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Nadda Meets Quota Protesters As Reservation Debate Intensifies

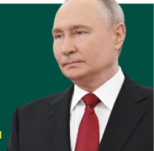
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NEWS BRIEF

Kharge Seeks Clarity on Special Parliament Session

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking clarity over reports that the government may convene a special session of Parliament to consider constitutional amendments linked to delimitation. Kharge's letter comes amid speculation over Parliament being reconvened after the Monsoon Session. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju has said the session has not been formally prorogued, leaving open the possibility of another sitting. Kharge reiterated Congress's demand that the Lok Sabha's current strength of 543 seats remain unchanged for another 25 years, along with existing state-wise seat allocation. He also sought implementation of one-third reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies from the 2029 elections. Delimitation has become particularly sensitive in southern States, where concerns persist that population-based redistribution could alter parliamentary representation. Kharge urged wider consultation with political parties before any legislation is introduced. The government has not formally announced a special session or disclosed any specific delimitation Bill.

BJP Faces Gen Z Disconnect Ahead of Polls



The BJP is seeking to strengthen its connect with younger voters as it prepares for a series of crucial Assembly elections. The organisational reshuffle under national president Nitin Nabin is being seen as an effort to refresh the party's structure and respond to emerging political challenges. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently met newly appointed national office-bearers and cautioned them against complacency as the party prepares for upcoming electoral contests. The BJP's new 65-member national team includes 51 new faces, combining younger leaders with experienced hands. The party has also created a dedicated team for Gen Z outreach, involving leaders including Nitin Nabin, Smriti Irani and Vinod Tawde. The initiative aims to increase direct interaction with young people and address concerns over employment, education and future opportunities. Ahead of the elections, the BJP faces the challenge of maintaining its existing support base while building stronger connections with younger Indians whose political priorities and expectations are rapidly evolving.

India Intensifies Efforts to Trace Nationals in Nepal

NEW DELHI : India has intensified efforts to locate and assist its citizens affected by the devastating flash floods in Nepal, with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) saying that 288 Indian nationals remain uncontactable in the flood-hit areas. The government has established a special control room to coordinate information, rescue efforts and assistance for Indians stranded or missing following the disaster. The MEA said 21 Indian nationals from Tamil Nadu, who were undertaking the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, have been successfully rescued from the affected areas. Authorities are continuing to coordinate with Nepalese agencies to ensure the safety and evacuation of other Indian citizens caught in the floods. The situation has also affected Indians travelling through or



staying in areas on the Chinese side of the border. According to the MEA, around 200 Indian nationals stranded in China have sought assistance from Indian authorities. New Delhi is coordinating with Chinese authorities to facilitate their movement and

provide necessary support. The flash floods, triggered by intense rainfall and extreme weather events, have caused widespread destruction across parts of Nepal. Rivers have swollen rapidly, sweeping away roads, bridges and buildings and cutting

off remote settlements. Rescue operations have been complicated by damaged infrastructure, difficult mountainous terrain and continuing risks from landslides and further flooding. The latest developments underline the scale of the disaster and the challenges facing rescue teams operating in remote Himalayan areas. With communication networks and transport links disrupted in several locations, authorities are relying on multiple agencies as well as aerial and ground operations to reach affected populations. Nepal continues to assess the damage, while rescue and relief efforts remain focused on locating survivors, evacuating stranded people and delivering essential supplies to communities cut off by the floods.



KATHMANDU : Rescue teams intensified operations across Nepal on Thursday after devastating flash floods and mudslides swept through Himalayan areas near the Nepal-China border. The disaster, reportedly triggered by a glacier collapse, destroyed homes, roads and bridges and left large areas buried under mud and debris. Nepal Police said hundreds of bodies had been recovered, while more than 1,000 people remained missing, including foreign tourists. Helicopters, drones and rescue personnel were deployed to search for survivors and evacuate stranded people. Damaged roads and bridges, swollen rivers and heavy debris have made access to several affected areas extremely difficult. Authorities warned that the casualty figure could rise as search operations continue

Indian nationals are also among those reported missing, while 21 Indians from Tamil Nadu who were undertaking the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra have been rescued, according to India's Ministry of External Affairs. Indian authorities have intensified efforts to trace and assist citizens affected by the disaster. The Ministry of External Affairs has established a special control room to coordinate information and rescue efforts, while maintaining contact with Nepalese authorities to facilitate the evacuation and safe return of stranded Indians. India has also extended humanitarian support to Nepal as rescue and relief operations continue with emergency supplies being arranged for affected communities.

Reservation Hatao Andolan Shifts Focus to Quota Reforms

NEW DELHI: The "Reservation Hatao Andolan", which began as a campaign against caste-based reservation, is increasingly emerging as a broader platform seeking reforms in India's quota system and greater representation of the general category. Organisers have prepared a charter of demands calling for changes to the existing reservation framework and increased attention to people outside reserved categories. A key demand is the creation of a National Commission for the General Category. Supporters argue that people from the general category require a dedicated institutional mechanism to raise concerns related to education, employment and government policies. The movement has also called for a review of the

reservation system, with greater consideration of economic disadvantage while determining eligibility for government support. The campaign is also demanding the withdrawal of the University Grants Commission's 2026 caste-equity regulations, which have become a major point of contention. Activists contend that measures designed to address caste inequalities should not result in discrimination or reduce opportunities based on merit. Another demand involves reviewing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Organisers say the legislation should be examined to prevent misuse of its provisions while maintaining protections for victims of genuine caste-based atrocities.



The campaign has attracted attention through demonstrations in Delhi. At Jantar Mantar, protesters called for government assistance to focus more heavily on economic disadvantage rather than caste, particularly in scholarships, education, coaching and other welfare measures. More than 50 people were detained during one protest. Another

gathering of around 300 people at Connaught Place on August 23 resulted in more than 20 detentions after police said the demonstration lacked authorisation. Supporters argue that quota policies require comprehensive reform, while critics maintain that caste remains an important measure of historical and continuing social discrimination.

Low-Turnout Delhi Seats Face Higher Risk Under SIR Rollout

Constituencies with weaker voter participation show below-average digitisation, raising questions over potential exclusions as the electoral-roll revision enters its final stages

NEW DELHI: Delhi's ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls could lead to a relatively higher number of voter exclusions in constituencies that recorded low turnout in the 2025 Assembly elections. Of Delhi's 70 Assembly constituencies, 17 of the 18 seats with the lowest voter turnout had digitisation rates below the citywide average of 67%. Digitisation refers to the uploading of enumeration forms collected by Booth Level Officers and indicates the proportion of electors whose details are likely to be included in the draft electoral roll. Mehrauli, which recorded the lowest turnout at 53% in the 2025 polls, has digitised around 59% of its electors. Kasturba Nagar recorded 54% turnout and



nearly 56% digitisation, while Tughlaqabad had 56% turnout and about 52% digitisation. The Election Commission has said low turnout may be linked to a larger number of electors who have shifted, died or are otherwise ineligible. Such constituencies could therefore have a higher proportion of names classified as "uncollectible" during the revision process.

However, the data does not show a similar broad pattern in constituencies with significant Purvanchali or Muslim populations. Among 15 constituencies where Purvanchali voters are considered a significant political force, seven have below-average digitisation, while eight are above the Delhi average. Similarly, five of seven constituencies with significant Muslim populations have digitisation

rates above the citywide average. The enumeration phase has concluded, with forms for around 97.51 lakh electors, or roughly 67% of the 1.45 crore voters on the rolls when the SIR began, collected and uploaded to the Election Commission portal. The remaining 47.58 lakh electors, around 33%, have been classified as "uncollectible". The category includes voters who were absent, had moved, died, had duplicate entries or fell under other reasons. The draft electoral roll is scheduled for publication on August 31. Voters whose names are missing will be able to seek inclusion during the revision process. The final scale of exclusions will become clear only when the final electoral roll is published on November 4.

Sugar Prices Ease After Duty-Free Import Move

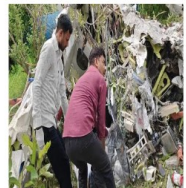
NEW DELHI: Retail sugar prices declined for the first time in a week after the Centre allowed duty-free imports of one million tonnes of raw sugar. The all-India average retail price fell to ₹64.33 per kg from ₹65.06 a day earlier, offering some relief after prices surged in recent weeks. The government approved the imports on August 20, its first such move in nearly a decade, to improve domestic availability and control prices ahead of the festive season. Sugar production is estimated at 30.6 million tonnes, below the initial projection of 34.35 million tonnes. Authorities have also imposed stock limits on dealers and wholesalers to prevent hoarding



and improve supplies. Around 3–3.5 lakh tonnes of refined sugar held by Indian refiners is expected to enter the domestic market. However, imported raw sugar must be refined before reaching consumers, so the full impact may take time. With additional supplies expected, retail prices could moderate further in the coming weeks

Two Pilots Killed in Kanpur Training Aircraft Crash

NEW DELHI: Delhi's ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls could result in a relatively higher number of voter exclusions in constituencies that recorded low turnout in the 2025 Assembly elections, an analysis by The Indian Express has found. Of Delhi's 70 constituencies, 17 of the 18 seats with the lowest turnout had digitisation rates below the citywide average of 67%. Mehrauli, which recorded the lowest turnout at 53%, had digitised around 59% of its electors. Kasturba Nagar and Tughlaqabad also recorded below-average digitisation. The Election Commission has said low turnout can be associated with voters who have shifted, died or are otherwise ineligible, potentially increasing the number of names classified as "uncollectible".



However, the data does not show the same broad pattern in constituencies with significant Purvanchali or Muslim populations. The enumeration phase has concluded, with forms for around 97.51 lakh electors collected and uploaded. About 47.58 lakh electors remain classified as "uncollectible". The draft roll is scheduled for August 31, while the final electoral roll is expected on November 4.