, Han Solo and Princess Leia, but I am far more excited about some first-ever releases, including Lego versions of Galen Erso from "Rogue One" and the Hot Tub Stormtrooper from the Lego Star Wars video games.

The new Lego UCS Star Wars Death Star will be officially hitting store shelves next month on Oct. 4. Lego Insiders (the company's free rewards program) will be able to score this one a few days early on Oct. 1. It clocks in with an incredibly steep \$1,000 price tag that surpasses previous kits like the UCS Millennium Falcon and UCS AT-AT, which both sold for \$850, the previous record for a Lego set.

We're in uncharted territory for the hobby. As I said above, this is the first time Lego has dared to release a set this expensive. I don't think that just anyone should run out and buy this as soon as possible, so definitely wait for a review.

INFA

Eurozone Crisis

FRANCE IS ENTERING CRISIS MODE AGAIN



Melissa Bell

"It sounds as if a regime change is inevitable yet I can't see how it will come about and who would do the job. We are in a phase of transition between a system that no longer works and a system no one can imagine."

It was a question famously asked by France's wartime leader and former President Charles de Gaulle. "How can anyone govern a country with 246 varieties of cheese?" More than 60 years on, the answer appears to be no one.

With yet another government on the brink, France has, it seems, become ungovernable. On Monday, Francois Bayrou, less than a year into his job, looks set to become the fourth prime minister to depart in just 20 months. His fate now rests on a confidence vote in parliament that, if lost, would cement a record under the Fifth Republic and leave the country's president Emmanuel Macron weaker than ever.

Bayrou called the vote in a bid to push through an unpopular 44 billion euros savings plan that includes scrapping two public holidays and freezing spending. He says it's a matter of "national survival," warning that France must get a grip on its spiraling debt, since "for 20 years, each hour of each day and each night has seen the debt grow by 12 million euros extra."

These may be alarmist words designed to spur the country's fractious political classes into urgent action, even though budget reform was precisely

what claimed the scalp of his predecessor, Michel Barnier. The European Union's chief negotiator who kept the bloc united in the wake of Britain's tortured vote to leave the European Union in 2016, lasted only three months as PM, failing to climb that much steeper mountain of getting the French to accept sweeping spending cuts. And yet the current instability can be traced back to Macron's dramatic decision to call a snap election last year. Piqued by the remarkable results of the far-right National Rally in the European elections of May 2024, the French president forced a parliamentary vote in which his own party lost seats to the far right and far left, leaving France with a divided Assembly.

But it didn't have to be this way. The Fifth Republic, founded by President de Gaulle in 1958, was designed to end the chronic instability that had plagued France's Third and Fourth republics earlier in the 20th century. The new constitution gave broad powers to the executive and set up a majority system to avoid short-lived governments. As a result, for decades, two mainstream parties on the left and right alternated in power.



Macron blew up that order in 2017, by becoming the first president elected without the backing of either of the main established political parties. Re-elected in 2022, he soon lost his parliamentary majority as voters flocked to the extremes. Two years of fragile rule followed, with Macron repeatedly forced to invoke Article 49.3 of the constitution – pushing legislation through without a vote, to the increasing displeasure of opposition lawmakers and much of the French public.

In the 2024 snap election, the left won most seats in the second round but still fell short of a majority after the far right dominated the first. But their hopes of forming a minority government collapsed when Macron refused to accept their choice of prime minister. Unlike Germany or Italy, France has no tradition of coalition-building, its politics shaped for more than 60 years by a presidency-dominated system.

The political climate is bleak. In the event of another snap parliamentary election, a recent Elabe poll suggests the National Rally would emerge on top, with the left coming in second and the center a distant third.

PIASTRI TOLD TO LET NORRIS PAST AS VERSTAPPEN WINS

Diary Times Desk : McLaren told Oscar Piastri to let Lando Norris past in a team orders controversy which overshadowed Max Verstappen's Italian Grand Prix victory.

They ordered Piastri to cede second place to team-mate Norris after a slow pit stop dropped the Briton behind the Australian after he had been running in second for most of the race.

McLaren unconventionally pitted Piastri before Norris as they left their pit stops late in the race in the hope of a safety car that could give them a chance to attack Red Bull's Verstappen.

But after Piastri had a clean stop on lap 45 with eight to go, when Norris stopped a lap later, a fault with a wheel gun delayed him, and his stop was four seconds longer than his team-mate's.



ALCARAZ & SINNER SET FOR GRAND SLAM TRILOGY IN NEW YORK

Diary Times Desk : Long before either player won a major title, Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz had already been identified as the rivalry to lead men's tennis into the post 'Big Three' landscape.

An electric night at the US Open three years ago was the first real sign why.

"If this match is the future of men's tennis, we are in for a great era ahead," read a tournament tweet after Alcaraz edged a five-set quarter-final thriller that finished at almost 3am local time.

'Sin-caraz' was born.

On Sunday, the pair return to Arthur Ashe Stadium to contest this year's US Open final - the third successive Grand Slam showpiece between them.

"I feel like our rivalry started here playing an amazing match," said Italian world number one Sinner.

"We are two different players now, with different confidence too. Let's see what's coming."

The embryonic potential of 2022 has developed into the real deal in 2025.

PSG CRITICISE 'AVOIDABLE' DOUE AND DEMBELE INJURIES

Diary Times Desk : Paris St-Germain have accused the France national team of ignoring risks around Ousmane Dembele and Desire Doue that led to the pair sustaining "avoidable" injuries during their World Cup qualifying win over Ukraine. Dembele has been ruled out for around six weeks with a "serious" hamstring injury, while Doue is sidelined for about four weeks, according to the French club.

They are set to miss several key matches, including the opening fixture in the defence of their Champions League title.

In a statement,, external the European champions said they had sent a letter to the French Football Federation calling for a "more transparent and collaborative" coordination on medical protocol between clubs and the national team. PSG added they had "sent the federation concrete medical information, even before the French national team began training, on the acceptable workload and injury risks for its players".

The statement said: "The club regrets that these medical recommendations were not taken into account by the French national team's medical staff and that there was a total lack of consultation with its medical teams."

ARYNA SABALENKA DEFEATS AMANDA ANISIMOVA FOR 2ND CONSECUTIVE US OPEN TITLE



Diary Times Desk : Aryna Sabalenka did not make many mistakes - well, until near the end - despite not sacrificing any power, and outplayed Amanda Anisimova for a 6-3, 7-6 (3) victory in the U.S. Open final Saturday, making her the first woman to win the tournament in consecutive years since Serena Williams more than a decade ago. The No. 1-ranked Sabalenka picked up the fourth Grand Slam title of her career, all on hard courts. This was not all smooth sailing, though. Sabalenka twice led by a break in the second set, and served for the win at 5-4. But at 30-all, so close to the trophy, she had a chance to hit an overhead and get to match point. Instead, while backpedaling, Sabalenka put the ball into the net, giving Anisimova a break chance. After that excruciating miss, Sabalenka dropped her racket on the blue court and smiled a rueful smile. A moment later, Anisimova - a 24-year-old American - converted the break to get to 5-all and shook her left fist while 24,000 or so of her closest friends in Arthur Ashe Stadium rose to applaud and shout.

CRISTIANO RONALDO ASSERTS SUPREMACY OVER LIONEL MESSI, SCRIPTS ANOTHER STUNNING RECORD

Diary Times Desk : Cristiano Ronaldo, arguably the greatest goalscorer of all time, added another brace to his off-the-charts tally of goals for the national team as Portugal thumped Armenia 5-0 in a FIFA World Cup qualifier match. Ronaldo looked at his absolute best, leading the attack line for Portugal as their No. 9. Ronaldo scored a couple of goals in the match, including a long-range screamer, to confirm that he still has what it takes to compete at the top level. In the process, Ronaldo also went past his arch-rival Lionel Messi in the list of top goalscorers in FIFA World Cup qualifiers. At the start of the Portugal vs Armenia match in Manchester on Saturday, Ronaldo and Messi were tied at the second spot, with 36 goals each, in the list of players with the most goals scored in FIFA World Cup qualifiers. With a brace against Armenia, Ronaldo went past Messi to make the second spot solely his own, now aggregating 38 goals.

IS CHERYL RICHARDSON-WAGNER THE 'PHILLIES KAREN' FROM VIRAL CLIP? FACT CHECK

Diary Times Desk : After a video of a woman berating a father-son duo at a baseball game in the USA went viral, social media users have been on a hunt to identify the 'Phillies Karen'. In the aftermath of the video, some speculated that the woman's name was Cheryl Richardson-Wagner, which inevitably led to users bombarding her Facebook page with messages.

As it turns out, the social media sleuths may have got it wrong this time. The woman, identified as Cheryl Richardson-Wagner was forced to put up a statement on her social media page, insisting that she was not the person who bullied the father for the home run ball.

"Ok everyone. I'm NOT the crazy Philly Mom (but I sure would love to be as thin as she is and move as fast)... and I'm a Red Sox fan," Ms Richardson-Wagner wrote, adding that she wasn't anywhere near Florida during the match.

Ms Richardson-Wagner even changed her Facebook cover photo to the Boston Red Sox crest to get her point across.

