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WEATHER REPORT

NEW DELHI

1 AUGUST 2026

30°C

Feels Like: 33°C

GENERALLY CLOUDY WITH SPELLS OF RAIN/THUNDERSHOWERS

H: 33°C

L: 26°C

PRECIPITATION	WIND	HUMIDITY	SUNRISE / SUNSET
70% High chance of rain	13 km/h SW	88% High	5:42 AM 7:16 PM

Weather may change. Stay updated!

Source: IMD Date: 1 AUGUST 2026

Punjab Expands Mukh Mantri Tirth Yatra Yojana, Free Pilgrimage Services Begin

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has expanded the Mukh Mantri Tirth Yatra Yojana, with free pilgrimage travel services starting from August 1 for devotees visiting religious destinations including Vrindavan, Rishikesh and Khatu Shyam. The expanded scheme aims to provide affordable access to religious journeys for people across the state, especially those who may not have the resources to undertake such pilgrimages independently. Under the initiative, eligible devotees will receive free travel facilities to selected religious destinations, with the government arranging necessary transportation services. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said the scheme reflects the state government's commitment to supporting citizens and

ensuring that people can visit important spiritual centres without financial burden. Officials said the programme has been designed to benefit devotees from different districts of Punjab and promote inclusive participation in religious tourism. The inclusion of destinations such as Vrindavan, Rishikesh and Khatu Shyam is expected to attract strong interest among devotees due to their religious and cultural significance. Government representatives said arrangements have been made to ensure smooth travel and better coordination for pilgrims under the expanded programme. The scheme is part of Punjab's efforts to promote social welfare initiatives and provide support to residents through public service programmes. The state government said more destinations and facilities may be considered in the future based on public response and requirements. The expansion of the Mukh Mantri Tirth Yatra Yojana has received attention among religious groups and residents who welcomed the move to make pilgrimage journeys more accessible. Officials said priority would be given to ensuring proper arrangements for devotees, including travel coordination, safety measures and assistance during the journey. The government has been working to streamline the process for beneficiaries so that eligible citizens can avail the facility without facing difficulties. Religious tourism has emerged as an important sector, and such initiatives are expected to encourage greater.

PM Modi Hails Cabinet Decisions on PM-Kisan, Khelo India

NEW DELHI: rime Minister Narendra Modi has welcomed the Union Cabinet's recent decisions on extending key welfare initiatives, expanding the Khelo India programme and strengthening major flagship schemes aimed at supporting farmers, youth and citizens. The Prime Minister said the decisions reflect the government's continued focus on inclusive development, empowering rural communities and creating new opportunities for young Indians. The Prime Minister said the decisions reflect the government's continued focus on inclusive development, empowering rural communities and creating new opportunities for young Indians. The Cabinet's approval related to the PM-Kisan scheme is expected to provide continued support to farmers by ensuring sustained assistance under the flagship agricultural welfare programme.

Modi highlighted that the government remains committed to improving farmers' welfare, strengthening the agriculture sector and ensuring that rural India remains a key part of the country's growth journey. The expansion of the Khelo India initiative was also welcomed by the Prime Minister, who said greater investment in sports infrastructure and talent development will help young athletes achieve success at national and international levels. Officials said the programme aims to encourage wider participation in sports, improve training.

NEWS BRIEF

PM Modi Inaugurates Bhogapuram Airport

VISAKHAPATNAM: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has officially inaugurated the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport near Bhogapuram in Andhra Pradesh, marking a major step towards strengthening aviation infrastructure and industrial development in the Uttarandhra region. The new airport is expected to improve regional connectivity, support tourism growth and create new opportunities for trade, investment and employment in northern Andhra Pradesh. Officials said the airport will play a key role in developing the Uttarandhra aviation and industrial corridor by providing better access for businesses and industries looking to expand in the region. The project is designed to handle increasing passenger traffic and support the economic development of nearby districts, including Visakhapatnam and surrounding areas.airport

Parliament Passes Anti-Paper Leak Bill Amid

NEW DELHI: Parliament has passed the new anti-paper leak legislation aimed at strengthening the security of public examinations, despite walkouts and protests by opposition members in the Rajya Sabha. The Bill seeks to introduce stricter measures against examination fraud, paper leaks and organised cheating networks that compromise the fairness of competitive and recruitment examinations. The government said the legislation is necessary to protect the interests of millions of students and ensure greater transparency and credibility in the examination system. During the proceedings, opposition members raised concerns over recent examination controversies and demanded accountability from the government. Several opposition MPs staged protests and walked out of the House during the discussion. Government representatives defended the Bill, stating that stronger legal provisions are required to prevent organised groups from exploiting examination systems and affect

Cabinet Clears ₹84,084-Crore Samudra

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet has approved the 84,084-crore Samudra Manthan scheme aimed at expanding India's domestic deepwater oil and gas exploration capabilities and strengthening energy security. The initiative is designed to encourage exploration in offshore regions and unlock potential hydrocarbon resources located in deepwater and challenging areas. Government officials said the scheme will support advanced exploration activities, attract investment and promote the use of modern technologies in India's offshore energy sector. The move is part of India's broader strategy to reduce dependence on imported crude oil by increasing domestic production and identifying new sources of energy resources. Under the programme, energy companies are expected.

IMD Forecast Warns of Below-Normal Rainfall

NEW DELHI: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued rainfall projections indicating the possibility of below-normal monsoon activity across parts of India during the second half of August. The weather agency said the forecast will be closely monitored as rainfall patterns during the monsoon season play a crucial role in agriculture, water resources.

AAP Faces Ticket Dilemma in Barnala as Meet Hayer and Bhangu Emerge

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's mother Harpal Kaur reached the house of District Planning Board Chairman Parminder Singh Bhangu in Barnala. She stayed at Chairman Bhangu's house for three to four hours. Mata Harpal Kaur spent a lot of time with Chairman Bhangu's entire family and his mother. The sudden arrival of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's mother Mata Harpal Kaur at Chairman Bhangu's house in Barnala was met with many reactions. It gives rise to speculations, intellectuals say that the 2027 assembly elections are very close and a candidate has to be selected for the Barnala constituency. Political experts also say that Meet Hayer, who is a strong contender for the ticket from Barnala but who has been involved in various organizations in front of his house in the past,lathi-charge continued, false cases were registered, false cases were registered against Congress workers, the issue of the old Ram Lila was also in the news, the issue of taking away the presidency of Guru Gobind Singh College, Sanghera was also very active, false cases

were also registered against journalists, false cases were registered against Panches and Sarpanches and many Panchayats were also closed.Many Panch Sarpanchs were suspended and now the most Major incident: Sanitation workers were tortured indiscriminately, but Meet Air did not play a good role in any matter, due to which his claim to the ticket from Barnala constituency was weakening, Mata Harpal Kaur suddenly went to Barnala and reached the house of the undisputed leader Parminder Singh Bhangu. Political experts say that while Parminder Singh Bhangu is a dervish politician, a hardworking youth and an undisputed leader, he is also the district president of the party and the chairman of the District Planning Board. No finger is raised against him, no accusation is made, while former chairman of the District Planning Board Gurdeep Singh Bath keeps tarnishing.

Gems of India Challenge Launched in Chandigarh

CHANDIGARH: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has launched the pilot phase of the Gems of India Challenge in Chandigarh, an initiative aimed at recognising and rewarding local short-form digital creators and vloggers. The programme seeks to encourage creators to showcase India's diverse culture, heritage, traditions and local stories through innovative digital content. Officials said the challenge will provide a platform for emerging creators to highlight unique aspects of their regions and bring lesser-known stories to a wider audience through social media platforms. The initiative focuses on promoting quality digital storytelling while supporting talented creators who use short videos, reels and vlogs to share meaningful content. The pilot phase in Chandigarh is expected to identify creative talent and encourage young digital storytellers to produce content that reflects India's cultural richness. Representatives from the ministry said digital platforms have become powerful tools for preserving traditions, promoting tourism and connecting communities across the country. The challenge will reward selected creators based on creativity, originality, storytelling ability and the impact of their digital content. Officials said the initiative aligns with efforts to strengthen India's digital media ecosystem and provide opportunities for young creators to contribute to cultural promotion. The Gems of India Challenge is expected to expand to more regions in the future, creating a larger network of creators documenting India's heritage and diverse experiences. The initiative reflects the growing importance of digital platforms in promoting local culture and giving young creators an opportunity to share regional stories with audiences across India and abroad. Officials said short-form content has emerged as an effective medium for reaching wider audiences, especially among younger generations who increasingly consume information through digital platforms. The challenge is expected to encourage creators to explore themes such as heritage sites, traditional art forms, local cuisines, festivals and community stories that represent India's cultural diversity. Media experts said such programmes can help bridge the gap between traditional storytelling and modern digital formats.

Jaishankar Urges Iran to Avoid Attacks on Commercial Shipping

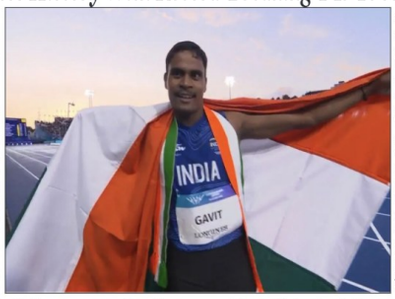
NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has conveyed India's deep concern to Iran over the safety of commercial shipping routes amid rising tensions in the Middle East, urging all sides to avoid actions that could disrupt maritime trade. During discussions with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Jaishankar stressed the importance of maintaining the security and stability of international shipping lanes, which are crucial for global trade and energy supplies. India highlighted the risks posed by any attacks or disruptions targeting commercial vessels, saying such developments could affect supply chains, increase economic uncertainty and impact countries dependent on maritime trade. The External Affairs Minister said India supports peaceful dialogue and diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions in the region. He emphasised that freedom of navigation and safety of merchant ships must be protected. The concerns come at a time when geopolitical tensions in West Asia have raised fears over possible disruptions in key maritime routes used for transporting oil, goods and other essential commodities. Indian officials said the government is closely monitoring developments in the region and remains engaged with relevant countries to protect its economic and strategic interests. Shipping and energy experts have warned that instability around major sea routes could lead to higher transportation costs and impact global markets. Jaishankar's message reflects India's focus on ensuring regional stability while safeguarding the interests of Indian businesses, exporters and citizens affected by international trade disruptions.

India has significant economic and energy interests linked to secure maritime routes in the Middle East. A large portion of global oil shipments passes through the region.

WORLD CUP FEVER PEAKS

Dilip Gavit Creates History With Record-Breaking T47 100m Gold at CWG

GLASGOW: Indian para-athlete Dilip Gavit delivered a remarkable performance at the Commonwealth Games by winning the gold medal in the men's T47 100m event with a record-breaking run. Gavit dominated the final race with exceptional speed and determination, setting a new benchmark in the event and bringing pride to India's para-athletics campaign. The victory marks a major milestone in Gavit's sporting career and highlights the growing strength of India's para-athletics talent on the international stage. His achievement was celebrated by fans, athletes and officials, who praised his dedication, hard work and ability to perform under pressure at a major global competition. Gavit's success also reflects the progress of



Indian para-sports, where athletes continue to achieve significant milestones through improved training, support systems and international exposure. Coaches said his disciplined approach and consistent efforts played a key role in helping him reach the highest level of competition. The gold medal adds to India's impressive performance at the Commonwealth Games and strengthens the country's reputation in para-athletics events. Sports authorities congratulated Gavit for his historic achievement, calling his record-breaking performance an inspiration for aspiring athletes across the country. The victory is expected to motivate more young athletes to pursue para-sports and aim for excellence at national and international competitions. Gavit's record-breaking performance was the result of years of rigorous training, determination and commitment to improving his skills. His journey reflects the challenges faced by para-athletes who continue to overcome obstacles to compete at the highest level. The athlete maintained his composure throughout the competition and delivered his best performance when it mattered most.