

Parliament adjourned for second straight day

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Both Houses of Parliament remained paralysed on the second day of the Monsoon Session on Tuesday as Opposition members protested over the alleged NEET paper leak, the police crackdown on students protesting in New Delhi and the alleged Ram Temple donation theft.

Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned twice at 11 a.m. and noon before the House was adjourned for the day at 2 p.m. Similar scenes were witnessed in the Rajya Sabha.

A delegation of Opposition MPs from both Houses, led by the Leader of Op-



Amid the din: A section of lawmakers raise slogans in the Lok Sabha in New Delhi on Tuesday. ANI

position in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, met Speaker Om Birla and demanded a discussion on alleged police brutality against students.

“Met the Lok Sabha Speaker along with MPs of

the Opposition. Our demand is simple: Parliament must have a detailed discussion on the brutality unleashed on students yesterday and on the government’s lack of accountability for the examination

crisis. If Parliament cannot discuss the future of India’s youth, what is it for?” Mr. Gandhi posted on X.

Earlier in the day, INDIA bloc floor leaders met in the chamber of the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge and discussed the Opposition’s strategy for the day.

As soon as the Lok Sabha assembled in the morning, Opposition members started raising slogans. Mr. Birla assured members that they would get an opportunity to raise their issues. However, as the protests continued, the Speaker adjourned the House. In the Rajya Sabha too, the first adjournment came within seven minutes

of the House convening. After official papers were laid, Mr. Kharge rose to speak on the police action. Treasury Bench members raised slogans, and before Mr. Kharge could finish his remarks, Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan adjourned the House till noon.

When the House met again, Secretary-General P. C. Mody read out a message from the Lok Sabha amid commotion. The House was adjourned almost immediately. During the post-lunch sitting, Opposition MPs started raising slogans as soon as proceedings started. Deputy Chairman Harivansh then adjourned the House for the day.

Congress leaders detained after dharna at PM's house

Rahul leads march to Modi's official residence amid anti-government protests; leaders held at different locations before being released; 'beginning of the end of Modi regime', says Cong. MP

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The principal Opposition party, the Congress, on Tuesday took the leadership of the anti-government agitation protesting against the spate of paper leaks and seeking education reform, with the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, leading a party contingent to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's doorstep. They were accompanied by other top Opposition leaders, including Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav.

Taken by surprise, the Delhi Police scurried into action, leading to a showdown between the two sides. Three hours into the sit-in and after a failed negotiation attempt, the police forcibly cleared the area and detained several leaders, including Mr. Gandhi, who resisted by lying flat on the road, Mr. Yadav, and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. The leaders were released late on Tuesday night.

"Modiji, try every pressure, exert all your might – this fight for justice for students will not stop or be



Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi being detained by the police outside the PM's residence on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Thousands regroup at CJP protest site after crackdown

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Thousands of people regrouped at the Cockroach Janta Party protest site at Jantar Mantar here by Tuesday afternoon. Security forces had almost

halted," Mr. Gandhi posted on X, while being detained at Chatrasal Stadium. Speaking to *The Hindu* from the same location, Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said that in the last two days, the Modi govern-

ment's real face had been exposed. "This is the beginning of the end of the Modi regime," the MP said.

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Reach out to youth, Modi tells NDA MPs

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

A day after protesters marching under the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) against the NEET question paper leak faced a police crackdown while almost breaching Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday told National Democratic Alliance MPs that his government had taken "strict action" against those involved in the paper leak.

Addressing the MPs at a meeting, Mr. Modi said ensuring leak-free examinations was a "national responsibility" and not a matter for party politics.

In what is being seen as his response to the protest, Mr. Modi appealed to his alliance MPs to maintain a positive outreach and "guide and help" youngsters with regard to their aspirations.

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Police file four FIRs amid flak over crackdown on protesters

Delhi Police probing if 'violence was premeditated', examining CCTV footage, phone recordings, drone images to identify those involved, says officer; Kejriwal demands that FIRs be made public; march was peaceful, ruckus was created, say AISA activists

**Shrimansi Kaushik
Ashna Butani**
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Tuesday registered four FIRs against unknown individuals for rioting, assault on public servants, damage to public property and other offences during Monday's Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protest.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP) Anand Kumar Mishra said there is an ongoing investigation into whether the entire violence was "premeditated and executed in an organised, coordinated" manner. "We have documented the protest through videography and are examining CCTV footage, mobile phone recordings, drone images and footage from body-worn cameras to identify those involved," Mr. Mishra told mediapersons.

Seeking clarity on the action taken by Delhi Police, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal wrote to Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Sachin Sharma demanding that a list of FIRs and the names of people detained be made public immediately.

Comparing what transpired at Jantar Mantar on Monday to the action taken by General Dyer at Jallianwala Bagh in 1919, Mr. Kejriwal while addressing a press conference said,



Rising up: Protesters demanding the sacking of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at Jantar Mantar on Tuesday. R.V. MOORTHY

"The police have brutally beaten students without any provocation and fired tear-gas shells. Such brutality was not even unleashed by the British against freedom fighters."

Later addressing those who continued to protest at Jantar Mantar, the former Chief Minister said the police have foisted false cases against students. "[Prime Minister Narendra] Modi is trying to call protesters terrorists. I want to tell you that the biggest terrorist is Modi. Modi is calling you anti-national but the biggest anti-national is Modi, for playing with the future of students," he said.

Mr. Kejriwal's demand for a list of those detained gains significance, with several people frantically

looking for their friends and family members a day after the police thwarted the march to Parliament by resorting to lathi-charge and tear gas to disperse those gathered.

'Lathi charge, tear gas'

Sharing details of what transpired, All India Students' Association (AISA) said at a press conference that thousands of slippers, torn clothes and blood spatter could be seen across Jantar Mantar. The panel included Neha, Ameen and Manish who fasted for 23 days, as well as protesters who were injured during Monday's protest.

Anjali, Delhi University AISA unit secretary, said, "Yesterday, across central



Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi with party leaders Priyanka Gandhi, Deepender Singh Hooda and Supriya Shrinate at the Mandir Marg police station on Tuesday. ANI

Delhi - Sansad Marg, Connaught Place, Palika Bazaar - there were barricades every 200 to 250 metres. Protesters were trapped in cramped spaces with barricades on both sides. They then [police] lobbed tear gas shells and beat protesters with

lathis."

Tanvi, a student and AISA activist, said, "Not only college students but also parents and school students who joined the protest in their uniforms were beaten." She added, "The march itself was peaceful. The ruckus was created."

Global wars delaying FTA negotiations

The deals facing various degrees of delays include separate free trade agreements with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Israel, and the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union, cumulatively accounting for about \$243 billion worth of trade for India, or about 20% of its total trade

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The ongoing wars in the world have led to varying degrees of delays in the negotiations of at least three separate trade deals that India is working on, sources in the government have confirmed.

These deals involve countries that cumulatively account for about 20% of India's total trade.

These negotiations are on separate FTAs with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Israel, and the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union.

"The GCC team had come to Delhi for the signing of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the deal and

so it is our turn to go there for the round of negotiation," a senior official in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry told *The Hindu*. "But with all this happening [the ongoing war in West Asia], that visit is pending."

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and the Secretary General of the GCC, Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, on February 24, 2026, formally launched negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the GCC countries – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

However, later that month, the U.S. launched its attack on Iran.

As a result, the first round of negotiations is yet

War risk

India's trade deals facing delays because of global wars
In \$ billion, unless specified

	Exports	Imports	Total Trade	Share in India's Total Trade
GCC	55.7	122.9	178.7	14.70%
EAEU	5.1	55.6	60.7	5%
Israel	2.2	1.7	3.9	0.30%
Total	63	180.3	243.3	20%

Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry • Note: GCC - Gulf Cooperation Council; EAEU - Eurasian Economic Union

to take place.

"This FTA is of particular importance for India not just as a strategic one, but also because of access," the official said. "It will mean that any one of the ports of the GCC countries will give Indian exporters access to all the other countries."

the second round was to be in May in Tel Aviv.

However, the war in the region delayed these talks as well and changed the location. Talks have only now resumed, with the Israeli negotiating team currently in New Delhi until July 23 to discuss the deal.

"Our team was to go there, but safety was obviously an issue," the official explained.

He added that similar concerns are leading to delays in India's in-person negotiations with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) as well. The EAEU comprises Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Armenia.

"The first round of the EAEU FTA was held in November 2025 and the se-

cond round in Moscow was held all the way in June 2026," he explained. "The back-end talks are progressing well, but actual visits are becoming difficult to coordinate especially now that Ukraine has intensified its counteroffensive."

India conducts \$60.7 billion worth of annual trade with the EAEU nations, predominantly with Russia. It has a total annual trade of about \$178.7 billion with the GCC countries and \$3.9 billion with Israel.

In total, therefore, the wars are delaying negotiations on trade deals involving about \$243 billion worth of trade for India, or about 20% of India's total trade.

Jaishankar to meet Quad counterparts in Manila on sidelines of ASEAN meet

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, July 21

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar will visit Manila, Philippines, on July 22-23 to attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting under the ASEAN framework, including the ASEAN-India, East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The MEA said that the visit "underscores India's deepening engagement with ASEAN under the Act East Policy and reaffirms our strong commitment to further strengthening the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. It is of particular significance that 2026 has been designated as the ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation".

It said that on the margins of the ASEAN-related meetings, "the External Affairs Minister will be participating in a Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting with his counterparts from Australia, Japan and the United States. He is also expected to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from participating countries."

In May this year, with an eye on China, the Quad Foreign Ministers decided to launch the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Corporation, expanding maritime domain awareness and enhancing port infrastructure in Fiji. They also agreed to launch the Indo-Pacific Energy Security initiative, which will focus on regional energy resilience. And they decided to proceed with concrete cooperation under the Quad Critical Minerals Initiative framework to strengthen supply chains.

The Foreign Ministers of India, the US, Australia and Japan will meet in Manila. But with the US and China engagement on one side and the strained ties between India and the US, there appears to be uncertainty over the Quad leaders' summit this year in Delhi.

In May this year, when the Quad Foreign Ministers met in Delhi, the joint statement did



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (centre left) and Deputy PM of the Lao People's Democratic Republic Thongsavanh Phomvihane (centre right) on the sidelines of the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings in Manila, on Tuesday. AP

E. EXPLAINED

Bridging the gap

The Quad grouping has faced challenges in the last year or so. With the US President Donald Trump reaching out to China and the strained ties between Delhi and Washington, there is a perceived gap between India and the US. But the Quad grouping meeting at the Foreign Ministers' level signals some effort to bridge the gap.

not specify whether it would be held this year in Delhi or in some other country. The Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting was originally planned to be held in Australia, but it was held in Delhi. So, officials said that it is

a "nimble" grouping, and the decision to hold the leaders' summit will be taken by the Foreign ministers.

"We look forward to the convening of the Quad Leaders' Summit, the next Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and continuing our engagements that advance peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and beyond," the joint statement had said.

The Philippines assumed the ASEAN Chairship for 2026 under the theme "Navigating Our Future, Together", focusing on regional peace and security, economic integration, digital transformation, inclusive growth and people empowerment. It comes at a time when ASEAN seeks to strengthen resilience amid global uncertainties while advancing cooperation among member states and external partners, including India.

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No. FTU/FIN/Consumable/356/Vol-V/2024 Dated: 20.07.2026
NOTIFICATION FOR RATE CONTRACT
On behalf of Tripura University, Rate Contract Proposal are invited from the reputed manufacturers for supply of Chemicals & Solvents, Reagents, Glassware and Plasticware with atleast 10% Discount on Company's Price List to various Departments of Tripura University for the Financial Year 2026-2027. Details can be seen and downloaded from Tripura University website: www.tripurauniv.ac.in (NB: Hindi version is available on T.U. website).
Sd/-, (Dr. Nirmalya Debnath)
Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO)

• GEOPOLITICS

First sanctions, now war: India's Chabahar plans up in the air

Divya A

New Delhi, July 21

A DRAMATIC image posted on social media by US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth last week fuelled concern in India. It showed the maritime control tower at Iran's Chabahar port collapsing after US strikes.

While New Delhi is already reeling under the impact of US sanctions on its strategically vital infrastructure project in Iran, where it has invested billions, the military strikes sparked fresh concerns.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) clarified that the terminal it operates at Chabahar Port was not damaged in the US strikes. The ministry, however, reiterated India's position that civilian infrastructure should not be targeted during conflicts.

India's stakes in Chabahar

The Chabahar port has two main terminals — Shahid Beheshti and Shahid Kalantari — with India managing the former. It is operated by India Ports Global Ltd under a 10-year renewable agreement with Iran's Ports and Maritime Organisation.

India and Iran have been developing Chabahar as a key trade and connectivity hub, particularly to improve access to

Afghanistan and Central Asia. Chabahar holds strategic importance for India as it provides an alternative trade route to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan, which does not allow Indian goods transit through its territory. For Iran, Chabahar is vital because it is its only oceanic port with direct access to the Indian Ocean, bypassing the congested Strait of Hormuz.

To ensure its continuous operation, India and Iran signed the landmark 10-year contract in May 2024 — replacing previous short-term contracts — to equip and operate the Shahid Beheshti terminal. To avoid financial penalties in the wake of US sanctions, India prepaid its \$120 million investment and transferred its operational stake at Shahid Beheshti to local entities.

US sanctions

US sanctions on Chabahar stem from its broader economic and military measures against Tehran. Despite India's efforts to develop the port for regional connectivity, the history of these sanctions and waivers has severely restricted the project's progress.

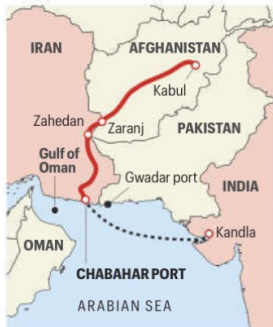
In 2018, the Donald Trump administration walked the US out of the Iran nuclear deal, and imposed sanctions on dealing with Tehran. At the same time, it granted a

More than maritime infra

• The sea-land transit route from Chabahar, that allows India to bypass Pakistan, is viewed as an important part of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

• INSTC is a multi-mode transport network connecting India with Iran, Russia, Europe and parts of Central Asia. In that sense, the port represents far more than maritime infrastructure.

• The end of the US's Chabahar waivers tilts the regional balance toward China and Pakistan.



targeted sanctions waiver for the Chabahar port to support humanitarian and economic efforts in Afghanistan.

For several years, the port facilitated the delivery of Indian wheat and medical supplies to Afghanistan. In September last year, the US administration withdrew the sanctions waiver, only to grant the exemption again through a six-month waiver in October that officially expired on April 26.

Owing to the end of the sanctions

waivers, India is losing its direct operational control over the Chabahar project.

The MEA has said India has been in discussions with "relevant stakeholders" after the expiry of the waiver.

Importance for Delhi, Tehran

Chabahar is vital for India not only because it provides direct, secure access to Afghanistan and Central Asia, but also because it serves as a counterweight to China's development of the Gwadar Port in Pakistan, located just 140 km away.

For Tehran, it also serves as a crucial economic hub in the Sistan-Baluchistan province, functioning as a gateway to connect Iran with landlocked Central Asian states, Afghanistan and Russia.

Future hangs in balance

Chabahar had received an allocation of Rs 400 crore in the previous financial year. But the Union Budget for 2026-27 made no allocation for the port.

The current situation has left questions hanging over the future of this strategic route. Without Chabahar, India loses its primary non-Pakistani corridor to landlocked markets, effectively undoing New Delhi's decades of connectivity planning.

Indian Oil Corp said to cancel Iraq oil lifting amid attacks

Reuters

NEW DELHI

Indian Oil Corp has cancelled the lifting of Iraqi oil from Basrah Oil Terminal due to increased risk and attacks on some vessels transiting through the Strait of Hormuz, three sources familiar with the matter said.

State-run IOC was preparing to lift 2 million barrels of Iraqi oil in the very large crude carrier Lila Jamnagar around July 23.

Another cancellation

Another state refiner, Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd., also cancelled plans to lift oil from Iraq in the Indian-flagged Aframax tanker Desh Gaurav, they said.

The two Indian refiners



IOC was preparing to lift 2 million barrels in the very large crude carrier Lila Jamnagar

did not immediately respond to a *Reuters* request for comment.

India has advised shipowners, ship managers and recruitment companies not to deploy the country's seafarers on vessels undertaking trips through the Strait of Hormuz following the resump-

tion of fighting in the region.

The shipping regulator has also directed masters of vessels to ensure that they are sufficiently vigilant about the security situation in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and adjoining waters, and called for continuous monitoring of navigational warnings.

The Strait of Hormuz between Iran and Oman was the main transit route before the conflict for around a fifth of global energy supplies.

Tensions have escalated since a fragile truce between Washington and Tehran collapsed in early July, reviving heavy exchanges of strikes and further disrupting shipping through the waterway.

Ed Miliband appointed Foreign Secretary; India-born Kanishka Narayan handles AI

Former Foreign Secretary, Yvette Cooper, was named Health Secretary; Shabana Mahmood is continuing as Home Secretary; Burnham had earlier said he intended to follow through with the significant tightening of immigration that Mahmood had proposed under the Keir Starmer government

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

Former Labour Party leader Ed Miliband was appointed U.K. Foreign Secretary on Monday as the country's new Prime Minister put together his Cabinet with some old faces from the Keir Starmer Cabinet and some new names.

Mr. Miliband – whose focus has been clean energy and climate action – was the Energy Minister in the Starmer administration. He had visited India in February 2025 to co-chair the fourth Energy Dialogue between the countries.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar congratulated his new British counterpart on X. He wrote: “The India-U.K. Comprehensive Strategic Partnership has witnessed a strong momentum in recent years, including the entry into force of CETA. Look forward to working together to advance our cooperation.”

Former U.K. Foreign Secretary, Yvette Cooper, was appointed Health Secretary.

Focus on immigration

John Healey, who resigned from the Starmer Cabinet over inadequate defence investments, was appointed



Ed Miliband and Shabana Mahmood walk on Downing Street after U.K. PM Andy Burnham took office, in London, Britain. REUTERS

ed the Chancellor of the Exchequer (i.e., Finance Minister). Shabana Mahmood is continuing as Home Secretary. Mr. Burnham had earlier said he in-

tended to follow through with the significant tightening of immigration that Ms. Mahmood had proposed under the Starmer government (the details

are expected to be finalised towards the end of the year).

Wes Streeting, who had resigned as Health Secretary from the Starmer Cabinet in recent weeks and became a potential contender for the Prime Minister's job, was appointed Defence Secretary. Lisa Nandy is continuing as Culture Secretary.

India-born Kanishka Narayan, who is an MP from the Vale of Glamorgan in Wales, was elevated to the post of AI Minister. He was already a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Starmer administration, which is the equivalent of a Minister of State.

“A nation which welcomed a 12-year old and his family, gave us the best chance at opportunity, put me in Parliament as Wales' first ethnic minority MP, and now affords me the chance to make a mark in Cabinet,” Mr. Narayan, who was born in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, wrote on X.

Miatta Fahnbulleh was appointed Energy Secretary, replacing Mr. Miliband. She was a junior minister in the Starmer administration, resigning shortly after Labour's losses in the May local elections. Former Home Office Minister Alex Norris was appointed Justice Secretary.

Strike on Ukraine-bound gas tanker in Black Sea wounds three seafarers

Agence France-Presse
BUCHAREST

A strike on a ship in the Black Sea carrying propane to the Ukrainian port of Reni wounded three seafarers and forced the crew's evacuation, Romania's President said on Tuesday.

Ukraine blamed Russia for the incident, describing it as a deliberate act of "terror".

Russia made no immediate public comment.

"Last night, the LPG tanker *Gas Lisbon*, flying the Liberian flag, was struck outside Romanian territorial waters, approximately 20 nautical miles off the Romanian coast," Romanian President Nicu-



Rescuers and paramedics walking at a docking area in Tulcea, Romania after a tanker ship caught fire, on Tuesday. AP

sor Dan said on X.

While authorities were still working to establish who had hit the tanker, the incident was "most likely part of the Russian Federation's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine," Mr. Dan said.

The strike on the ship, which was carrying more than 3,790 tonnes of propane from the port of Alexandria in Egypt, caused a major fire on board the vessel.

After the strike, two Romanian rescue vessels

evacuated the ship's 17 crew members, including three who "required emergency medical care", the emergency services said.

Authorities did not immediately give details about the weapon involved in the strike.

"Two victims had burns covering approximately 10-15% of their bodies, and the third had suffered multiple wounds and was bleeding," the statement said.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga called the incident "yet another example of Russia's terror".

"The response must match the scale of the threat. Stronger sanctions. Greater pressure on Russia," he said.

Israel building earthen barrier inside Gaza, dividing the strip

Lee Keath & Julia Frankel

Cairo, July 21

THE ISRAELI military is quietly but quickly building a giant earthen barrier separating the over 50% of the Gaza Strip it controls from the rest of the territory, according to satellite imagery, further entrenching the division of the tiny Palestinian enclave.

More than 23 kilometers (14 miles) have been constructed in recent months, running through Palestinian communities demolished by the military. That is equivalent to more than half the length of the coastal strip, which is some 40 kilometers long and 11 kilometers wide, and home to over 2 million Palestinians.

When presented with the satellite images, Israel's mili-



A satellite image from Planet Labs PBC shows a section of an earthen barrier being built in Gaza. AP

tary confirmed to The Associated Press it has built a physical barrier in the area of the so-called yellow line, the boundary to which Israeli troops withdrew under the October

ceasefire deal with Hamas.

The line was envisioned in the US-backed agreement as a temporary division of the territory pending a fuller Israeli withdrawal. AP