

THE NEWS THAT MATTERS

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Three students win national hackathon for impact-resistant sports T-shirt

New Delhi, July 21 : Three Indian students have won the government-backed national innovation hackathon for developing an impact-resistant sports T-shirt that helps reduce injuries caused by high-speed ball strikes, according to a statement issued on Monday. B.Tech Fashion Technology students -- Nandheeswar M., G.Saran and Sushmitha K.S. -- from Sona College of Technology, Tamil Nadu, have secured first prize at Sanrachna, the Design Innovation Hackathon that was organised by the Ministry of Textiles during BharatTex 2026 here from July 14 to 17. The team also received a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh after emerging as winners among more than 700 entries. The students developed a specially designed sports T-shirt featuring an inner protective layer treated with a shear-thickening fluid (STF), an advanced material that remains soft and flexible during normal use but instantly stiffens on impact. The technology absorbs and disperses the force generated by high-speed ball strikes, helping reduce the risk of injuries to athletes. The innovation is intended for use in sports such as cricket, hockey, football, volleyball and golf. According to the statement issued by the educational institution, the project aims to combine comfort with protection, allowing athletes to wear lightweight apparel without compromising mobility while providing additional safety during play. In another achievement, a second team from the Department of Fashion Technology received the Special Innovation Recognition Award in the Best Innovation Project category for developing a flame-resistant finishing process for cotton fabric using natural resources. The team -- comprising Supriya S., Monika S. and Kabila Shree N.R. -- was recognised for its sustainable approach, innovative use of natural materials and potential applications in protective textiles. Congratulating the students, S.R.R. Senthilkumar, Principal of Sona College of Technology, said the awards reflected the institution's focus on innovation and interdisciplinary learning.



lowed fresh military exchanges between the US and Iran over the weekend, with Tehran declaring that the ceasefire between the two countries had effectively collapsed, raising concerns over a possible escalation of the crude shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. The US Central Command said American forces carried out a ninth consecutive night of strikes on Iranian targets, describing the operation as aimed at weakening military capabilities allegedly used in attacks on commercial and civilian shipping. According to market analysts, oil prices are likely to remain supported in the near term as escalating tensions in the Middle East and concerns over shipping disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz

continue to underpin sentiment." MEX crude has broken above the Rs 8,000 level, reflecting strong bullish momentum. The near-term bias for both domestic and global crude remains positive, although elevated prices may trigger phases of consolidation," the experts said. Maritime security concerns also intensified after Iran's navy said it stopped four unidentified vessels attempting to pass through what it described as an unsafe route in the Strait of Hormuz. The claim that two of the vessels were involved in accidents and halted, while the remaining ships turned back, adding to concerns over the security of one of the world's key energy shipping corridors.

Hyundai Motor India opens access to 30,000 EV charging points

New Delhi, July 21 : The Ministry of Civil Aviation informed Parliament on Monday that the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AARB) is "transparently" conducting its investigation into the Air India Boeing crash at Ahmedabad airport on June 12 last year, and "all probable causes leading to the accident are being investigated." A preliminary investigation report was published by AARB on July 12, 2025, and is available on its website at www.aarb.gov.in. The investigation is in progress, and the ministry is yet to publish a final report. In a letter to the ministry stated in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha. The ministry added that "as per the ICAO Annex 13 requirements, the interim statement has been published by AARB on June 12, 2026. The final investigation report will be published after completion of the investigation." As many as 260 people were killed when the AI-171 Boeing Dreamliner flight from Ahmedabad to London-Gatwick on June 12 crashed within 35 seconds of taking off. While 241 people on board the Dreamliner lost their lives, 19 people survived, including the captain and two flight attendants, in a miraculous escape. The preliminary report released by AARB on July 12 stated that both engines of the ill-fated Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner lost thrust after the two fuel cut-off switches moved from the 'RUN' to the 'CUTOFF' position.

New Delhi, July 21 : Leading auto-mobile firm Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) on Monday announced that EV users can now access more than 30,000 charging points across the country through its myHyundai app, creating one of India's largest integrated electric vehicle charging networks in the world. The platform, the company said, the platform has been developed in partnership with leading charge point operators (CPOs) and service providers and is open to electric vehicles across all brands. Besides locating nearby charging stations, the myHyundai app allows users to navigate to charging points, book charging slots in advance and make digital payments through a unified interface. HMIL said the integrated network provides a coverage of 100 km across India, with a service radius of 25 km across India, including major highway corridors such as Delhi-Gurgaon-Jaipur, Mumbai-Pune-Bengaluru, Mumbai-Ratnagiri-Goa, Chennai-Vellore-Bengaluru and Hyderabad-Kurnool-Bengaluru. Tarun Garg,

Managing Director and CEO, HML, said charging infrastructure remains a key enabler for electric vehicle adoption in India. "Through the integration of over 30,000 charging points on their MyHyundai app, we are empowering EV users with one of India's largest charging networks accessible through a single platform," he said. "The platform is open to EV owners across brands, reinforcing HML's commitment to developing India's broader EV ecosystem," he said. Apart from this, the company announced plans to more than triple its proprietary DC fast public charging network from the current 183 stations to 600 stations by 2030. According to HML, its charging infrastructure has so far supported more than three lakh EV charging sessions and delivered over 50 million km of range. "By expanding our charging network, we have helped reduce around 3.5 million kg of carbon dioxide emissions," said the company. It is also preparing to strengthen its electric vehicle portfolio by launching a mass-market electric SUV during the current financial year.



Pakistan: Transporters reject fuel price hike, warn of nationwide wheel-jam strike



New Delhi, July 21 Gold and silver prices traded higher on Monday, supported by value buying after the US dollar eased slightly. Although elevated crude oil prices kept investors cautious amid expectations of another US Federal Reserve rate hike. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures for August delivery rose as much as 0.52 per cent or Rs 743 to hit an intraday high of Rs 1,41,649 per 10 grams at 11:45 am. At the last count, the yellow metal was trading at Rs 1,41,254, up Rs 348 or 0.25 per cent.

They said MCX gold is likely to remain supported above the Rs 1.41 lakh level, while a sustained move beyond Rs 1.42 lakh could strengthen the recovery. Silver is also expected to retain its positive momentum if it manages to hold above the Rs 2.20 lakh mark. Analysts said the softer US dollar offered support to bullion prices by making gold cheaper for holders of other currencies. However, the rally in crude oil prices above \$90 per barrel, driven by escalating tensions in the Middle East, has reinforced inflation concerns and expectations of another US Federal Reserve interest rate hike this year.

Islamabad, July 21—The Karachi Goods Carriers Association (KGCA) have rejected the recent hike in prices of petrol and diesel and warned of a nationwide wheel-jam strike if the decision is not withdrawn within 24 hours, local media reported on Monday. Speaking at a press conference, the KGCA General Secretary, Nadeem Akhtar Arain said transporters would stop movement of goods, close offices and launch a nationwide protest in coordination with transport bodies across Pakistan. He said that the transport sector is the "backbone of the economy" and said repeated fuel price increase has pushed operators into a severe financial crisis, Pakistan's daily the Dawn reported. He also stated that transporters, drivers and vehicle owners were facing "unnecessary checks, heavy fines and harassment" by var-

ious authorities in several regions, further increasing their problems. Nadeem Akhtar Arain said that the suspension of goods transport would dis-

rupt supply chains in Pakistan, including the movement of imports and exports from Karachi, Port Qasim, Gwadar and the distribution of fuel, food and med-

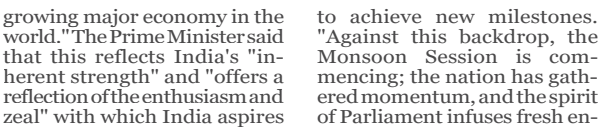
icides. The KGCA said it has concluded talks with major transport organisations and would soon announce a final protest schedule. It urged Pakistan

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb to review the fuel pricing decision and address the issues of the transporters to prevent an economic disruption. The Express Tribune reported. On Friday, Pakistan raised petrol and diesel prices by PKR 5.44 and PKR 35.15 per litre while the government immediate effect for the next three days until July 20, due to the impact of higher import premiums and international prices after renewed tensions in West Asia. After the increase, the price of petrol in Pakistan stands at PKR 316.15 per litre while the price of HSD is PKR 354.35. Pakistan's daily Dawn reported. Pakistan's Petroleum Minister Aftab Ahmad said that the fuel prices would now be fixed on a daily basis due to changes in international market prices after the renewed tensions between Iran and the US.



Piyush Goyal's Europe visit strengthens India's trade ties

New Delhi, July 21
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that India maintaining a growth rate of 7.7 per cent despite the West Asia crisis reflects India's "inherent strength" and "offers evidence of the enormous capacity and zeal" with which India aspires to achieve new milestones. Addressing the media at the start of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, PM Modi said, "Everyone is aware, and the world is concerned about the threat of war in various regions. The war in West Asia has posed a challenge to the global economy. India, which relies on others for its energy needs, petrol, diesel, LPG, fertilisers, and chemicals. However, despite this, India has maintained a growth rate of 7.7 per cent, emerging as the fastest-



ery into that pace. A positivever
spirit is very essential for
achieving the country's goal.
Our Parliament also has many
experienced parliamentarians,
regardless of their party affili-
ation. At a time like this, the
Parliament has to work with
the people and take into account
their experience and knowl-
edge. Therefore, I believe the
need of the hour is the func-
tioning of Parliament, mean-
ingful discussions, and a col-
lective resolve to take the nation
forward," he added. "The
country's youth, who are full of
aspirations, demand that we
must harness their energy and
talent to attain the goal of
transforming the country into
a developed nation. The youth
today have the demand for
transformation. They are filled
with national dedication and
living for national devotion gets
a proper platform in the House.
May they raise their voices to

provide direction to the nation, and therefore, I hope, and I am firmly confident, that where there are facts and where there is logic, there is no place for creating a storm." He added: "The principal ministerial colleagues on the Conservative benches will, in the productive debate and ensure that "every voice finds an opportunity." "When arguments and evidence are solid, one can effectively convey their message even in a composed manner. I hope that the discussions in the House will benefit from such reasoning and evidence. May all Members have a chance to be heard, and may every concept receive due respect. I encourage all Members of Parliament to engage wholeheartedly in the proceedings of the House," he added.

New Delhi, July 21 Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal has concluded a five-day visit to Spain, Belgium, Finland and Estonia aimed at deepening India's economic partnership with Europe, while building on the momentum generated by the successful conclusion of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, according to a statement issued by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on Sunday.

During thrushit from 13-18 July 2026, the minister held multiple high-level engagements with ministers, senior government leaders, business executives and industry stakeholders across the four countries to expand investment linkages and foster greater business-to-business engagement. He was accompanied by a high-level Indian business delegation. The visit imparted fresh momentum to India's expanding economic engagement with Europe. The understandings reached during the visit are expected to strengthen technology partnerships, promote investment flows, improve market access for Indian exporters and expand cooperation in future-oriented sectors, the statement said. During his visit to Spain, Goyal held prominent meetings with Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, First Vice-President and Minister of Economy, Trade and Business, and Jordi Hereu Boher, Minister of Industry and Tourism. Goyal proposed an annual India-Spain Joint Commission meeting with business participation, while Spain proposed establishing a dedicated "India Team" to facilitate bilateral engagement. Both sides also agreed to

advance technical discussions on interoperability between India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Spain's Bizum digital payments platform. They identified significant opportunities for collaboration in the automotive, pharmaceutical, chemical, textile, renewable energy, tourism, and infrastructure sectors. Addressing the India-Spain Business Forum, Goyal called upon businesses to forge early partnerships to maximise opportunities arising from the India-EU FTA and outlined an ambitious "10x10x10" vision to increase bilateral trade, investment and tourism tenfold over the next decade. In Brussels, Goyal co-chaired the 3rd India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) Ministerial Meeting. He welcomed the adoption of the 2026-27 TTC Action Plan and the listing of 16 additional Indian supply chain policies, taking the total number of policies to 32. He also established a 625 India Global Value Chain (GVC) established in 2025. India also raised the issue of listing Indian ship recycling yards and proposed launching an India-EU dialogue on skills, education and talent mobility. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to work towards the early signing and implementation of the India-EU FTA. The discussions also covered negotiations on the Investment Protection Agreement and the Geographical Indications Agreement, cooperation on the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), regulatory simplification, market access for agricultural products, duty derogation for Basmati rice, steel scrap and other items. In Finland, Goyal met Riikka Purra, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and Sakari Puisto, Minister of Economic Affairs.

A futuristic white flying car with four rotors, flying over a city skyline. The vehicle has a sleek, aerodynamic design with a large, curved windshield and a small cockpit area. It is shown in flight against a backdrop of a city with many skyscrapers and mountains in the distance.

New Delhi, July 21 India's launch of its first electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft prototype has put the spotlight on a technology that could reshape urban transport by enabling short-distance flights above road traffic. The eVTOL -- unveiled earlier this month by IIT Madras-incubated startup the ePlane Company -- is designed to take off and land vertically like a helicopter before transitioning to forward flight like a conventional aircraft. The company plans to begin commercial operations by 2028, initially focusing on air ambulance services before expanding into passenger transport. Unlike helicopters, which rely on one or two large fuel-powered rotors, eVTOL aircraft use multiple electrically powered propellers driven by batteries. This distributed propulsion system is expected to reduce noise, improve energy efficiency and provide greater redundancy, allowing the aircraft to continue operating safely even if one motor fails. Because they do not require long runways, eVTOLs can op-

erate from compact landing sites known as vertiports, making them suitable for airport transfers, emergency medical services and short intra-city journeys. In a post on X on Monday, the ePlane Company said its e200X PT-01 prototype marked the transition of its programme "from sub-scale into a 2.2-ton full-scale reality". It said the aircraft was the culmination of five years of engineering and testing, during which it flew sub-scale demonstrators, including the ATVA in 2021 and the heavy-lift e50 in 2023, logging more than 10,000 km of flight testing. The company said the prototype features a carbon-fibre airframe, an 800V high voltage electric powertrain, NVIDIA IGX Thor computing hardware and HEN-SOLDT avionics. It added that the aircraft has entered structured ground testing at its 60,000 sq ft facility at IIT Madras, ahead of flight testing. Earlier this year, the International Critical Air Transfer Team (ICATT) signed an agreement with The ePlane Company to procure 788 eVTOL air ambulances.



EDITORIAL

AI in Healthcare:
Promise or Peril?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming healthcare at an unprecedented pace, promising faster diagnoses, personalized treatments, and more efficient medical services. From detecting cancer in its earliest stages to predicting disease outbreaks and assisting surgeons with robotic precision, AI has the potential to revolutionize medicine. Yet, as healthcare increasingly embraces algorithms, an important question arises: Is AI a promise for humanity, or could it become a peril if left unchecked? The greatest strength of AI lies in its ability to analyze vast amounts of medical data within seconds. Machine learning models can identify patterns in X-rays, CT scans, and pathology reports that may be overlooked by the human eye. AI-powered wearable devices monitor heart rates, blood sugar levels, and sleep patterns in real time, enabling preventive care rather than reactive treatment. In countries like India, where doctor-to-patient ratios remain inadequate, AI can bridge critical gaps by supporting physicians, especially in rural and underserved areas. However, AI is not without risks. Medical decisions involve more than data—they require empathy, ethical judgment, and an understanding of individual circumstances. An algorithm can suggest a diagnosis, but it cannot comfort an anxious patient or make nuanced decisions in complex situations. Overreliance on AI may weaken the doctor-patient relationship, reducing healthcare to a series of automated recommendations.

Privacy is another major concern. AI systems rely on enormous volumes of personal health data, making hospitals and healthcare providers attractive targets for cybercriminals. Data breaches, unauthorized surveillance, and misuse of sensitive medical records could erode public trust. Equally troubling is the issue of algorithmic bias. If AI is trained on incomplete or unrepresentative datasets, it may produce inaccurate diagnoses or unequal treatment recommendations, particularly for marginalized populations. The future of AI in healthcare depends on responsible governance rather than blind adoption. Governments must establish strong regulatory frameworks that ensure transparency, accountability, and patient safety. AI systems should undergo rigorous clinical validation before deployment, while doctors must remain the final decision-makers in critical medical cases. Medical professionals should also be trained to understand both the capabilities and limitations of AI. The debate is not about replacing doctors with machines. Instead, it is about empowering healthcare professionals with intelligent tools that enhance accuracy, efficiency, and accessibility. AI should serve as an assistant—not an authority. When guided by ethical principles, robust regulation, and human oversight, AI can become one of the greatest advancements in modern medicine. But without these safeguards, the same technology could deepen inequalities, compromise privacy, and undermine trust. The future of healthcare, therefore, must remain human-centered.

The God we worship,
the dharma we ignore

BR. Raju..

It was long ago, when I was a student I stepped into the Village Office with my father to obtain an income certificate. My college had made it mandatory so that I could avail myself of a fee concession. I was not particularly perplexed when my father was turned away by the officer on the first day, citing certain reasons. Our second visit to the office, too, turned out to be a repetition of the first. We were sent back again, this time citing some technical reasons. On our third visit, someone standing in the corridor of the office premises imparted to us the gyan - the knowledge of how an income certificate could be obtained without being harassed. It was surprisingly simple. My father was advised to pay a bribe under the table, which he rejected outright. Thankfully, I still remember my father's gesture of disagreement. It became a lesson for me - his reaction reflected an uncompromising mind. That incident inspired me throughout my life never to compromise with corruption or with the corrupt. Unfortunately, in India, the most prominent measure by which a person often gains acceptance is the extent to which he makes extra earnings. From the minister at the top to the chauffeur at the bottom, the story is often the same - temptation. The word temptation explains it all: the greater the greed, the greater the corruption. India is known as a spiritual nation that encourages, nurtures, and embraces a variety of religious practices. Everybody considers himself religious, with numerous rituals and practices forming the foundation of his spiritual life. This is where, I believe, the fundamental mistake lies. We have come to define spirituality by considering rituals and practices as its limbs while deliberately discarding its heart - Dharma. For centuries, India was a Dharmic civilization that upheld and propagated Dharma. We learned this from our epics and sacred texts. But as rituals gradually overpowered our conscience, they also weakened the Dharmic essence of religious life. Our temples and other places of worship increasingly became centres of ritualistic observances, where people

assembled primarily to fulfill their personal aspirations. Such is the dilution of our spiritual principles have sunk into. Dominated by rituals, most of us are under the belief that they make us spiritual. This is a bitter fallacy. It never happens that way. To become spiritual through the path of Dharma is the best-advised way. Let us try to understand this from a different angle. A person, having amassed enormous wealth through Adharmic means, feels inclined to offer a share of it to God. Most such offerings of great value often come from wealth amassed illegitimately. Down the line, he seeks to enhance his spiritual standing by making an offering to a renowned temple, thereby making God a party to his corruption. It is an act that he feels will wash away the stain of corruption. This is a huge downfall of the human mind, which the ritualistic standards of religion have taught us to accept. An incident of the same kind suddenly rushes to my mind. Vijay Mallya donated about 30 kg of gold to the world-famous Sabarimala Temple in 1998. I refuse to arrive at the conclusion that it was merely a sort of bribe he offered to God as an appeasement. It was a camouflaging technique that he might have thought would earn him greater acceptance. The corruption cases that followed him later truly accentuated the fact that many such offerings people make to temple deities stem from a deep urge to conceal what they have amassed through unlawful means. A significant part of Vijay Mallya's offerings to Sabarimala was later stolen. The investigation is still underway. Some people, obviously, make remarkable offerings out of sincere devotion. Again, suspicion arises when Durga Stalin, the wife of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin, visits temples. Her offering to the deity at the Guruvayoor Temple was a gold crown worth about fourteen lakh rupees. Her son has often been a popular critic of Sanatan Dharma, who wanted it to be eradicated. While M. K. Stalin is known for his atheistic stance, there are multiple corruption charges against him. What might have propelled her inclination to visit temples so often? A double-standard often stands between the devotee and



his devotion. My point is that there is a severe sense of insincerity when it comes to rituals; in whatever manner they are performed. They have, of course, by today's standards, become obstacles to real spirituality. Seeing a temple as the ultimate destination of spirituality is the primary mistake. Misconceiving the deity as the Supreme Being is the second. The third is even more embarrassing: believing that making an offering to an idol will wash away all sins. This is where, irrespective of our struggles to regain our spiritual spaces and temples, we lose the real essence of spirituality. This is

also where we invalidate the meaningful messages passed down through generations by the sages. The idea behind constructing temples and worshipping idols was to symbolically anchor the wayward mind of the common man. The sages believed that temples and idols would ultimately help illogical minds march towards the ultimate truth. This simplification of true spirituality into a merely ritualistic approach was the reason behind all temple thefts and embezzlements across India. Corruption is certainly a reality, whereas it is impossible in true spirituality. With ritualism overtaking the true

spirit of spirituality, a fallacy becomes the ultimate truth. At last, what I feel is that there is no visible difference between the village officer who expected my father to pay under the table and the devotee who offers a part of his wealth to the deity. The only difference is the third party - the one who steals from the deity, as has happened in Ayodhya, Sabarimala and several other temples. In doing so, he brings the entire process full circle. (Author is freelance journalist based in Kerala. The views expressed are personal.)

Fuelling India's future: The promise
and challenge of energy independence



India has entered a decisive new phase in its quest for energy security. A bold push on ethanol blending, a major expansion of refining capacity, and promising new hydrocarbon discoveries are all part of a multi-pronged strategy aimed at reducing the country's heavy dependence on imported crude oil - currently around 88.5% of its total consumption - and shielding the economy from the volatility of global energy markets. Yet the rapid nationwide rollout of a 20% ethanol blend (E20) has stirred a spirited debate, exposing the tensions between strategic ambition and ground-level consumer reality. The government, meanwhile, is also reshaping the source of its imports - a quiet but significant shift that began gathering pace after the Gulf conflict.

Ethanol Blending: A Big Win, But Needs More Scientific Assessment

No widespread damage from E20, and have acknowledged a 3-3.5% drop in fuel efficiency. The Centre has since clarified that warranty coverage will not be affected, addressing a key consumer concern. More than 75% of vehicles on Indian roads were, however, designed for older blends - a compatibility gap the government now accepts must be bridged carefully. Officials are reportedly considering a more gradual approach to any move beyond E20, and have called for a scientific assessment of consumer complaints. The signal is clear: the strategy will continue, but the pace will be calibrated to consumer comfort.

Securing India's Energy Future: The Supply-Side Push

While ethanol addresses the demand side, the government is simultaneously strengthening

the country's own fuel-making capacity. India's refining capacity is set to expand by more than 20% by 2028, rising from 256 million metric tonnes to 309 million metric tonnes, with existing refineries already running above 100%. The flagship of this expansion is the HPCL Rajasthan Refinery (HRRL) at Pachpadra - a 9 MMTPA greenfield refinery-cum-petrochemical complex, flagged off on 22 June 2026, nine days ahead of schedule. In Assam, the Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) is tripling its capacity from 3 MMTPA to 9 MMTPA, enabling it to process a wider range of imported crudes. Exploration news is equally encouraging. In West Bengal's North 24 Pargana district, the Ashoknagar oil field has been confirmed as a major onshore find, with the broader Bengal

basin estimated to hold 240 million barrels of oil equivalent in place. Cumulative production value could touch ₹45,000 crore, with West Bengal set to receive ₹4,500 crore in royalties. Offshore, Oil India Limited has confirmed natural gas at the Sri Vijayapuram wells in the Andaman Sea, with high methane content of 87% - further exploration is planned under the Samudra Manthan Mission. **Diversifying The Import Basket: A Post-Gulf Shift** Less remarked upon, but equally consequential, is the quiet diversification of India's crude sourcing. The recent Gulf conflict exposed the risks of an over-concentrated import basket, prompting a decisive move to broaden the supplier base. The share of crude from West Asian producers has been gradually reduced, with Russian, African, and Latin

American barrels now forming a much larger slice. State-run refiners have signed longer-term supply agreements with non-traditional suppliers, while public-sector energy firms are also negotiating direct stakes in overseas upstream assets. The aim is straightforward: no single region should hold India's energy security hostage. **The Road Ahead** Taken together, these steps underline a clear direction of travel. India's energy transition will not be smooth, and it will not be uniform - but the country is unmistakably moving towards greater self-reliance: more fuel at home, more gas from its own waters, broader sources for imports, and a pace of change that respects the consumer at the pump.



Ferran's extra-time heroics fire Spain to WC glory

Spain's football hero Torres has Assam link



Guwahati, July 21 : Spain's FIFA World Cup-winning player Ferran Torres, whose decisive goal against Argentina secured his country's triumph in the 2026 FIFA World Cup final, has a little-known connection with Assam.

Long before emerging as Spain's World Cup hero on football's biggest stage, Torres had showcased his talent at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Sarusajai in Guwahati during the FIFA U-17 World Cup hosted by India in 2017.

The Spanish attacker was part of the Spain side that faced France in a Group D encounter at the Guwahati venue on October 17, 2017. Spain defeated France 2-1 in a closely contested match then, with Torres among the standout young players who impressed thousands of football enthusiasts packed into the stadium. At the time, Torres was regarded as one of Spain's brightest emerging prospects. Few could have predicted that the teenager who thrilled spectators in Guwahati

would, nearly a decade later, score the goal that would hand Spain the coveted FIFA World Cup trophy. Torres etched his name into football history after finding the net in the World Cup final against Argentina, helping Spain lift the prestigious title and capping an outstanding tournament with the defining moment of his international career. His rise from a promising youth international to a World Cup-winning star has also rekindled memories of the 2017 FIFA U-17

World Cup in Assam, an event widely regarded as a landmark moment for football in the state. Guwahati was one of the host cities for the global age-group tournament and welcomed several future international stars who have since established themselves at the highest level of world football. The matches at Sarusajai gave local fans a rare opportunity to watch many of the game's brightest young talents before they became household names.

Ugly scenes at final: Punches thrown, Paredes grabs Garcia by throat

New York, July 21 : The 2026 FIFA World Cup final ended in ugly scenes as the summit clash descended into chaos immediately after the final whistle, with players exchanging punches and Argentina midfielder Leandro Paredes grabbing Spain's Eric Garcia by the throat.

Spain secured their second World Cup title with a tense 1-0 victory in extra time, but the historic win was quickly overshadowed by physical altercations on the pitch, leading to a post-match turmoil. Argentina defender Nahuel Molina appeared to punch one of the Spanish players in the stomach. In another altercation, midfielder Paredes was seen shoving Spain's Eric Garcia by the throat as Scaloni intervened.

Argentina boss Scaloni leaves press conference in tears

New York July 21 : Argentina manager Lionel Scaloni struggled to contain his emotions when asked about his own future and left his post-match news conference in tears after FIFA World Cup final defeat at the hands of Spain.

"I will talk to the president," he said. "I have an idea of what I would like to do. I will see out my contract and I feel the need, I don't know if something as big can be done. We need to speak this through. "I am thankful to the president for bringing me this chance of being in this place where I am at the moment. It was a dream place for everyone. We have tried up until the very last minute to give our utmost, the staff and players. I believe it's only fair that I can take this time for myself to think this through."

Mbappe becomes first player to win Golden Boot twice

New York, July 21 : France captain Kylian Mbappe has won the Golden Boot for FIFA World Cup 2026, retaining the title of tournament top scorer which he claimed at Qatar 2022.

The France forward took his tally to ten with a double in Les Bleus' 6-4 defeat by England in an enthralling and end-to-end Bronze final in Miami on Saturday. Having struck eight times to finish top scorer at Qatar 2022, Mbappe became the first player to win the World Cup Golden Boot twice.

The 27-year-old was the first man to reach double figures for World Cup goals since Gerd Muller for West Germany in 1970. Only Just Fontaine, who hit 13 for France in 1958, and Hungary's Sandor Kocsis with 11 in 1954, have scored more individual goals in a single tournament.

Spain midfielder Rodri wins Golden Ball

New York, July 21 : Spanish midfield maestro Rodri has secured the Golden Ball, awarded to the FIFA World Cup Player of the Tournament, for his performances in the 2026 global showpiece. Rodri was a steady presence in the centre of the park for La Roja in their eight matches, helping them win their second global crown.

He featured in all of La Roja's matches en route to glory, completing more passes, covering more distance and have more player involvements (distinct touches or participations) than any other player at this summer's tournament.

Int'l Chess Day celebrated at Tata Steel Centre



Jamshedpur, July 21: International Chess Day was celebrated at the Tata Steel Chess Training Centre with the participation of players, coaches and chess enthusiasts. The occasion was marked by activities promoting the spirit of the game. The programme was attended by Sanjay Mishra, Senior Manager (Sports), coach Soukhin Kundu and Jayant Bhuiyan.

Jamshedpur's chess stars honored



Jamshedpur, July 21: Outstanding chess players of East Singhbhum were felicitated at the East Singhbhum District Chess Association's (ESDCA) Annual Prize Nite 2025-26 for their achievements at the state, national and international levels. The players were presented with mementoes and token gifts in recognition of bringing laurels to the district.

The function was attended by Capt. Manish Sinha, Head - Sports (Events & Training Centres), Tata Steel, as the Chief Guest. The awards were jointly presented by N.K. Tiwary, Prof. R. Anantharam, R. Srivatsan, Jayant Kumar Bhuyan, Vishal Kumar Minz and Purbibhosh.

The achievements of the players were appreciated by the ESDCA office-bearers. The contribution and continued support of parents and coaches in the success of the players were also acknowledged during the programme.

CISCE zonal handball trials kick-off



Jamshedpur, July 21: The CISCE zonal handball selection trials 2026 were inaugurated at the handball ground of the JRD Sports Complex on Sunday. The event was organised by RMS High School, Balichela.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by more than 1,000 students representing 20 CISCE-affiliated schools. The participants filled the venue with energy as the selection trials officially got underway.

The ceremony was inaugurated by the chief guest, Preeti Sinha, principal of Gulmohar High School and CISCE zonal coordinator. Hassan Imam, Senior Manager at Tata Steel sports department attended the event as the distinguished guest. The occasion was also graced by Sanjay Kedia, Chairman of RMS, R.K. Jhunjhunwala, Trustee, Vandana Jain from the RMS Management, and Parinita Shukla, Principal of RMS High School, Khutadih.

The players were encouraged to uphold the values of sportsmanship, discipline, dedication, determination and fair play. It was stressed that the true spirit of sports should be reflected through honest effort rather than victory alone.

The selection trials were formally declared open at the end of the ceremony, following which the participating teams competed with great enthusiasm.

Jharkhand Archery Association defers AGM, elections

Jamshedpur, July 21: The Annual General Meeting (AGM) and elections of the Jharkhand Archery Association (JAA) have been postponed in view of the upcoming implementation of the National Sports Governance Act-2025. The decision has been taken to ensure that the Association's proceedings and election process are conducted in accordance with the new Act and its rules.

The AGM and elections were earlier scheduled to be held on July 25, 2026. However, the programme has now been deferred until the National Sports Governance Act-2025 is adopted and implemented by the Archery Association of India.

The decision was communicated to all affiliated district archery associations through a letter issued by Purnima Mahato, Honorary Secretary of the Jharkhand Archery Association.

It has been stated that the AGM and elections will be conducted only after the new governance framework comes into effect. The Association has also clarified that all election-related procedures will be carried out in compliance with the provisions of the Act.

The new date, time and venue for the AGM and elections will be announced later. The information will be communicated separately to all affiliated district associations and units.

Shobha wins gold in State Laser Run C'ship

Saraikela, July 21: Saraikela-Kharsawan athlete Shobha Mahto has brought laurels to the district by winning the gold medal at the first State-Level Laser Run Championship held in Dhanbad. Based on her impressive performance, she has been selected to compete in the upcoming National Laser Run Championship.

It has also been announced that she will represent India in two international events scheduled for October. She is set to participate in the Asian Championship in Dubai during the first week of October, followed by the World Championship later in the month.

According to Sikandar Mahto, Secretary of the District Modern Pentathlon Association, preparations are being made to arrange the required financial support for her participation.

Sumit FC Sini register third win in football league

Saraikela, July 21: Sumit FC Sini recorded a 3-1 victory over Tengadih (Nimdi) in the District Football League organised by the Saraikela-Kharsawan District Sports Association at Birsa Munda Stadium on Monday. The win marked the team's third victory in the tournament.

Earlier, the opening match between MLC Bhelaidih and NSC Burudih ended in a 2-2 draw. The matches were officiated by referees Dashrath Hansda, Diku Hembram, Deva Sardar and Santosh Mahto.

Smith clinches ICC Men's Player of the Month award

New Delhi, July 21 New Zealand seamer Nathan Smith was on Monday named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for June 2026 following his superb performances during the 2-1 Test series victory over England. Smith, 27, played a pivotal role in New Zealand's historic Test series triumph on English soil by picking 16 scalps at an average of 23. With several frontline New Zealand quicks sidelined due to injuries, Smith remarkably stepped up to lead a depleted bowling attack and delivered under pressure.

The Kiwi pacer claimed the prestigious monthly honour ahead of fellow nominees, India captain Shubman Gill and Bangladesh all-rounder Mossadek Hossain. "This is really special. It was a great tour of England for the boys, and this is pretty cool. I don't usually play for individual awards, but it's nice to receive this recognition and, more importantly, to have contributed to a series win.

'If there's no noise, there's no fun': Rohit unfazed by retirement talk



New Delhi, July 21 Former India captain Rohit Sharma brushed aside speculation surrounding his future after England clinched the three-match ODI series 2-1 with a 27-run victory in the deciding third ODI at Lord's, insisting that external noises have never distracted him from contributing to the team's success.

Reflecting on the constant scrutiny

that has followed him throughout his career, Rohit made it clear that his focus remains unchanged despite the conversations surrounding his future.

"My job is with the bat. Come and play, represent my country, represent the team. And that's what I've been told to do since I made my debut. So, that's what I'm going to do. You know, the noise since I made my debut was there. And till the

There's no such discussion in the team: Gill dismisses Rohit's retirement talk

London, July 20 (IANS) India captain Shubman Gill has refuted suggestions that opener and former skipper Rohit Sharma plans to retire from international cricket after the third ODI against England at Lord's.

"He's not told us anything. I think it's all out in the media, but there's not been any discussion like that in the team," Gill said. He put up a 147-run opening stand with Gill in India's run chase before getting dismissed in the 39th over when the score was on 260 and the required rate was within touch.

Gill was full of praise for his opening partner, suggesting Rohit's experience

at the crease was crucial in their stand.

"I think the way Rohit bhai paced his innings was outstanding," Gill noted.

"Most of the time, I was at the non-striker's end just watching him bat. Our discussions were mainly about keeping wickets in hand because that was the only way we could chase such a big total.

"During the Powerplay, we spoke about whether we should go after the bowling or not, but we know it's not easy to attack against the new ball. The way he paced his innings and then accelerated was exceptional. Once he got into the 60s and 70s, it was truly a treat to watch."

Rohit's remarks came after he produced a magnificent 138 at Lord's, the first ODI century by an Indian batter at the iconic venue, but his effort was not enough to prevent England from defeating 387 and sealing the series. Despite the personal milestone, he admitted that the outcome left him dissatisfied as India failed to complete what would have been a record chase.

time I'm going to stay here, it's always going to be there. So, it doesn't really matter too much. What matters is what I do on the field. Try and contribute to the success of the team. That's all my focus is right now. And let the noise be there. You know, if there's no noise, there's no fun. My job is inside; their job is outside. So, that's how I look at it," Rohit said in a video shared by BCCI.

Premier Division: Tata Steel thrash Classic Eight 6-0

Sunil Lohar's four-goal blitz highlights JSA League action



Jamshedpur, July 21: Tata Steel registered a commanding 6-0 victory over Classic Eight in a JSA Premier Division match played at the JRD Tata Sports Complex. Four goals were scored by Sunil Lohar, while one goal each was added by Birsha Tudu and Durga Hembram.

The opening goal was scored by Lohar in the 12th minute, and the lead was doubled four minutes later. His hat-trick was completed in the 28th minute. The fourth goal was added by Birsha Tudu in first-half stoppage time. The fifth goal was scored by Durga Hembram in the 49th minute before Lohar completed his four-goal haul in stoppage time.

Super Division: Manbhum FC beat Singhbhum Soccer Fans Club

Manbhum FC secured a 3-1 win over Singhbhum Soccer Fans Club in a JSA Super Division League match at Gopal Maidan.

ADivision (Group A): Katin FC Edge Vision Apex FC

Katin Football Club defeated Vision Apex Football Club 1-0 in an A Division Group A match at Tinplate Ground.

After a goalless first half, the winning goal was scored by Sushanta Mandi in the 60th minute. No player was cautioned or sent off during the match.

ADivision (Group B): Aruna Samity Rally Past Adivasi Ritui Gondai Club

Aruna Samity Football Club came from behind to defeat Adivasi Ritui Gondai Club 3-2 in an A Division Group B match at Armoury Ground.

India to play four-day warm-up game in Colombo ahead of Tests against Sri Lanka



New Delhi, July 21 The Indian men's cricket team will play a four-day warm-up game in Colombo starting on August 7 ahead of facing Sri Lanka in a two-match Test series starting on August 15. The Shubman Gill-led visitors are scheduled to land in Colombo on August 4 and will go through some practice sessions before playing the warm-up game at the Nondescripts Cricket Club (NCC).

"Yes, the Indian team will have its practice game from August 7 to 10 at NCC, Colombo. It will help all players to adjust to the local conditions on offer before the main series gets underway," said a source familiar with the development to IANS on Monday.

Following the conclusion of the four-day tour game, the Indian team will travel to Galle, where the opening Test match will be played at the picturesque Galle International Cricket Stadium (GICS) from August 15 to 19.

Style of the Day



Trisha Shetty

Maruti to Raise Car Prices

New Delhi, July 21: Maruti Suzuki India has announced a price hike of up to Rs 30,000 across its passenger vehicle range from August 2026, citing rising input costs and continued inflationary pressures. The company said it had absorbed higher production costs through cost-cutting measures over the past few months.

However, the persistent increase in manufacturing expenses has compelled it to pass on part of the burden to customers. Maruti Suzuki clarified that the extent of the price increase will vary by model and assured that it would keep the impact on customers to the minimum possible level.



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